

Coltsfoot

Family	Asteraceae
Botanical	Tussilago farfara
Parts Used	Flowers and leaves
USDA Hardiness	6 - 10
Light	Full Sun to semi shade
Soil	Sandy and moist
Duration	Perennial



Propagation	This plant has a spreading growth habit, using its very efficient rhizomes. Many herb growers say it is actually very hard NOT to grow coltsfoot and choose to keep it in a container.
Water	As needed, do not overwater
Growing	Wild crafting. Found wild commonly along roadsides, pathways and the edges of forest and field. Leaf looks like a colts foot with small yellow dandelion-like flowers in the spring. The natural habitat of Coltsfoot is the moist, heavy soils of England and Europe with its range extending into some areas of Northern Africa and Asia. However, it has now become naturalised through North America and Canada, where they will grow anywhere that has sandy and moist soils.

Medicinal Uses	Demulcent, astringent, expectorate, mucilage, vulnerary, alterative and nutritive.
Benefits	Traditional herb for coughs and irritating respiratory issues including chronic emphysema and silicosis. Can help immensely to recover after damage from smoking.
Preparation	Infusion and tincture of leaves and flowers. Infusion: Pour a cup of boiling water onto 1-2 teaspoons of the dried flowers or leaves and let infuse for 10 minutes. Drink 3 times a day, as hot as possible. Do not take more than 3 cups of coltsfoot tea per day, for three days. Do not take coltsfoot for more than 30 days out of the year. Do not combine coltsfoot with other potentially liver damaging substances, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or comfrey. Tylenol contains these same alkaloids. Therefore, I suggest you take the same precautions with coltsfoot (and comfrey) as you would with Tylenol. Don't overdose. People with a history of alcohol abuse or liver disease should not take coltsfoot. If you ever begin to feel nauseated while using this herb, stop immediately. It is not a "normal" side affect, but a sign that the coltsfoot is hurting your liver. Fresh bruised leaves can be applied to boils, abscesses and ulcers. As a cough syrup, combine it with horehound, ginger and licorice root.

Fines Herbes

Culinary Uses

Flowerbuds, young flowers and leaves can be added to salads or steamed as a vegetable. The flavor is similar to anise or licorice. It is not recommended that you make a habit of eating coltsfoot because of its potential toxicity in high doses

Salad with Coltsfoot

Radish rounds

Spinach

Coltsfoot

Goat Cheese



Historical Facts

Early apothecaries in France used to display a picture of the leaf on their shop door, in order to alert the mostly non-reading public that they carried healing herbs, for its curative powers were widely known. While Europeans use mostly the leaf, the Chinese prefer the flower. However, the flower is much higher in pyrrolizidine alkaloids (one of the plant's constituents) which may be toxic to the liver. In both countries the preferred plant part is made into a decoction (where the plant is gently boiled to reduce the liquid, intensifying its potency.)

Additional Tips

Nutrition Facts

Coltsfoot is rich in various elements like zinc, copper, calcium, potassium, manganese, sulfur, vitamins A, B, C and P and iron.