

Senna tea

Uses, benefits, harms and warnings



Is Senna tea safe to drink?

- Uses of Senna tea
- Risks
- Side effects
- What are the drug interactions?
- Takeaway

Uses of Senna tea: Senna is an herb that comes from several different flowering species of the Cassia plants. The leaves, flowers, and fruits of the Senna plant have been used in tea as a laxative or stimulant for centuries.

The leaves of the Senna plant are also used in some teas to help relieve constipation or promote weight loss.

The most common Cassia Senna plants used are the *C. acutifolia*, and *C. angustifolia* plants, which are grown in the Middle East and India.

Fast facts on Senna tea:

Senna is available as a tea, a liquid, a powder, or tablets.

It is regarded as safe when used by adults and children over the age of 2.

While generally safe, Senna can interact with certain medications.

Uses of Senna tea

The leaves of the Senna plant are used in teas and may help relieve constipation.

Senna is most often used as a laxative, either to relieve constipation or in some cases, to help with weight loss. It is also an ingredient in some conventional over-the-counter laxatives.

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have approved Senna as a non-prescription drug to treat constipation. The most common doses are:

Children: 8.5 milligrams (mg) per day to cause a single bowel movement

Children over 12 and adults: 17.2 mg per day, with no more than 34.4 mg each day

Older adults: 17 mg per day

Postpartum pregnancy (After child birth): 28 mg per day, divided into two doses

It is not recommended to use Senna for longer than 2 weeks at a time.

Senna is generally well tolerated and thought to be safe for most people. However, it does have the potential to cause serious complications in some people with certain health conditions and who take certain medications.

It is best to consult a doctor with any questions about taking Senna.

Risks: There have been some case reports of people suffering from liver damage, coma or nerve damage after using Senna. In these cases, people were using Senna at much higher than the recommended doses and for more extended periods of time.

Senna tea should not be used by people with the medical conditions:

1. Abdominal pain
2. Intestinal obstruction or blockage
3. Ulcerative colitis
4. Crohn's disease
5. ulcerative colitis
6. appendicitis
7. dehydration
8. diarrhea

9. heart disease
10. Pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers
11. Women with period or **menstruating**
<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320659#risks>

What are the drug interactions of Senna tea?

There are several drug interactions to be noted. By being aware of these, people can make sure that they are drinking Senna tea safely.

People taking the following medications or herbal supplements should avoid taking Senna:

- **Contraceptives:** Senna can interact with the form of estrogen in some contraceptives, including the vaginal ring, patch or pills. It might make the birth control less effective, making it more likely for an accidental pregnancy to occur.
- **Digoxin:** Senna can cause electrolyte imbalances in the body, especially in potassium levels. Low potassium can cause problems for someone taking digoxin.
- **Warfarin:** Diarrhea in people taking warfarin can increase the risk of serious bleeding. Because Senna can cause diarrhea, anyone taking warfarin should avoid using Senna.
- **Diuretics:** Like Senna, some diuretics can also decrease potassium and other electrolyte levels. Taking these two medications together can cause potassium levels to drop to a dangerous level.
- **Estrogens:** Estrogens in hormone replacement therapies react the same way as birth control pills. Using Senna with hormone replacement therapy may mean that the estrogen is not absorbed or work as well.
- **Horsetail:** Horsetail is an herb that some people take for several different reasons. There is some thought that horsetail could lower potassium levels in some people. Taking Senna with horsetail may lower potassium levels too much.
- **Licorice:** Licorice also lowers potassium levels; people should avoid taking both licorice and Senna together.

Common side effects of Senna tea include:

1. Abdominal pain or discomfort
2. Cramps
3. Diarrhea
4. Excessive bowel activity
5. Feeling faint or dizzy
6. Electrolyte abnormalities, including low potassium (hypokalemia)
7. Melanosis coli
8. Finger clubbing (long-term use)
9. Nausea (you feel like vomiting)
10. Kidney and liver damage because of dehydration (if you don't drink too much water after loose motion & for next 2 days)

Abdominal pain or discomfort, Cramps or Diarrhea: In Case of these 3 conditions, drink too much water with Dioralyte or Bazoori and stop using Senna tea.

