

Ginkgo biloba



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ASTROLOGY OF HEALING BONUS MATERIAL

INGRID NAIMAN

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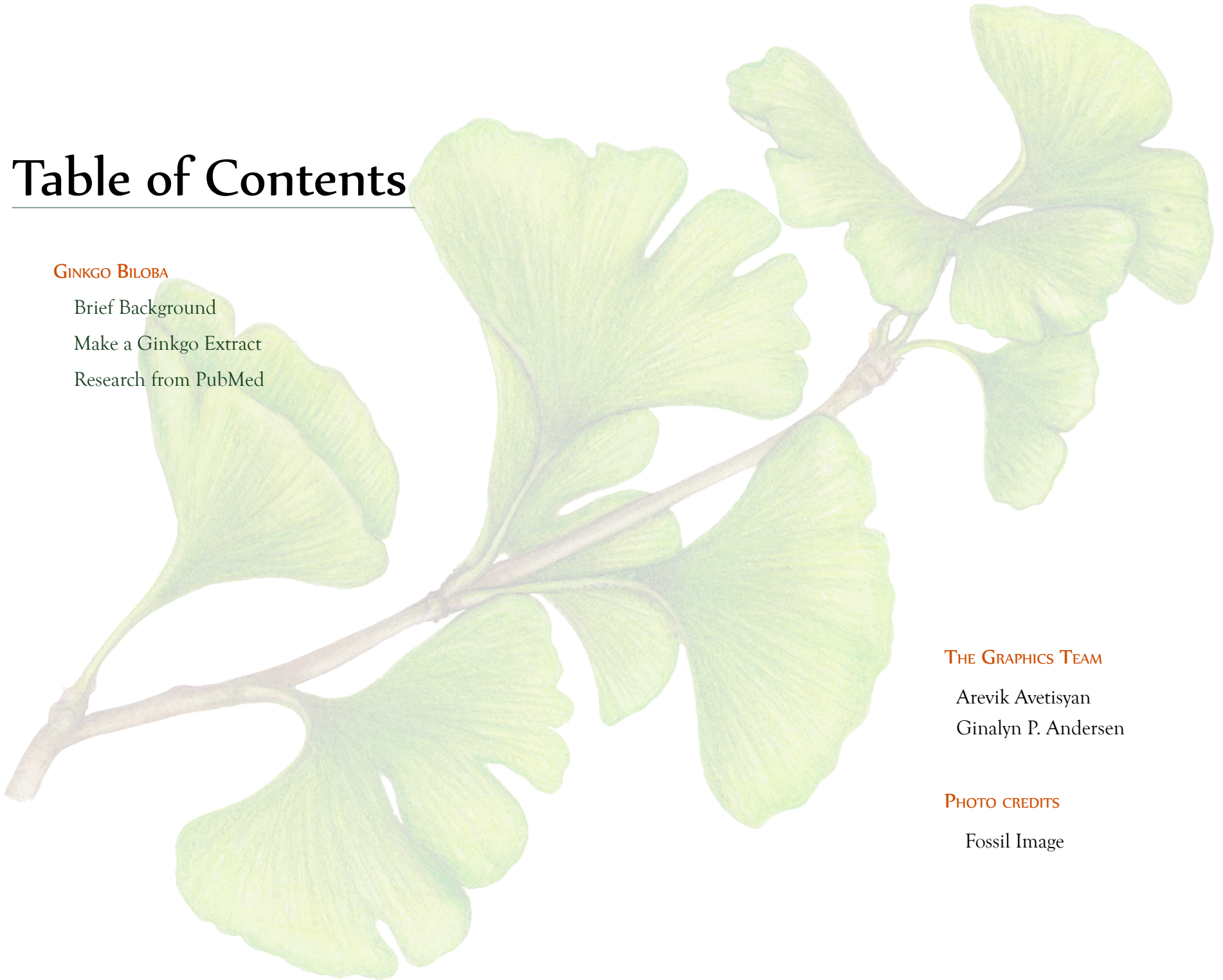
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PHOTO CREDITS

Fossil Image



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Ginkgo biloba

Native to East Asia and is often grown in monasteries.

