

# **Devil's Club**

Oplopanax horridum popularly known as the devil's club/devil's walking stick, is a very big understory shrub, found from Alaska down through the western-most Canadian provinces and into Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. It is also found in the Great Lakes area.

The name Oplopanax is a compound word hailing from the Greek όπλο or oploweapon and the Latin panax- (panacea) to mean all-healing.

Devil's club is well known for its big palmate leaves and stiff woody stems which are covered in poisonous and irritating spines. It is a very popular medicinal herb used by the tribes of the native Indians living in the Northwest of the Pacific.

People use its inner bark of the root and stem as medicine for type 2 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis and autoimmune dis-function, stress-induced overeaters, short term for sugar cravings- a treatment for type 2 diabetes, late-onset of hypoglycemia (should be administered in small doses) and as an expectorant for thick mucus. The plant also contains chemicals that might help in preventing certain cancer cells from growing and also fight some bacteria, fungi, and viruses.

Traditionally, devil's club was used for ritual functions. Its spiny stems were used to construct ritual huts to warn away intruders. The plant was also credited with bringing about supernatural powers, cleansing, and protection.

## **Effects of devil's club tea on blood glucose**

Researchers did a study on blood glucose levels by monitoring an insulin-dependent patient. The patient was seen to not have any hypoglycemic effect after taking devil's club tea. The study also shows that patients suffering from Diabetes are able to maintain a normal blood glucose level after using this medicinal plant.

To heal diabetes, one has to infuse the inner bark of the roots and sometimes use the roots and come up with a decoction (devil's club tea) for oral consumption. The appropriate dose of devil's club depends on several factors such as the user's age, health, and several other conditions. At this time, there is not enough scientific information to determine an appropriate range of doses for devil's club. Keep in mind that natural products are not always necessarily safe and dosages can be important. Be sure to follow relevant directions on product labels and consult your [pharmacist](#) or physician or other [healthcare](#) professional before using.

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