

Ashitaba powder (Organic JAS Certified)

Scientific name: Angelica Keiskei Koidzumi

Family: Umbelliferae

Part used: Leaf and stem

Origin from Japan.

Hot air dried powder

90% Water soluble

Milky green color

Particle size: 120 mesh

Principle use in health food, confectionery, noodle, processed food.

Ashitaba's name, in Japanese (in English: Tomorrow's Leaf or Earth Growth), refers to an interesting botanical fact. If its leaves are picked in the morning, new leaves will be in place by the next morning.

Why Ashitaba is an ideal food for vegans and vegetarians

It is not difficult to ascertain why Ashitaba exerts so many positive effects on health when you consider the broad range of nutrients it contains - including 11 different types of vitamins and 13 minerals.

Nutritional analysis reveals that 100 grams of Ashitaba powder contains the beta-carotene content equivalent to four carrots, the vitamin B2 content equivalent to 28 cloves of garlic, the vitamin C content equivalent to 4 lemons, and nine times the amount of iron found in spinach. It also contains vitamins B1, B3, B5, B6, biotin, folic acid, and the minerals calcium, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous, zinc, copper, manganese, sulphur and silicon.

Most plants are devoid of vitamin B12, which is normally only obtainable through meat, fish and eggs. However, Ashitaba is a good source of this nutrient, making it an ideal supplement for strict vegetarians and vegans, who omit these foods from their diets and are at risk of suffering from a deficiency. A shortage of B12 can cause serious cognitive and nervous system problems, in addition to increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease and pernicious anaemia.

The list of therapeutic compounds in Ashitaba is endless

Many researchers believe that Ashitaba is so effective against so many different medical problems as a result of its synergistic action - a combined effect of its various active components working together. In addition to the vitamin and minerals it contains,

Ashitaba also possesses lesser-known nutrients that also have specific health-related benefits. These include:

Chlorophyll - Ashitaba is rich in chlorophyll, the green pigment present in plants that is responsible for collecting and storing energy from the sun. Because the chlorophyll molecule is almost identical to the haemoglobin molecule in red blood cells it is often referred to as 'nature's blood'. And one of its many attributes includes its ability to stimulate the production of red blood cells, which carry oxygen to the body's tissues. It is also an excellent agent for cleansing the blood and liver, and promotes the growth of 'friendly' intestinal bacteria.

Germanium - This trace mineral has been found to promote the production of interferon, a substance produced in the body that works to prevent viruses and bacteria from penetrating the body's cells.

Coumarins - These are potent antioxidants, which have been found to contain anti-carcinogenic properties.

They are particularly abundant in Ashitaba and other foods such as citrus fruit and celery.

Chalcones - Unique to Ashitaba is a class of flavonoid compounds called chalcones. Research has shown that they are potent antioxidants, protecting cells from free radical damage, which is associated with accelerating the ageing process and with many degenerative diseases, including cancer.

They also suppress the excessive secretion of gastric juice in the stomach, which is often caused by stress and can lead to stomach ulcers. In addition they help strengthen the immune system, regulate blood pressure and cholesterol, and exhibit anti-viral and anti-bacterial activities.

Chalcones have also been found to stimulate the production of Nerve Growth Factor (NGF), which is synthesised in minute amounts in the body and is essential in the development and survival of certain neurons (nerve cells) in the peripheral and central nervous system. NGF is believed to have the potential to alleviate Alzheimer's disease and peripheral neuropathy (a common neurological disorder resulting from damage to the peripheral nerves, which originate from the brain and spinal cord). In an animal study conducted by the Biomedical Group, in Takara, Japan, there was a 20 per cent increase in NGF concentration after taking Ashitaba for just four days.

Helps disarm harmful free radicals and keeps blood sugar levels stable
Research published in the September 2002 issue of *Nutraceuticals World*, showed that Ashitaba out-performed a range of herbs including sage, St. John's Wort, camomile, dandelion, fennel, black tea and green tea for its antioxidant potential.

There is also mounting data to suggest that Ashitaba has a regulating effect on blood sugar levels. In reviewing Ashitaba, Dr Kevin Lance Jones, a licensed acupuncturist and orthomolecular medical doctor (OMD) from California, in the US, says:

'There is a patient in Texas that has insulin-dependent (Type 1) diabetes who is currently taking the herb. He says that he now has to use less insulin because his blood sugar no longer spikes with attacks of hyperglycaemia. Another diabetes patient in Japan took Ashitaba for six months and his blood sugar level dropped from 400 mg/dl to 150 mg/dl.'

How to take?

The recommended dosage is one teaspoon of Ashitaba powder taken in the morning and evening in a small amount of juice, followed by a glass of water. Ashitaba has a sweet herb-like taste and has no known contraindications. However, as with all remedies you should consult your doctor before taking Ashitaba if you are currently on any medication.

Q & A

Q: What is "Ashitaba"?

A: "Ashitaba (also known as Angelica Keiskei)" is a native Japanese apiaceous plant that has been eaten as a healthy vegetable and used as a medicinal herb for a long time in Hachijojima (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hachij%C5%8Djima>), Japan.

An interesting point to note is that you will see a lot of healthy old people in Hachijojima. Why?

It is often discussed that one of the major reasons is that they eat and use Ashitaba a lot, which seems to contribute to their longevity and good health.

In fact, Ashitaba has a higher nutritional value than the other vegetables, such as spinach or tomatoes.

In addition, "Ashitaba" literally means "Tomorrow Leaf" in Japanese, which comes from the belief that "even if you harvest it today, you will see new leaves tomorrow" (of course, it takes time to have new leaves, but it exemplifies Ashitaba's remarkable vitality).

Q: What is "Chalcone" in Ashitaba?

A: Chalcone in Ashitaba is a sticky yellow sap uniquely contained in its stem.

Some studies have shown that Chalcone in Ashitaba, mainly consisting of Xanthoangelol and 4-hydroxyderricin, has several beneficial bioactive effects, such as an antibacterial effect, an antitumour effect and an effect on lipid metabolism.

Q: Why should we buy "Ashitaba Powder"?

A:

1: It supplements the daily intake of vegetables (Ashitaba has a high nutritional value).

2: It uses high quality Ashitaba grown in Indonesia without agricultural chemicals (you can make sure its quality).