

Rosemary(*Rosemarinus officinalis*)

Common Name: Rosemary.

Description: Rosemary is an aromatic evergreen shrub that grows to a height of three feet. It bears thick, narrow, parallel green leaves and pale blue to blue-violet flowers. The leaves and the essential oil distilled from the leaves are used in herbal medicine. Rosemary is also used in food preparation as an antioxidant and preservative, particularly for meats, and in the preparation of liqueurs such as Benedictine and Danziger Goldwasser.

Properties: Rosemary is a potent anti-oxidant, antiseptic, and antispasmodic.

Uses: In European folk medicine, it was used both internally and externally, for ills including nervous disorders, upset stomach, headaches, baldness, arthritis, pain, strains and bruises. More recently, it has been investigated as a cancer therapy. Benefits of rosemary for specific health conditions include treatment of Alzheimer's disease, cancer, circulatory problems, eczema, rheumatic disorders, and sore muscles, indigestion and menstrual cramps, irritable bowel syndrome and yeast infection.

Doses: Rosemary is available as enteric-coated oil capsules, oils (which can be used for aromatherapy), and teas (which can be used as skin washes). The small amounts of rosemary used in cooking do not pose a risk of any side effects.

Warnings: Continuous medicinal use of rosemary should be avoided by women who have heavy menstrual flow. Since this herb is a uterine stimulant, it should not be used medically during pregnancy. You should never ingest the essential oil. It can irritate the stomach and intestines, and cause kidney damage.