

# Rhodiola rosea

*Rhodiola rosea* has been used for centuries for a wide range of medical conditions, including depression and anxiety. Medical use of the root began in Eastern Europe and its benefits have since been confirmed in scientific studies. It improves fatigue, sleep, concentration, and helps people adjust to stressful situations.

*Rhodiola rosea* enhances transmission of serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine in the brain. It has antioxidant and neuroprotective properties. It modulates a major stress hormone, cortisone-releasing factor.

## Side effects

*Rhodiola rosea* has a good safety profile. Side effects are uncommon and mild. They can include drug allergy, irritability, headache, dizziness, insomnia, and fatigue.

## Risks and interactions

*Rhodiola rosea* can lower blood pressure and blood sugar, so use caution and consult with your physician if you are in treatment for hypertension or diabetes. *Rhodiola rosea* may raise levels of medications that are metabolized by specific enzymes in the liver (CYP2C9, CYP3A4, CYP1A2). Just how much it may raise other medication is not well known.

## Dosage

Most studies use a dose of 100-680 mg/day (usually 200-400 mg/day). *Rhodiola rosea* is well tolerated. Start with a low dose (100-200 mg/day) and increase to around 300 mg/day after a week.

## Choosing a product

A good product contains close to 3% rosavins and 0.8-1% salidroside, the two key ingredients. *Rhodiola rosea* products are not regulated by the FDA, but an independent group (Consumer Labs) tests products. Their top picks (for cost) are *Nature's Way* and *Solaray*. They also recommend *Bluebonnet*, *Enzymatic Therapy*, *Gaia Herbs*, *GNC Herbal Plus*, *New Chapter Rhodiola First*, and *Thorne*.

Find links to top products at [www.chrisaikenmd.com/supplements](http://www.chrisaikenmd.com/supplements).



*Rhodiola rosea* is a plant with bright orange flowers

–Chris Aiken, MD, Updated 7/27/2024