



Senna Combination

Powerful stimulant laxative for purging the colon

Senna Combination is a stimulant laxative or purgative formula used for severe constipation. It's primary ingredient is senna, a powerful stimulant laxative which stimulates peristalsis of the intestines. The primary active ingredients in senna are anthraquinone glycosides which are broken down in the colon. The anthraquinones then act to stimulate the peristaltic action (wave-like contractions that move food) in the colon. Because this breakdown of the anthraquinone glycosides takes six to ten hours after ingesting the capsules, senna is usually given at bedtime.

Aside from the anthraquinone glycosides which provide its laxative effect, senna is also rich in calcium and magnesium which help balance the acid/alkaline levels in the body and nourish the nervous system. Other important components of senna are: sodium, which is essential for digestion, stopping fermentation of food in the digestive system, and purifying the blood; iron, which builds the blood; zinc, which acts as an antioxidant; silicon, which supports calcium absorption; A, C and B-complex vitamins which help in maintaining liver and colon health; and moderate amounts of potassium, selenium, and manganese.

Senna, by itself, is so strong that it often causes painfully strong cramps. So, Senna Combination combines senna with fennel seed, ginger and catnip to balance senna's strong effects. All of these other ingredients are aromatic herbs containing essential oils which mobilize energy inwardly within the digestive tract and help to buffer the strong stimulant effect of the senna. They also have the following additional properties:

Fennel is a gentle, antispasmodic herb often found in children's formulas. Its digestive properties are demonstrated by the bowls of fennel seeds that are found in Indian restaurants; chewing them after a meal always helps to improve digestion. Fennel also has several phytochemicals which inhibit spasms of smooth muscle, including that found in the digestive tract. It also stimulates digestive secretions.

Ginger has many beneficial effects on the digestive tract. In addition to its ability to allay nausea and vomiting, ginger is known to stimulate digestive secretions and to increase circulation in the digestive organs and pelvic region. It reduces inflammation and irritation to tissues.

Catnip is often combined with fennel as a formula to relieve infant colic. Sometimes referred to as "nature's alkaseltzer," catnip has a soothing and settling effect on the digestive system and is used to relieve indigestion, gas, bloating and an acid stomach. It has mild antispasmodic (anti-cramping) and sedative properties which make it a perfect complement to the activity of the senna in this formula.

Usage: Take two to four capsules with water and a late evening snack for occasional relief from persistent and severe constipation. Senna Combination may also be used occasionally as part of a short colon cleanse to purge the liver and digestive tract.

Precautions: Senna, like any other stimulant laxative, should not be taken on a regular basis. It is generally recognized that nursing mothers who take senna pass it on to their infants, though there is some controversy as to whether or not it then has a laxative effect on the infant. Because senna is so powerful, it is a good idea to try other, commonsense measures first. If, after increasing the fiber in your diet, drinking more fluids, and exercising more, you still are experiencing constipation, try a milder laxative like cascara sagrada or LBS II. If this still doesn't help, then use Senna Combination. You can think of senna as the "big guns" to be brought out if gentler methods don't do the trick. Some herbalists claim that senna has a habit-forming character. In fact, what happens is that its stimulative laxative effect is so strong that, used over time, the tissue of the colon acclimatizes to it and then has difficulty providing the stimulus itself. For this reason, it should never be used for more than two weeks at a time.

If people have become habituated to the use of stimulant laxatives like senna, then magnesium, vitamin C, bioflavonoids and/or Cellular Energy may be used to re-energize the colon and help to restore normal peristalsis.

Sources:

Complete Medicinal Herbal by Penelope Ody
A Hand Book of Native American Herbs by Alma R. Hutchings
The Healing Herbs by Michael Castleman
Nutritional Herbology by Mark Pederson
Wild Rose Scientific Herbal by Terry Willard

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