

## Celery Seed Profile

### Also known as

Apium graveolens, wild celery, Aches des Marais, Ajamoda, Apii Frutus, Celery Fruit, Fruit de Celeri, Smallage, Selleriefuchte, Selleriesamen.

### Introduction

The Greeks and Romans called it "smallage" and harvested it in the wild for its medicinal properties, especially for "nervous unrest" and loss of appetite. The Romans used it more for cooking than for its medicinal properties. When it was finally grown and harvested in the middle ages it was found to be a wonderful vegetable to add to the dinner table. It was not until the 19th century that the seeds were used as a spice in recipes and pickling. It was associated with funerals and bad luck, and woven garlands of wild celery were often found in Egyptian tombs. The celery used in herbal medicine is a close relative of the celery you can buy in market. The fruit or "seed" is grayish green to brown with a characteristic, slightly bitter, spicy taste. Too much celery seed can overpower a dish, whereas a little brings out flavors in other foods. Celery seed is used in pickles, casseroles, and Bloody Marys.

### Constituents

Essential oil, with limonene and selinene as the main components, also pinene, cymene, caryophyllene, pinene, santalol, and dihydrocarvone, as well as antioxidant apigenin and isoquercetin.

### Parts Used

The fruits or "seeds," whole or powdered

### Typical Preparations

Can be used to make teas, but more often used in cooking. Seldom used in extract or capsule form.

### Summary

Celery seed is a traditional remedy for nervous stomach. Prior to the Middle Ages, a wild form of celery referred to as selinon, or smallage, was used as a diuretic and a carminative, which is a treatment to reduce intestinal gas. Today, although celery is primarily used for flavor, it has the same effects on digestion. A series of scientific studies conducted 10 to 30 years ago found that celery seed's essential oil contains compounds that are mildly tranquilizing and helpful in relieving arthritic pain. Some recent research suggests that celery seed contains other compounds that stop the carcinogenic effect of environmental toxins in the liver. Other research suggests that essential oils in the seeds may be mildly bactericidal against *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Salmonella enterica*.

### Precautions

If you use diuretics, it is recommended that you do not use celery seed. The herb does not cause sensitivity to sunlight by itself, but it can cause increased risk of sunburn in people who take prescription ACE inhibitors to control high blood pressure. Large consumption of Celery seed should be avoided while pregnant or nursing.

**Botanical:** *Apium graveolens* (LINN.)

**Family:** N.O. Umbelliferae

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---**Synonyms**---Smallage. Wild Celery.

---**Parts Used**---Ripe seeds, herb and root.

---**Habitat**---Levant, South Europe, and cultivated in Great Britain, etc.

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---**Description**---Odour characteristic and agreeable. Taste, aromatic, warm, and slightly pungent.

---**Constituents**---Celery seed contains two oils - one heavy, the other lighter; it also contains apiol, but not so much as is found in parsley.

---**Medicinal Action and Uses**---Carminative stimulant, diuretic, tonic, nervine, useful in hysteria, promoting restfulness and sleep, and diffusing through the system a mild sustaining influence. Good combined with Scutellaria for nervous cases with loss of tone. On this account it is recommended to eat the *cultivated* fresh root as well as taking the oil or fluid extract. Is said to be very good for rheumatism, when it is often combined with Coca, Damiana, etc. Dose: fluid extract, 3 to 7 drops every four hours.