



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Red Clover

This information describes the common uses of Red Clover, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

## What is it?

Red clover is an herb that belongs to the same family as peas and beans. It contains nutrients known as isoflavones (i-so-FLAY-vones) that help treat hot flashes.

Red clover is used in traditional medicine for many health issues. You can take red clover supplements as tablets, capsules, and tinctures (concentrated herbal liquid). It also comes as creams and ointments that you can put on your skin.

# What are the potential uses and benefits?

Red clover is used to:

- Manage symptoms caused by menopause (permanent end of menstrual cycles), such as hot flashes.
- Treat osteoporosis (thinning of your bones).
- Lower high cholesterol.

Red clover also has other uses that have not been studied by doctors to see if they work.

Talk with your healthcare provider before taking red clover supplements. Herbal supplements are stronger than the herbs you would use in cooking.

Some supplements can also affect how medications work. For more information, read the “What else do I need to know?” section below.

## What are the side effects?

Side effects have not been reported.

## What else do I need to know?

- Talk with your healthcare provider if you’re taking blood thinners such as warfarin (Jantoven® or Coumadin®). Red clover may increase your risk of bleeding.

- Avoid red clover if you're pregnant or breastfeeding. It may not be safe for you.
- Talk to your healthcare provider if you have a hormone-sensitive cancer (like some breast cancers). Red clover may worsen your condition.
- The safety of using red clover over a long period of time is not known.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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