



# *Juniper Berry*

**Juniper Berry** promotes urine flow and *helps to clear the kidneys, bladder and prostate of toxic wastes*, while at the same time helping to *combat urinary infections in both men and women*. Juniper Berry's warm, aromatic qualities aid digestion and also help to *relieve gout, arthritis and painful joints*.

**Information:** Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong. Consequently, if they are not tailored to your specific needs, they can do more harm than good. This information is meant to be used by your VHC Medical Team and personal Physician as they build your Total Health Plan. Never attempt to adjust your prescribed medications and/or Natural Treatments without your physician's and Medical Team's knowledge and guidance. Since herbals/nutritionals and medications can interact with each other, it is always advisable to consult with your health care provider and The Vibrant Health Community at [www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com](http://www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com) (or call 1-866-378-8253) before starting or changing your program.

**Botanical:** *Juniperus communis*

**Family:** *Cupressaceae* (cypress) - *Coniferae* (conifer)

**Other common names:** Common Juniper, Ginepro, Enebro, Ground Juniper, Hackmatack, Horse Savin

**History:** It is said that the flavor of the berries is stronger the farther south the plant is grown, and Juniper is a rare and endangered species in some states of the United States. The use of Juniper goes back many centuries. In the Middle Ages, the scent of Juniper was believed to ward off plague, contagious diseases and leprosy. For hundreds of years, Juniper Berry has been (*and still is*) an herbal remedy for urinary tract problems, including urine retention and gallstones and is an old folk remedy for gout. In the 1500s, a Dutch pharmacist used Juniper Berries to create a new, inexpensive diuretic drink that he called gin, which was not only used for medicinal purposes, but its delightful juniper-flavor (and other obvious enjoyments) became a very popular beverage. In North America, the Native Americans believed that Juniper would cleanse and heal the body and keep away infection, and different tribes used it to treat a wide range of illnesses from kidney complaints to stomachaches, colds and syphilis. The Navajos used it for flu, and because it was an excellent survival food, many of the tribes used it to fight off starvation by drying and grinding the berries into cakes. Roasted Juniper Berries have been ground and used as a substitute for coffee, and the berries are frequently used as a spice for pickles, sauerkraut, game, pork and in patés. Needless to

say, it is highly valued commercially as the flavoring for gin. The word gin is a shortened form of the Dutch, *genever*, which was originally derived from the Latin, *juniperus*. Some of the constituents in Juniper include the volatile oils, camphene, cineole, myrcene, alpha- and beta-pinene and terpinene (the active ingredients), as well as resin, sugar, gum, lignin, wax, salines, beta-carotene, betulin, borneol, catechin, glycolic acid, limonene, linalool, menthol, rutin, tannins, calcium, chromium, iron (and many other valuable minerals), B-vitamins and vitamin C.

**Beneficial Uses:** Juniper Berry is an effective diuretic and antiseptic that not only promotes the flow of urine, but also treats infection of the urinary tract at the same time. As a diuretic, the herb stimulates the kidneys and bladder to get rid of retained and excess water (possibly also helping to treat obesity). Juniper increases the filtering of waste products by the kidneys and helps to expel prostate sediment and gallstones. It is also thought to dissolve kidney stones. The herb helps to prevent the crystallization of uric acid in the kidneys, retaining it in a solution and passing it in the urine; this is of great benefit to those suffering from gout (a condition marked by painful inflammation of the joints caused by deposits of uric acid).

As an antiseptic and further aiding urinary and prostate health, Juniper Berry is helpful in combating bacteria, including bladder and urinary infections, such as cystitis, urethritis, prostatitis, vaginitis and inflamed kidneys, etc.

Juniper Berry is an old herbal therapy for the digestive tract. The active volatile oil content helps to eliminate gas and expel intestinal flatulence and assists in the digestion of gassy foods like cabbage, etc. The herb has been used to ease stomach cramps, colic and indigestion; and in small doses, it stimulates the appetite.

The anti-inflammatory properties of Juniper Berry are thought to ease the pain of rheumatism, arthritis, sore muscles and gout.

Juniper Berry has traditionally shown excellent results in the treatment of lung disorders as an effective expectorant and decongestant. It is highly recommended in catarrhal conditions and has helped to ease breathing and treat bronchial asthma, emphysema, sinusitis, head colds, flu and general congestion.

Juniper Berry is considered a purifier of the blood and overall system cleanser, and by removing acid and toxic wastes from the body, the herb helps to reduce overall susceptibility to disease. As an excellent antiseptic, it helps to control general infection and disease.

In preliminary lab studies, Juniper has demonstrated antiviral activity against virus A-2 and Herpes simplex virus I and II.

**Contraindications:** Pregnant women should not use Juniper Berry, because it stimulates the uterus and may cause abortion. The USFDA does not recommend this herb as safe and prolonged use (more than a month) is not recommended, as it may cause kidney damage. If kidney disease is suspected, Juniper berries may over-stimulate the kidneys and adrenals and should be avoided. Those with kidney disease or acute kidney infection should avoid this herb. Juniper should not be used in cases of heavy menstrual flow, and the herb may interfere with the absorption of iron and other minerals. Some people may have allergic responses to Junipers.

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