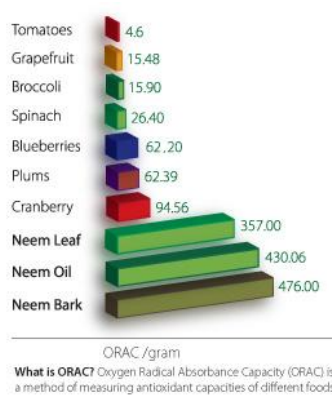


Bitters are Better!

Using Neem leaf for healthy digestion, acid reflux and ulcers

By Trinity Ava-Herbalist

- ***Azadiracta indica* – Neem:** This tree native to India is also known as *the village pharmacy* recognizing its use as a panacea herb for many common issues. The **cooling, soothing** and **astringent** leaves of Neem are used to support the body's ability to respond to inflammation and boost immune system function.. It has **protective and supportive actions that enhance liver functions and promote healthy digestion and metabolism.** Neem supports the respiratory system by helping to “clear heat” and dry up excess mucous. An analysis of Neem leaf, bark and oil found that they were more than three times higher on the ORAC scale that measures antioxidant levels than fruit such as blueberries or cranberries. Neem also is naturally rich in quercetin which supports the body's ability to respond to inflammation.



- **Key words for Neem:** Cooling, strengthens your body's ability to respond to inflammation, boosts immune system function, enhances liver functions and promotes healthy digestion.

Neem Leaf dietary supplement contraindications and safety awareness:

Contraindications: Use with caution for those with liver disease, those taking blood thinners and for those who tend to run cold (Vata), as it is a cooling herb. Not intended for use with those who have signs of wasting and debility. Individuals with blood sugar imbalances should consult a healthcare professional prior to using neem and check blood sugar levels at least daily while taking it internally. Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you have diabetes and/or autoimmune disease. Use with caution for those with liver disease or those taking blood thinners.

- If you have a medical condition or take pharmaceutical drugs, please consult with your health care practitioner before using this product.
- **Side effects:** Neem leaf extracts are generally considered very safe at recommended intake levels with no significant reports of problems when used appropriately. Not considered an herb for long term use as a single herb if taken in high amounts use due to its cooling and bitter properties.

Safety:

- There are no known drug-herb interactions
- **Internal use as a dietary supplement during pregnancy & lactation:** Not to be used internally during pregnancy or while lactating. Topical applications of Neem oil and leaf are considered very safe; contact your health care provider with any concerns and discontinue use if any irritation occurs.
- **Internal use as a dietary supplement with children or infants:** Not recommended for use with children under 12 or with infants. Topical use is safe.
- **Internal use as a dietary supplement while trying to conceive:** Not intended for men or women trying to conceive. Neem has been traditionally used as contraceptive. We do not endorse the use of Neem for this purpose.
- **Energetics:** Cooling, refrigerant (reduces body temperature).
- **Taste:** bitter, astringent (firms tissues & organs, reduces discharges and secretions).
- Utilizing the energetic principles (heating or cooling), of herbs can help us discover the multifaceted benefits of herbs. Examples of heating herbs are ginger, black pepper, chili peppers, etc.
- Bitter herbs are generally considered cooling and may be beneficial for issues that are **red, hot or inflamed**, such as a bug bite, bee sting, heated digestion, gas, bloating, acidic feeling, and heaviness after eating. Bitters and cooling herbs are often used to support liver health.
- Neem is often well combined with other warming herbs (I.E. Turmeric, or our Aller Support or Anti-Oxidant Cellular Support formula), to balance its cooling energetics. Its cooling broad spectrum actions are used as a “panacea” herb for many short term, common conditions: digestive support, immune system support, liver support, skin care support and much more!

