

# BAIKAL SKULLCAP

*Scutellaria baicalensis*



## Areas of application

- Inflammation
- Infections
- Fever
- Allergies
- Respiratory diseases
- Gastrointestinal complaints

## Family

(Lamiaceae)

## Based in

Baikal skullcap is primarily native to northern East Asia, particularly Siberia (around Lake Baikal), Mongolia, parts of China and Korea

## Plant parts used

Roots

## Ingredients

More than 290 different constituents have been identified; the six most important are: baicalein, wogonin, oroxylin A, baicalin, wogonoside and oroxylin A7-O-glucuronide.

## Usage/Indications

Baikal skullcap is a medicinal plant with a long history in Traditional Chinese Medicine. It is primarily the dried root that is used, which is rich in flavonoids such as baicalin and baicalein. The plant is mainly valued for its anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic and antimicrobial properties. Traditionally, Baikal skullcap is used for inflammatory conditions, such as inflammation of the respiratory tract, bronchitis or sore throats. It is also used for allergic complaints such as hay fever or skin reactions. In TCM, the plant is also regarded as a remedy for 'clearing heat' and is used for febrile illnesses or inner restlessness. Furthermore, Baikal skullcap is used as a supportive treatment for infections, as its constituents are believed to have antibacterial and antiviral effects. The root is also traditionally used for digestive complaints and inflammatory conditions of the gastrointestinal tract. Modern phytotherapeutic approaches are also investigating potential liver-protective effects as well as its use in chronic inflammation.

## Side effects/Contraindications

Baikal skullcap is generally considered to be well tolerated. However, gastrointestinal complaints, headaches or allergic skin reactions may occasionally occur. In rare cases, potential liver strain has been reported. As a precaution, it should be avoided during pregnancy and while breastfeeding, or only used after consulting a doctor, particularly in cases of existing liver disease.

## Good to know



Baikal skullcap contains the flavonoids baicalin and baicalein, which not only have anti-inflammatory properties but also act directly on nerve cells in the brain. Research shows that they modulate GABA receptors – much like mild sedatives – thereby producing stress-relieving and mildly anxiolytic effects. This medicinal plant thus combines herbal healing power with a subtle neuroactive effect – a fascinating reason why it has been valued in TCM for centuries.

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