

# Herbal Products & Prescription Medicine:

## Potentially dangerous mixtures



Tips from your Poison Control Center

This is a list of only a few medication interactions.

Consult your pharmacist before taking over-the-counter products.

### If you take these:

Aloe + digoxin heart medicine  
Aloe + steroids or blood pressure meds  
Beta-Carotene + cigarette smoking  
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Capsicum + blood-thinners  
Cat's Claw + blood pressure meds  
Cat's Claw + immunosuppressants  
Chondroitin + blood-thinners  
Echinacea + immunosuppressants  
Ephedra + digoxin heart medicine  
Ephedra + Diabetes meds  
Fish oils + blood thinners  
Garlic pills + blood-thinners, aspirin  
Garlic pills + Diabetes medicines  
Garlic pills + cyclosporine  
Ginkgo Biloba + blood-thinners  
Ginkgo + diuretic blood pressure pills  
Ginkgo + anticonvulsants  
Ginseng + blood-thinners  
Glucosamine + Diabetes medicines  
Glucosamine + cancer meds  
Glucosamine + shellfish allergy

### This could happen:

Lower potassium  
Lower potassium  
Higher cancer risk  
High heart attack risk  
Risk of bleeding  
Low blood pressure  
Reduced effectiveness  
Risk of bleeding  
Reduced effectiveness  
Irregular heartbeat  
Higher blood sugar  
Risk of bleeding  
Risk of bleeding  
Very low blood sugar  
Organ rejection  
Risk of bleeding  
Higher blood pressure  
Risk of seizures  
Risk of bleeding  
May raise blood sugar  
Cancer med won't work  
Allergic reaction

## If you take these:

Hawthorn + digoxin heart medicine  
Kava-kava if you have liver problems  
St. John's Wort + digoxin  
St. John's Wort + psychiatric meds  
St. John's Wort + Cyclosporine  
St. John's Wort + blood thinners

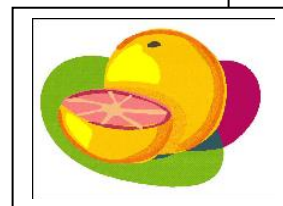
## This could happen:

Irregular heartbeat  
Severe liver damage  
Digoxin won't work well  
Toxic side effects  
Organ rejection  
Reduced effectiveness

For questions about medications,  
call your pharmacist or physician.  
Poison Centers can provide advice about  
medication problems and are  
open 24 hours. Call 1-800-222-1222.



These are some of the types of drugs that have interactions with whole grapefruit or grapefruit juice: drugs used to treat high blood pressure, "statin" drugs used to lower cholesterol, some anti-anxiety and antihistamine medications, protease inhibitors used to treat HIV/AIDS and immunosuppressant drugs used after transplant surgery. If you are on medications, ask a pharmacist for the latest information before taking grapefruit or grapefruit juice.



**Grapefruit &  
Medication  
Interactions**

### **Websites to search for medication interactions:**

[www.druginteractioncenter.org](http://www.druginteractioncenter.org) (grapefruit interactions)

<http://www.mskcc.org/about/herbs>

<http://my.webmd.com/medical-information/drug-and-herb>

<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/>

Reference List for interaction information:

Thomson Micromedex Alternative Medicine Database:9/2005 edition

Lexi-Interact:2004 , <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FS088>

Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database 2003, Edited by *Pharmacist's Letter*