

Mahonia/Berberis aquifolia
Family: *Berberidaceae*– barberry
Parts Used: roots

Oregon grape, also known as mountain grape, grows all over the Rocky Mountain area I live in. It has many of the same properties as goldenseal that grows in the Eastern United States but unlike goldenseal is not endangered, in fact, it is the opposite of endangered. It can be a substitute for goldenseal in formulas.

Properties

Antibacterial, antimicrobial, antifungal, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antiparasitic, astringent, antiseptic, alterative, antiemetic, cholagogue, diuretic, hepatic, lymphatic, laxative, tonic.

Energetics: cooling, drying, bitter
Systems Affected: digestive, liver, immune, skin

Uses

- Skin conditions (greater affinity to skin)
- Eczema, psoriasis, dermatitis, acne, scaly skin, etc.
- Highly antibiotic, infection fighter
- Inhibit E-coli, strep, staph, and other bacteria, strep throat and staph infections.
- Cold, coughs and flu
- Eye and mouth infections.
- Candida and yeast infection.
- Improve liver and gallbladder function, help with imbalances.
- Hepatitis, jaundice, and other liver conditions.
- Urinary tract infection and vaginal infections.
- Boost white blood cell count, which boosts the immune system.
- Balance hormones
- Regulate blood sugar
- Boost sluggish glandular system
- Constipation, gas, bloating
- Gall bladder problems including gall stones
- Ulcers
- Inflammation
- Cuts, scrapes, wounds
- Nausea, diarrhea, bloating, constipation, vomiting

Herb Preparations

Use both internally and externally.

- Tea (prepare as a decoction, 2 ounces 3 times a day)
- Eyewash, gargle
- Bath
- Powder, capsules
- Extract, liniment
- Herbal oil
- Salves, ointments, balms
- Douche

Wildcrafting/Harvesting

Found on slopes, canyons, forests, woodland, and open sites. Can also be purchased at a nursery. Evergreen shrub that grows up to 4-6 feet. Holly like leaves that are leathery and shiny with scalloped edged spines. Greenish yellow flowers that turn to purple berries covered with whiteish film.

- Roots are best harvested in the fall but can be dug up at any time if needed. Avoid cutting the main root that extends down from the trunk and the plant will survive.

Safety

Avoid if pregnant.

Don't use with herbs that have a high tannin content, they can neutralize the alkaloids which give Oregon Grape Root its healing properties.