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[Review](#) > [Holist Nurs Pract.](#) Jan-Feb 2016;30(1):54-7. doi: 10.1097/HNP.000000000000130.

Echinacea Purpurea: A Proprietary Extract of Echinacea Purpurea Is Shown to Be Safe and Effective in the Prevention of the Common Cold

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Abstract

The research study in this review represents the largest clinical trial to date that evaluated the safety and efficacy of Echinacea purpurea for prophylactic treatment of the common cold, in addition to investigating its risk-benefit in a long-term treatment period. The clinical application of the proprietary standardized Echinacea purpurea extract (Echinaforce) demonstrated efficacy as a preventive cold treatment option over a 4-month duration. This study showed that Echinacea's long-term prevention was associated with a reduction in the total number of cold episodes, a reduction in the number of days with colds, and a reduction in cold episodes requiring additional medication. Furthermore, the Echinacea test agent inhibited virally confirmed colds, exhibited maximal effects on recurrent infections, and demonstrated that its preventive effects increased relative to therapy compliance and adherence to the protocol. In summary, Echinacea purpurea when taken as recommended for the prevention of the common cold appears to provide a positive risk to benefit ratio.

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