

## Substances and Herbs Used to Reduce the Appetite

---

Both chemical substances and herbal extracts can be used to reduce appetite and thereby help slimming. But all of these are not equally healthy to use.

Substances to reduce appetite have been used since the First World War. Soldiers used the stimulating substance amphetamine both to stimulate their fighting capacity and to reduce hunger. The same was done in the Second World War. After the last war, the civil market began to use amphetamine and related substances to help reduce the intake of food during weight loss efforts.

### **A. APPETITE SUPPRESSORS OF THE AMPHETAMINE GROUP**

Amphetamine and related substances stimulate the alertness of the central nervous system and the impulse to external action. When zones of the brain dealing with external action are in high activity, signals are sent to zones controlling appetite, digestion and connected functions to reduce their activity. Thus central stimulating substances also reduce appetite. Since these drugs increase the bodily activity, they also help to reduce weight by inducing a higher rate of fat burning.

Some drugs of this group are also used as antidepressant, for example fluoxetine hydrochloride (Prozac).

Being central stimulants all these appetite suppressors also bear a certain risk of developing addiction, and of side effects like insomnia, agitation, manic reactions, hypertension, stroke, heart valve damage and heart rhythm disturbances.

Because of such dangerous effects, many of these substances have been banned from most markets as appetite suppressants, for example amphetamine itself, aminorex, fenfluramine, phenylpropanolamine and ephedrine. However, many of these substances are still used for other purposes, for example to stimulate heart activity and to regulate up a too low blood pressure.

Substances of this group available on the market today as appetite suppressants are: Phentermine, diethylpropion, phenidmetrazine, benzphetamine, sibutramine, rimonabant, oxyntomodulin and fluoxetine hydrochloride (Prozac).

### **PHENTERMINE**

Phentermine is perhaps the most widely used appetite suppressant drug today. It works by increasing the release of the hormones / neurotransmitters norepinephrine, serotonin and dopamine. The signals from these substances make the nervous system more alert for external action and reduce appetite.

### **EPHEDRA AND EPHEDRINE**

Ephedrine is a central stimulant extracted from species of the plant genus Ephedra. The substance is banned in most communities as a appetite suppressor nowadays, but are used for other medical purposes, for example to stimulate heart activity and increase blood pressure. In some communities Ephedra as a herb is still used as a part of stimulating herbal preparations.

### **SIBUTRAMINE**

Sibutramine works by reducing the reuptake of the hormones / neurotransmitters serotonin, norepinephrine and dopamine and thus increases the effects from these substances, with increased alertness and reduced appetite as a result.

## **RIMONABANT**

This is a new drug working by blocking signals receptors that increase appetite upon signals from neurotransmitters / hormones. These are the same receptors that react upon contact with substances in the narcotic herb Cannabis. The main action of this drug is appetite reduction. In addition to appetite reduction it also seems to help smoking cessation for certain smokers. Severe depression may be a side effect of this drug.

## **B. MODERN HERBAL APPETITE REDUCERS**

Because of the potential side effects of appetite suppressors from the amphetamine group, people often turn to herbal appetite reducers with a very long history of use in their country of origin without having shown the same side effects. The herbal appetite suppressors Hoodia Gordonii and pinnothin are two such herbal appetite suppressors of increasing popularity. Preparations containing these herbs generally also contain herbs that increase the burning of fat, or herbs that reduce the uptake of fat or sugar from the intestines.

### **HOODIA GORDONII**

This is a cactus-like plant native in the African desert Kalahari. The San tribe living in this region has used the herb in centuries to suppress hungers during long hunting expeditions. In the long traditional use, the herb has shown to suppress hunger without side effects.

The plant contains substances whose molecules resemble glucose molecules. When there is enough glucose in the blood, the brain interprets it as a signal to reduce the hunger. The substances of the Hoodia Gordonii give the same signal to the brain, and thus reduce the appetite.

### **PINNOTHIN**

This chemical complex is found on the Korean Pine Nut tree *Pinus Koreanensis*, and the working substance of Pinnothin is pinnoleic acid, an unsaturated fatty acid with 18 carbon atoms, three double bounds and with the first bound on the fifth carbon atom (omega-5 poly-unsaturated fatty acid). Pinnoleic acid reduces the appetite by inducing production of a larger amount of the appetite regulating signal substance cholecystokinin (CCK), which then is released into the blood circulation. CCK in the blood is interpreted by the brain as a command to reduce the feeling of hunger.

Another ways CCK works, is by delaying the emptying of the stomach content into the intestines, and by giving signal to the gall bladder to empty its content with digestive enzymes into the small intestine. The stomach will therefore lack room for new food a longer time each day, and this reduces the urge to eat.

-----  
Knut Holt is an internet consultant and marketer focusing on health items. For more information about slimming, fitness, health and other areas, and interesting products within the fields health, hobby, automotive and apparel, please see his website.

<http://www.abicana.com>

----Free to reprint with the author's name and link.

---

Author: aquila

Article downloaded from page [eioba.com](http://www.eioba.com)