



Bilberry - <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	
Description	Bilberry is a short, shrubby perennial bush that grows in the forests and on the moors of northern Europe. The main active ingredient in its fruit is anthocyanoside - a powerful antioxidant.
Traditional Use	Bilberry is widely used for maintaining healthy vision. It helps to strengthen capillaries and so help deliver oxygen rich blood to the eyes.
Commercial Availability & Dosage	Bilberry is generally available as fresh or dried berries; tea made from dried leaves or dried berries; bilberry extract (standardised to 25% anthocyanidin). Tablets providing 50-120mg of anthocyanins per day have been typically used in clinical trials ¹ .
Precautions / Contra-Indications¹	Very high doses should be avoided in patients with haemorrhagic (bleeding) disorders.
Pregnancy & Breastfeeding²	Likely to be safe when consumed in dietary amounts, however safety is not known when used in larger quantities. Has been safely used during the second and third trimesters.
Adverse Effects	None known
Interactions¹	Warfarin and other anti-coagulant and anti-platelet (blood-thinning) medication.
References	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mills, S. & Bone, K. Principles and practice of phytotherapy. Churchill Livingstone, 2000.2. Braun & Cohen. Herbs and Natural Supplements: An evidence-based guide. Churchill Livingstone, 2005.