

Do you feel your body needs a good clean up?

- Gentle
- Well tolerated
- Easy to use



Detox-Kit® stimulates the body's natural process of elimination to cleanse itself of toxins.

The Heel Detox-Kit® combines three homeopathic remedies for a comprehensive effect:

- **Lyphosot®** (30 ml oral drops)
Activates the lymphatic system in order to detoxify the connective tissues and the mesenchyme.
- **Nux vomica-Homaccord®** (30 ml oral drops)
Stimulates the gastrointestinal excretion pathway as well as the liver.
- **Berberis-Homaccord®** (30 ml oral drops)
Activates the kidneys and the gallbladder.

Purchase the Detox-Kit® in selected health food stores and pharmacies or through your health care practitioner.

By the maker of Traumeel®



-Heel
www.heel.ca

holistic healing

More nutritious than spinach!

Dandelion—the amazing weed

Bruce Burnett, CH



You have a choice. You can be a horticultural extremist, using toxic chemicals to botanically cleanse your yard of the pesky dandelion, or you can thank the universe for this abundantly free harvest of nutritious food and medicine.

Or you could go a step further and plant a crop. Just think of the fun you'll have when you calmly announce to your neighbour that you're about to do just that.

Wholesome goodness

Dandelion leaves (*Taraxacum officinale*) are more nutritious than spinach, and the whole plant—leaves, flowers, roots, and the milky latex fluid from the stem—has medicinal value. James A. Duke, PhD, herbalist, botanist, and author of *The Green Pharmacy* (Rodale, 1997), has built a phytochemical database for the US Agricultural Research Service. For the humble dandelion, he lists the following compounds and their functions:

- **Sesquiterpene lactones** stimulate digestion and relax the sympathetic nervous system.
- **Triterpenes** include phytosterols called stigmasterol and sitosterol, which may inhibit the growth of

tumours and help regulate blood lipids. Other compounds are associated with the regulation of thyroid function.

- **Polysaccharides**, especially inulin, a polymer of fructose, helps stabilize blood sugar levels in hypoglycemia. Inulin also has diuretic and immunostimulant properties.
- **Lecithin** protects the liver.
- **Phenolic acids** function as anti-inflammatories.
- **Carotenoids** such as lutein and violaxanthin are powerful antioxidants. Lutein in particular has been identified as a preserver and enhancer of good vision and may prevent macular degeneration.
- **Coumarins** thin the blood.
- **Vitamins A, B, C, and D** and the minerals calcium, chromium (helps metabolize fat and reduce cholesterol and triglycerides), copper, iron, magnesium, potassium, selenium, sulphur, and zinc are found in dandelions.

Medicinal benefits

In addition to their nutritional qualities, dandelion leaves are powerful diuretics and are used to cleanse and treat high blood pressure by reducing the volume of excess body fluids. Unlike some pharmaceutical diuretics, which can cause a loss of potassium, dandelion leaves contain high amounts of this important mineral and provide a net gain.

Herbalists sanction dandelion leaf and root for the prevention of gallstones.

The German Commission E (a governmental regulatory agency composed of scientists, physicians, pharmacists, and toxicologists, first established in 1978), validates dandelion root as an effective liver cleanser and bile stimulator. Herbalists endorse the root as one of the most effective detoxifying herbs. The dandelion's root qualities have helped clear up many eczema-like skin problems.

The fresh latex from dandelion stems has been used to banish warts by applying several times daily.

Roots and leaves

The leaf is best harvested in spring or early summer and preferably before flowering. Later in the year the leaves become tough and bitter.

Diuretic Tea

- 2 tsp (10 mL) fresh, washed dandelion root, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp (4 mL) each of nettle leaf (fresh or dried), oat straw, fennel seed, and corn silk
- 4 cups (1 L) boiling water

Pour boiling water over herbs. Steep for 20 minutes. Strain herbs and drink one or two cups as needed.

Even young leaves are bitter and some recommend blanching or soaking them overnight in cold water to reduce the astringency.

Cooked or served raw in salads, it is advisable to combine dandelion with other greens. Do not cut or tear dandelion leaves until you're ready to use them. When cut, the cells are damaged, releasing an ascorbic acid oxidase. This chemical destroys the herb's vitamin C.

The roots are best harvested in the fall of the second year when the nutritional compounds are returning to the root. For example, autumn-harvested roots contain about 40 percent inulin compared to only two percent in spring-harvested roots. However, frost will diminish dandelions'

nutritional content.

Dandelion root, chopped, roasted, and ground, makes a delicious, nutritious coffee substitute.

Flower power

Dr. Duke recommends using the flowers, a rich source of the nutrient lecithin. They make a nutritional garnish, having a sweet, honey-like flavour when young, and they impart a beautiful yellow hue to herbal vinegars. Dandelion flowers also make a clear, rich, sherry-like herbal wine.

Harvest dandelion leaves or roots well away from traffic and industrial areas and where you know they haven't been sprayed. **a**

Bruce Burnett, CH, is a chartered herbalist, award-winning writer, and author of *HerbWise: growing cooking wellbeing* (HerbWise Inc., 2002), based in Ladysmith, BC.

Get ready to start kissing again!



FAST ACTING MEDICATION

Traditional Herbal Medicine
to help clear-up and/or shrink

COLD SORES

All natural, Antiviral Action, with no need for a prescription



sales and distribution by
Purity Life Health Products Ltd. A Division of SunOpta Inc.

www.coldsorecorner.com

Copyright of *Alive: Canadian Journal of Health & Nutrition* is the property of Alive Publishing and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.