

RASPBERRY LEAF & PREGNANT WOMEN

Biophysical effects, safety and efficacy: a systemic integrative review

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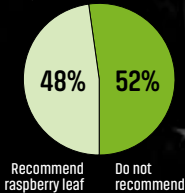
BACKGROUND

Childbearing women and midwives have been using various herbs to assist with pregnancy, labour and birth for centuries. The most common in Australia is raspberry leaf. The evidence base for the use of raspberry leaf is under-developed.

It is incumbent on midwives and other maternity care providers to provide women with evidence-based information so they can make informed choices. The aim of this study was to review the research literature to identify the evidence base on the biophysical effects, safety and efficacy of raspberry leaf in pregnancy.

Australian midwives & post-dates pregnancy

Moffatt, et al. 2018



METHODS

- 6 databases were searched to identify empirical research papers published in peer reviewed journals including in vitro, in vivo, human & animal studies.
- CINAHL, MEDLINE, Cochrane Library, Scopus & Web of Science Core Collection and AMED.
- Identified studies were appraised independently by 2 reviewers using the MMAT appraisal instrument.
- An integrative approach was taken to analysis.

RESULTS

13 studies were included:

- 5 laboratory studies using animal and human tissue,
- 2 experiments using animals, and
- 6 human studies.

Raspberry leaf has biophysical effects on animal & human smooth muscle including the uterus.

Toxity was demonstrated when high doses were administered intravenously or intraperitoneally in animal studies.

Human studies have not shown any harm or benefit though one study demonstrated a clinically meaningful (though non-statistically significant) reduction in both length of second stage of labour and augmentation of labour.



Potential power of Raspberry Leaf

Parameters in vitro have been identified that suggests a herb has an impact in vivo and should be further investigated. Raspberry leaf was found to exceed these parameters by over 60 times.

CONCLUSIONS

Many women use raspberry leaf in pregnancy to facilitate labour and birth. The evidence base supporting the use of raspberry leaf in pregnancy is weak and further research is needed to address the question of raspberry leaf's effectiveness.

Women deserve to know so they can make informed decisions about their pregnancy and birth.

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