

Mullein, Common Mullein, Hag's Taper

Family	Scrophulariaceae
Botanical	Verbascum thapsus
Parts Used	Dried leaves, flowers, and root
USDA Hardiness	4A - 10B
Light	Full Sun to Partial Shade
Soil	Poor soil
Duration	Biennial



Propagation	Soil pH requirements: 6.6 (neutral) to 8.5 (alkaline). Self sows freely from seed.
Water	As needed, do not overwater
Growing	Pioneer plant, it will be one of the first plants to grow in a disturbed area. Mullein can grow just about everywhere that it can get full sunlight. Mullein may be bothered by weevils and slugs. Used to attract butterflies and honey bees.

Medicinal Uses	Expectorant, demulcent, antispasmodic, vulnerary, antitussive, alterative, astringent
Benefits	Eases hoarsness, coughs, bronchitis, whooping cough, asthma, hay fever, colic, constipation, facial neuralgia and urinary tract infections.
Preparation	Leaves should be collected in mid-summer before they turn brown. Dry them in the shade. The flowers should be gathered between mid-summer and early fall during dry weather. Dry in shade or artificial heat not higher than 104 degrees. The flowers turn brown if they are damp and become ineffective. Infusion, tincture and herbal oil (flowers) Externally, the flowers are infused into oil and used for earaches or infections of the ear, often used with garlic or thyme.

Fines Herbes

Culinary Uses

Used medicinally

Mullein Tea

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups boiling water

1-2 teaspoons dried mullein leaves and/or flowers (flowers make a sweeter tea)

1 teaspoon dried spearmint (optional for flavor)

1-2 teaspoons honey (optional)

Method:

Steep the mullein leaves in hot water inside a tea ball or strainer for 15 minutes.

Add honey if you like a sweeter tea.

If the flavor of mullein doesn't agree with you, another great way to reap its benefits is by preparing an inhalant. To do this, boil the leaves in water for 5 minutes and inhale the steam to relieve coughs, congestion and asthma. Mullein can fight asthma and keep away colds because it actually prevents infections from settling into the delicate respiratory tissue by curing dryness and constriction. Mullein can also be smoked, thus rendering itself the only type of cigarette that could be considered beneficial in treating lung conditions.

Mullein is primarily a respiratory herb, although its benefits reach much further than our lungs. The herb is a diuretic and thus can relieve urinary tract inflammation when taken through a tea. It can also be used to decrease inflammation in the bowels, helping to reduce colitis and other issues. Mullein extract infused with olive oil has been used to reduce the inflammation of earaches, sore joints, insect bites and hemorrhoids because of its soothing properties. Simple poultices made out of fresh, mashed mullein leaves and flowers mixed with water can also be used to relieve, burns, boils and sores.

Historical Facts

An old superstition existed that witches used lamps and candles provided with wicks of Mullein in their incantations, and another of the plant's many names, 'Hag's Taper', refers to this. Both in Europe and Asia the power of driving away evil spirits was ascribed to the Mullein. Being a sure safeguard against evil spirits and magic, and from the ancient classics, it was this plant which Ulysses took to protect himself against the wiles of Circe.

The uses of Mullein leaf has appeared in many ancient records, even in some folklore, telling about their effective powers against evil spirits and sickness. Since one's sickness was often blamed on evil spirits or magic in ancient times, the use of the Mullein plant to counter evil presence proves that people have relied on it to cure sickness. Native Americans used the poisonous seeds of this plant to paralyze fish for easier catching.

Additional Tips

Mullein is a wonderful indicator of a soil's contamination level. When looking for wild mullein, only har

Nutrition Facts

Mullein nutritional information:

Vitamins B2, B5, B12, & D

Choline

Herperidin

PABA

Sulfur

Magnesium