



## BLADDER INFECTION

### **Blueberry** (vaccinium, various species) and **Cranberry** (*V. macrocarpon*)

When I was 17 years old, I got a horrible kidney infection. Along with an antibiotic, my doctor prescribed me cranberry juice and I still drink it on a regular basis for its benefits. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association showed that certain compounds in cranberry and blueberry juice prevent bacteria from adhering to the bladder walls. Additionally, both berries contain arbutin, a chemical compound that is both an antibiotic and a diuretic that helps relieve excess water retention. In another study of seven juices, cranberry and blueberry lowered *E. coli* adhesion, while grapefruit, guava, mango, orange and pineapple did not.

**Bearberry** (*arctostaphylos uva ursi*) *Uva Ursi* has a specific antiseptic and astringent effect upon the membranes of the urinary system. It will generally soothe, tone and strengthen them. It is specifically used where there is gravel or ulceration in the kidney or bladder. It may be used in the treatment of infections such as pyelitis and cystitis or as part of a holistic approach to more chronic kidney problems. It has a useful role to play in the treatment of gravel or a calculus in the kidney. With its high astringency it is used in some forms of bedwetting. As a douche it may be helpful in vaginal ulceration and infection.

**Dandelion** (*taraxacum officinale*). Dandelion root is a particularly potent diuretic. Diuretics are useful in bladder infections, not as an outright cure but for their ability to flush the urinary tract, removing harmful bacteria. Dandelion is my favorite diuretic because it also replaces the potassium lost during frequent urination.

**Birch** (*betula*, various species). Commission E endorses birch leaves as a valuable diuretic that is useful in treating both kidney and urinary tract infections.

**Echinacea** (*echinacea*, various species) and goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*). Echinacea is a powerful immune system booster. Taking Echinacea along with antibiotics can be a good treatment for most infections including urinary tract infections. I recommend taking goldenseal along with your Echinacea treatment.

**Lovage** (*levisticum officinale*). According to Commission E reports, lovage has diuretic qualities that aid in the treatment of urinary tract infections.