

NETTLE

Urtica officinalis



Areas of application

- Joint pain
- Hair problems
- Urinary tract disorders
- Menstrual cramps
- Metabolic disorders
- Indigestion

Family

Nettle family (Urticaceae)

Based in

Africa, America, Asia, Europe

Plant parts used

the whole plant, but usually just the leaves.

Ingredients

Vitamins such as vitamins A and C, iron, magnesium, calcium, potassium, phosphorus and silicon, as well as (among others) flavonoids, serotonin, phytosterols, carotenoids, silicic acid, tannins, essential oils, unsaturated fatty acids, acetylcholine, polysaccharides and coumarins. Formic acid is responsible for skin irritation

Usage/Indications

The stinging nettle is a medicinal plant that has been valued for centuries and has a wide range of uses. In herbal medicine, it is primarily the leaves and roots that are used. Nettle leaves are used for complaints affecting the urinary tract, as they have a diuretic effect and can promote flushing. As a result, they are traditionally used for mild urinary tract complaints and to help prevent kidney stones. Furthermore, nettle is valued for rheumatic complaints and joint problems, as it is believed to have anti-inflammatory properties. It is also frequently included in spring health regimens to stimulate the metabolism. The nettle root is primarily used for conditions associated with benign prostatic hyperplasia to alleviate symptoms such as frequent or difficult urination.

Good to know

An intriguing feature of the stinging nettle is that its 'stinging' is a highly sophisticated natural injection technique. The fine stinging hairs are hollow, like tiny glass needles, and break off at the tip upon contact. As they do so, they penetrate the skin and release a mixture of substances such as histamine, formic acid and other irritants. This ingenious defence mechanism is so effective that it has even served as a model for medical microneedles.

Side effects/Contraindications

In the event of an overdose, consuming stinging nettles may occasionally lead to flatulence, diarrhoea, heartburn, nausea or a feeling of fullness. This is partly due to the herb's diuretic effect (which causes the diarrhoea) and partly due to the strong stimulation of digestive activity and the production of gas resulting from the digestion of stinging nettles.

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