

X



[Make an Appointment](#)

Back

Search About Herbs

Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment

Refer a Patient

Our mission, vision & core values

Leadership

History

Equality, diversity & inclusion

Annual report

[Give to MSK](#)

Epimedium is a Chinese herb traditionally used to treat fatigue and sexual problems. Cancer patients may experience symptoms of sexual dysfunction such as painful intercourse, loss of libido, and ability to maintain arousal. These problems can be caused by many factors: stress, emotional distress, hormone changes, as well as various cancer treatments. Initial results suggest that a special blend of Epimedium may help prevent bone loss, but more studies are needed.

Epimedium may affect hormone levels, and should be avoided in patients with hormone-sensitive cancers or those with heart disease.

- Fatigue

Epimedium is traditionally used for fatigue but it has not been studied in clinical trials.

- Osteoporosis

A small randomized trial shows that Epimedium may help prevent bone loss in women who have had menopause for a long time.

- Sexual dysfunction

Epimedium is traditionally used in herbal formulas for sexual dysfunction. More studies are needed to verify such effects.

What are the side effects?

- Sweating or feeling hot
- Rapid irregular heartbeat
- Increase in energy
- Mood changes

What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

- You are sensitive to Epimedium.
- You have heart disease: Epimedium caused rapid irregular heartbeat and excitability in a patient with heart disease.
- You are taking drugs that are metabolized by the cytochrome P450 3A4 enzyme, or drugs that are aromatase inhibitors, like anastrozole, exemestane, and letrozole. Clinical relevance is not known.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Epimedium - Last updated on April 5, 2023

[Communication preferences](#)

[Cookie preferences](#)

[Legal disclaimer](#)

[Accessibility statement](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

[Price transparency](#)

[Public notices](#)

© 2024 Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center