**Purslane**

***Portulaca oleracea***

Other names: pursley, summer purslane, pigweed, and little hogweed

A superfood (not a) weed!

**Description:** Succulent plant, grows along the ground, up to 1 foot tall. Leaves are green, smooth, oval, fleshy (similar to jade houseplant leaves). Purslane usually has reddish-brown stems, yellow flowers. Purslane is eaten raw or cooked as a medicinal vegetable, and can also be prepared as a vinegar or alcohol tincture.

**Parts used:** mostly leaves (seeds, flowers and stems are also edible and nutritious)

**Taste:** slightly sour, salty, peppery, lemony spinach flavor. Some say that it’s sweeter when you pick it in the middle of the day.

**Actions:** Cooling, mucilaginous, detoxifying, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antifungal, antimicrobial, diuretic, bronchodilatory

**Constituents:** Purslane is one of the best vegetable sources of omega-3’s, it is rich in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), and contains smaller amounts of Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) omega-3 fatty acids. Purslane also provides many minerals: calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium and manganese, vitamins (A, B, C, E), antioxidants, fiber, pectin.

Omega-3 fatty acids are an important part of a healthy diet. They help lower cholesterol, regulate blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke, and promote brain health. Studies have shown that omega-3 fatty acids may decrease the risk of depression, hyperactivity, migraines and Alzheimer’s disease. A diet high in omega-3’s may also help lower the risk of cancer and arthritis.

Purslane is a good food for bone health, since it is high in minerals.

Nourishing to the skin, mucous membranes and eyes.

A poultice of fresh, crushed purslane relieves burns and sunburn, eczema, cuts, boils and sore eyes.

Antifungal - used topically to treat athlete’s foot, fungal nail infections

For oral health: purslane helps to heal sore mouths and swollen gums.

Soothing to the stomach and intestines - purslane heals ulcers, dysentery, and diarrhea. It has also been used to stop postpartum bleeding, and to soothe bladder infections.

Those suffering from hot flashes, night sweats or fever can benefit from purslane’s cooling properties.

Headaches: as a good source of magnesium, purslane may help those who suffer from headaches that are caused by magnesium deficiency.

**Tincture dosage:** 1-2 tsp per day with water as a tonic, or 1-2 tsp as needed.

**Contraindications & cautions:**

During pregnancy- purslane can make the uterine muscles contract.

Purslane also contains oxalic acid- which may crystallize as oxalate stones in the urinary tract in some people. Those with kidney stones should avoid. Boiling purslane will eliminate some of the oxalic acid.

Look-alike plants: Don’t confuse purslane with spurge

<https://hotdogjam.wordpress.com/2009/09/01/purslane-or-spurge/>

Recipes:

<http://chocolateandzucchini.com/ingredients-fine-foods/45-things-to-do-with-purslane/>

Infused cider vinegar + purslane pickles: make an herbal vinegar with fresh purslane leaves. After several weeks, the vinegar is ready and you can also eat the purslane pickles :)

Recipe here: <http://www.susunweed.com/Article_Joy-of-Purslane.htm>

Info on benefits of purslane seeds: <https://wildfoodism.com/2014/12/03/who-knew-purslane-seeds-are-loaded-with-health-benefits-here-are-5-of-them/>

More resources:

<https://www.beneficialbotanicals.com/tincture-information/purslane.html>

<http://www.organicauthority.com/eco-chic-table/dont-pull-the-purslane.html>

<http://truthnhealth.com/2013/03/a-great-green-super-power-purslane/>

<http://naturalplantation.com/ca/purslane/>

<http://www.home-remedies-for-you.com/articles/291/alternative-health/purslane-a-therapeutic-herb.html>