



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Rhodiola

This information describes the common uses of Rhodiola, 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?

Rhodiola is an herb used in traditional medicine in Eastern Europe and Asia. It also comes as tablets, capsules, and liquid extracts.

What are the potential uses and benefits?

Rhodiola is used to:

- Manage stress
- Manage fatigue (feeling very tired or having less energy than usual)
- Improve endurance (your ability to do physical activity for a long time)
- Treat depression

Rhodiola has other uses, but doctors have not studied them to see if they work.

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

Supplements can also interact with some medications and affect how they work. For more information, read the “What else do I need to know?” section below.

What are the side effects?

Side effects of taking rhodiola may include:

- Dizziness (feeling faint or lightheaded)
- Dry mouth

What else do I need to know?

- Talk to your healthcare provider if you’re taking a blood thinner, such as warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®). Rhodiola can affect the way it works.
- Talk to your doctor if you’re taking anti-seizure medications such as phenytoin (Dilantin®). Rhodiola may increase your risk of having side effects.

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 to search our virtual library.

Rhodiola - Last updated on November 9, 2022

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