

Slippery Elm

What is Slippery Elm?

Slippery Elm is an herb prepared from the inner bark of the Slippery or red Elm tree (*Ulmus rubra*). The term 'Slippery' refers to the remarkable viscid gel that is formed when the powdered bark comes in contact with water.



Why recommend administration of Slippery Elm to my pet?

Slippery Elm is well known for its use as a protecting and lubricating herb for pets with gastrointestinal disease. The tannins in the herb reduce inflammation, and the oily mucilage components lubricate the digestive tract and assist in waste elimination. The herb is visualized to coat the lining of inflamed mucous membranes such as the gastrointestinal tract and respiratory tract.

How much experience is there with the use of Slippery Elm in pets?

Slippery Elm is in common use in pets with digestive disturbances.

What species of animals are being treated regularly with Slippery Elm?

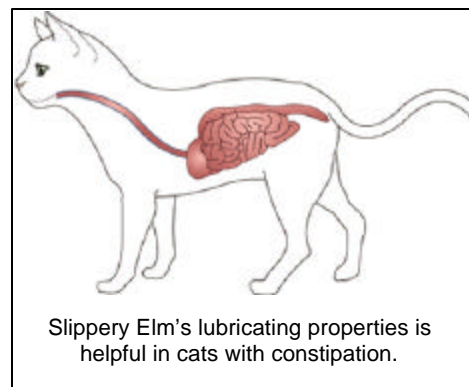
While Slippery Elm is probably safe for use in a variety of animals, most veterinary clinical experience comes from its use in cats and dogs.

How much research has been conducted on this supplement?

The effects of Slippery Elm have only been studied in humans. No animal studies currently exist.

How can my pet benefit from Slippery Elm?

The lubricating qualities make it desirable to try for pets, especially cats, with constipation. The lubricating qualities may also help soothe the upper respiratory passages of pets with bronchitis symptoms such as excessive coughing. The lubricating qualities are considered to be higher in dried powdered extracts of Slippery Elm.



How successful is Slippery Elm?

Slippery Elm is a generally safe herb for use in animals because it is relatively mild in its effects. For the acute management of constipation and severe bronchitis, additional therapy will likely be required. Slippery Elm may be very useful in preventing constipation.

How safe is Slippery Elm?

Slippery Elm is safe although rarely an animal may show allergies to it. While unlikely to be found in commercial preparations, the outer bark can irritate urinary and digestive systems and cause abortion in pregnant animals. Slippery Elm may marginally interfere with the absorption of other drugs. Consider giving Slippery Elm at a slightly different time from other drugs.

Where do I obtain Slippery Elm and do I need a prescription?

Your veterinarian may have superior quality preparations that he or she will recommend, but a prescription is not required for Slippery Elm. Remember that supplement quality can vary tremendously among manufacturers.

This client information sheet is based on material written by Steve Marsden, DVM ND MSOM LAc DipICH AHG, Shawn Messonnier, DVM and Cheryl Yuill, DVM, MSc, CVH.

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