

The Longwood Herbal Task Force
(<http://www.mcp.edu/herbal/default.htm>) and
The Center for Holistic Pediatric Education and Research
(<http://www.childrenshospital.org/holistic/>)

Clinician Information Summary
HOXSEY FORMULA

SUMMARY

The Hoxsey herbal mixture is one of the most colorful complementary therapies for cancer. Despite the plethora of testimonials about its effectiveness, there are no controlled trials evaluating it. There are no reports of serious adverse effects with short term use. It is not recommended for use during pregnancy, lactation or childhood. The topical salves may cause skin irritation and heavy metal toxicity; the herbal constituents in the tonic may cause diarrhea, iodism, electrolyte imbalances and neural toxicity.

POPULAR USE: Cancer remedy

HERBAL CONSTITUENTS:

- External pastes or salves: antimony sulfide, arsenic, sulfur, talc, zinc chloride; bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)
- Tonic: potassium iodide, barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*), buckthorn bark (*Rhamnus purshiana*), burdock root (*Arctium lappa*), licorice root (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), poke berries and root (*Phytolacca americana*), prickly ash bark (*Zanthoxylum americanum*), stillingia root (*Stillingia sylvatica*)

SCIENTIFIC DATA:

In vitro: No data.

In animals: Anecdotal data only. The formula was based on the diet of a horse who had a spontaneous recovery from an apparently cancerous growth on the leg in 1840.

Human data: Despite numerous testimonials, no controlled trials have been reported.

TOXICITY AND SIDE EFFECTS

(continued)

Side effects: No toxicity data have been reported. Different products may contain different amounts of active ingredients, and there is potential for misidentification and contamination with any constituent. The presence of heavy metals, laxative herbs and known toxins such as poke are concerning.

Interactions with other medications: Unknown

Contraindications: Unknown

Pregnancy and lactation: Not typically used. No data evaluating safety.

Pediatric use: Not traditionally used in childhood. No clinical studies or systematic surveillance evaluating safety.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- HOME: <http://www.mcp.edu/herbal/default.htm>
- Hoxsey Formula Complete Monograph: <http://www.mcp.edu/herbal/hoxsey/hoxsey.pdf>
- Hoxsey Formula Patient Fact Sheet: <http://www.mcp.edu/herbal/hoxsey/hoxsey.ph.pdf>
- University of Texas Center for Alternative Medicine:
<http://www.uth.tmc.edu:8052/utcam/agents/hoxsey.htm>