Indications

Used for weak, irregular heart action, tachycardia, palpitations, aortic regurgitation, and angina.

Mechanism of Action

The amines in night-blooming cactus are credited with cardiotonic effects. The amino acid tyramine is found in the plant and credited with a positive ionotropic action.\(^1\) \textit{Selicereus} can stimulate the heart and dilate peripheral vessels.\(^2\) The flowers contain betacyanins and flavonoglycosides, at least eight flavonoids, tyramine (0.3% in dry matter), and hordenine.

Evidence-Based Research

There have been no clinical trials or modern scientific investigations on night-blooming cactus as yet. Case reports may be found by Dr. AO Jones from 1890.

Safety in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

There are no investigations published regarding the use of night-blooming cactus in pregnancy or lactation.

General Safety

The plant is considered safe when used in small doses in the traditional manner. Mouse data report the LD\(_{50}\) to be 10,700 mg/kg body weight orally and 145 mg/kg body weight subcutaneously.\(^5,3\)

Dosage

Low doses of night-blooming cactus, 10–100 mg QD to BID are clinically effective.

Traditional Uses

\textit{Cereus or Cactus grandiflorus} (now classified as \textit{Selenicereus grandifloras}) is a folkloric medicine used as a heart tonic for blood pressure regulation and the management of the symptoms of congestive heart failure.\(^4,5\) Night-blooming cactus is specific for weak, irregular heart action; aortic regurgitation; and angina, especially when associated with depression and lethargy. The early American folkloric notion was that night-blooming cactus was a restorative remedy for the heart, capable of improving function via nutritional and tonic effects.
References


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