**Figwort**

**Species (Family)**
Scrophularia nodosa L. (Scrophulariaceae)

**Synonym(s)**
Common Figwort, Scrophularia

**Part(s) Used**
Herb

**Pharmacopoeial and Other Monographs**
BHP 1983\(^{(G7)}\)
PDR for Herbal Medicines 2nd edition\(^{(G36)}\)

**Legal Category (Licensed Products)**
Figwort is not included in the GSL.\(^{(G37)}\)

**Constituents\(^{(G62,G64)}\)**

- **Amino acids** Alanine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, phenylalanine, threonine, tyrosine and valine.\(^{(1)}\)

- **Flavonoids** Diosmetin, diosmin and acacetin rhamnoside.\(^{(2)}\)

- **Iridoids** Aucubin, acetylharpagide, harpagide, harpagoside, isoharpagoside, procumbid and a catalpol glycoside.\(^{(3-5)}\) Figwort is stated to have the same qualitative iridoid composition as devil's claw, but about half the content of harpagoside.

- **Acids** Various acids including caffeic acid, cinnamic acid, ferulic acid, sinapic acid and vanillic acid, present as both esters and glycosides.\(^{(6,7)}\)

**Dosage**

- **Dried herb** 2–8 g by infusion.\(^{(G7)}\)

- **Liquid extract** 2–8 mL (1:1 in 25% alcohol).\(^{(G7)}\)

- **Tincture** 2–4 mL (1:10 in 45% alcohol).\(^{(G7)}\)

**Pharmacological Actions**

**In vitro and animal studies**
The iridoid glycosides aucubin and catalpol have been documented to exert a purgative action in mice.\(^{(8)}\) Cardioactive properties and anti-inflammatory activity have been claimed for harpagide and the other iridoid constituents (see Devil's Claw).\(^{(G62)}\)

**Clinical studies**
None documented. The iridoids are stated to be bitter principles.\(^{(G62)}\)

**Side-effects, Toxicity**
None documented.

**Contra-indications, Warnings**
Figwort should be avoided in ventricular tachycardia.\(^{(G7)}\)

**Pregnancy and lactation** The safety of figwort has not been established. In view of the lack of pharmacological and toxicity data, use of figwort during pregnancy and lactation should be avoided.

**Pharmaceutical Comment**
The chemistry of figwort is well studied and it is stated to be an acceptable substitute for devil's claw (Harpagophytum procumbens) with the same qualitative composition of bitter principles but half the content of harpagoside.\(^{(G62)}\) Little scientific evidence was located to justify the herbal uses. In view of the lack of toxicity data and possible cardioactive properties, excessive use of figwort should be avoided.

**References**
See also General References G7, G31, G36, G37, G62 and G64.