

~ A Healthier You ~

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When I surrender, the Universe moves.
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Feverfew



Butterbur

Migraine Headaches

Migraine headaches are caused by expansion of the blood vessels in the brain and inflammation of surrounding tissue. They are usually of the 'reoccurring' type and tend to run in families. About 20% of individuals who have migraines, experience an 'aura' prior to an attack. There are certain foods, events and changes called 'trigger factors' that can initiate a migraine. These could include dietary factors, such as chocolate, alcohol and skipping meals, or sensory triggers such as bright lights, strong odors, or weather changes. There can also be stress triggers such as job loss or divorce and hormonal factors related to menstruation.

Up until recently there was only one main herb for treating the migraine headache and that was Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*). Due to clinical trials in Britain during the 1980's, Feverfew has been an effective remedy for migraine, although the exact nature of its action is not understood. The constituent 'parthenolide' appears to inhibit the release of the hormone serotonin, which is thought to trigger the headache. Feverfew, taken in small quantities, is used as a preventive and has to be taken regularly at the first signs of an attack.

Butterbur ((*Petasites hybridus*) is now being used extensively for preventing the blood vessel expansion of a migraine, along with the inflammation, as well. Butterbur extract (standardized to 7.5 mg petasin) has been studied significantly and has shown to reduce the frequency of migraine attacks, the number of attacks per month and the accompanying nausea and dizziness.

Based on the results of studies, the recommended dosage of standardized Butterbur Extract is 150 mg per day for the first month and then 100 mg per day thereafter. Generally, people see results after 4 weeks. To date there are no studies to compare Feverfew and Butterbur for migraine prevention. But as for effectiveness with a migraine attack, it seems that the Butterbur is more effective than Feverfew.