

Senna fruit and leaf
Botanical name: Senna
alexandrina

Energetics/Actions: Bitter,
sweet, cold, stimulant laxative

Description

Senna is a shrub that is native northern Africa and has been used for centuries in Eastern and Western systems of medicine. It is one of the most commonly used laxatives worldwide. Senna is a stimulating laxative that *should not be used for longer than 1-2 weeks*. Both the fruit pod and the leaf of the plant are used.



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Uses

Constipation: For short-term treatment of occasional constipation. Useful when there are hemorrhoid or fissure flare-ups and easy defecation with soft stools is desirable.

Dose

Tea: $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of dried leaf or pod in 1 cup of water, steep covered for 15-20 minutes.

Honey or other flavorful herbs may be added to improve taste.

This herb is the main ingredient in many over the counter laxatives, including Smooth Move tea.

To avoid cramping "gripping", start with the lowest dose.

Safety information

Do not use senna if you have Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, or abdominal pain. Do not use for longer than 1-2 weeks. Using senna for longer than 2 weeks can slow down intestinal function. Not for use in pregnancy or breastfeeding.