



*Foeniculum vulgare*

Family: *Umbelliferae*, includes carrot, parsley, dill, angelica, etc.

Parts: Seed (other parts can be used for food but only the seed is medicinal)

From the time of the Pharaohs in Egypt, fennel has been a favorite herb as a digestive aid, support and help. It has a licorice type taste and can naturally sweeten any herbal tea. If you are not a big fan of licorice flavor, dill seed could be used with similar properties.

**Properties:** antispasmodic, anthelmintic (nausea), antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, carminative (aid digestion, expel gas), demulcent, diuretic (urine flow), expectorant (expels congestion), galactagogue (milk flow), nervine, tonic.

### Medicinal Uses:

- Digestive aid: upset stomach, cramping, diarrhea, constipation, expels gas, promotes bile secretion, IBS, colic, and even killing pathogenic bacteria in the gut.
- Upset stomach due to nerves. Calms both the body and the mind.
- Nausea, belching, bloating, and heartburn.
- Women's Health: mild estrogenic effect, PMS symptom relief, help start periods if struggling with menstruation, increase milk production for nursing mamas, menopause.
- Colic in babies (mama can drink it for milk production and baby gets it through the milk).
- Improves vision and can help with eye inflammation and conjunctivitis.

- Helps break up and expel mucus from chest congestion. Use for coughs and respiratory issues.

### Methods of Use:

- Chew the seeds, this way is also used as a breath freshener.
- Tea - crush the seeds before making a tea or adding to a blend.
- Tincture
- Honey, syrup
- Herbal oil
- Bath and foot soak
- Herbal sprinkle

### Care/Harvesting:

You can find fennel in your local nursery or plant from seed. Fennel doesn't get along well with vegetable gardens so plant in a different area. It is drought tolerant and grows in any type of soil and condition. It will continue to self seed if some seeds are left on the plant in the fall.

- **Seeds:** When the seed heads turn brown with grey stripes they are ready to harvest by snipping of the umbel and shaking or rubbing the seeds off. If they have any moisture left in them, leave out in the sun for a couple of days or dehydrate before storing.
- **Leaves:** Can be harvested as food anytime.
- **Bulb:** The bulb can be harvested as vegetable late summer early fall. It can be chopped and added to foods or dried.

### Caution:

High doses of fennel can stimulate the uterus which makes it great for menstruation but not so great if pregnant.