



# Mugwort

**Mugwort** is a bitter digestive that *relieves stomach acidity, dyspepsia, indigestion, travel sickness and acute bowel and stomach pain.* It also *soothes the nerves, reduces tension and insomnia.* Mugwort is beneficial for female complaints, *easing menstrual cramps and painful menopausal symptoms,* and it also *improves liver and gallbladder function.*

**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:** *Artemisia vulgaris*

**Family:** *Compositae* (daisy) - *Asteraceae* (aster)

**Other common names:** Felon Herb, *Cingulum Sancti Johannis*, Saint John's Plant, Common Artemisia, Wild Wormwood, Chinese Moxa, Sailor's Tobacco

**History:** In ancient Greece, the Father of Medicine, Hippocrates (circa 400 B.C.), and the first-century physician, Dioscorides, prescribed Mugwort as a specific to ease and hasten childbirth, and the herb was frequently mentioned in first-century Greek and Roman writings. Legend claims that the Romans planted Mugwort on roadsides, so that passing soldiers might put it in their sandals on long marches to soothe sore feet, and herbalists still recommend it in footbaths to invigorate tired feet. Mugwort appears in Chinese medical literature dating back to A.D. 500, and was used to ease rheumatism and is still used for acupuncture points on the skin. In Ayurvedic medicine, Mugwort has been used for the female reproductive system, nervous complaints and as a wash for fungal infections. Legend tells us that in the wilderness, Saint John the Baptist wore a *cingulum*, or belt, that was woven from Mugwort, giving us several of its common names, Saint John's Plant and *Cingulum Sancti Johannis*. Moreover, another of its common names, Felon Plant, comes to us because the plant was said to draw the pus from a "felon" or purulent infection at the end of a finger or toe. Mugwort was important in Druidic and Anglo-Saxon

times and was one of the nine sacred herbs given to the world by the god, Woden, that were used to repel evil and poisons. Called the "Mother of Herbs," Mugwort was associated with witchcraft and fertility rites. Placed on a pillow, it was said reveal the future in dreams, and it was also a traveler's remedy, not only protecting medieval pilgrims from fatigue and sunstroke, but also from wild beasts and demons. Old-time wayfarers put it in their shoes to keep from becoming footsore (confirming one of its ancient uses). In 1636, John Gerard's important "*Herbal*" was published in England, and he recommended Mugwort for epilepsy and palsy, noting that it "cureth the shakings of the joints, inclining to the palsy." Long ago it was used in England as a tea substitute and in beer brewing. It is a natural insect repellent and has been utilized in clothes closets as a protection against moths. Mugwort is very popular in Europe as a medicinal herb, and it is an important ingredient in traditional recipes of the U.K., Germany and Spain in dishes of eels or carp and in stuffings for geese, duck, pork and game. Mugwort is a bitter, aromatic, tonic herb, and the roots and leaves are used in herbal medicines. Some of the constituents included in Mugwort are essential oil (containing

terpenes and terpene derivatives, such as cineol, camphor, linalool, thujone, borneol, etc.), flavonoids (quercetin), silica, antibiotic polacetylenes, inulin, hydroxycoumarins, resin, tannin, beta-carotene, fiber, calcium, zinc and vitamin C.

**Beneficial Uses:** Mugwort's root contains a bitter principle that makes it a fine digestive stimulant and stomachic. It tones and gives strength to the stomach, helping to relieve gastric disorders and bowel complaints and is said to relieve acute bowel and stomach pain. As a digestive, it cools the digestive tract, peps up the appetite, and eases nervous and sluggish digestion, dyspepsia, stomach acidity, travel sickness and indigestion.

As a cholagogue, Mugwort stimulates bile flow from the gallbladder and bile ducts into the duodenum and has a beneficial effect on liver and gallbladder function. It is used for liver stagnation and is useful in cases of jaundice. The improved liver function also helps the digestive tract.

Mugwort is said to be splendid for female complaints. As an emmenagogue, it promotes the onset of suppressed menstruation and, further, regulates its flow, easing prolonged bleeding. It is said to relieve menstrual pain and cramps; and as a uterine stimulant, it has been employed by herbalists to facilitate childbirth when labor is prolonged, and to expel retained placenta. (It should be noted that because it is a uterine stimulant, pregnant women should never use this herb.) Some herbalists recommend it as a sedative for women during menopause and for painful symptoms of menopause.

Mugwort is a mild tonic for the nervous system that is soothing for the nerves, helping to reduce tension and nervousness. It is said to be mildly narcotic and has been used to calm hysteria, uncontrollable shaking and as a sedative to promote sleep in cases of insomnia. Mugwort is believed to be helpful in

cases of depression, especially with loss of appetite. Long ago it was used to treat epilepsy and palsy.

As a mild purgative, Mugwort is said to be helpful in cases of constipation. Mugwort is a parasiticide and has been used to destroy and expel intestinal parasites, especially roundworm and threadworm infestations. The herb's laxative qualities may also facilitate this action.

As a diuretic, Mugwort encourages the flow of urine and helps to flush the kidneys of impurities and the bladder of gravel and stones, and may also be helpful for gout.

Mugwort is considered a diaphoretic that promotes sweating and helps to clear toxins through the skin as well as lower intermittent fever. It is said to be excellent at the outset of a cold, helping to reduce fever and ague (fever with chills), and some even claim that it prevents malaria.

Mugwort acts as an antifungal and antiseptic, combating infections, and it is also thought to be an antidote for many poisonous mushrooms.

Used externally, Mugwort has been used to alleviate bruises, the itching of poison oak and is said (probably because of its antiseptic qualities) to be good for abscesses, carbuncles, whitlows/felons (a painful purulent, pus-filled infection at the end of a finger or toe in the area surrounding the nail). Added to baths, the herb was used to relieve rheumatism, gout, and tired legs and feet.

**Contraindications:** As a uterine stimulant, Mugwort should not be used by pregnant women, and it is not recommended for nursing mothers. Overuse (many times the recommended dosage) or prolonged use should be avoided, as it is toxic in large doses.