

Tansy

Botanical: *Tanacetum vulgare*

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Tansy has long been used as a medical herb despite its toxicity. Its leaves and flowers are toxic if consumed in large quantities, as they contain toxic compounds, including thujone. The plant is no longer recommended for internal use. It has a long tradition as an effective treatment for intestinal worms, digestive issues, stimulating menstruation, and rheumatism.

Western



Western Name: Tansy

Also Known As: Common Tansy, Bitter Buttons, Cow Bitter

Main Systems: Intestines, Skin, Circulation, Digestive Sys.

Key Actions: Anthelmintic, Antiviral, Abortifacient, Repellent, Emmenagogue, Diaphoretic, Antioxidant, Stimulant, Bitter

Key Medicinal Uses: Intestinal worms (including roundworm and threadworm in children), lice, tics, migraines, neuralgia, rheumatism, insect repellent, promote menstruation, promote uterine contractions, herpes simplex, gout, digestive complaints, fevers, bring out measles, sciatica, bloating, nausea, stomach spasms, poor appetite, epileptic seizures.



BASIC HABITAT/BOTANY: Tansy is a perennial, herbaceous flowering plant in the Aster family. It has finely divided compound fern-like leaves and yellow, button-like flowers. Its erect stem is somewhat reddish, usually smooth and can grow to be 20-60 inches tall, branching near the top. The round, flat topped, button-like flowers are produced in terminal clusters that bloom from mid-to-late summer. Their scent is similar to camphor and a hint of rosemary. Tansy is native to the temperate zones of Europe and Asia.

KEY CONSTITUENTS: Thujone, Axillarin, 5-Dicaffeoylquinic acid, Sesquiterpene lactones, Tannins, Vitamin C, Citric acid, Oxalic acid, Terpenoids (including Pyrethrins), Bitter glycosides, Resin.

PARTS MOST FREQUENTLY USED: Aerial Parts

FLAVORS/TEMPS: Bitter, Pungent, Cool

CAUTION: Deaths have been reported after taking only 10 drops of tansy oil, teas, or powdered forms. Its leaves and flowers are toxic if consumed in large quantities, as they contain the toxic compound thujone, which can cause convulsions and liver and brain damage. It is possible for some individuals to suffer from contact dermatitis while harvesting the plant, so wear gloves! Not recommended for pregnant women as tansy can cause uterine contractions.

HISTORY/FOLKLORE: The ancient Greeks are thought to have been the first to cultivate the plant as a medicine. By the 8th century AD it was grown in the herb gardens of Charlemagne and Benedictine monks. It was used to treat intestinal worms, rheumatism, digestive problems, fevers, sores, and to bring out measles.

Eastern



Pin Yin: Ai Ju

Also Known As: N/A

Main Meridians: Stomach, Spleen, Bladder, Liver

Key Actions: Moves Qi, Clears Damp, Resolves Phlegm

Key Medicinal Uses: Sprains, Epilepsy, Digestive Upsets due to Damp (such as bloating, gas, and nausea), rheumatism, gout, edema, externally as a douche for vaginal discharge.

FUN FACT!



Worms

A bitter tea made from tansy has traditionally been used to treat parasitic worms.



In Your Shoes

Tansy was frequently worn in shoes to help protect against malaria and other fevers. Given its insect repelling properties, it probably was effective in minimizing the exposure to mosquitos and insects that might be carrying the disease.



Bees

Dried tansy is used by some beekeepers as a fuel in a bee smoker.

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