

BIRCH

Date: April 24, 2008

Proper and common name(s):

Table 1: Proper and common name(s)

Proper name(s)	Common name(s)
<i>Betula pendula</i> Roth. (Betulaceae) (USDA 1998)	Birch, European white birch, silver birch, weeping birch (McGuffin et al. 2000)
<i>Betula pubescens</i> Ehrh. (Betulaceae) Synonym: <i>Betula alba</i> L. (Betulaceae) (USDA 1998)	Birch, downy birch, white birch (McGuffin et al. 2000)

Source material(s): Leaf (Bradley 2006; ESCOP 2003)

Route(s) of administration: Oral

Dosage form(s): Those suited to the allowable route(s) of administration.
This monograph is not intended to include food-like dosage forms such as bars, chewing gums or beverages.

Use(s) or Purpose(s): Statement(s) to the effect of

Used in Herbal Medicine as a diuretic (Bradley 2006; ESCOP 2003; Hoffmann 2003; Blumenthal et al. 1998).

Dose(s): Preparations equivalent to 0.6-9 g dried leaf, per day (Bradley 2006; ESCOP 2003; Hoffmann 2003; Blumenthal et al. 1998).

See Appendix 1 for examples of appropriate dosage preparations, frequencies of use and directions for use, according to cited references. The purpose of Appendix 1 is to provide guidance to industry.

Duration of use: Statement(s) to the effect of:
For occasional use only (Berardi et al. 2002; CPA 2002)

Risk information: Statement(s) to the effect of:

Caution(s) and warning(s):

- ▶ Consult a health care practitioner if symptoms persist or worsen.
- ▶ Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you are pregnant or breastfeeding (ESCOP 2003).
- ▶ Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you have oedema due to a kidney or cardiovascular disorder (Bradley 2006; ESCOP 2003; Brinker 2001; Blumenthal et al. 1998).

Contraindication(s): No statement required.

Known adverse reaction(s): Hypersensitivity (e.g. allergy) has been known to occur; in which case, discontinue use (Brinker 2001).

Non-medicinal ingredients: Must be chosen from the current NHPD *List of Acceptable Non-medicinal Ingredients* and must meet the limitations outlined in the list.

Specifications:

- ▶ The finished product must comply with the minimum specifications outlined in the current NHPD *Compendium of Monographs*.
- ▶ The medicinal ingredient may comply with the specifications outlined in the Birch Leaf Monographs published in the European or British Pharmacopoeias.

References cited:

Berardi RR, DeSimone EM, Newton GD, Oszko MA, Popovich NG, Rollins CJ, Shimp LA, Tietze KJ, editors. Handbook of Nonprescription Drugs: An Interactive Approach to Self-Care, 13th edition. Washington (DC): American Pharmaceutical Association; 2002.

Blumenthal M, Busse W, Goldberg A, Gruenwald J, Hall T, Riggins C, Rister R, editors. The Complete German Commission E Monographs: Therapeutic Guide to Herbal Medicines. Austin (TX): American Botanical Council; 1998.

Bradley PR, editor. *British Herbal Compendium: A Handbook of Scientific Information on Widely Used Plant Drugs, Volume 2*. Bournemouth (UK): British Herbal Medicine Association; 2006.

Brinker F. *Herb Contraindications and Drug Interactions*, 3rd edition. Sandy (OR): Eclectic Medical Publications; 2001.

CPA 2002: Canadian Pharmacists Association. *Patient Self-Care. Helping Patients Make Therapeutic Choices*. Ottawa (ON): Canadian Pharmacists Association; 2002.

ESCOP 2003: ESCOP Monographs: The Scientific Foundation for Herbal Medicinal Products, 2nd edition. Exeter (UK): European Scientific Cooperative on Phytotherapy and Thieme; 2003.

Hoffmann D. *Medical Herbalism*. Rochester (VT): Healing Arts Press; 2003.

McGuffin M, Kartesz JT, Leung AY, Tucker AO, editors. *Herbs of Commerce*, 2nd edition. Silver Spring (MD): American Herbal Products Association; 2000.

USDA 1998: United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, National Genetic Resources Program. Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN). *Betula pendula* Roth., *Betula alba* L./*Betula pubescens* Ehrh. National Germplasm Resources Laboratory, Beltsville (MD). [Accessed 2008-04-24]. Available from: http://www.ars-grin.gov/cgi-bin/npgs/html/tax_search.pl

References reviewed:

Brinker F. Online Updates and Additions to Herb Contraindications and Drug Interactions, 3rd edition. Sandy (OR): Eclectic Medical Publications; 2008. [Accessed 2008-04-24]. Available from: <http://www.eclecticherb.com/emp/updatesHCIDI.html>

Grieve M. *A Modern Herbal, Volume 1*. New York (NY): Dover Publications; 1971 [Reprint of 1931 Harcourt, Brace & Company publication].

McGuffin M, Hobbs C, Upton R, Goldberg A, editors. *American Herbal Products Association's Botanical Safety Handbook*. Boca Raton (FL): CRC Press; 1997.

Appendix 1: Examples of appropriate dosage preparations, frequencies of use and directions for use

Dried leaf: 2-3 g, several times per day [not to exceed 9 g per day] (Blumenthal et al. 1998)

Infusion:

- ▶ 2-3 g dried leaf, several times per day [not to exceed 9 g per day] (Bradley 2006)
- ▶ 2-3 g dried leaf, 2-3 times per day (ESCOP 2003)

Directions for use: Pour 250 ml of boiling water on dried leaf and steep for 10 minutes (Hoffmann 2003).

Tincture:

- ▶ 0.2 g dried equivalent, 3 times per day (1:10, 2 ml) (ESCOP 2003)
- ▶ 0.2-0.4 g dried equivalent, 3 times per day (1:5, 25% alcohol, 1-2 ml) (Hoffmann 2003)