

The leaves and tops contain a number of biologically active compounds, including cardioactive glycosides that benefit the heart. It dilates the coronary vessels. They are similar to those found in foxglove but gentler. These substances increase the heart's efficiency by increasing its output while slowing its rate. Unlike foxglove, however, false hellebore's effect on the heart is slightly sedative, and it is generally prescribed for patients with hearts that are beating too fast or irregularly. It is also used for mitral stenosis and edema due to heart failure. False hellebore is recommended as a treatment for certain cases of low blood pressure. False hellebore is strongly diuretic and can be used to counter water retention, particularly if this condition can be attributed to poor circulatory function. It is an ingredient of several commercial German preparations for heart complaints and low blood pressure. It is also found in Bechterew's Mixture, a Russian formulation for heart conditions of nervous origin.