

DIGESTIVE BITTERS

Digestive Bitter Formulas:

Digestive bitters are herbal preparations that can support digestion and promote digestive health. They typically contain bitter-tasting herbs or botanical extracts that stimulate digestive enzymes and promote the production of gastric juices. Here is a list of some commonly used digestive bitters which can be consumed alone or in blended formulas:

1. **Gentian:** Gentian root is one of the most commonly used bitter herbs in digestive bitters. It stimulates the production of saliva, gastric juices, and bile, thereby supporting digestion.
2. **Dandelion:** Dandelion root and leaf are often included in digestive bitters due to their bitter taste and potential benefits for liver health. Dandelion can promote bile production and support overall digestion.
3. **Artichoke:** Artichoke leaf extract is known for its bitter taste and its potential to stimulate digestion. It may help improve liver function and promote the flow of bile.
4. **Wormwood:** Wormwood is a bitter herb that has traditionally been used to support digestion. It can stimulate the appetite, promote the release of digestive enzymes, and improve overall digestion.
5. **Angelica:** Angelica root is sometimes included in digestive bitters for its bitter taste and potential digestive benefits by promoting the production of gastric juices.
6. **Chamomile:** Chamomile flowers are commonly used in digestive bitters for their soothing properties. Chamomile may help relieve indigestion, bloating, and stomach discomfort.
7. **Fennel:** Fennel seeds have a mildly bitter taste and are often used in digestive blends. They can support digestion, relieve gas and bloating, and soothe the digestive tract.
8. **Ginger:** Ginger root is known for its digestive benefits and is often included in digestive bitters. It can help relieve nausea, improve digestion, and soothe the digestive system.
9. **Orange peel:** Orange peel is a common ingredient in digestive bitters, adding a citrusy flavor. It can stimulate digestion and promote the flow of gastric juices.
10. **Milk thistle:** Milk thistle is sometimes included in digestive bitters due to its potential benefits for liver health. It may help protect the liver and support its detoxification processes.

As always, consult with a healthcare professional before starting any new herbal supplements, especially if you have underlying health conditions or are taking medications.

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Sample formulas:



Dr. Shade's Bitters No. 9



Dr. Mercola's Digestive Bitters

(without alcohol)



Urban Moonshine Calm Tummy

(pregnancy safe)

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Digestive Bitter Foods

While digestive bitters are typically prepared as herbal tinctures or extracts, there are certain foods and ingredients that naturally possess bitter properties and can be consumed to support digestion. Here are some edible options that can act as digestive bitters:

1. **Dark Chocolate:** High-quality dark chocolate with a high percentage of cocoa often has a bitter taste. Consuming a small piece of dark chocolate (70% cocoa or higher) after a meal may aid digestion.
2. **Coffee:** Coffee, particularly black coffee without sugar or milk, has a bitter taste that can stimulate digestion. However, it's worth noting that excessive consumption of coffee may have adverse effects on digestion for some individuals.
3. **Grapefruit:** Grapefruit is a citrus fruit with a distinct bitter taste. Consuming fresh grapefruit or its juice may help stimulate digestion due to its natural bitterness.
4. **Radicchio:** Radicchio is a leafy vegetable that belongs to the chicory family. It has a bitter taste and is often used in salads. Consuming radicchio may promote digestive health.
5. **Endive:** Endive is another bitter leafy vegetable that is commonly used in salads. Its bitter taste can stimulate digestive processes and support healthy digestion.
6. **Artichoke:** While commonly used in digestive bitters, artichokes are also edible and can be consumed as food. Steamed or grilled artichokes have a slightly bitter taste and are known for their potential benefits for digestion.
7. **Gentian Greens:** Gentian greens are the leaves of the gentian plant. They can be consumed as a bitter green vegetable and have digestive benefits similar to gentian root.
8. **Bitter Melon:** Bitter melon, also known as bitter gourd, is a tropical vegetable with a very bitter taste. It is often used in Asian cuisine and is believed to have digestive properties.
9. **Dandelion Greens:** Dandelion leaves, when young and tender, can be consumed as bitter greens. They are rich in nutrients and may support digestion and liver health.
10. **Chicory:** Chicory leaves are used as bitter greens and can be consumed in salads or cooked as a vegetable. They have a bitter taste and are known for their potential digestive benefits.

Incorporating these foods into your diet can provide natural sources of digestive bitters, helping to support healthy digestion. However, individual tolerances to bitterness may vary, so it's important to listen to your body and consume these foods as tolerated.