



# Wintergreen

*Pain killer, anti-inflammatory, headaches, breath freshener., sore muscles and joints.*

**Information:** Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong, consequently, if each one is not tailored to your specific needs, then you can risk 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:** *Gaultheria procumbens*

**Family:** *Ericaceae* (heath/blueberry)

**Other common names:** Teaberry, Boxberry, Mountain Tea, Hillberry, Spiceberry, Wax Cluster, Wax Berry, Ground Berry, Spring Wintergreen, Aromatic Wintergreen, Spicy Wintergreen, Checkerberry\*, Deerberry\*, Partridge Berry\*

**Wintergreen** has been traditionally used as a *pain reliever*. It is an old native American remedy for *the aches and pains of arthritis, sore joints and rheumatism*, as well as an aid to breathing while hunting or carrying heavy loads. Its aspirin-like qualities also help to *relieve headaches, muscle inflammation, carpal tunnel syndrome and colds*.

**\*Important Note:** *These common names should not be confused with another herb of the madder (rubiacae) family, **Mitchella repens**, which is also commonly called Checkerberry, Deerberry, Partridgeberry, Squawberry, Squaw Vine and Mitchella. Wintergreen (**Gaultheria procumbens**) is an entirely different plant of a different genus with different therapeutic applications.*

The essential oil, which is distilled from the leaves, is used in perfumery and as a flavoring for candies, teas, cough drops, mouthwashes and toothpastes, and the essential oil and leaves are used in herbal medicines. Some of the constituents included in Wintergreen are volatile oil, caffeic acid, ferulic acid, gallic acid, p-coumaric acid, methyl salicylate, tannins, vanillic acid and gaultherin.

**Beneficial Uses:** Wintergreen is a pain reliever with similar properties to those of aspirin, and it relieves pains of all description, including headaches and toothaches. The herb contains a compound that is composed of ninety-eight percent methyl salicylate, the natural forerunner of synthetic aspirin, and like aspirin, it stops the hormonal reactions that cause inflammation and pain.

As such, Wintergreen not only relieves pain, but it is also an anti-inflammatory and, therefore, helpful in cases of carpal tunnel syndrome, sore muscles and joints, as well as the aches and pains of arthritis and rheumatism. Its mucilage content is soothing and softening and also indirectly helps to alleviate soreness in muscles and joints.

The tannins in Wintergreen act as an astringent, helping to control diarrhea and excess mucous discharges. Wintergreen is an aromatic, warming herb and a tonic that mildly stimulates circulation and the digestive tract. It is considered a "carminative" that is particularly effective for easing gas in the bowels and is also helpful in cases of colic and general stomach trouble.

As a diuretic, Wintergreen promotes the production and flow of urine, and with its added antiseptic qualities, it is believed to be good for urinary, prostate and kidney ailments, as well as all bladder complaints. It is interesting to note that in smaller doses, it acts as a diuretic, but in larger doses, the herb acts as an emetic and produces vomiting. Wintergreen is also said to be helpful in relieving scrofula, the swelling of the lymph nodes of the neck.

As an emmenagogue, Wintergreen stimulates suppressed menstruation and regulates its flow. Moreover, it is thought to relieve the pain and headaches associated with menstruation. Used externally, Wintergreen is an excellent anti-inflammatory and relieves the pain of

rheumatism, arthritis, sciatica, myalgia, sprains and neuralgia, but it must be used cautiously, as it is very strong and can cause irritation. Its excellent antiseptic qualities have made it effective in easing sore throat and sore mouth, and it has also been used for gonorrhoea and as a douche for leucorrhoea.

Related News:- **Ancient minty painkiller worked, study suggests; Ancient Chinese used mint oil, which has anti-inflammatory properties** - *From MSNBC's >Technology & Science > Science Section - 08/25/06*  
"The doctors of ancient Greece and China had it right when they applied cool and minty salves to soothe aches and pains, a new study suggests. A synthetic treatment with the same properties as mint oil is an effective painkiller when applied directly to the skin. The new cooling compounds could be especially beneficial to millions suffering with the chronic pain of arthritis and diseases affecting nerve endings, scientists say."

#### **Contraindications:**

Wintergreen should not be taken by people who are hypersensitive to salicylates (aspirin). Those who take warfarin (Coumadin) or any prescription blood-thinning medications should not use Wintergreen. The oil should never be ingested (it is meant for external use only), and because it is so easily absorbed through the skin, it can become toxic to the kidneys and liver if used for more than three days a month. Do not use Wintergreen if you suffer from acid reflux (GERD) problems.

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