

# Medicinal plants and their uses

By Erika Maring





# Mint



Mint is a must-have in any home garden. It's a perennial plant that grows easily and is infamous for its ability to spread quickly and take over a space, so it's best to plant it in a container garden.

- Mint (peppermint specifically) helps to reduce nausea, soothes upset stomachs
- Reduces fever and headaches
- Fights colds and flus
- Freshens breath (hence all of those mint-flavored gums and toothpastes)

There are fascinating studies out there about how the scent of mint affects brain functioning. In one study, the aroma of mint helped boost alertness and memory. In another, it helped test subjects perform better on basic clerical skills, such as typing and memorization.

To reap mint's medicinal benefits, chew it fresh, steep it fresh or dried and take it as a tea, or a tincture (i.e., mint extract) or dry it and infuse it in oil to use in homemade balms and salves to soothe headaches and stomach aches.



# Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*)



You might be wondering why I've got lavender on a list of herbs when its often thought of as a flower. But, lavender is actually a highly potent medicinal plant, and can be used as a culinary herb In numerous drinks and dishes.

Opt for English lavender (instead of French lavender/ Lavandin), as English lavender is better both for its culinary medicinal properties.



## Medicinal Uses:

- Helps to ease stress, calm anxiety and induce sleep and relaxation
- Boosts mood and helps combat symptoms of depression
- Can help soothe skin problems and flare ups like acne, eczema and psoriasis
- Helps to relieve gas, and bloating
- Antimicrobial
- Analgesic

-Topically, lavender (as a wash or essential oil) can be healing for burns, wounds, and minor infections. Oil is soothing , antimicrobial and pain-relieving.

-Package dried lavender buds in an organza bag with a drawstring top and place it under your pillow to help you sleep at night or sprinkle some fresh or dried buds in a bath and some Epsom salts to help you relax and to calm skin irritations.

- Alternatively brew some lavender tea (lavender and chamomile is a great combination) to help you relax after a stressful day.

# Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)





- The quintessential “woody” herb, rosemary is a highly flavorful, highly medicinal perennial herb that’s a staple in just about every herb garden.

## Medicinal Uses

- Helps improve memory and focus.
- Helps to relieve sore muscles and joint pain.
- Reduces stress and anxiety.
- May help relieve headaches/migraine.
- Helps to boost the immune and circulatory system.

Eat it fresh, or dried, or make a tea or tincture for more concentrated medicinal use. Infuse it into apple cider vinegar to make a rosemary hair rinse for your hair, or infuse dried rosemary into oil to make a pain-relieving salve for achy muscles and joints



# OREGANO (*Origanum vulgare*)



Oregano is a perennial Mediterranean herb that grows well in hot, dry conditions and requires very little care and attention to flourish.

## Medicinal Uses:

- Antibacterial
- Antiviral
- Antiseptic
- Powerful antioxidant properties

- Brewed as a tea to treat coughs and colds.
  - Treat wounds, and infections
  - Psoriasis
  - Stomachaches
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- Oregano oil is a rich source of carvacrol, which is a powerful antioxidant with antibacterial properties.



- Studies have found that the carvacrol compounds found in oregano oil may be effective when fighting drug resistant strains of bacteria, such as Staphylococcus (the bacteria responsible for staph infections), when they were combined with silver nanoparticles.
- Brew oregano as a tea and mix with honey and lemon to help soothe and heal coughs, sore throats, colds and flu, or make a tincture for a more potent concentrated dose. Make an oregano concoction to pour over cuts and wounds to encourage healing and ward off infections or infuse it in witch hazel and use as an astringent on acne and breakouts.

# Thyme (Thymus vulgaris)



Thyme is another popular earthy, woody herb and goes hand-in-hand with rosemary, both in the garden and in cooking.

### Medicinal Uses:

- Sore throats (including bronchitis)
- High blood pressure and cholesterol

- Boost immunity.
- Help combat acne.
- Disinfecting,
- Repelling pests.
- Preventing bacterial infections
- Said to have been used as a hangover cure in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Both the flowers and leaves of thyme can be used to treat a variety of illnesses and ailments,



## Resources:

- Medicinal uses for herbs
- <https://thehouseandhomestead.com/culinary-and-medicinal-herbs-to-grow-at-home/>
- <https://chestnutherbs.com/growing-medicinal-herbs-in-pots/>

### Medical Herbal companies

<https://www.gaiaherbs.com>

<https://chestnutherbs.com/growing-medicinal-herbs-in-pots>

### Essential Oils

<https://oshadhi.com>