



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Emblica officinalis

This information describes the common uses of *Emblica officinalis*, 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?

Emblica officinalis has antioxidant effects. It has not been shown to treat cancer in humans.

E. officinalis is commonly used in Ayurveda, the traditional medicinal system of India, for various ailments including diarrhea, jaundice, headaches, inflammation, and as a tonic. It is also one of the constituents of a popular Ayurvedic formulation, [Triphala](#). All parts of the tree including the dried and fresh fruits, seeds, leaves, root bark, and flowers are used. Studies done in the lab and in animals suggest that *E. officinalis* has antioxidant, antibacterial, liver protective, cardioprotective, antiulcer, antitumor, antidiabetic properties. Small studies in humans show that it has antioxidant and lipid-lowering effects.

E. officinalis has strong antioxidant effects, and may therefore interfere with chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

- **Diabetes**
Small studies showed that *E. officinalis* improves HDL cholesterol and reduces LDL levels in diabetic individuals.
- **Cancer**
Studies in mice that indicate that *E. officinalis* may inhibit tumor growth. However, human studies are needed in order to confirm this effect.
- **Cardioprotective Effects**
Lab studies suggest protective effects against doxorubicin toxicity.
- **Diarrhea**
There is no scientific evidence to support this use.
- **Jaundice**
Used in traditional medicine for jaundice. Clinical data are lacking.
- **Headaches**
Animal studies suggest *E. officinalis* can reduce fever and pain.
- **Inflammation**
E. officinalis was shown to reduce inflammation in lab studies. Human data are lacking.
- **Chronic ulcers**
Traditional use and results from lab studies support this use.
- **Hyperlipidemia**
Data from lab studies and small human studies indicate hyperlipidemic effects.

What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

- **Clopidogrel:** When used at the same time, *E. officinalis* extract was found to increase the antiplatelet activity in a study of patients with Type-2 diabetes.
- **Ecosprin:** The above study found increased antiplatelet activity with

Ecosprin as well.

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.

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