

Pregnancy Herbs to be cautious of!

This list of herbs must be used with caution and through an experienced Herbalist or Herbally trained midwife. Emmenagogues are herbs that can cause contractions as they stimulate the menstrual flow. Most need to be avoided. Laxatives may also stimulate contractions. * means these are to be avoided when pregnant, unless being used for the birthing process.

Agave (*Agave* spp) – strong bitter, laxative
Alder buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*) – cathartic, laxative
Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*) – emmenagogue
***Arbor vitae* (*Thuja occidentalis*) – abortifacient
Autumn Crocus (*Colchicum autumnate*) – teratogenic damage
Barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) – emmenagogue, uterine stimulant
Bearberry (*Arcostaphylos uva-ursi*) – emmenagogue
Beth Root/Birthroot (*Trillium* spp.) – uterine astringent
**Black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*) – emmenagogue
Blessed thistle (*Cnicus benedictus*) – strong bitter
Blood root (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) – Emetic
***Blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*) - emmenagogue
**Broom (*Sarothamnus scoparius*) – abortifacient
Buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*) – laxative
Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*) – laxative
Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) – estrogenic effect
Cascara sagrada (*Rhamnus purshiana*) – laxative
*Celandine (*Chelidonium majus*) – emmenagogue
Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*) – possible fetotoxic
**Cottonroot bark (*Gossypium herbaceum*) – stimulates uterine contractions
Damiana (*Turnera diffusa*) – nervous system and hormonal activity
Dong quai (*Angelica sinensis*) – hormonal activity
*Drug aloe (*Aloe vera*) – cathartic
Ephedra (Ma-huang) (*Ephedra sinica*) – high alkaloid content, cardiac stimulant
Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*) – emmenagogue
Ginseng (*Panax ginseng*) – affects nervous system
*Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) – emmenagogue, uterine stimulant
Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*) – affects nervous system
Hops (*Humulus lupulus*) – strong bitter
*Juniper berries (*Juniperus communis*) – possibly fetotoxic, affects kidneys
Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) – can cause high blood pressure
Male Fern (*Dryopteris felix-mas*) – emetic and laxative effect
Mandrake (*Mandragora vernalis*) – strong laxative, slightly toxic
Mistletoe (*Viscum album*) – Hemostatic
Motherwort (*Leonorus cordiaca*) – emmenagogue
Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) – emmenagogue
Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) – (safe to use in cooking) slightly toxic
Osha (*Ligusticum porteri*) – emmenagogue
Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) – (safe to use in cooking) emmenagogue when used vaginally.
**Pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*) – emmenagogue
Peruvian Bark (*Cinchona* spp.) – strong bitter
Pleurisy root (*Asclepias tuberosa*) – cardiac stimulant
Poke Root (*Phytolacca* spp.) – emetic due to high sapon content
Rhubarb (*Rheum palmatum*) – laxative
*Rue (*Ruta graveolens*) – emmenagogue
Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) (Safe to use in cooking) – emmenagogue, hormonal activity
Sarsaparilla (*Smilax* spp.) – hormonal activity
Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) – cardiac stimulant
Senna (*Senna alexandrina*) – laxative
Shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) – hemostatic
Southernwood (*Artemisa abrotanum*) – emmenagogue
**Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) – emmenagogue
Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*) – emmenagogue
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) – emmenagogue