

Caulophyllum thalictroides (L.) Michx.

Blue Cohosh Rhizome and Root

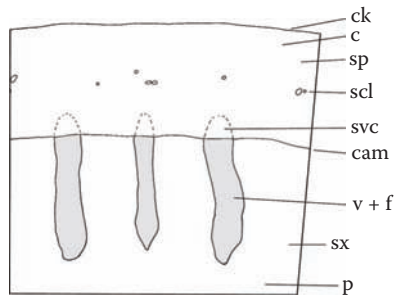
Rhizoma et Radix Caulophylli

Berberidaceae

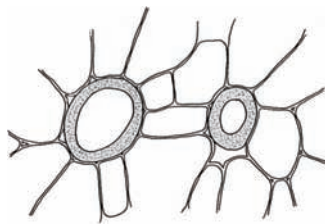
Blue cohosh is one of the primary uterine tonics, uterine antispasmodics, and smooth muscle relaxants used in Western herbalism. It is commonly used as a partus preparator, a substance used in the last 6 weeks of pregnancy to help prepare for birth. It is also used to promote efficient uterine contractions during birth. In recent years, concern regarding its use for these purposes has been raised. There are no reported adulterants of blue cohosh.

A. Rhizome

Transverse section: Cork is present; cortex of thin-walled parenchyma with occasional sclereids and pitted fibers; parenchymatous secondary phloem is without distinguishing features; secondary xylem vessels in radial lines, arranged with fibers into nearly rectangular, radially elongated groups separated by broad medullary rays; vessels up to 40 μm diameter; central pith of thin-walled parenchyma cells with intercellular spaces.



1



3

Longitudinal section: Vessels with bordered pits.

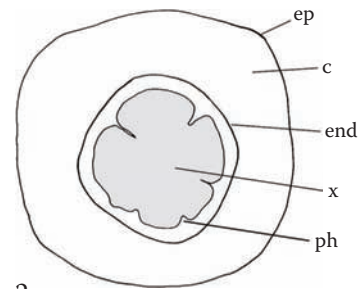
B. Root

Transverse section: Brown epidermis; cortex of parenchyma with slightly thickened cells; endodermis is well defined; xylem of vessels and fibers, with only a few short rays penetrating slightly into the region; vessels up to 40 μm diameter.

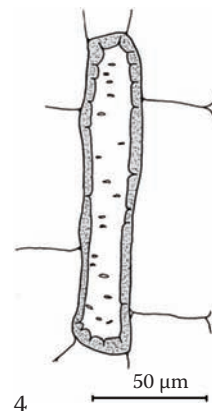
Longitudinal section: Vessels with bordered pits.

Starch: Present in rhizome and root; granules are primarily compound, ovate, and very small, up to 10 μm .

Powder: Fragments of vessels with fibers; parenchyma; starch.



2



4