

► **Alternative or Complementary Medicines can be harmful.**

A “natural” product does not mean that it is either safe or effective. Herbal medications usually are not recommended for children, pregnant or nursing women, the immunosuppressed, or elders on prescription drugs.

► **Medications & Supplements to avoid taking together.**

| Diet /Herbal Supplement | Medication | Possible Interaction or Side Effect |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Aloe | Antiarrhythmics, Corticosteroids, Diuretics, Lanoxin | May lower potassium, leading to excess drug effect and toxicity |
| Cayenne (Capsicum) | Blood-thinners (Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, Ticlid) | Increases risk of bleeding |
| Dong Quai | Blood-thinners (Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, Ticlid) | Increases risk of bleeding |
| Echinacea | Immunosuppressants (Cyclosporine) | Decreases effectiveness leading to organ rejection |
| Ephedra (MaHuang) | Antihypertensives, Stimulants (Caffeine), Hypoglycemics, Lanoxin, MAOI's | Interferes with drug effect: raises blood pressure or heart rate, elevates blood sugar, causes seizures or strokes |
| Garlic clove, tablets | Blood-thinners (Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, Ticlid) | Increases risk of bleeding |
| Garlic clove, tablets | Hypoglycemics | Increases effect - may lead to severe low blood sugar |
| Garlic clove, tablets | HIV medications, Cyclosporine | Decreases effectiveness leading to drug resistance or organ rejection |
| Garlic clove, tablets | Oral Contraceptives | Decreases effectiveness leading to pregnancy |
| Ginkgo leaf, Biloba | Blood-thinners (as above), Thiazide diuretics | Increases risk of bleeding, elevates blood pressure |
| Ginkgo leaf, Biloba | Seizure lowering drugs, Trazodone (Desyrel) | Decreases effectiveness, possible seizures, coma |

Continue on back...

Medications & Supplements to avoid taking together (continued).

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| Ginseng (American, Panax, Siberian) | Blood-thinners (as above) | Conflicting evidence - may increase risk of bleeding |
| Ginseng (American, Panax, Siberian) | Hypoglycemics | Increases effect - may lead to extreme low blood sugar |
| Ginseng (American, Panax, Siberian) | Immuno suppressants (Cyclosporine) | Decreases effectiveness, possible organ rejection |
| Ginseng (American, Panax, Siberian) | Diuretics (Lasix) | Decreases effectiveness leading to elevated blood pressure |
| Glucosamine | Hypoglycemics | Increases insulin resistance leading to altered blood sugar |
| Goldenseal | Sedatives | May see additive effects intensifying sedation |
| Hawthorn | Cardiovascular Drugs, Digoxin | Conflicting evidence - may interfere with effectiveness or increase digoxin effect |
| Kava-Kava | CNS Depressants (Alcohol, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines-Ativan, Valium, Xanax) | May see additive effects intensifying sedation and increased risk of liver damage |
| St. John's Wort | Crixivan (Indinavir), Cyclosporine, Coumadin, Digoxin, Tegretol, Theophylline | Increases metabolism leading to reduced drug effectiveness & potential worsening of disease |
| St. John's Wort | Antidepressants including: Celexa, Paxil, Prozac, MAOI's | Additive serotonin elevation leading to fever, muscle rigidity, altered mental status |
| St. John's Wort | Oral Contraceptives | Increases metabolism – can lead to pregnancy |
| Valerian | CNS Depressants (Alcohol, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines) | Additive effects may intensify sedation |

Expert Poison Information 24/7: 1-800-222-1222