

My Experience with Otopa Bark and Cat's Claw for Lyme Disease

In my Seattle practice, I had quite a bit of success using the herbs Otopa Bark (*Otopa parvifolia*) extract and Cat's Claw (*Uncaria tomentosa*) tinctures, even when prescriptive antibiotics were no longer working. I find this combination helps improve the symptoms of Lyme disease 80 to 90 percent of the time. This is the same chance of success I see with prescription antibiotics.

I added these two herbs into my treatments in August 2010 based on a research paper published in the July 2010 Townsend Letter. In the paper, Eva Sapi, PhD, and her research group showed that Otopa Bark extract and Cat's Claw treat the various forms of the Lyme germ and reduce biofilm colonies. Biofilms are slime layers that cover Lyme germs, blocking treatment. For more information, see [Biofilms: Lyme Disease Gated Communities \(treatlyme.net\)](http://Biofilms: Lyme Disease Gated Communities (treatlyme.net)).

When I first started to work with Otopa Bark and Cat's Claw, I introduced them into the treatments of my patients that had plateaued on prescriptive antibiotics at a good level of health. During these plateaus, I had tried various prescriptive regimens targeted at all three forms of the Lyme germs and treated for biofilms with lumbrokinase to move the treatments forward, without success. Many of these patients had energy levels of 80 percent of normal with minimal body pain and good cognition. For these patients, I offered Otopa Bark extract and Cat's Claw as a means of preventing recurrence off of prescriptive antibiotics, and to possibly move the treatments forward. I started each of these herbs as tinctures at 10 drop 2 times a day and added 1 drop per dose per day till each patient was at 20 drops 2 times a day.

To my surprise, I observed that nearly 90 percent of patients I placed on this protocol had marked improvements in fatigue by the follow-up two-month appointment. Some reported significant die-off reactions. Eventually, based on my patients observed and reported successes, I started to work with Otopa Bark and Cat's Claw in the middle of treatment courses, and now at the initiation of treatments.

I am pleased for my patients because, across the board, I there were good benefits. In the beginning and middle of treatments, I found success with these two herbal tinctures that compared with those of prescriptive antibiotic regimens. At the end of treatments or when a patient has plateaued, I found that these two herbs also moved treatments forward. I also used these herbs in some of my relapse prevention programs. See [Finished? And How To Prevent Relapse](#) for more information.

Working with these two herbs, I changed my opinion about the benefit of herbal antimicrobials. In the past, I recommended teasel, cumanda, andrographis, and Cat's Claw in various combinations and in rotations similar to those found in the Cowden Protocol. In my practice, I found success with herbal antimicrobials about 60 percent of the time. This compares with the 85 to 90 percent chance of improvement that I observe with prescription antibiotic protocols. Naturally, when given a choice between the herbs and prescriptive antimicrobials with these observed success rates, most of my patients elected prescriptive regimens.

As a nutritional support, the combination of Otopa Bark and Cat's Claw is a frontline treatment. They are also effective in the middle and to wrap up treatments. These herbs are an equally effective option to prescription antibiotics.

Method of Action of Otopa Bark and Cat's Claw

So, what is going on here? Based on the work of Sapi and her colleagues, I think the combination of Otopa Bark and Cat's Claw effectively kills the various forms of Lyme *Borrelia* while it breaks up biofilms. Sapi, et al's work shows that Cat's Claw and Otopa Bark have a synergistic effect, where the sum of the killing is greater than the individual effects of each herb.

In addition, my success in moving plateaued treatments forward suggests that these herbs can kill germs in dormant or persister phases where prescriptive antibiotics do not work.

Dosage of Otoba Bark and Cat's Claw in Lyme Disease

Over time, because of strong Herxheimer die-off reactions, I changed how I started the regimen.

Start treatments at 5 drops 2 times a day of each herb and increase the dosage every 2 days by 1 drop per dose until taking 30 drops 2 times a day. If there is a Herxheimer a die-off reaction at any dose, do not increase the dose till the die-off reaction has improved. With this adjusted approach I found limited die-off reactions.

Take these herbs together without food. But they can be taken with other supplements and medications. Do not take them at least 30 minutes before eating and until two hours after eating.

Finally, one manufacturer of these two herbal tinctures recommends that they be taken at least 15 minutes apart from each other. I do not find this matters, and I had patients take both of these together all the time.

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References



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About the Author

Marty Ross, MD is a passionate Lyme disease educator and clinical expert. He helps Lyme sufferers and their physicians see what really works based on his review of the science and extensive real-world experience. Dr. Ross is licensed to practice medicine in Washington State (License: MD00033296) where he has treated thousands of Lyme disease patients in his Seattle practice.

Marty Ross, MD is a graduate of Indiana University School of Medicine and Georgetown University Family Medicine Residency. He is a member of the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society (ILADS) and The Institute for Functional Medicine.