

**Onset of colds and flu:** Echinacea should be used at the very early onset of a cold or flu when you feel just the earliest hint of that tingle in the body that signals the approach of symptoms. It is at this point that echinacea is most effective, but it must be taken in large doses and frequently to be effective. When it is taken after the full onset of symptoms, I have found (in over 10 years of clinical experience) that echinacea is not effective, irrespective of its proven ability to increase white blood cell count. Usually, assertive action at this early point in infection will result in averting the full onset of either colds or flu *as long as the immune system is relatively healthy*. A compromised immune system will, after a while, fail to prevent disease in spite of any stimulation you give it (see contraindications, on the next page).

**External wounds:** Because of its capacity to correct tissue abnormality, echinacea is perfect for this application, and worldwide clinical experience has shown its effectiveness in this area. Echinacea's anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and cell-normalizing actions all come into powerful play for any external wounds.

**Venomous stings and bites:** Echinacea has a long history of successful use with venomous stings and bites, from bees to rattlesnakes to scorpions.

**Serious blood infections (bacteremia):** Though I have not met any modern clinicians who have used echinacea in this most serious of conditions, the eclectic physicians, botanical doctors that practiced in the early part of the twentieth century, used it for this condition, apparently with success. Its proven ability to stimulate white blood cell counts appears to support the use of massive doses for this condition.

### Endangered Echinacea

Like goldenseal, echinacea is one of the most overused herbs in the world and is commonly used for conditions that it will not help. As a result, echinacea in the wild is endangered, and whole ecosystems of the herb are being backhoed into oblivion. Unfortunately, *Echinacea angustifolia* is not very easy to grow, though one or two farms produce it in moderate quantities (not enough to meet demand). In my experience, *angustifolia* root is the herb of choice *only* for abnormal pap smear. The rest of the conditions for which echinacea is indicated can rely on the use of *E. purpurea* blossoms, which naturally renew themselves each year.