

Layton Aging & Alzheimer's Disease Center

Medication Fact Sheet

Oregon Health & Science University
3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Road, CR-131
Portland, OR 97239-3098
503.494.6976

Ginkgo Biloba

_____ has prescribed the following for you:

How Ginkgo Biloba Works

How ginkgo biloba works is uncertain. Some research suggests that it may 1) act as an antioxidant to prevent damage by free radicals [harmful oxygen molecules], 2) reduce the inflammation at the cellular level, and 3) interfere with the body's blood clotting process

Ginkgo biloba is an herbal remedy extracted from the leaves of the ginkgo tree. Historically, this Chinese herbal medicine has been used to treat a variety of medical conditions.

Ginkgo biloba extracts have been studied with patients diagnosed with dementia due to Alzheimer's disease and stroke (vascular dementia). In 1997, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported the results of a clinical trial comparing ginkgo biloba extracts and placebo in-patients with mild to moderately severe dementia. A small treatment effect was found in the people receiving the extracts. No serious side effects were noted.

Dose and Treatment Information

Ginkgo biloba is considered a dietary supplement by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and does not require a prescription.

When purchasing ginkgo biloba, look for extracts standardized for medicinal use. These will say on the label, contains 24% ginkgo-flavone glycosides and 6% terpenoids. Avoid over-the-counter preparations that do not clearly state these percentages.

Current dosages for ginkgo biloba range from 40-80mg taken 3 times a day.

Your primary health care provider needs to be aware of the treatment with ginkgo biloba. If you are having any surgery (including dental), your surgeon & anesthesiologist need to be aware of the treatment as well. Similar to aspirin, ginkgo biloba may need to be stopped briefly prior to surgery.

WARNING

There have been isolated case reports of bleeding problems with the use of ginkgo biloba extracts, especially when taken with warfarin (Coumadin).

GINGKO BILOBA SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN IN COMBINATION WITH COUMADIN.

Your primary care provider should be contacted if you note any signs of bleeding (increased bruising, bleeding gums, dark tarry stools.)

If you have questions or problems, please call (503) 494-7615
between 8:30am and 4:30pm, Monday through Friday.

For information on Alzheimer's disease contact:

- * The Layton Center for Aging & Alzheimer's Disease Research
(503-494-6976)
- * Alzheimer's Association/ Oregon and Greater Idaho Chapter
1-800-733-0402 or (503) 413-7115
- * Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center
- * Phone: 1-800-438-4380 Web address: <http://www.alzheimers.org>