Vitex (Chasteberry)

The chasteberry tree finds its origins in the Mediterranean. Its fruit is harvested and dried for medicinal purposes. It has a long folk history of use in women’s health, especially for mild to moderate complaints associated with menstruation and menopause.

**Reported Uses**

Although chasteberry is safe for use, its function in the body isn’t fully understood. Studies suggest that chasteberry has a progesterone-like effect, which may account for its use in the support of women’s health. Because of this activity, chasteberry has been recommended for a variety of female complaints, such as PMS. The effectiveness of a chasteberry extract was studied in 50 patients with PMS. At the conclusion of the study, PMS-related symptoms were reduced by treatment. Another study of 178 women taking a standardized chasteberry product reported improvement in PMS symptoms over three menstrual cycles when compared to placebo. Improved symptoms included mood alteration, anger, headache, breast fullness and bloating.

Several clinical studies have also reported beneficial results with using chasteberry in treating women with certain types of infertility, menopausal symptoms and endometriosis.

**Dosage Info**

**Dosage Range:** 200-400mg (standardized extract) daily.

**Most Common Dosage:** 400mg (standardized extract) daily.

**Standardization:** The most current available medical and scientific literature indicates that this dietary supplement should be standardized to 0.5% agnuside and 0.6% aucubin per dose. Standardization represents the complete body of information and controls that serve to enhance the batch to batch consistency of a botanical product, including but not limited to the presence of a marker compound at a defined level or within a defined range.

**Toxicities and Precautions**

Be sure to tell your pharmacist, doctor or other health care providers about any dietary supplements you are taking. There may be a potential for interactions or side effects.

**General**

This dietary supplement is considered safe when used in accordance with proper dosing guidelines.

**Side Effects**

Side effects are possible with any dietary supplement. This dietary supplement may cause minor side effects such as stomach upset or rash in rare instances. Tell your doctor if these side effects become severe or do not go away.

**Pregnancy/Breast-Feeding**

This dietary supplement should be used with caution in women of child-bearing age and should not be used by pregnant women or women trying to get pregnant. Animal studies have shown that some of the active compounds in chasteberry may prevent implantation of an embryo. This dietary supplement should not be used if you are breast-feeding an infant without first consulting a physician.
Age Limitations
To date, the medical literature has not reported any adverse effects specifically related to the use of this dietary supplement in children. Since young children may have undiagnosed allergies or medical conditions, this dietary supplement should not be used in children under 10 years of age unless recommended by a physician.

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1 Amann W. Elimination of Obstipation with Agnolyt. Ther Gegenew. 1965;104(9):1263-65.
5 Schellenberg R. Treatment for the Premenstrual Syndrome with Agnus castus Fruit Extract: Prospective, Randomised, Placebo Controlled Study. BMJ. Jan 2001; 322:134-137.
6 Propping D, et al. [Diagnosis and Therapy of Corpus Luteum Deficiency in General Practice]. Therapiewoche. 1988;38:2992-3001.