

Asafetida (Ferula assa-foetida)

Written by Administrator

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Asafetida is said to have antispasmodic properties. It has been used in the past to treat hysteria and was sometimes taken as a sedative. In India it is prescribed to treat flatulence and bronchitis. It also has carminative, expectorant, laxative and sedative properties. Asafetida acts as a local stimulant to mucous membrane, particularly that of the alimentary canal and therefore is a remedy of great value as a carminative in flatulent colic and a useful addition to laxative medicine. There is evidence that the volatile oil is eliminated through the lungs which has been found useful for whooping cough, asthma, and bronchitis, as well as for croup and flatulent colic in infants. It was formerly used as a sedative for hysteria, infantile convulsions, and spasmodic nervous conditions. Some researchers have suggested that asafetida may help lower blood pressure and increase the amount of time it takes for blood to clot. Like garlic, asafetida has been hung around the neck to ward off colds and other infectious diseases, but its only real effect seems to be its ability to keep other people and their colds at arm's length. Owing to its vile taste it is usually taken in pill form, but is often given to infants per rectum in the form of an emulsion. The powdered gum resin is not advocated as a medicine, the volatile oil being quickly dissipated. Asafetida is admittedly the most adulterated drug on the market. Besides being largely admixed with inferior qualities of Asafetida, it has often red clay, sand, stones and gypsum added to it to increase the weight.