Burdock root is an underground tuber of the greater burdock plant that is used both as a vegetable and a medicinal plant. Botanically speaking, burdock belongs to the Asteraceae family; in the genus of Arctium, also known as *Arctium lappa*.

Of the four species of *Arctium*, only greater burdock (*Arctium lappa*) and lesser burdock (*Arctium minus*) are cultivated for their herbal parts. That said, throughout the world, almost all parts of the plant are used either for culinary purposes or medicinal ones.

From a nutritional standpoint, burdock packs quite a nutritional punch. As a root vegetable, it possesses considerably stronger antioxidant activity than common fruits and vegetables. It is a good source of non-starch polysaccharides such as inulin, crystalline glucoside-lapponin and mucilage, that help improve digestion, nutrient absorption and elimination. Additionally, inulin acts as prebiotic and helps reduce blood-sugar, cholesterol and ultimately helps improve overall metabolic function.

Burdock root is also exceptionally rich in potassium and low in sodium, as well as supplies various vitamins such as folic acid, riboflavin, pyridoxine, niacin, vitamin E and vitamin C. Additionally, burdock provides many essential minerals such as iron, manganese, magnesium, zinc, calcium, selenium and phosphorus. Recent studies have further shown that burdock contains the flavonoids quercetin and luteolin, which are potent & powerful antioxidants, thus offering additional health protecting properties.

Medicinally speaking, burdock has long been recognized as a potent blood purifier or alterative. Indeed, burdock offers distinct diuretic properties, which help expel toxins from the blood through urine and is thus of particular benefit in situations such as exposure to environmental toxins, parasites in the blood, heavy metal contamination, as well as chronic bacterial or viral infections, like chronic fatigue syndrome or Lyme disease. Burdock further supports cleaning by stimulating the lymphatic system, thus helping to reinforce the body’s natural detoxification and drainage processes.

In addition, burdock promotes blood circulation to the skin surface, which improves skin health, and thus explains why the root is so often used in the treatment of skin conditions such as acne, eczema (dermatitis), psoriasis and dry skin, among others. So beneficial is burdock to skin health in fact, that researchers have been trying to elucidate its precise effects on tissue. Indeed, recent scientific studies have been able to show that burdock extract naturally improves the clinical signs of aging skin. One such study from 2008 showed that daily topical application of burdock extract significantly improved the dermal extracellular matrix metabolism and resulted in visibly reduced wrinkles.

Finally, as a root with many well-supported medicinal properties, burdock is also recognized as an effective herbal remedy for all manner of liver and gall bladder complaints, as a mild and reliable laxative, as well as for potent immune stimulation.
IMMUNOMODULATION

- ANTIDIABETIC
- ANTI-HEPATOTOXIC
- ANTIFUNGAL
- ANTI-INFLAMMATORY
- ANTIMICROBIAL
- ANTIVIRAL
- DEPURATION
- DETOXIFIER
- DIAPHORETIC
- DIURETIC

PATHOGENS

DIGESTION: Burdock is known to help strengthen the stomach, digestion and appetite, while also helping to relieve gas and bloating. The roots are referred to as “alterative” agents - meaning that they are capable of enhancing the digestive process, the absorption of nutrients and supporting the elimination of wastes, while soothing the gut and removing toxins from the large intestine. Like dandelion and yellow dock, burdock roots are extremely bitter, thus stimulate digestive secretions to further support digestion.

DETOXIFICATION: Burdock leaves and roots contain significant amounts of fiber that can help keep the bowels regular and promote the implantation and proliferation of healthy bacteria throughout the digestive tract. In fact, the root contains nearly 50% inulin. Studies have been able to show that inulin acts as a prebiotic by promoting the growth of friendly bacteria which have the ability to control inflammation, boost immunity and eliminate unwanted pathogens, such as those that can cause diarrhea. Finally, burdock helps stimulate cellular regeneration, detoxification and cleansing and is thus of considerable value to help support the body’s natural inherent detoxification processes, most notably, in patients dealing with chronic degenerative conditions.

LIVER HEALTH: Burdock root is widely recognized as a supportive of liver function. In fact, it has been shown that burdock root supports the liver by promoting the production of bile, which is of great importance for the healthy metabolism of fats and removal of fat-soluble toxins. Burdock also provides powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits that can help reduce liver damage from microbes, bacteria or an overload of toxic chemicals. In fact, according to a very compelling study published in the “Journal of Biomedical Science” in September 2002, the hepatoprotective properties in burdock root help prevent damage to the liver, as well as are effective for healing liver damage caused by chronic alcohol use.

SKIN HEALTH: Burdock has long been used by herbalists to treat a wide variety of skin conditions such as abscesses, carbuncles, psoriasis, eczema, rashes and dry skin. The beneficial effects of burdock include increasing circulation to the skin, helping to detoxify the epidermal tissues and destroying any bacteria and fungus that may be present on the surface of the skin. Burdock is also widely used as an effective treatment for acne. It decreases the flow of sebum produced by the sebaceous glands, helping to clear up the skin, while increasing circulation to the skin and killing any bacteria that may be present.

Finally, the burdock rhizome possesses potent cholagogue properties and is thus of particular value to help stimulate and support liver function, and so may be of great benefit for acne flare-ups which can manifest as a result of liver overload.

CONCOMITANT PRODUCTS:

CONCOMITANT PRODUCTS: Burdock is a wonderful natural approach to help stimulate detoxification, cleanse and purify the blood. It is also particularly useful and safe to help bolster kidney and urinary tract health, to strengthen and protect the liver and to support digestion and metabolism. As a nourishing herbal it is a great standalone remedy, but may also be combined fairly liberally with other like-minded herbs according to the clinical picture. Some other plants that may be considered include yellow dock, sarsaparilla, marshmallow, beets, parsley, cumin, ginger, fennel and anise, among others.