

# Aloe Vera

(*Aloe barbadensis*)



The medicinal use of aloe was already mentioned more than 4000 years ago in a collection of Sumerian clay tablets dated 2100 BC. Aloe was also mentioned as a laxative in the Egyptian Papyrus Ebers from 1552 BC. Aloe has had a very long historical use as a strong laxative treatment for chronic constipation, and it is still listed as a laxative in many pharmacopoeias.

Barbaloin resembles to the anthraquinone glycosides in Senna and has a strongly irritating effect on the intestine, increasing peristalsis and having a strong laxative effect.

## Active contents:

Fresh aloe juice/gel from the inner leaf parenchyma contains 96% water, polysaccharides (mucilage) consisting mainly of D-glucose and D-mannose, tannins, steroids, enzymes, plant hormones, amino acids, vitamins, minerals, and a small amount of barbaloin. The dried latex from the superficial pericycle cells contains at least 28% hydroxyanthracene, calculated as anhydrous barbaloin, which is a mixture of aloin-A and aloin-B, resin and saponins.<sup>1</sup>

## Herb actions:

**Laxative effects:** Anthraquinones present in latex are a potent laxative. It increases intestinal water content, stimulates mucus secretion and increases intestinal peristalsis.<sup>2</sup>

**Healing properties:** Glucomannan, a mannose-rich polysaccharide, and gibberellin, a growth hormone, interacts with growth factor receptors on the fibroblast, thereby stimulating its activity and proliferation, which in turn significantly increases collagen synthesis after topical and oral administration of *Aloe Vera*.<sup>3</sup>

**Dyspepsia and hyperacidity:** *Aloe Vera* is an excellent gastro-protective and soothes internal mucosa of stomach in the condition of hyperacidity.

**Indications:** Constipation, Gastric Ulcer, Hyperacidity.

**Contraindication:** Aloe Vera is contra-indicated during pregnancy.

**Dose:** 1 capsule, twice a day or as directed by the physician.

**Composition:** Each capsule contains 250 mg standardized extract of Aloe Vera.

## References:

1. Bradley, 1992; Steinegger & Hänsel, 1988; Wagner, 1993; Sandberg & Bohlin, 1993; Samuelsson.
2. Ishii Y, Tanizawa H, Takino Y. Studies of aloe. V: Mechanism of cathartic effect. Biol Pharm Bull. 1994;17:651–3.
3. Chithra R Sajithlal GB, Chandrakasan G. Influence of *Aloe Vera* on collagen characteristics in healing dermal wounds in rats. Mol Cell Biochem. 1998;181:71–6.