Common name: Maidenhair Tree

Part used: leaf

Harvest: in late summer or early autumn before leaves turn yellow.



Ginkgo Biloba

Ginkgo is sometimes called a living fossil because there are no other members of its species, and its age and uniqueness set it apart from other plants. It might owe its survival to the fact that it tolerates drought as well as pollution. Some trees are believed to be 2500 years old. Fossils from the Jurassic Period have been found.

The tree is hardy to zone 4 but grows slowly. Both male and female plants are required in order to produce seed, but the fruit (on the female plant) smells like rancid butter so female trees are seldom used for ornamental purposes.



In Chinese medicine, it was primarily the cooked seed that was used, but recent studies of the leaves suggest that they, too, have considerable medicinal benefits, including promoting circulation, especially to the brain. It is also used to treat tinnitus where the presumed cause is free radical damage or impaired circulation. The leaf contains a compound unknown in any other plant, ginkgolides. These have anti-allergenic actions that make ginkgo suitable for use in treating asthma.

The most popular uses of ginkgo leaf today are for conditions related "cerebral insufficiency" characterized by loss of memory, dizziness, confusion, and anxiety.¹ Traditionally, it is used for many of the diseases common to elderly persons, such as deafness, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, memory loss, and vertigo. However, due to the success in protecting workers at the Chernobyl nuclear disaster site, it is being studied more and more for its radioprotective properties.

My interest in ginkgo began in 1962 when visiting Hiroshima and learning that six trees within one-to-two kilometers of the atomic bomb blast survived.

¹The Mayo Clinic.

1:5 Extract of Ginkgo Biloba

Anyone can make his or her own herbal remedies from fresh or dried plants. In the example here, the plant material was purchased rather than harvested from my garden, but I do have a small ginkgo tree which, however, does not have leaves at this time of year. For this particular potency, we need 5 oz. of dried plant material for 750 ml. of liquid, called a menstruum. I chose these amounts because the volume fits well into a one quart mason jar and many types of alcohol are sold in 750 ml. bottles. In this case, I used vodka, but one can use Everclear mixed with 10-20% distilled water. One can also use glycerin, vinegar, or wine, including sake, as the liquid.

The process is very simple: measure the herbs and cover them with the liquid (solvent) and wait at least a week or two for the herbs to be extracted.



Then, press the extract to separate the liquid from the marc. Some people use muslin or cheesecloth. Others use herb presses or coffee presses. Pour the liquid into a bottle, label it, and compost the marc.

Warning: If taking anticoagulants such as coumarins, please monitor carefully.



Research

Ginkgo Biloba and Chernobyl Liquidators

Clastogenic factors are found in the plasma of persons irradiated accidentally or therapeutically. They persisted in the plasma of A-bomb survivors over 30 years. Clastogenic factors were found in 33 of 47 Chernobyl accident recovery workers (often referred to as liquidators) in a previous study (I. Emerit et al., J. Cancer Res. Clin. Oncol. 120, 558-561, 1994). In the present study, we show that there is a positive correlation between clastogenic activity and dose and that these biomarkers of oxidative stress can be influenced successfully by appropriate antioxidant treatment. With the authorization of the Armenian Ministry of Health, 30 workers were treated with antioxidants from Ginkgo biloba leaves. The extract EGb 761 containing flavonoids and terpenoids was given at a daily dose of 3 x 40 mg (Tanakan, IPSEN, France) during 2 months. The clastogenic activity of the plasma was reduced to control levels on the first day after the end of the treatment. A 1-year follow-up showed that the benefit of the treatment persisted for at least 7 months. One-third of the workers again had clastogenic factors after 1 year, demonstrating that the process which produced clastogenic factors continued.

However, the observation that antioxidants do not have to be given continuously is encouraging for intervention trials on a large-scale basis. These appear justified, since clastogenic factors are thought to be risk factors for the development of late effects of irradiation.

SOURCE: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/7480646>