Electrolyte abnormalities: An **electrolyte** disorder occurs when the levels of **electrolytes** in your body are either too high or too low. **Electrolytes** need to be maintained in an even balance for your body to function properly. Severe **electrolyte** imbalances can cause serious problems such as coma, seizures, and cardiac arrest.

Causes of electrolyte abnormalities or disorders:

Electrolyte disorders are most often caused by a loss of bodily fluids through prolonged vomiting, diarrhea, or sweating. They may also develop due to fluid loss related to burns. Certain medications can cause electrolyte disorders as well.

Treatment of an Electrolyte Imbalance: Use too much water with Dioralyte or Bazoori or other forms of concentrated juices like concentrated Ribena blackcurrant squash or some other concentrated squash.

Dioralyte is a brand of rehydration salts that you can take to replace lost water and body salts. These rehydration sachets contain a powder that you mix with water to make a drink. They come in blackcurrant, citrus and natural flavours. Other brands of rehydration sachets include Dioralyte relief and Electrolade.

Bazoori or sharbat e Bazoori is a concentrated herbal drink used in diluted form in water to make a sweet nice taste drink, may be not suitable for diabetic patients. It is mostly available in most of Pakistani Super food stores.

Intravenous fluids: In case of worst dehydration, electrolyte replacement is necessary. A Minor electrolyte imbalance may be corrected by diet changes. For example; eating a diet rich in potassium if you have low potassium levels, or restricting your water intake if you have a low blood sodium level.

Melanosis coli: It is a condition in which there is a discoloration of the membranes lining your colon (large intestine) and rectum resulting from the deposit of pigment in the **lamina propria**, a layer of the intestinal lining (The lamina propria is a thin layer of loose (areolar) connective tissue, which lies beneath the epithelium, and together with the epithelium and basement membrane constitutes the mucosa. The lamina propria is also rich in immune cells known as lymphocytes). Because it has no symptoms, this discoloration is usually identified during a colonoscopy. Also called pseudo melanosis coli, melanosis coli got its name because it was originally believed that the color change was the result of the pigment melanin. However, research shows that lipofuscin, a pigment associated with aging, is responsible for the dark color.

Symptoms

Typically seen on an endoscopy, melanosis coli is usually a dark brown or black color that can vary in darkness and intensity.² The color change tends to be more evident at the beginning and middle parts of the colon rather than spread uniformly throughout, but this can be different for every individual with the condition. On rare occasions, pigment changes may also be seen in the small intestine, a condition known as melanosis ilei.

Causes

Doctors most often see melanosis coli in patients who experience chronic constipation and frequently use laxatives. This has led to a confirmation of a solid link between the use of herbal laxatives that contain organic compounds found in some plants called anthraquinones and the appearance of melanosis coli. These laxatives are also commonly called anthranoids.

The intestinal discoloration may be seen as early as four months after you start regularly using herbal laxatives. Melanosis coli may be seen in patients who do not have constipation or use the anthraquinone-containing laxatives as well, though this is rare.

Scientists don't know exactly why these particular laxatives cause the pigment changes of melanosis coli, but the best theory is that the purging effects of the laxatives damage the epithelial cells on the lining of the colon, creating pigmentation. As the damaged cells accumulate, the pigmentation also accumulates, and melanosis coli occurs.

Diagnosis

Since it has no symptoms, melanosis coli is usually found during an endoscopic procedure such as a colonoscopy or a sigmoidoscopy, a procedure that looks at just your sigmoid (lower) colon rather than the entire colon as in a colonoscopy. A doctor may see melanosis coli himself or it may be found during the examination of a tissue biopsy taken during one of these procedures.

