



Prunus virginiana/serotina

Family: *Rosaceae* (includes rose, apple, peach)

Parts Used: Inner bark and fruit.

Properties: nervine sedative, astringent, expectorant, digestive.

Medicinal Uses:

The main use of wild cherry is for coughs as it has a sedative effect on the cough reflex. The cough reflex is useful for a productive cough that is expelling mucus from the lungs. When it turns to an irritating cough that is painful, not expelling any mucus or preventing a person from resting, it is time to use wild cherry bark.

- Bronchitis
- Whooping cough
- Unproductive cough
- Eye inflammation, use a wash with the bark.
- Fevers (cooked cherry juice with equal parts honey)
- Calms indigestion and upset stomach.
- Pain reliever for headache and aching from cold and flu.

Methods of Use:

- Food: Fruit can be eaten fresh, cooked, juiced or dried.
- Tea (only make with a cold infusion, heat will destroy properties)
- Syrup
- Tincture
- Powdered, capsules
- Eye wash, gargle

Care/Harvesting:

Found scattered in open woods, grasslands, rocky slopes, canyons, and clearings. Can also purchase from a nursery and cultivate in the yard.

- Fruit is ready to harvest in the autumn and will be red to black.
- Bark can be harvested anytime but is most potent in the spring or fall.
- Cut twigs and branches as if pruning and strip off outer bark. Peel, one layer at a time the inner bark, which is living, moist and greenish in color. Use immediately for tincture and syrup or dry for future use.

Caution:

Leaves and pits are toxic, do not consume. Not for long term use (inner bark), just to treat conditions. Avoid taking if pregnant. Heat will destroy the properties of the bark so only use a cold infusion.