

Achillea millefolium (yarrow)

Constituents: sesquiterpene lactones, tannins, alkylamides

Actions: bitter digestive stimulant, styptic, inflammation modulating, vulnerary, diaphoretic.

Indications:

Topical: wounds/skin ulcers

As styptic: menorrhagia, metrorrhagia, mild bleeding

As digestive stimulant: hypochlorhydria, nonulcer dyspepsia, maldigestion, anorexia, biliary insufficiency (due to low bile production only, not obstruction), biliary dyskinesia, gas, atonic constipation

As diaphoretic: fever (mild to moderate)

Contraindications: active peptic ulcers (particularly duodenal ulcers, which are associated with hyperchlorhydria, unlike gastric ulcers); gastritis, hyperchlorhydria, gastroesophageal reflux, biliary obstruction, acute diarrhea, acute cholelithiasis, high fever

Adverse Effects: nausea

Toxicity: none (contraindications are due to extension of physiologic effects of this herb in conditions that are exacerbated by GI stimulation)

Interactions: increases gut motility; thus, may decrease absorption of many drugs if taken simultaneously (purely theoretical).