Women are more likely to be diagnosed with melanosis coli than men, probably because constipation is three times higher in women, which may result in more laxative use. Constipation is more frequent in women most likely because stool tends to move more slowly through the female digestive tract and because some women seem to experience constipation during their monthly periods.

Cancer Risk

Most [gastroenterologists](#) consider melanosis coli to be a harmless condition. Studies have not found an association between melanosis coli and an increased risk of [colorectal cancer](#) in humans. This doesn't mean that there isn't one, but that a potential association is difficult to find and hasn't been proven yet.

In 1997, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned the use of the anthraquinone phenolphthalein in over-the-counter laxatives because of concerns that prolonged or excessive use could cause cancer. The reason for the ban was that there were animal studies that showed that using large amounts of phenolphthalein caused tumors. However, phenolphthalein hasn't been shown to cause tumors in humans.

One 2011 study of melanosis coli in patients with colon cancer found that the presence of melanosis coli increases with age, similar to colon cancer itself. This makes sense considering that the pigment responsible for melanosis coli, lipofuscin, is a product of aging (cell death). The study also found that there was no melanosis inside the tumors studied.

The reason for the lack of clarity on the subject has to do with the unclear association of constipation and cancer risk. Studies have shown an association between constipation and colon cancer, but it isn't known why. Some scientists think it's due to the slow motility, or movement, of bowel movements during constipation, which could result in carcinogens having prolonged contact with intestinal cells. Or it may be that the factors that contributed to constipation itself, such as a diet that's too low in fiber, are the reason why this possible higher risk of cancer exists.

Treatment

There is no definitive protocol for eliminating melanosis coli, but your doctor will likely recommend that you take steps to prevent constipation, including staying hydrated and eating a high-fiber diet, and that you stop using laxatives, especially those that

contain anthraquinone. Once these laxatives are discontinued, it's possible that the condition will disappear within six to 12 months.

Finger clubbing: Mostly Finger clubbing or Nail clubbing, also known as digital or clubbing, is a deformity of the finger or toe nails associated with a number of diseases, mostly of the heart and lungs. Clubbing is associated with lung cancer, lung infections, interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, or cardiovascular disease. But long term use of any laxative can cause Finger clubbing as well.

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Senna tea is a viable short-term treatment for constipation. Because **Senna tea** can treat constipation, it may also help treat hemorrhoids that occur as a result of chronic constipation, but you should consult your doctor before use. **Senna** is also thought to have both anti-inflammatory and antiparasitic properties.

Senna tea is an FDA-approved nonprescription laxative. Its top health **benefits** include aiding **weight loss**, treating constipation, reducing inflammation, and detoxifying the body, among others so it is a “detox” tea.

Traditional Use and Health Benefits

Senna has been used as a traditional medicine by ancient cultures all over the world for millennia. Senna is an Arabian name and 9th century writings describe how it was used extensively by Arabian physicians. According to a rare Egyptian medical papyrus, dating to the 16th century BCE, Senna was prescribed by the physicians for their distinguished patients.

In North America, native tribes used Senna seeds (pods) as a mucilaginous medicine for sore throat. The Cherokees used Senna bruised root, moistened with water, for dressing sores. They also used it in a tea to cure fevers with black spots and paralysis as symptoms.

Senna Health Benefits

Constipation

The most famous use of this herb is as a laxative and a purgative (strongly laxative). It is now known that the laxative effects of Senna are due to *anthraquinone glycosides* known as *sennosides*. These compounds stimulate intestinal contractions that lead to the rapid expulsion of waste matter.

Senna may also be able to soften the stool by assisting the large intestine to absorb more water and adding bulk to faeces. This allows for bowel movements that are quick and smooth as waste passes through the large intestine.

Colon Cleanse

Senna is often used to clear the bowel before diagnostic tests such as colonoscopies. Cleansing the colon is believed to improve nutrient uptake and support overall colon health.

