

Burnet

Species (Family)

Sanguisorba officinalis L. (Rosaceae)

Synonym(s)

Garden Burnet, Greater Burnet, Sanguisorba

Part(s) Used

Herb

Pharmacopoeial and Other Monographs

BHP 1983^(G7)
PDR for Herbal Medicines 2nd edition^(G36)

Legal Category (Licensed Products)

GSL (Sanguisorba)^(G37)

Constituents^(G40,G64)

All phytochemical data located refer to the underground plant parts and not to the herb.

Flavonoids Flavones, unstable flavonol derivatives.

Saponins Ziyu glycosides I and II (major glycosides),⁽¹⁾ pomolic acid as aglycone (not tomentosolic acid as documented in earlier work), sanguisorbin 2.5–4.0%.

Tannins Numerous compounds (condensed and hydrolysable) have been isolated, including 3,3,4-tri-O-methylellagic acid.⁽²⁻⁶⁾

Other constituents Volatile oil, ascorbic acid (vitamin C) in the fresh plant.

Food Use

Burnet is not used in foods.

Herbal Use

Burnet is stated to possess astringent, antihemorrhagic, styptic and antihemorrhoidal properties. It has been used for ulcerative colitis, metrorrhagia, and specifically for acute diarrhoea.^(G7,G64)

Dosage

Dried herb 2–6 g or by infusion three times daily.^(G7)

Liquid extract 2–6 mL (1:1 in 25% alcohol) three times daily.^(G7)

Tincture 2–8 mL (1:5 in 45% alcohol) three times daily.^(G7)

Pharmacological Actions

In vitro and animal studies

None documented for burnet. The roots have been reported to contain an antihemorrhagic principle, 3,3,4-tri-O-methylellagic acid.⁽²⁾

Side-effects, Toxicity

None documented.

Contra-indications, Warnings

None documented.

Pregnancy and lactation In view of the lack of phytochemical, pharmacological and toxicity data, the use of burnet during pregnancy and lactation should be avoided.

Pharmaceutical Comment

The chemistry of burnet herb does not appear to have been studied, although data are available for the underground plant parts. If present in the herb as well as the root, the tannin constituents would support the reputed astringent and antihemorrhagic actions of burnet. In view of the lack of toxicity data and the possible high tannin content of the herb, excessive use of burnet should be avoided.

References

See also General References G7, G36, G37, G40 and G64.

- 1 Yosioka I *et al.* Soil bacterial hydrolysis leading to genuine aglycone. III. The structures of glycosides and genuine aglycone of *Sanguisorbae radix*. *Chem Pharm Bull* 1971; 19: 1700–1707.

- 2 Kosuge T *et al.* Studies on antihemorrhagic substances in herbs classified as hemostatics in Chinese medicine. III. On the antihemorrhagic principle in *Sanguisorba officinalis* L. *Chem Pharm Bull* 1984; 32: 4478-4481.
- 3 Nonaka G-I *et al.* Tannins and related compounds. XVII. Galloylhamameloses from *Castanea crenata* L. and *Sanguisorba officinalis* L. *Chem Pharm Bull* 1984; 32: 483-489.
- 4 Nonaka G-I *et al.* A dimeric hydrolyzable tannin, sanguin H-6 from *Sanguisorba officinalis* L. *Chem Pharm Bull* 1982; 30: 2255-2257.
- 5 Tanaka T *et al.* Tannins and related compounds. XVI. Isolation and characterization of six methyl glucoside gallates and a gallic acid glucoside gallate from *Sanguisorba officinalis* L. *Chem Pharm Bull* 1984; 32: 117-121.
- 6 Tanaka T *et al.* 7-O-galloyl-(+)-catechin and 3-O-galloylprocyanidin B-3 from *Sanguisorba officinalis*. *Phytochemistry* 1983; 22: 2575-2578.