



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Dandelion

This information describes the common uses of Dandelion, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

What is it?

Dandelion is a plant with yellow flowers and is related to the daisy family. Its roots, leaves, and flowers have been used in traditional medicine in China, Mexico, and North America to treat different issues.

Dandelion is used to make tea, wine, soups, salads, and can be used as a substitute for coffee. It can also be taken as a supplement as capsules or liquid extracts.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

Dandelion is used to:

- Help with lactation (when your body makes breast milk)
- Treat diabetes
- Build your appetite
- Help increase urination

Dandelion also has other uses that haven't been studied by doctors to see if they work.

It's generally safe to use dandelion in food and tea. But talk with your healthcare providers before taking supplements or higher amounts of dandelion. Herbal supplements are stronger than the herbs you would use in cooking. They can also interact with some medications and affect how they work.

For more information, read the “What else do I need to know?” section below.

What are the side effects?

Side effects of using dandelion may include:

- Heartburn (burning feeling in your chest or throat)
- Stomach ache

- Low blood sugar
- Skin rash
- Mild diarrhea (loose or watery bowel movements). This may happen if you take high amounts of dandelion.

What else do I need to know?

- Talk to your healthcare provider if you're taking water pills. Dandelion can increase the number of times you urinate (pee).

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

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

Dandelion - Last updated on February 8, 2023

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