Anti-Parasitic

Senna also works as an effective vermifuge to destroy parasites and expel worms from the intestinal tract. It works best when combined with other anthelmintic herbs (used in the treatment of roundworm), such as ginger or fennel. These herbs increase regularity and reduce the chance of bowel cramps due to Senna's strong action.

Digestive Health

Senna, if used in the proper dosage for certain periods of time, has shown potential in reducing irritability in the intestines by improving overall digestion.

Senna also contains the anti-inflammatory compound *resveratrol* which can help to soothe inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract.

Skin Health

Senna leaves contain essential oils and tannins that help to alleviate skin inflammation. With a strong antibacterial activity, they can be made into a compress which can be applied to

Wounds and burns

Acetone and ethanol - other compounds present in Senna - can fight the microorganisms that cause acne. Senna also helps to reduce sebum production and increase cell regeneration and collagen production.

Typical Use

Senna Leaf/Pod Tea: Pour hot (not boiling) water over ½ to 2 grams (one-quarter teaspoon) of crushed Senna herb. Allow the tea to steep for 10 minutes and then strain.

Senna Leaf/Pod Tincture: Traditionally taken: 2-3ml taken 2-3 times per day, or as directed by a Herbal Practitioner.

Other Gastrointestinal Disorders

Senna tea is sometimes used for irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and bloating. But there is not enough scientific evidence to support the use of Senna tea or other Senna preparations to treat these conditions.

Treats Indigestion

If you are struggling with constipation, bloating, cramping or indigestion, Senna tea can often help by promoting the normal flow of food and waste matter through your bowels.

Diuretic

This specialty tea is also well-known as a diuretic, meaning it stimulates urination. This can release excess salts, fats, toxins and water from the body. Senna can often result in dehydration, so make sure you are staying well hydrated.

Skin Care

Senna tea, due to the presence of tannin, resin, and essential oils, is used to treat wounds, burns, and ringworms. Its anti-bacterial properties are also useful in fighting acne, and other skin ailments.

Hair Care & Color

Applying Senna to your hair will ensure stronger, thicker, and voluminous hair. It also acts as a natural hair highlighter which gives ash blonde to golden color.

Anti-Parasitic

Certain compounds found in Senna tea, such as sennosides, possess anti-parasitic effect. By eradicating intestinal worms and other gut parasites.

This tea can help ensure that you get as many nutrients as possible from your meals.

Anticancer Potential

The literature on Senna extracts suggests that it is a weak promoter of colon carcinogenesis but however when taken in large amounts, it can be a cause of cancer cell formation in the body. In this research, the test subjects were administered with 10mg/kg for 13 to 28 weeks, which is a healthy dose to induce laxation. The dose was, however, increased to 100mg/kg over the next three months and results showed an increase in the appearance of tumors.

To gain more clarity, a study was conducted in 2005 and researchers found that when the rats were administered with a dose of 30 and 60mg/kg for 110 weeks, there was no tumor activity. On the other hand, when the rats were administered with the same amount of Senna extracts, as well as tumor-initiating agent, the study showed that Senna could actually help reduce the tumor.

A 2011 study published in the Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine suggests that there is no relation between the occurrence of colon cancer and consumption of Senna.

Anti-inflammatory

Traditionally, Senna tea has been used for a wide variety of inflammatory conditions, including headaches, fevers, and inflammation of joints and tissues.

Warning: Senna should be used as a short term remedy. It should not be used long term as it can cause laxative dependence, i.e. you will always get constipation without using Senna or some other laxative, which is clearly not good and it can make your intestines weak.

This leaflet is published for the benefits of people and help is taken from the following sites to thanks to all of them.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/senna-tea#:~:text=mild%20abdominal%20cramps,that%20leads%20to%20water%20loss>

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320659>

<https://www.webmd.com/vitamins/ai/ingredientmono-652/senna>

<https://www.rxlist.com/senna/supplements.htm>

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