

Gotu Kola (*Centella asiatica*)

Common Names: Indian pennywort and centella.

Location: This herb can be located in India and North America.

Description: Gotu kola has fan-shaped leaves that have a bitter taste.

Properties: This herb is said to increase blood circulation and repair skin cells with the asiaticoside it contains.

Uses: Use this herb to treat memory loss, Alzheimer's disease, swollen ankles, cellulite, varicose veins, wounds, scarring and psoriasis.

Doses: This herb can be found as a topical cream, or in liposome tinctures or tablets.

Warnings: Do not take this herb if you are pregnant, nursing or trying to become pregnant. If you have diabetes, consult with your doctor before taking this herb.

Gotu Kola Herb and Powder Profile

Also known as

Centella asiatica, Brahmi, Indian Pennywort, Marsh Penny, Spadeleaf, Tiger's Herb, and Pennywort.

Introduction

Gotu Kola, also known as Indian Pennywort is one of the most widely used and important Ayurvedic herbs on the market today. It has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for thousands of years and is thought to be one of the most spiritual and rejuvenating herbs in Ayurveda. It is also thought to increase psychic sensitivity. This ground cover species is weed like, especially in parts of India and Hawaii where it grows prolifically in unusual conditions, such as drainage ditches, gutters and neglected areas. Don't let its wild predominance scare you, Gotu Kola is also one of the largest cultivated crops in India and thrives under organic farming conditions. While popularly used as a food source rich in vitamin C in the form of leafy greens within Bangladesh, Thailand and Sri Lanka it also has been internationally recognized within many countries pharmacopoeias and has been a valid, recognized, botanical medicine since 1884. In India it has been used as a folk remedy for leprosy, lupus, and improving mental functions, as well as to fortify the immune system. It is used in Traditional Chinese medicine as a treatment for colds, sunstroke, urinary tract infections, and dysentery. Also, it has been used in China externally as a poultice for snake bites and traumatic injuries. In China it is considered one of the "miracle elixirs of life."

Constituents

Mainly consisting of triterpenoid saponins, sapogenins

Parts Used

Leaf. Either fresh or dried.

Typical Preparations

Tea from the dried leaves, encapsulated dry leaf, liquid herbal extract and, using fresh leaves from your garden in your salads, beverages and medicines.

Summary

The widespread belief that Gotu Kola helps improve memory led to several studies on its effect on the central nervous and circulatory systems. The preliminary results suggest that it may help with memory and cognitive disabilities as well as helping the body overcome stress and fatigue. However it should be noted that those with mild to moderate depression might want to use caution. Some testing done in India indicates it may act as a very mild depressant.

Precautions

None noted