



Health Benefits of Sage

DID YOU KNOW?

That common sage, also known as dalmation sage (*Salvia officinalis*) was named in historical times with the meaning 'to be saved' due to its proposed potent healing powers. The plant is part of the mint family with a slightly peppery taste. Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties (1,2) are believed to help regulate blood pressure, reduce sweating in menopause, calm a sore throat by reducing inflammation, soothe indigestion and dyspepsia, and importantly are also thought to help with memory. The use of sage in commercially available dental products helps to maintain good dental hygiene providing an effective toothpaste and mouthwash to help combat gum disease and mouth ulcers. Its volatile oils of thujone, cineol and limonene along with its rosmarinic acid are thought to be the active ingredients that offer health benefits. These components help to provide a natural astringent which can have antibacterial and anti-fungal properties making it useful to kill micro biotic activity.

RESEARCH

Limited research on herbal products have been carried out however a few randomized placebo- controlled studies have found that people taking sage oil could recall a word count sequence at higher rates than those that were assigned the placebo(3). In addition people with Alzheimer's showed better mood and quality of life when given sage as part of their management regimes (4). This is thought to be a result of sage inhibiting the loss of Acetylcholine, a brain chemical which is often found in low levels in people diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and reduced levels as we age. Hence the old saying "Sage for Age". This finding has been supported by subsequent research however more studies need to occur.

Home remedy recipes

Ulcer relief:

make some strong sage tea and freeze it in ice cubes ready for use. To soothe painful ulcer simply suck on the cube allowing it to melt in your mouth make sure the melted liquid flushes over the ulcer.

Hair tonic:

combine a handful of leaves in boiling water, allow to cool then use as a tonic to bring back the lustre and softness of hair. The tonic can also be useful in the treatment of dandruff and scalp irritations. Don't forget to do a test spot 1st.

Sore throat gargle:

10gm of fresh leaves in about 100gm of cold water; bring to the boil and allow to sit for 10-15 minutes. Strain the mixture and combine with a tablespoon of honey. This can be used as a throat gargle when sore or as a regular gargle to help with throat irritation.

Food addition:

Sage herb use in cooking is often an accompaniment to pasta and chicken and lamb. Have a try mixed with a vegetable ratatouille. Brilliant flavour and a health boost to boot.



Cautions

The thujone content of sage oil can be toxic in large amounts and should be avoided if pregnant. The high astringent effect of too much tea can heighten xerostomia (mouth dryness) and skin irritation can occur when used in a lotion in some sensitive individuals.

It is also advised that the drinking of sage tea and taking mineral supplements of iron, calcium or magnesium should be separated by a few hours as absorption capacity can be altered.

1. D. Baricevic, S. Sosa, R. Della Loggia, et al. Topical anti-inflammatory activity of *Salvia officinalis* L. leaves: the relevance of ursolic acid, *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, Vol 75, 2001.
2. Biljana Božin, Neda Mimica-Dukić, Isidora Samojlik and Emilija Jovin . Antimicrobial and Antioxidant Properties of Rosemary and Sage (*Rosmarinus officinalis* L. and *Salvia officinalis* L., Lamiaceae) Essential Oils, *J. Agric. Food Chem.*; 2007, 55 (19),
3. N.T.J Tildesley, D.O Kennedy, E.K Perry, et al. *Salvia lavandulaefolia* (Spanish Sage) enhances memory in healthy young volunteers, *Pharmacology Biochemistry and Behavior* Volume 75, 3; 2003.,
4. S. Akhondzadeh, M. Noroozian, M. Mohammadi, et al. *Salvia officinalis* extract in the treatment of patients with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease; a double blind, randomized and placebo-controlled trial, *Journal of Clinical Pharmacy and Therapeutics*, Vol 28, 1, 2003