

Vitex agnus-castus

Vitex agnus-castus, commonly known as Chaste Tree or Chasteberry, is a medicinal shrub native to the Mediterranean region and parts of Central Asia. It has been traditionally used for centuries in women's health and hormonal balance support. Today, Vitex is widely utilized in herbal medicine and dietary supplements related to menstrual and reproductive wellness.

Key facts

- **Scientific name:** *Vitex agnus-castus*
- **Common names:** Chaste Tree, Chasteberry
- **Family:** Lamiaceae
- **Active compounds:** Flavonoids, iridoids, diterpenes
- **Typical forms:** Capsules, tinctures, teas, extracts

Botanical characteristics

Vitex agnus-castus is a deciduous shrub with aromatic leaves and purple flower spikes that produce small dark berries. The berries are harvested and processed into herbal preparations commonly used in wellness and traditional medicine.

Traditional and modern uses

Traditionally, Vitex has been used to support menstrual regularity, reproductive health, and hormonal balance. In modern herbal medicine, it is frequently promoted for premenstrual symptoms, menstrual cycle support, and women's wellness formulations.

Mechanism and research

Research suggests that compounds in Vitex may influence dopaminergic pathways and hormonal signaling associated with prolactin regulation. Clinical studies have explored its role in premenstrual symptoms and menstrual cycle support, although further research is still ongoing.

Safety and regulation

Vitex is generally considered safe when used in moderate amounts. Mild gastrointestinal symptoms, headache, or skin reactions may occur in sensitive individuals. Caution is advised during pregnancy or when using hormonal medications unless supervised by a healthcare professional.

Culinary and supplement context

Vitex agnus-castus is widely available in capsules, tinctures, herbal teas, and women's wellness supplements. Its longstanding use in traditional medicine continues to support its popularity worldwide.