

and hemostatic. It has served as bitter tonic, as an alterative to the mucous membranes, and has been used as a douche for uterine hemorrhage and for hemorrhoids. Used in some eye lotions. Mixed with red pepper, goldenseal is used as a remedy for chronic alcoholism. Some Indians employed the herb as diuretic, escharotic, and stimulant, using the powder for blistering and the infusion for dropsy. Cures for boils, hemorrhoids, psoriasis, ringworm, and ulcers have been reported. Said to prevent the pitting caused by small pox. Homeopaths prescribe the fresh root for alcoholism, asthma, cancer, catarrh, chancroids, constipation, corns, deafness, dyspepsia, ear, eczema, faintness, fistula, gastric catarrh, glossitis, hemorrhoids, impetigo, jaundice, leucorrhea, lip cancer, liver ailments, lumbago, lupus, menorrhagia, metrorrhagia, mouth sore, nail affections, ozaena, placental adherence, post-nasal catarrh, rectal ailments, sciatica, seborrhea, sore mouth, sore nipple, sore throat, stomach ailments, stomatitis, taste disorders, throat ailments, tongue ailments, typhus, ulcers, and uteral afflictions.³⁰ Parvati suggests adding goldenseal and sage to cider vinegar and acidophilous as a douching solution.⁴⁸ For a brief period, goldenseal was “pushed” as an herb to prevent the detection of morphine in urinalysis, but there is no scientific evidence for such claims.³⁷ But for the other side of the coin, witness the following newspaper clipping.¹⁷⁸ Dateline San Diego (WNS): newspapers reported that Ethan Nebelkopf was using goldenseal (with comfrey, mullein, orange peel, and spearmint) as a “detox” tea to help addicts kick their cocaine, heroin, and methadone habits. Nebelkopf said, “People who are into herb-based drugs like heroin and cocaine seem to take naturally to herbal tea.” I wonder, however, how many physicians or nurses would inject goldenseal tea into your bladder with a rubber catheter two or three times a day for bladder ailments, as Kloss recommends.⁴⁴

Alkaloids isolated from *hydrastis* include hydrastine (1.5 to 4%), berberastine (2 to 3%), berberine (0.5 to 6%), canadine, candaline, hydrastinine, 5-hydroxytetrahydroberberine, meconine, reticuline, and xanthopucine. Volatile oils, chlorogenic acid, phytosterins, and resins are also recorded. Leung states that goldenseal is used for inflammation of mucous membranes (uteral and vaginal), hemorrhoids, nasal congestion, sore eyes, sore gums, acne, dandruff, etc.²⁹

Toxicity — An overdose (even externally) can cause severe ulceration of any surface it may touch. Such notes should discourage those who recommend goldenseal as a douche. According to Tierra, women who have a tendency to miscarry should avoid the use of goldenseal.²⁸ Excessive use over a prolonged period can diminish vitamin B absorption.²⁸ People with a history of high blood pressure should avoid goldenseal.²⁸