

REMARKABLE ROSEMARY

One of my favorite all-season drinks, hot or cold, is easily brewed from the aromatic ornamental plant that decorates many yards in the southwestern United States! See the recipes for rosemary tea below. Rosemary has a plethora of health benefits for the heart, skin, liver and brain. Rosemary is well known as a relief for headaches and migraines, as a memory enhancer and as a restorative after radiation exposure. The list goes on, as you can see from the article below.

HARVESTING ROSEMARY

Gather whole branches of rosemary, rinse, then tie into small bundles with rubber bands. Hang upside down in the house or outside in a shaded area. Once the leaves are dry, they can easily be removed by holding over a large bowl and crushing with your fingers. Store in a glass container that is well sealed. Label the container with the harvest date and all the good, healthy things rosemary does for you. This is a great idea if your memory is poor, since rosemary is a memory enhancer. Rosemary will help raise your pH alkalinity and restore a sagging spirit. Enjoy in joy!

HEALTH BENEFITS OF ROSEMARY

Rosemary is a perennial evergreen shrub that generally grows from three to six feet and requires shelter in cold regions. Its botanical name, Rosmarinus, is derived from the Latin, ros, meaning "dew" and marinus, meaning "of the sea," since it grew near the sea.

Rosemary has been used since ancient times as a symbol of friendship, loyalty, and remembrance, and was traditionally carried by mourners at funerals and brides during their weddings. Garlands were worn to help scholars with their studies since it was believed that rosemary helped with clear thinking and memory.

COOKING

Rosemary adds delicious flavor to many foods. First, remove leaves from the plant, then chop them into small pieces to release the oil. Rosemary enhances the flavor of soups, stews, potatoes and meats such as lamb, chicken, salmon and tuna. Since ancient times, It has been used as a food preservative by folding crushed rosemary into meat, fish, pasta and potato dishes. In addition to flavoring foods, Rosemary is a powerful herbal remedy with many health benefits. It is also a source for calcium, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, iron, zinc, potassium, Vitamin C and B-vitamins.

ANTIOXIDANT

Rosemary is a rich source of Vitamin E, giving it strong antioxidant qualities that prevent cancer-causing chemicals from binding and causing mutations in cellular DNA (particularly in the liver and bronchial cells). The anit-oxidant properties also help protect the cells in the body from the damage of free radicals by slowing down their production. Rosemary also may help in preventing heart disease, arthritis, premature aging and the formation of cataracts.

ANTISEPTIC

Rosemary cleanses the blood and helps to control many pathogenic organisms. As a diuretic, it increases the flow of urine that flushes bacteria from the body before they have chance to cause infection, yet does not completely wipe out the natural bacterial population of the digestive tract that keep the intestines in healthy balance. Rosemary has also been used successfully in treating toxic shock syndrome.

Rosemary's fungicidal properties have been effective in killing yeast infections, such as candida albicans. Rosemary also kills germs when used as a gargle and mouthwash. To inhibit infections from minor cuts, press fresh leaves onto the wound. You can also use rosemary to prevent body odor caused by bacteria or fungus by mixing ground rosemary into bath powder and applying it to the body. The leaves can be used to make tea for drinking or as a body wash.

CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

Rosemary is an excellent brain stimulant that improves brain functioning and memory by feeding it with oxygen-rich blood. It also contains compounds that prevent the breakdown of acetylcholine, a brain chemical that assists the nerve cells responsible for memory and reasoning. These compounds may help Alzheimer patients by drinking in tea form and using shampoos containing Rosemary essence oils.

Rosemary also improves hair quality, reduces dandruff and may delay balding by stimulating hair follicles. However, be aware that most shampoos on the market are full of toxic chemicals which in themselves may cause more problems.

