



Mentha piperita (peppermint)

Mentha spicata (spearmint)

Family: *Labiatae* - Mint

Properties:

analgesic, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic, antiviral, stimulating, digestive, decongestant, antibiotic, antifungal, anti-depressant, astringent, calmative, nervine, purifying.

Medicinal Uses:

- Sinus and bronchial congestion
- Coughs and colds
- Sore Throat
- Pain reliever
- Toothaches and mouth wash
- Nausea, motion sickness
- Aids digestion
- Digestive complaints: gas, constipation, diarrhea, cramps, etc.
- Parasites
- Bug bites and stings
- Repels mosquitoes, flies, fleas, moths, ants, and spiders.
- Infections
- Headache
- Mental strain
- Boosts memory and thinking



Annie's Place

- Nervous system
- Women's Health including PMS
- Clogged milk ducts and milk knots in nursing mothers (best used as a fresh poultice)
- Burns
- Fever reducer
- Skin conditions, including rashes
- Stimulant
- Cooling (rub diluted essential oil over body for a refreshing coolant on hot days)
- Cleaning agent: deodorizes, disinfects and removes noxious odors

Methods of Use:

- The most well know way to use mint is in an herbal infusion (tea). This can be drank, used as a steam inhalation, or in a bath or foot soak.
- Herbal oil
- Tincture/Extract
- Vinegar (makes a great fly, ant, spider repellent to spray around the house)
- Sleep pillows and sachets
- Herbal capsules or pills
- Herbal syrup
- Salve, ointment, balm
- Poultice (best for bug bites, stings and milk knots)
- Use in the kitchen: blender drinks and smoothies, herbal water, salads, pesto, pastas, chop and include in cookies and treats. See in the kitchen section above.
- Peppermint essential oil
- Spearmint essential oil

In the Kitchen:

- Mint is a nutrient dense herb and is particularly high in calcium, magnesium, and potassium which makes it a great herb to include in your recipes for added nutrition. Keeping in mind this is a digestive aid, you may just want to include it in everything! Here are some ideas and uses for mint in the kitchen.
- A flavoring for deserts and drinks (tincture with alcohol and you have peppermint extract)
- Use fresh leaves for pesto, smoothies, herbal drinks, salads, soup etc.
- Make a powder with the dried herb to use in any cooking dishes and in rubs for meat.



Annie's Place

- Use peppermint honey or butter in tea, on toast, as rubs, or any way you would use them in your meals.
- Floating fresh mint on raw milk will keep it fresher longer and will keep it from coagulating as readily.

In the Garden:

- Must plant from a cutting, when planted from seed the plant loses potency, smell and taste.
- This is a vigorously spreading plant so watch carefully and only plant next to other vigorous plants, in a container or where you don't care to let it spread.
- Mint likes rich, moist, well drained soil in full sun to part shade.
- Frequent cuttings encourage bushiness. Harvest leaves anytime during the season, in the morning when it is sunny and dry is a good time. Never harvest wet leaves and pick out those that are shriveled or diseased. Leaves cut before flowering yield a sweeter taste.
- Cut the entire plant back within a few inches of the ground when the first flowers appear.
- Not a good bed mate with other plants, including other mints. They easily cross pollinate with other mint varieties, making them less potent. I do plant mine next to yarrow, which is another vigorous plant and they seem to tolerate each other. St. John's wort is another vigorous plant that would get along with mint. Chamomile on the other hand gets along well with mint and when planted next to each other their oil content is increased. Never plant next to potatoes.

Garden Helper:

Planted in pots around the garden mint discourages ant, controls aphids and cabbage caterpillars. Mint will also aid the growth and flavor of cabbages, pea, and tomatoes.

Preserving:

Because of its aromatic properties mint should be dried as quickly as possible, preferably in a dry, warm, shady, area with lots of good air flow. Store in a glass, air tight container in a cool, dry place where it should last up to a year.

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.