

Fines Herbes

Motherwort, Lions Tail

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| Family | Lamiaceae |
| Botanical | <i>Leonurus cardiaca</i> |
| Parts Used | Aerial parts |
| USDA Hardiness | 4 - 8 |
| Light | Partial Shade |
| Soil | Well drained, moist, rich |
| Duration | Perennial |



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| Propagation | Will self-seed prolifically if the seed is allowed to mature and spread. Start from seed after freezing them for several months or plant seeds in the ground in the fall, so the winter season naturally stratifies (freezes) them. Also can be started by root division. Soil should be light, slightly alkaline and well drained. |
| Water | As needed, do not overwater |
| Growing | Very flexible in most growing and soil conditions. Found wild along stream beds. Motherwort seeds will need to be stratified for several weeks. They can be sown directly to the garden area. It also attracts bees and butterflies but can become invasive. |

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| Medicinal Uses | Emmenagogue, antispasmodic, nervine, diaphoretic, carinative, laxative and female tonic. |
| Benefits | Strengthens the heart (emotionally and physically), beneficial for nerve pain, high blood pressure, nervous palpitation, disturbed sleep, general pain relief, emotional turbulence, hysteria and convulsions. |
| Preparation | <p>Stalks should be gathered at the time of flowering between early summer and early fall. Tincture and infusion of the leaves, stems and flowers in the bud stage. Motherwort and Lemon Balm Tea Infusion: by pouring 1 cup of boiling water on 1-2 teaspoons of each of the dried herbs. Infuse for 10-15 minutes and strain. Drink throughout the day. Take as a regular tea for depression. May take a few weeks to work. Motherwort tea is very bitter. Sweeten with honey.</p> <p>Decoction: boil 1 tsp. tops or leaves in 1 pint water until 1 cup liquid remains. Take 1/3 cup morning, noon, evening.</p> <p>Cold extract: soak 2 tsp. tops or leaves in 1 cup cold water for 8-10 hours. Take 1 cup a day.</p> <p>Tincture: take 9-15 drops in water, 3 or more times a day as needed.</p> |

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Culinary Uses

Young shoots can be cooked like any other green.

Kacangma (Chicken and Motherwort)

Ingredients:

1/2 cup of dried motherwort leaves
1.5kg of chicken thighs, chopped into smaller bites
4 tbsp sesame oil
1 big sized ginger, grated in food processor
2 cups rice wine
1 1/2 tbsp salt
1/2 tbsp sugar

Directions:

1. Peel the skin and slice the ginger. Extract the ginger juices from the ginger using a food processor. Of course if you have mortar and pestle then it is even better because more juice and the ginger will be really minced.
2. Heat up sesame oil in wok. When it is hot, throw in the processed ginger (not the juice). Saute for few minutes till ginger is fragrant and browned. Add in motherwort and stir for a while.
3. Add in chicken meat. Cook for 5 minutes till the chicken turns white. Add in ginger juice and white wine. Give a few quick stirs. Cover the wok with lid and let it cook for 5 minutes
4. Open the lid and give the meat a stir. Add salt and sugar (optional). Cover with lid and let it cook till chicken is done. Turn off the heat and dish out the kacangma.



Historical Facts

Motherwort was first used by the Greeks to soothe the anxiety of pregnant women. This use continued and spread and gave the herb its common name. The botanical name, *Leonurus cardiaca* also comes from the greek. Leon=lion, ouros=tail and kardiaca refers to the heart.

Historically, the herb has been associated with longevity. An old legend states that there was once a town whose spring ran through a patch of Motherwort. All the local townspeople got their daily drinking water from that spring and all of them lived to be over 100 years old. Its association with longevity was widespread throughout Europe and Asia.

Additional Tips

Can be greatly beneficial for labor pains, after birth pains and restoration of spirit and body after the birth.

Nutrition Facts

Bitter principle, bitter glycosides, leonurin, alkaloids (including stachydrine), tannin, essential oil, resin, organic acids, volatile oil, vitamin A