Neem is well known to promote digestive health **via its support of the liver** and for its cooling and soothing benefits for issues such as acid reflux. The liver plays an enormous role in how we **digest and metabolize**:

- **Supporting liver health** - The liver is the largest solid organ in the body and performs many vital functions, including:
 - Metabolizing proteins
 - Metabolizing carbohydrates
 - Stores glycogen (**Glycogen** is a polysaccharide of glucose (Glc) which functions as the primary short term energy storage in animal cells. It is made primarily by the liver and the muscles. Glycogen forms an energy reserve that can be quickly mobilized to meet a sudden need for glucose, but one that is less compact than the energy reserves of triglycerides (fat).) – *Wikipedia free encyclopedia*
 - Metabolizes lipids, including the synthesis of cholesterol and bile acids
 - Initiates the formulation of bile
 - Engages in the transport of bilirubin (**Bilirubin** is the breakdown product of Hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is the oxygen carrying component present in the red blood cells. When red blood cells are worn out, they are broken down & bilirubin is formed. Liver plays an important role in the process. The bilirubin is then excreted in the bile). *Wikipedia free encyclopedia*
 - Biotransforms waste, toxins and drugs
 - Produces blood-clotting factors and other blood proteins
- *Above liver functions sourced from **Medical Herbalism**- David Hoffmann©2003*

How to use Neem Leaf to promote healthy digestion:

- **Neem Leaf capsules for digestive health:** More gentle and appropriate for occasional digestive disturbances, or if supercritical extracts are not well tolerated. The capsules are also suitable for vegetarians/vegans, the CO₂ capsules are not.
- Neem Leaf capsules are often better used as a “tonic” if taking Neem more regularly.
- **Serving size as a dietary Supplement of Neem Leaf capsules:** 1-2 capsules, two times daily as a dietary supplement, or as recommended by an herbal practitioner or health care provider.
- **Neem Leaf tincture/alcohol extract:** 5-20 drops, 1-3 times per day with room temperature water.
- **Neem Leaf tincture for digestive support:** Neem tincture may be used as a “digestive bitter” to stimulate bile flow and healthy digestion before a meal. 5-10 drops in room temperature water, or 1-3 drops undiluted under tongue if well tolerated. Not for use with children, during pregnancy, lactation or when trying to conceive.

Neem leaf for ulcers & acid reflux:

Neem provides **cooling, soothing and astringent** actions to help reduce hyperacidity, intestinal inflammation, ulcers, colitis and Crohn’s disease. Neem leaf and bark help to:

- Protect the integrity of stomach functions and balances gastric acid secretions.
- Strengthen the body’s ability to respond to minor inflammation

Studies indicate that Neem bark and leaf provide significant protection to soothe your stomach and promote balanced gastric secretions and digestion.

Neem leaf extract was found to reduce ulcer index, free and total acidity, and the volume of gastric acid secretion (1)

Full publication below:

Antiulcerogenic Activity

Neem leaf has proven successful in treating stomach ulcers. Its antihistamine and antibacterial compounds can reduce inflammation and destroy ulcer-causing bacteria such as *Helicobacter pylori* [32]. Garg *et al.* [33] have observed antiulcer effects of neem leaves in rats exposed to restraint cold stress or ethanol orally. Neem leaf extract was found to reduce ulcer index, free and total acidity, and the volume of gastric acid secretion [34]. Neem leaves are reported to exert antiulcer effects by preventing mucus depletion and mast cell degranulation. Recently, Chattopadhyay *et al.* [35] reported that the antiulcer effect of aqueous neem leaf extract is brought about by blocking acid secretion through inhibition of H⁺K⁺-ATPase, and by preventing oxidative damage and apoptosis. The potent antiulcer effects exerted by nimbidin, constituent of neem leaf, was correlated to its antihistaminic action mediated *via* H₂-receptor blockade [33]. 1.

**1. *r. Med. Chem. - Anti-Cancer Agents*, 2005, 5, 149-156 149
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Medicinal Properties of Neem Leaves: A Review

R. Subapriya and S. Nagini*

Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Science, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar-608 002, Tamil Nadu, India