



Herbs For Healing Newsletter

Hawthorn Berries: the heart of the matter

In the middle ages it was thought that if you hung hawthorn over your doorway it would prevent evil spirits from entering the home.

Celtic folklore referred to hawthorn as the fairy bush and it should not be cut for fear of offending the fairies, who live in the bush.

A strengthener for the circulatory system

Modern research however has shown in many publications that hawthorn berries have potent chemicals which promote the health of the circulatory system.

People who suffered chest pain due to angina (insufficient bloodflow to the heart) were able to exercise for longer periods of time after they took a hawthorn berry extract for three weeks.

Other trials with people suffering from congestive heart failure concluded that hawthorn significantly improved heart function and also improved the patient's ability to exercise.

One study found that hawthorn extract taken for 2 months was as effective as low doses of captopril (a leading heart medication) in improving the symptoms of congestive heart failure.

Another condition which can arise in the circulatory system is atherosclerosis, hardening of the blood vessels due to sclerotic plaques. This can lead to heart attacks or to strokes when the blood

supply to the brain is affected. It is the hawthorn's antioxidant properties which help to protect against plaque formation.

Then there is the problem of high cholesterol. Millions of people now take statins (simvastatin etc) in the UK. What is the cost to the NHS? Are the short or long term side effects worth it?

How much wiser would it be to use the medicine which nature provides us in the form of the hawthorn bush, flowers, leaves and berries, a whole medicine chest for most of the year, available free of charge and growing in abundance in the countryside.



Hawthorn Tincture



Hawthorn tincture helps to remove LDL ("bad") cholesterol from the bloodstream.

These are porridge-like chemicals which clog up the arteries and cause all sorts of problems.

Rats, who have been fed a high-cholesterol diet, produced less cholesterol in their liver after they took hawthorn tincture. Studies to determine if the same effect will take place in people are needed.

Try a fruity Hawthorn Tea

The leaves and the berries (fresh or dried) can be chopped up and one or two teaspoonful can be infused in a mug of boiling water and left to infuse for 10 minutes.

You can drink 2 or 3 mugs a day and soon the benefits will be felt. It has a pleasant fruity flavour.

To your good heart health!



Luzia Barclay: an introduction

Luzia Barclay is a registered medical herbalist (DBTh MIRCH), based in Salisbury, Wiltshire.

As well as appearing on BBC Radio Solent as a 'resident herbalist', Luzia is a tutor at Kingston Maurward College in Dorchester, Monkton Wyld Court, Long Crichel Herb Garden, Turnworth Herbal Practice and Adult Education.

Her website: www.herbsforhealing.org.uk is a fast growing resource for those interested in the benefits of herbs and herbal medicine.

On the site you can: ● **Sign-up for a workshop or course**, ● **Shop for organic herbal products**, ● **Arrange a consultation**, or ● **Read news and articles about herbs**.

The aim of a herbalist is always to find the root cause of symptoms and to help the body to heal itself. Herbs have been used for centuries to enable this.

"By running these courses, and doing BBC radio phone-ins, I hope to ensure that the knowledge isn't lost," says Luzia. "We have become so used to quick fixes for everyday ailments. Sadly, these often weaken our immune systems; but there are some really effective natural alternatives."

Why not find out more? Half-day courses and workshops are booking up fast this year, so visit www.herbsforhealing.org.uk/courses for details.

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