Rosemary is an excellent stimulant for the circulatory system to treat disorders such as low blood pressure, bruises, sprains and varicose veins. The flavonoid, diosmin, is effective in reducing capillary fragility and enhances the flow of blood. Rosemary also regulates blood flow during menstruation and helps to ease menstrual cramps and pain. Because Rosemary stimulates and improves circulation throughout the body, it increases the blood supply to the skin, which may help restore a youthful glow. Rosemary essence can also be used in facial masks and may help in preventing wrinkles.

Drink a cup of Rosemary tea as a pick me when feeling fatigued. Asthma may be relieved by rosemary's volatile oil which can open air passages and help relieve congestion brought on by colds and flu. To aid with congestion, make an herbal tea with crushed rosemary. Add 1 teaspoon per cup of hot water, steep for 10 minutes, strain and drink a few cups a day. You can also inhale steam from Rosemary tea to help break up congestion and reduce fever.

DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

Rosemary strengthens and tones the stomach, stimulates digestion and relaxes the digestive tract, which helps to calm upset stomach, nausea, ease cramps and spasms in the intestines, alleviate flatulence, stimulate appetite, dyspepsia and bloating. It also stimulates the release of bile and aids in the digestion of dietary fat and is helpful in treating indigestion caused by anxiety. Rosemary extract encourages detoxifying enzymes that help flush harmful toxins from the liver, boosting its function. As a mild diuretic, it can assist in reducing swelling.

RELAXANT

Rosemary calms and soothes the nerves, relaxes muscles, eases pain and reduces tension and anxiety throughout the body. It has been very helpful in treating headache, stress-related migraines, depression, nervous exhaustion, depression and apathy. The herb is also effective in alleviating the pain of neuritis, neuralgia, tendonitis, rheumatism, aching joints and overall muscle pain and spasms. Add 10 drops of Rosemary essential oil to your bathwater to help relieve aching muscles and frazzled nerves.

SKIN

Rosemary essential oil strengthens capillaries when applied to the skin, having a refreshing effect. It also helps prevent age-related skin damage. As with any essential oil, dilute rosemary oil with another oil (such as coconut, olive or sesame) before applying to the skin, starting with a small patch to test for sensitivity.

PRECAUTIONS

For most people, Rosemary is safe to use as an herbal tea or food supplement. However, small amounts of rosemary oil may cause irritation of the stomach, kidneys and intestines. Larger doses can be toxic. Never ingest more than a drop of concentrated rosemary oil.

You should not ingest rosemary extract if you are pregnant, have epilepsy, fever or high blood pressure (it may slightly increase blood pressure). Like all herbs and foods, start slow and pay attention to any possible side effects.

ROSEMARY TEA

Rosemary tea has an aromatic "pine" taste, try various dilutions to find the taste that best appeals to you. It also blends well with other teas, such as dandelion. Rosemary tea is a mild stimulant, yet contains no caffeine.

There are a variety of ways to make rosemary tea. My preferred method for 1 - 2 cups of hot tea is to add 1 T. of dried leaves or a sprig of fresh leaves per cup to a tea press or teaball. Add boiling water and let steep 5 - 10 minutes. For best results, cover cup with a plate to retain the steam so the active chemicals are preserved in the tea.

You can also add dried leaves or fresh sprigs in your favorite teacup. Add boiling water and let steep 5 - 10 minutes. Then pour through a strainer or cheesecloth.

To make a gallon of rosemary tea, place about a half cup of dried leaves or several fresh sprigs in a large pot with a gallon of water. Bring to a boil, remove from heat and allow to steep 5 - 10 minutes. Once it has cooled, pour through a strainer into a glass container that can handle hot liquids. Serve at room temperature or store in the refrigerator.

For additional health benefits or fuller flavor, add additional spices such as cloves, garlic or star anise.

To sweeten, add raw honey or stevia.

Try adding a splash of lemon or lime juice for pizzazz.

Rosemary, brewed with ginger is a natural antihistamine and is excellent as an expectorant, decongestant and helps combat nausea.