

Top Five Herbs that Promote Kidney Health

by Kirk Patrick, citizen journalist

(NaturalNews) While many herbs are popular for liver and colon health, the best herbs for kidney maintenance are not as well known in Western medicine. Those suffering nausea, loss of appetite, stunted growth, dry skin, sleep disorders, concentration problems, or puffy eyes should consider a kidney flush. This article will review five plants traditionally used to promote and maintain kidney health.

The Top Five

1) **Couch grass** - *Agropyron repens* (Gramineae)

A vigorous perennial harvested throughout the year, couch grass is found on every continent except Africa. Couch grass contains polysaccharides (including *tritacin*), volatile oil (including *agropyrene*), mucilage and other nutrients. Used medicinally since about 25 AD, couch grass increases urine production and treats urinary tract infections such as cystitis and urethritis. Couch grass relieves and even partially dissolves kidney stones. Couch grass (considered an invasive weed in many areas) can treat an enlarged prostate. The fresh juice can treat liver problems such as jaundice. The root can be roasted and ground as a coffee substitute. Couch grass has diuretic, demulcent and antibacterial properties.

2) **Green tea** - *Camellia sinensis* (Zingiberaceae)

Native to the Orient, green tea has been consumed for thousands of years. The young, unfermented leaves of the green tea plant contain compounds known as *polyphenols* (plant antioxidants), which inhibit kidney stones and prevent cancers of the prostate, ovaries, liver, breast and colon. Green tea also helps the liver by reducing fatty deposits. Known to encourage improvement of the heart, circulatory system, brain, pancreas and liver, green tea also assists with weight loss by strengthening the metabolism via *thermogenesis* (an increase in body temperature that helps break down fat). Green tea also reduces cholesterol and is used as a heart tonic. Green tea is a stimulant (containing caffeine) and has anti-inflammatory, astringent and diuretic properties.

3) **Java tea** - *Orthosiphon aristatus* (Lamiaceae)

A shrub with lilac colored flowers, java tea is native to Asia and Australia. The leaves of java tea (also known as *kidney tea* and *cat whisker plant*) are used medicinally. Java tea contains flavones (including *sinensetin*), glycoside (including *orthosiphonin*), volatile oil and large amounts of potassium. Java tea is listed in French, Indonesian, Dutch and Swiss pharmacopoeias as a remedy for kidney ailments. Thought to increase the kidney's ability to eliminate nitrogen-containing compounds, java tea treats kidney stones, kidney infections and renal function. Java tea has diuretic properties.

4) **Rehmannia** - *Rehmannia glutinosa* (Scrophulariaceae)

A perennial with large sticky leaves and purple flowers, rehmannia is the most important herb for kidney and adrenal health in Chinese medicine (where it is called *di huang*). Rehmannia root is used medicinally and it contains phytosterols and antioxidants (including

rehmannin), along with iridoid glycosides (including *catapol*). Rehmannia is primarily used as a kidney tonic and also to detoxify the liver and to treat hepatitis. Rehmannia treats autoimmune disorders such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis and fibromyalgia. Rehmannia helps treat hair loss, respiratory disorders, menopause and other hormone related disorders. Rehmannia has diuretic properties.

5) **Uva ursi** - *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (Ericaceae)

Also known as *bearberry*, uva-ursi is a low-lying evergreen shrub native to Europe and even found in the Arctic. The leaves are gathered in autumn along with the berries. Uva-ursi contains hydroquinones (including *arbutin* - up to 17%), tannins (15%), phenolic glycosides and flavonoids. Uva-ursi is one of the best urinary antiseptics. Used extensively in herbal medicine since the 2nd century, uva-ursi is primarily used to help disinfect and astringe the kidneys. Uva-ursi was also traditionally smoked along with tobacco. Uva-ursi has antiseptic and antibacterial properties. *Note:* uva-ursi should not be used by pregnant women or for more than 7-10 days at a time. While promoting kidney health, uva-ursi should not be used to treat existing kidney infections.

References

The Encyclopedia of Medicinal Plants - Dorling Kindersley and Andrew Chevallier

More on Kidney herbs

<http://www.vitaminstohealth.com/her...>

More on Green tea

<http://www.amazing-green-tea.com/gr...>

<http://greentealovers.com/greenteah...>

More on Java tea

<http://herbalmedicine.suite101.com/...>

More on Rehmannia

<http://www.herbal-supplement-resour...>

More on Uva-ursi

<http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/...>

Kidney Warning Signs

<http://www.aakp.org/aakp-library/Wa...>