ginger (Zingiber Officinale) (jin-jer)

Other Name(s):
Calicut, cochin, ginger, root, imber, imsperiential, Jamaica ginger, Youbei, hanzhi, jiang, zingiber

Classification: anthemics

Common Uses
Prevention and treatment of nausea and vomiting associated with motion sickness, loss of appetite, pregnancy, surgery, and chemotherapy. Prevention of postoperative nausea and vomiting. May be used for dyspepsia, diarrhea, flatulence, arthritis, cramping, and diarrhea. Migraine headaches. Tonic (toning/strengthening agent) in gout, gas, respiratory infections, anti-inflammatory, stimulant (tones the gut, increases saliva and gastric juices, acts as anticoagulant, decreases blood cholesterol).

Action
Antiemetic effect due to increasing GI motility and transport may act on serotonin receptors. Shown to be hypoglycemic, hypotensive or hypertensive, and positive inotropic agent. Exhibits prostaglandin-diol and -aldehyde, lowers cholesterol, and improves appetite and digestion. Therapeutic Effects: ↑ nausea and vomiting due to motion sickness, surgery, and chemotherapy. ↓ joint pain and improvement of joint mobility in rheumatoid arthritis. Antioxidant.

Pharmacokinetics
Absorption: Unknown.
Distribution: Unknown.
Metabolism and Excretion: Unknown.
Half-life: Unknown.

Contraindications/Precautions
Contraindicated in: Lactation (if using large amounts); Gallstones.
Use Cautiously in: Pregnancy (preliminary evidence that ginger might affect fetal sex hormones); Patients with ↑ risk of bleeding; Diabetes; Anticoagulant therapy; Cardiovascular disease.

Interactions
Natural Product-Drug: May ↑ risk of bleeding when used with anticoagulants, antiplatelet agents, and thrombolytics. May have additive effects with antihypertensive agents (causing hypotension) and calcium channel blockers (causing hypotension).

Route/Commonly Used Doses
PO (Adults): Motion sickness — 1000 mg dried ginger root taken 30 min–4 hr before travel or 250 mg qid. Postoperative nausea prevention — 1000 mg ginger taken 1 hr before induction or anesthesia. Chemotherapy— induced nausea — 2-4 g/day. Up to 2 mg/day powdered ginger has been used as an antinauseative (nadir exceed 4 g/day). Alzheimer’s — 500 mg at more than 500 mg every 4 days up to 1.5–2 g/day for 3–4 days. Rheumatoid arthritis — 170 mg tid or 255 mg bid of ginger extract.

NURSING IMPLICATIONS
Assessment
● Assess patient for nausea, vomiting, abdominal distention, and pain prior to and after administration of the herb when used as an antinauseative agent.
● Assess pain location, duration, intensity, and associated symptoms (phosphorescence, photophobia, hallucinations) during migraine attack.
Assess pain, swelling, and range of motion in affected joints prior to and after administration when used in the treatment of arthritis.

Assess patient's appetite prior to and after administration when used as a gastrointestinal agent.

Monitor BP and heart rate in patients with cardiovascular disease including hypertension.

Lab Test Considerations: Monitor blood glucose and coagulation panels periodically during therapy.

Potential Nursing Diagnoses

Acute pain (Indications)
Deficient knowledge, related to medication regimen (Patient/Family Teaching)

Implementation

Administer ginger prior to situations where nausea or vomiting is anticipated (e.g., motion sickness).

Dosage form and strengths vary with each disease state. Ensure that proper formulation and dose are administered for the indicated use.

Patient/Family Teaching

Instruct patients receiving anticoagulants not to take this herb without the advice of their health care professional (increased risk of bleeding).

Tell patient to stop the herb immediately if palpitations occur and notify health care professional.

Instruct patient to observe for easy bruising or other signs of bleeding. If they occur, stop the herb immediately and notify health care professional.

Warn patients with a history of gallbladder disease to use this herb only under the supervision of their health care professional.

Instruct patient to consult health care professional before taking any Rx, OTC, or other herbal products concurrently with ginger.

Herb is meant to be used as a tonic, not for long-term use.

Evaluation

Prevention of nausea and vomiting.
Relief of epigastric pain.
Improved joint mobility and relief of pain.
Relief of migraine headache.

Why was this drug prescribed for your patient?