

# Herbal Supplement Garden

When taking vitamins or supplements, we want to be sure of what's in the bottle. But how do herbal supplement companies know?

To verify the authenticity of raw materials, companies examine them on both a macroscopic (seen with the naked eye) and microscopic (seen through a microscope) level.

For example, two plants may look similar but have very different chemical profiles. Conversely, two plants may look different but have very similar chemical profiles, as seen in the high-performance thin-layer chromatography (HPTLC) images at right. Testing within the herbal supplement industry is important to determine identity and purity. Herbal supplement companies want to make sure their raw materials have not been adulterated, or mixed with filler materials, to bulk up the product and cut costs. Using the wrong plant in an herbal supplement may have detrimental effects!

## Did you know?

To assist with quality control, Green Bay Botanical Garden provides samples of raw plant material to Nature's Way® to help them build their Botanical Reference Material library. This Herbal Supplement Garden displays some of the medicinal herbs (as well as some of the look-a-likes) used in their supplements. Can you tell which plant is which? Check out our online handout for the answers!

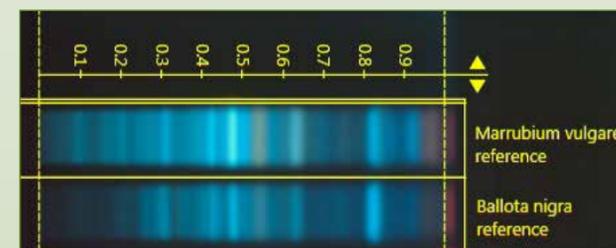
The Herbal Supplement Garden is for demonstration purposes only. Green Bay Botanical Garden does not endorse the use of these herbs to treat any illness or disease. Use with caution and consult with a physician before beginning any herbal treatments.

Which plants do you recognize from your supplements?

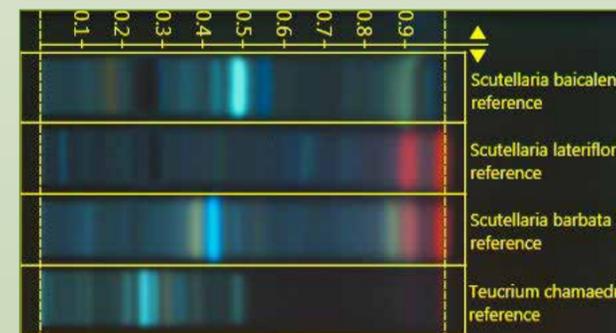
Quality control at Nature's Way® guarantees that what is on the label is actually inside the bottle.



Plants such as horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*) and black horehound (*Ballota nigra*) look different but have similar chemical profiles.



Plants such as germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*) and skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*) look similar but have different chemical profiles.



Find helpful Herbal Supplement Garden information at [GBBG.org/Herbs](http://GBBG.org/Herbs)