

Herbal supplements need to be stopped 14 days before surgery

Name of Herb Common Uses Possible Side Effects or Drug Interactions

<i>Echinacea</i>	Boosts the immune system and helps fight colds and flu; aids wound healing.	May cause inflammation of the liver if used with certain other medications such as anabolic steroids, methotrexate or others.
<i>Ephedra</i> (also called Ma-Huang)	Used in many over-the-counter diet aids as an appetite suppressant; also for asthma or bronchitis.	May interact with certain antidepressant medications or certain high-blood pressure medicines to cause dangerous elevations in blood pressure or heart rate. Could cause death in certain individuals.
<i>Feverfew</i>	Used to ward off migraine headaches and for arthritis, rheumatic disease and allergies.	May increase bleeding, especially in patients already taking certain anticlotting medications.
<i>GBL, BD and GHB</i>	Bodybuilding, weight loss aid and sleep aid.	These are abbreviations for illegally distributed, unapproved drugs (not supplements) that may cause death, seizures or unconsciousness.
<i>Garlic</i>	For lowering cholesterol, triglyceride levels and blood pressure.	May increase bleeding, especially in patients already taking certain anticlotting medications. May decrease effectiveness of certain AIDS-fighting drugs, e.g., saquinavir.
<i>Ginger</i>	For reducing nausea, vomiting and vertigo.	May increase bleeding, especially in patients already taking certain anticlotting medications.
<i>Ginkgo</i> (also called ginkgo biloba)	For increasing blood circulation and oxygenation and for improving memory and mental alertness.	May increase bleeding, especially in patients already taking certain anticlotting medications.
<i>Ginseng</i>	Increase physical stamina and mental concentration.	May increase bleeding, especially in patients already taking certain anticlotting medications. May see increased heart rate or high blood pressure. May cause bleeding in women after menopause.
<i>Goldenseal</i>	Used as a mild laxative and also reduces inflammation.	May worsen swelling and/or high blood pressure.
<i>Kava-kava</i>	For nervousness, anxiety or restlessness; also a muscle relaxant.	May increase the effects of certain anti-seizure medications and/or prolong the effects of certain anesthetics. May cause serious liver injury. May worsen the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. Can enhance the effects of alcohol. May increase the risk of suicide for people with certain types of depression.
<i>Licorice</i>	For treating stomach ulcers.	Certain licorice compounds may cause high blood pressure, swelling or electrolyte imbalance.
<i>Saw palmetto</i>	For enlarged prostate and urinary inflammation.	May see effects with other hormone therapies.
<i>St. John's wort</i>	For mild to moderate depression or anxiety and sleep disorders.	May decrease effectiveness of all currently marketed HIV protease inhibitors and non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (powerful AIDS-fighting drugs). May possibly prolong effects of anesthesia (not proven). May unknowingly decrease levels of digoxin, a powerful heart medication.
<i>Valerian</i>	Mild sedative or sleep-aid; also a muscle relaxant.	May increase the effects of certain anti-seizure medications or prolong the effects of certain anesthetic agents.
<i>Vitamin E</i>	Used to prevent stroke and blood clots in the lungs. Also used to slow the aging process and for protection against environmental pollution.	May increase bleeding, especially in patients already taking certain anticlotting medications. May affect thyroid gland function in otherwise healthy individuals. In doses higher than 400IU per day, may cause problems with increased blood pressure in people who already have high blood pressure.



Helpful Phone Numbers

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Resources for Insurance/Billing Questions

Check with your insurance company

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