

CAVALINHA

Scientific name: *Equisetum arvense* Linné ^(1,2).

Family: *Equisetaceae* ^(1,2).

Popular names: cavalinha ⁽¹⁾, horsetail ⁽²⁾.

Used parts: aerial parts ^(1,2).

Botanical characteristics: Horsetail appears in two forms during the year. From March to April the red-brown to straw yellow simple stem develops with leaves arranged in a number of levels on the stem in whorls. The leaves are brown, fused to a sheath at the lower level with black-tipped, dry sporangia cones at the tip sprinkling greenish spore powder. In May and June there is a sterile summer form with 10 to 14 cm high stems and numerous branches that are arranged in whorls at the nodes. The stem and branches are deeply grooved, usually square and rough ⁽²⁾.

Habitat: It grows throughout Europe. It grows in Asia as far south as Turkey and Iran. The plant is also found in the Himalayas, central and north China and Japan ⁽²⁾.

Chemical composition: flavonoids (apigenin-5-O-glucoside, genkwanin-5-O-glucoside, kaempferol-3,7-di-O-glucoside, kaempferol-3-O-(6'-O-malonyl-glucoside)-7-O-glucoside, kaempferol-3-O-sophoroside, luteolin-5-O-glucoside, quercetin-3-O-glucoside), caffeic acid ester (chlorogenic acid, dicaffeoyl-meso-tartaric acid), silicic acid, pyridine alkaloids (nicotine, palustrine, metosapiridine, palustrinine) ^(1,2), tannins, vitamin C, mineral salts, saponins (equisetonin) ⁽¹⁾.

Indications: mild diuretic, spasmolytic, astringent, infections of the urinary tract, kidney and bladder stones, wounds and burns. Internal preparations are used for post-traumatic and static edema, flushing-out therapy for bacterial and inflammatory diseases of the lower urinary tract and renal stones. It is used externally as a supportive treatment for poorly healing wounds ⁽²⁾.

Dose:

Inside use:

- Infusion: 2 to 4 g ⁽²⁾.
- Liquid extract: 1 to 4 ml 3 times daily ⁽²⁾.
- Tea: 2 to 3 g per cup repeatedly during the day between mealtimes ⁽²⁾.

Outside use:

- Compresses: 10 g drug to 1 liter ⁽²⁾.

Others informations:

- Horsetail is contraindicated in patients who have edema due to impaired heart and kidney function ^(1,2).

References:

1. TESKE, M.; TRENTINI, A. M. M. **Herbarium compêndio de fitoterapia**. 3. ed. Curitiba: Herbarium, 1997.

MEDICAL ECONOMICS COMPANY. **PDR for herbal medicines**. 2. ed. Montvale: Copyright, 2000.