



nettle

Urtica dioica

cool, dry, tonifying

Taste: earthy, salty, umami

Family: Urticaceae

Medicinal parts: leaves, roots, seeds

Actions: diuretic, nutritive, alterative, adaptogen (seeds)

Affinities: kidneys, adrenals

Notable constituents: aesculetin, betaine, caffeic acid, chlorogenic acid, chlorophylls, choline, flavonoids, isoquercitrin, kaempferol, porphyrins, protein (leaf to 25%), rutin, tannins

Medicinal applications

- Nettle leaf is a high-mineral, kidney-specific nutritive.
- Nettle performs better than the prescription drug Furosemide in reducing blood pressure via its diuretic activity, increasing urine output and salt excretion, yet it replaces more minerals than are lost in the urine.
- Mast-cell-stabilizing and antihistaminic activities found in nettle preparations yield substantial relief from seasonal and environmental allergies.
- Nettle is a good source of iron, and is helpful for fatigue, anemia, and malnourishment, particularly when minerals are lacking.
- Nettle root is very effective in prostate complaints and pelvic stagnations.
- For BPH, nettle root aids complete bladder emptying and relieves the continuous urge to urinate. Nettle doesn't decrease the size of the prostate, but does slow further prostate gland cell growth.
- Nettle seeds are an adaptogen particularly useful in burnout and exhaustion following overexertion under conditions of chronic stress.
- Urtication, the practice of stinging oneself with nettles, is useful for a direct rubefacient effect which can relieve arthritic pains and restore feeling to numbed areas.

In practice:

- Nettle for everyone! In the U.S., most people have serious mineral deficiencies as a result of the standard diet, but nettle is an excellent source of minerals. Furthermore, nettle's diuretic action helps to expel wastes from the body, while bringing nourishment to the kidneys. Nettle leaf is a superb remedy for cleaning and building up the blood. Nettle is very helpful for chronic illness, acute problems, and as a long-term mineral supplement.
- Nettle leaf helps with hair loss due to mineral deficiency – common in pregnancy, as well as hypothyroid states.
- Nettle root is also effective for stopping hair loss – in this case, the action is connected to its effects on testosterone ecology, and so it may also help with PCOS.

Cautions: Nettle is quite drying on its own, so formulating together with a moistening plant is wise. Licorice, linden, violet, and marshmallow are all good options.

Friends: dandelion, goldenrod, red clover, licorice, marshmallow, violet, horsetail