

## Echinacea

Latin name: *Echinaceae angustifolia*, *E. pallida*, *E. purpurea*

Family: Asteraceae

### **Miscellaneous:**

- a.k.a. “purple coneflower”.
- The roots and seeds are the primary parts of the plant that are used.
- This herb is native to America. American drug companies used to sell echinacea-based products for their ability to fight infections.
- Traditional claims: antiseptic, snakebites (compress), arthritis, etc.

### **Uses:**

As an immunostimulant. Approved by German Commission E to treat colds, respiratory infections, flu, influenza, UTI and inflammation, skin ulcers, and general wounds. It has been demonstrated by German trials that when taken at the onset of infection, echinacea shortens the duration of symptoms by 1/3 of the time.<sup>1</sup> Internal or external use, however, should not exceed a period of 8 continuous weeks.

### **Mechanism:**

Unknown. Many speculations exist.

### **Dosage:**

800-1000 mg/day of capsule or the equivalent of fluid extract. 6-9 mg of pressed juice could also be used. Again, use should not exceed a period of 8 continuous weeks.

### **Contraindications/Side effects:**

People with known allergies to plants within the sunflower family (Asteraceae). Echinacea should also not be used in those patients with systemic autoimmune diseases including TB, leukoses, collagenosis, MS, HIV, AIDS, etc. due to the immunostimulating effects.<sup>1</sup>

### **Citation References:**

1. Tyler, V., Robbers, J.: *Tyler's Herbs of Choice: The Therapeutic Use of Phytomedicinals*: 1999, pp. 141-146.

### **References:**

1. McGuffin, M., Hobbs, C., Upton, R., Goldberg, A.: *American Herbal Products Association's Botanical Safety Handbook*: 1997, pp. 43-44.
2. Pierce, A., The American Pharmaceutical Association: *Practical Guide to Natural Medicines*: 1999, pp. 236-239.
3. Karch, S.: *The Consumer's Guide to Herbal Medicine*: 1999, pp. 79-80.
4. Tyler, V., Robbers, J.: *Tyler's Herbs of Choice: The Therapeutic Use of Phytomedicinals*: 1999, pp. 253-257.
5. Duke, J.: *Dr. Duke's Essential Herbs*: 1999, pp. 81-96.