



Hawthorn Wins Our Heart

Traditionally, hawthorn has been used to treat a wide variety of heart problems. In modern times, plenty of research has been done on hawthorn with promising results. It is one of the few plants with numerous health benefits that both traditional and Western medicine agree on! A review published in May 2020 has highlighted the many health benefits of hawthorn. Plants such as hawthorn are becoming more popular as they are safer and have fewer side effects than synthetic medicines on the market.

The Multiple Health Benefits of Hawthorn

Rich source of antioxidants

Hawthorn is a rich source of polyphenols—a powerful type of antioxidant found in plants. Antioxidants are associated with health benefits, such as protecting against some cancers, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, and even premature skin aging!

Helps with heart failure

Based on a systematic review of 14 randomized controlled trials, and a meta-analysis of 13 other randomized controlled trials, hawthorn can help to relieve the symptoms of congestive heart failure. In one study, hawthorn was pitted against a common heart medicine (angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor) and fared just as well. This means that hawthorn could work just as well as a drug and be a potential natural treatment.

Other studies have shown that hawthorn can help improve exercise capacity, shortness of breath, and fatigue in people with heart failure.

Lowers blood pressure

Hawthorn may help relax blood vessels, and thus help lower blood pressure.

Lowers blood cholesterol

Hawthorn has been shown to help reduce total cholesterol blood levels and lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol levels. While common drugs given to control cholesterol cannot increase HDL (“good”) cholesterol levels, hawthorn may increase the levels of HDL cholesterol in the body.

References:

1. Nazhand A, Lucarini M, Durazzo A, et al. Hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.): An updated overview on its beneficial properties. *Forests*. 2020;11(5):564. doi:10.3390/f11050564
2. Dahmer S, Scott E. Health effects of hawthorn. *Am Fam Physician*. 2010;81(4):465-468.