

Galactogenic Herbs & Foods Summaries & Evidence

Fenugreek (*Trigonella Foenumgraecum*)

- **Fenugreek Seed** – Common/historical world-wide galactogogue, hypoglycemic, rich in iron, may raise prolactin and stimulate growth hormone, contains steroidal saponins (diosgenin may partially synthesize progesterone), may impact neurotransmitters like serotonin/dopamine.
- **Modern evidence:** Turmeric, Ginger, Fenugreek RCT = 49% increase week 2, 103% increase week 4, greater than placebo group, no adverse outcomes (bumrungpert, 2018). RCT 66 dyads, 3 cups tea increased production compared to placebo (Turkyilmaz et al, 2011) Other studies = Ghasemi et al, 2015; Bazzano et al., 2016 ABM protocols 2018.
- **Dosing:** Dried seed / powder 2-3g / day (although some studies looked at up to 25g / day), 1:2 tincture 2-5ml / day, 1:5 tincture 1- ml / day.
- **Contraindications:** Pg, may impact med absorption, hypoglycemic, anti-thyroid (Fenugreek inhibits conversion of T4 to T3, decreases serum T3, increases T4), gastric irritant for some, may irritate those sensitive to legumes. Herbs rich in saponins may be inappropriate in individuals with: Celiac, fat malabsorption issues, A, D, E, K, deficiencies, digestive irritation, cholestasis.

Moringa / Malunggay (*Moringa Oleifera*)

- **Moringa** – Traditional galactogogue / food, nutrient powerhouse (iron, vitamins, minerals, protein, amino acids, calcium, etc.), may increase prolactin and mammary tissue, ok in the late Ph, rich in phytosterols.
- **Modern evidence:** Bazzano et al., 2016; Saini et al, 2016

(Note* The company GoLacta keeps a comprehensive list of lactation related moringa research on their website: <http://www.golacta.com/go-lacta-studies.aspx>)

- **Dosing:** 3-6 g / day + powdered / capsule, 3-6 ml / day tincture.
- **Contraindications:** Possibly contraindicated pre-mid Pg (implantation) based on rat research (human dose = 11,900 mg / day = rat dose), potentially can impact thyroid? (human dose – 23,300 mg / day).

Goat's Rue (*Galega Officinalis*)

- **Goat's Rue** – Hypoglycemic, (precursor to Metformin) diuretic, may stimulate breast tissue growth, can use in late Pg. Rich in Amines, saponins, phytoestrogens.
- **Modern evidence:** Milk production on 7th and 30th DOL was greater (200 ml avg) in silymarin/galega group compared to placebo (avg 115ml) (Zecca et al., 2014, Tabares et al., 2014); 2/3 reported improved milk output and perceived benefits/safety (Salatino et al., 2017). Castoldi et al., 2014, Tabares et al., 2014
- **Dosing:** 3-6 ml 1:1 tincture, 4-8 ml / day 1:2 tincture, 6-12 ml / day 1:10 tincture.
- **Contraindications:** May be contraindicated with blood thinners, potentiates action of hypoglycemic drugs.

Shatavai (*Asparagus Racemosus*)

- **Shatavari** – Known to increase mammary gland tissue / milk volume in rat studies traditional Ayurvedic galactagogue, good for getting “secretions” flowing, comparable to metoclopramide (Regaln) in studies for gastric issues. Dopamine antagonist has been shown to increase prolactin levels. Rich phytoestrogens, saponins.
- **Modern evidence:** Gupta & Shaw, 2011; Sharma et al, 1996; Goyal et al. 2003
- **Dosing:** 1:2 tincture 4-9 ml/day, powder – 3-6 g /day.
- **Contraindications:** No major contraindications. Herbs rich in saponins may be inappropriate in individuals with celiac, fat malabsorption issues, A, D, E, K, deficiencies, digestive irritation, cholestasis.

Milk Thistle (*Silybum Marianum*)

- **Milk Thistle** – Promotes gastric / bile secretions, supports liver / gallbladder, prevents depletion of glutathione, reduces fasting glucose levels, increases cell membrane strength, historical galactagogue. Rich in sterols, silymarin / flavolignans (phytoestrogens?)
- **Modern evidence:** Silymarin has enhanced mammary cells proliferation in cow / rat studies. Human RCT = 85% increase in production over 60 days on 420 mg silymarin as compared to placebo (Di Pierro et al. 2008). Milk production on 7th and 30th DOL was greater (200 ml avg) in silymarin / galega group compared to placebo (avg 115ml) (Zecca et. Al., 2018); No Adverser outcomes in mother / preemies (<32 weeks) (Peila et al., 2015) ABM protocols 2018.
- **Dosing:** 4 – 10 ml / day 1:1 tincture, 200 – 600 mg / capsule / tablet per day (standardized to 20 – 80 % silymarin)
- **Contraindications:** No major contraindications unless allergic to composite species.

Fennel (*Foeniculum Vulgare*)

- **Fennel Seed** – Good digestive aid, antispasmodic, hypotensive, diuretic, anti-androgenic, historical galactagogue, rich in phytoestrogens, anethole. May aid in mammary tissue development, prolactin levels and let-down reflex.
- **Modern evidence:** Some monographs, traditional evidence, animal research shows higher fat content and quantity of milk (Bone & Mills, 2013)
- **Dosing:** Can be eaten raw, in salads, cooked. 3 – 6 ml / day 1: 2 tincture, 7 – 14 ml / day 1:5 tincture, 1 – 2 g / day dried / powder or 1 tsp – 1 tbsp crushed seeds as infusion per cup / water
- **Contraindications:** Allergy to umbelliferae species, contraindicated in Pg.

Lactogenic Foods

- **Vegetables:** lettuce, fennel, onion, potato, asparagus, legumes, carrots, potato, broccoli, brussels sprouts, spinach, beets, greens, seaweed, moringa, maca root
- **Fruits:** figs, dates, apricots, steamed green papaya, sweet cherries, peaches, strawberries, lemon, lucuma
- **Grains:** oats, quinoa, barley, millet
- **Nuts/Seeds:** almonds, sesame, flax, cashews, pecans, hemp seeds
- **Good Fats:** avocado, olive oil, sesame oil, coconut oil