

Psyllium

Latin name: *Plantago psyllium*, *P. indica*, *P. ovate*

Family: Plantaginaceae

Miscellaneous:

- Similar in therapeutic effect and MOA to flaxseed.

Uses:

Bulk-producing laxative and analgesic for a number of IBD (inflammatory bowel disease) and GI complaints. Recent clinical trials have also indicated that psyllium can cause a drop in cholesterol levels.

Mechanism:

Adds bulk to feces, thereby relieving diarrhea (in the definitional sense of watery feces), while simultaneously acting as a laxative due to added volume. Also forms a softer movement with gel-like consistency that relieves pain associated with the digestive tract, especially that of intestinal origin.

MOA pertaining to decreased levels of cholesterol is associated with the increased fecal excretion of bile acids via intestinal binding. As a result of this, less acids are reentered enterohepatically. Hence, more cholesterol is required to be converted to bile acids to compensate for the loss.¹

Dosage:

1 tsp. ground seeds or powder in 1 cup liquid BID-TID. Adjust capsule dosage accordingly. During use, drink at least 8-10 glasses of water QD to prevent intestinal obstruction.

Contraindications/Side effects:

Anaphylaxis, GI. Start slowly and then gradually increase into diet, allowing body to adapt. Starting at too high of a dose at initiation could cause GI upset.

Citation References:

1. Tyler, V., Robbers, J.: *Tyler's Herbs of Choice: The Therapeutic Use of Phytomedicinals*: 1999, pp. 56-57.

General References:

1. Tyler, V., Robbers, J.: *Tyler's Herbs of Choice: The Therapeutic Use of Phytomedicinals*: 1999, pp. 56-57.
2. Mindell, E.: *Earl Mindell's Herb Bible*: 1992, pp. 66-67.
3. Duke, J.: *The Green Pharmacy*: 1997, pp. 206, 346.