**MORE ABOUT THE HERBS IN THE RENE CAISSE TEA**

**SHEEP SORREL**

*Rumex acetosella*

Sheep sorrel was regarded by Rene Caisse as having the most direct effect on health and is therefore a vital component of the herbal tea. Known as Gypsy Rhubarb in southern England, the tangy, slightly astringent leaves have been used traditionally to flavour salads and soups as well as stuffings and fish. And the whole plant has wide ranging therapeutic effects.

At Clouds Trust, the ground sheep sorrel leaves and stems are bought in from organic herb suppliers in the UK. The roots, however, we harvest ourselves after the first winter frosts, when the plant is dormant. Indeed it is the root which provides additional, concentrated therapeutic elements and small quantities should always be included in the tea. **Clouds Trust is one of the few, if only producers of “Essiac” tea to include the powdered root.**

We also package sheep sorrel on its own for use as an enema, gargle or douche, to enhance the healing properties of the tea. Because of the acidic nature of the plant (it has a pH of 4.5), we do not recommend that it is consumed orally.

**BURDOCK**

*Arctium lappa*

**Burdock** forms one of the cornerstones of the Rene Caisse Herbal Tea: more than half of the dried herb mixture consists of ground burdock root. The roots (and seeds) have a long tradition of use in the herbal pharmacy and burdock is a favourite amongst herbalists, with very good reason.

In the “essiac” formula, one-year-old burdock root provides a wide spectrum of therapeutic benefits, including **blood cleansing** and **immune boosting** functions. It has mild **anti-bloodclotting** activity.

The herb also **protects the liver** and **aids digestion** and **appetite** by stimulating the production of bile. It is therefore also known to be a mild **laxative** and **diuretic**, helping to **clear toxins** from the body. By supporting the liver, it is particularly helpful for **skin conditions** such as psoriasis and acne and may be used topically as a poultice.

It is **antibacterial**, **anti-inflammatory** and **antioxidant** and also **aids kidney function**, protecting against cystitis and gout. It can help to **reduce coughing and fever**, as well as **regulate blood sugar levels.**

**SLIPPERY ELM**

*Ulmus fulva/rubra*

The inner bark of the Slippery Elm tree is an essential component of the Rene Caisse herbal tea, making up nearly 10% of the dried mixture. Finely ground, the powder has **demulcent** and **anti-inflammatory** qualities, helping to **soothe** the mucous membrane lining of the **digestive** **tract,** which makes it especially useful during **chemotherapy**.

It is also useful for gastritis, enteritis, haemorrhoids and gastric or duodenal ulcers, as well sore throats.

Its **nutritious** qualities make it a valuable food during convalescence as it is easily absorbed. It has gentle astringent properties as well and helps to ease diarrhoea.

An excellent source of soluble **fibre**, slippery elm bark may help to reduce cholesterol levels, as well as bulk up the stool when constipated.

Externally, the powder may be mixed to a paste with water and applied to boils, ulcers and abscesses.

In fact, the herb has an ancient history: in Culpeper’s day, it was mixed with vinegar or brine and applied externally to ease gout, or decocted and dabbed on to burns.

Apart from its use in the herbal tea, the powdered bark may be taken on its own in warm milk or water: 1 teaspoon per cup three times a day. Because of its demulcent properties, however, it would be best to take it away from any other medication, food or supplement as it may delay or inhibit their absorption. And it is best to avoid slippery elm during pregnancy as the bark may stimulate labour.

**TURKEY RHUBARB**

*Rheum palmatum*

The dried, powdered root of Turkey rhubarb constitutes a small but significant part of the Rene Caisse herbal tea: only approximately 300mg are used in the 15g monthly pack.

Also known as East India or China Rhubarb, it was originally imported from China and Tibet, but can now be grown and harvested locally. It comes from the same family as our native English rhubarb *Rheum rhaponticum,* which has similar if milder actions.

Turkey rhubarb has bitter, astringent qualities and is known as an effective digestive stimulant and liver tonic. At varying doses, it can be used to treat both constipation and diarrhoea and therefore has a regulatory effect on digestion. It stimulates the appetite and promotes the flow of bile from the liver, thus optimising the action of digestive enzymes, reducing liver congestion and preventing the formation of gallstones.

In Ayurvedic medicine, Turkey rhubarb is thought to reduce cholesterol, heal ulcers in the digestive tract, reduce gastrointestinal bleeding, including haemorrhoids, and clear tumours and toxins from the bowel.

However, because of the anthraquinone constituents of Turkey rhubarb, it is contraindicated in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

According to Thomas Bartram, Turkey rhubarb forms part of the ancient Sanskrit remedy, Soma, for courage, wisdom and longevity.

**ALL HERBS SUPPLIED BY THE CLOUDS TRUST ARE ORGANIC**

**Further information on the herbs in the Rene Caisse herbal tea may be found in the following books:**

* **Mali Klein (2006) *The Essiac Book.* Guage Ltd.** Detailed information about the herbs and the essiac tea, including various recipes and lifestyle tips.

*Available through the Clouds Trust. Suggested donation £8 plus £2 P&P.*

**Or:**

* **Sheila Snow & Mali Klein (1999) *Essiac Essentials.* Gill & Macmillan, Dublin.** Detailed information about the Rene Caisse Herbal Tea, the herbs and background story.
* **Sheila Snow & Mali Klein (2001) *Essiac, the Secrets of Rene Caisse’s Herbal Pharmacy.* Gill & Macmillan, Dublin.** Further details about the herbs as well as an excellent Frequently Asked Questions section, and uplifting testimonials.

*The above books are not available through the Clouds Trust but may be located through www.amazon.co.uk or other bookshops*