



Althaea officinalis

Family: Malvaceae (other members include hibiscus, hollyhock, okra and cotton)

Parts Used: roots, leaves and flowers

Properties:

Expectorant, diuretic, demulcent, emollient, anti-inflammatory, nutritive, vulnerary, laxative.

Medicinal Uses:

- Support and soothe kidney, bladder and urinary system
- Urinary disorders such as kidney stones and urinary tract infections
- Bronchial problems, such as bronchitis, irritating coughs, whooping cough, pneumonia, etc.
- Wounds, burns, boils, sores, and skin ulcerations of any kind (poultice or compress)
- Bug bites and stings (make a poultice with the leaf by chewing or rubbing)
- Soothes irritation and inflammation in the digestive and urinary systems
- Helps neutralize stomach acid, aiding in stomach ulcers and heartburn
- Gout
- Eye infections and sore eye (eye wash with the tea)
- Mastitis (use hot compress or fomentation)
- Sore nipples (gel or salve)
- Soothes skin irritation (gel or salve)
- Venereal issues (douche with tea, salve, bath)

Methods of Use:

- Tea
- Poultice
- Gruel: chop root and add water (or use root powder) once a gel forms this can be used internally or externally to soothe inflammation and irritation.



Annie's Place

- Tincture or syrup
- Salve, ointment and balm
- Powdered and herbal capsules
- Bath (sooth and moisturize skin)
- Food: all parts can be used as a vegetable. Root can be used as a thickener and to make – marshmallows! Flowers will turn into “cheeses” that can be eaten.

In the Garden:

The plant can be grown from seed, sown directly in the spring or started indoors and transplanted. It can also be started from cuttings or root divisions in the autumn. Space about 2 feet apart. Loves loamy, moist soil (hence the name “marsh”).

- Flowers can be harvested in the summer right before they are fully open. They are expectorant and used to make cough syrup. They can be dried for future use but must be stored in a dark container. Carefully remove the flowers with snips so they do not get bruised.
- Leaves are best harvested after flowering in the late summer – although they can be used anytime.
- Roots can be harvested in the fall or winter after the plant is over 2 years old. Pull or dig out tap root and wash, peel and then use immediately or dry them in slices, may need to use a dehydrator on low setting to dry thoroughly.

Disclaimer: The Information contained on this handout is for educational purposes only and as a guideline for your personal use. It is not intended to replace the advice of a licensed physician. Those who follow these suggestions do so at their own risk.