

Schizonepeta (*Schizonepeta tenuifolia*)

Common Names: Japanese catnip, Japanese mint, jing jie, tenuifolia.

Location: Schizonepeta is native to China and Japan, and is widely cultivated in the Far East.

Description: It is a pleasantly aromatic herb with highly dissected foliage and small, clustered lavender blooms that grow in spikes above the foliage. Schizonepeta belongs to the same family as catnip, but it is an annual with a sweet, pinelike aroma.

Properties: The whole plant is used in herbal medicine.

Uses: It is the principal herb of traditional Japanese medicine for skin infections. The Chinese use the herb to treat symptoms of the common cold: chills, sore throat, and headaches. It helps to lower fever and promote sweating, and has antibacterial action. Used also for boils and mastitis, schizonepeta heals skin infections by stimulating circulation within the skin and by inducing perspiration. It has excellent antimicrobial and antiviral effects and helps to eliminate toxins, as well as promoting healing of skin lesions and eruptions.

Doses: Schizonepeta is available as a cream for external use. Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners dispense it in tea form for internal use.

Warnings: The cream should not be used on open sores.