

RAUWOLFIA SERPENTINA



Rauwolfia serpentina (also spelled *Rauvolfia serpentina*), a member of the Apocynaceae family and known as ‘Indian snake root’ or ‘Sarpagandha’, **is one of the most important medicinal plants for treating high blood pressure.** It calms the central nervous system, regulates heart rate and reduces high blood pressure.

Indian medicine has recognized the soothing and relaxing effect of the plant for thousands of years. The root has been used to fight against fever, snake bites and mental illness. It is reported that after a hard day's work, **Gandhi always took a cup of soothing Rauwolfia tea.**

Even in Ayurvedic texts from the seventh century BC, the Indian snake root is mentioned. There, it is described as dry and warming, with a particularly good effect on digestion. Furthermore, the plant is used in Ayurvedic medicine against cramps and nervous restlessness. Pitta is appeased, Vata and Kapha are reduced.

MODE OF ACTION

The latex-rich plant leaves have a **large number of alkaloids**, of which the most important is reserpine, which is to be found up to 3%, and rescinnamine. Reserpine affects the activity of several chemical messengers in the central nervous system (neurotransmitters). In particular, it weakens the effect of noradrenaline and reduces in this way the activating effect of the sympathetic nervous system, which is



part of the unconscious nervous system. **As a result, blood vessels relax and the heart beats slower.**

Reserpine has a hypotensive and sedative effects also.

Sarpaghanda is also used in homeopathy to reduce the hardening of the arteries to treat hypertension.

In summary, it can be said that this herb works particularly well for high blood pressure, but also against psychosomatic symptoms such as sleep disturbances, blood changes and autonomic dysregulations. In general, it has **laxative, sedative, hypertensive, antispasmodic and mood-healing effects on humans.**

ABOUT THE PLANT

Rauwolfia is a shrub-like plant, 50-90cm tall and grows in South Asia. In the wild, it is usually found standing in threes in tropical forests; its range extends from Punjab to Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Assam, the Ganges, central India and the Andaman Islands in Myanmar (Burma). Its white-light pink flowers appear in acyme. After pollination, five small petals of the flower stem continue growing to produce little black drupes. This valuable and versatile plant is almost in danger of extinction, so cultivation is practiced instead of wild harvesting, and special authorization is required for export. At OneWorld-alc, we cultivate it using bio-dynamic farming techniques, helping reduce the risk of extinction.

PRODUCTION

Since 2001 *Rauwolfia serpentina* (Sarpaghanda), as well as other herbs, have been successfully cultivated at the “Land of the Medicine Buddha”, OneWorld’s own herbal farm. The noble **Sarpaghanda leaf** has been cultivated using bio-dynamic farming methods, and so, after inspection and certification from IMO Switzerland and Demeter International, they can now carry the **Organic and Demeter logos**.

Carefully handpicked, and gently dried in the shade, the leaves and fruit retains all of its healing properties. The herbs are then selected and added to noble tea mixtures by **OneWorldalc Nepal**. OneWorldalc is a German - Nepali cooperation for **bio-dynamic agriculture** that upholds **Fair Trade** standards in all its undertakings and is a member of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (**IFOAM**). We are happy to be able to offer you *Rauwolfia serpentina* leaves of the highest quality as a true **LOHAS product**.

The raw leaves can be purchased unmixed on request.