



Milk thistle (Silybum marianum)

Type of Plant/Fruit:

- Milk thistle is native to the Mediterranean, but is now widespread throughout the world. This stout thistle usually grows in dry, sunny areas. The stem branches at the top, and reaches a height of 4 to 10 feet. The leaves are wide, with white blotches or veins. According to legend, the white veins carry the milk of the Virgin Mary, hence its other common name—Marian thistle. The stem and leaves contain a milky white sap. The flowers are red-purple. The small, hard-skinned fruit is brown, spotted, and shiny. Milk thistle is easy to grow, and quickly matures in less than a year.

Origin and Native Uses:

- Milk thistle (Silybum marianum) has been used since Greco-Roman times as an herbal remedy for a variety of ailments. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, physicians in the United States used milk thistle seeds to support normal functions of the liver, spleen, and kidneys. These traditional uses are noted to qualify the nutrient benefits of the plant and it is not intended to treat or cure any disease.

Form Used in Chiropractor's Choice:

- Our milk thistle (silymarin) is extracted from the fruits (seeds) of the plant. Over 70% of the extraction we use in our formula contains silymarin.

Primary Ingredients and Benefits:

- The active ingredient in milk thistle is known as silymarin. Silymarin actually consists of a group of compounds called flavonolignands. Silymarin has also been shown to be a potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory in many studies.
- There are many past and ongoing scientific studies which suggest that active substances in milk thistle (particularly silymarin) support normal liver functions. Certain drugs such as acetaminophen (a common over the counter medication used for headaches and pain) can cause liver damage if taken in large quantities or by people who drink alcohol regularly.
- Many professional herbalists recommend milk thistle extract to support normal low levels of a variety of inflammatory conditions.

References:

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