



GINKGO BILOBA

The Ginkgo tree first appeared on the earth some 190 million years ago and since that time has survived all the changes that have occurred. It is thought that the Ginkgo tree has probably existed on earth longer than any other tree. The tree itself can grow 80 feet in height and to a spread of 60 feet. The leaves are bilobed (have two lobes), hence the plant was given the name Ginkgo biloba.

The Chinese have revered Ginkgo for over 5000 years and history makes many references to its use in treating asthma, tuberculosis, bronchitis and circulatory conditions such as tinnitus and Raynaud's disease.



The Benefits of Ginkgo Biloba

Memory—in one study an improvement in short-term memory was noticed as soon as 48 hours after taking Ginkgo extract. This was confirmed in another study, where a beneficial effect was seen in mild to moderate memory loss. The greatest benefit was noticed in those over 50 years of age.

Alzheimer's disease—many studies have shown that people taking Ginkgo biloba possessed improved mental acuity, were more alert, scored higher on psychometric tests and had a more positive outlook than control patients.

Circulatory disorders—improved circulation has been demonstrated in the brain and in the hands and feet. Walking without pain has been seen to improve along with Raynaud's disease, warmth of lower limbs and clearing of ulcerous lesions. Ginkgo biloba has been shown to improve circulation to diseased areas of the brain as well as to healthy areas.

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) and strokes—Ginkgo biloba has been shown to block or antagonise the platelet activating factor (PAF). A reduction in PAF activity reduces the incidence of thrombosis (clots forming inside the blood vessels) which in turn reduces the damage caused by the prevention of blood reaching vital organs by blockage of blood vessels. Ginkgo biloba's potential usefulness in 'Economy Class Syndrome' has been indicated.

Sexual dysfunction due to anti-depressants—improvement in all 4 phases of the sexual response cycle (desire, excitement (erection/lubrication), orgasm and resolution) was noted.

Anti-oxidant—the human body is especially vulnerable to oxidant attack when oxygen supply to tissues is low. This is the type of condition where Ginkgo biloba is typically used. Its anti-oxidant properties are well documented.

Asthma—PAF causes an inflammatory response which is a factor in asthma. The blocking of this response has been shown to help asthma sufferers.

Ear health—tinnitus, hearing loss, dizziness and vertigo have all been shown in clinical trials to respond to Ginkgo biloba.

Eye health—evidence is emerging that Ginkgo biloba may help sufferers of macular degeneration.



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