

The Best Kept Secret of Cats!

Down through history it has been noted that cats have a strange affinity to the Catnip plant. (*Nepeta Cateria* or 'Cat Mint') If its leaves are crushed or torn they release a pleasant smelling volatile oil that really turns cats on. They will eat it and roll in it and seem to get 'high' on it. It is not at all harmful to them, however, as the things people too often use for such purposes are.

Wise women and knowing herbalists down through the ages have also held great respect for this lowly member of the mint family, for it is really a 'medicine chest' in a plant. I will try and list a few of the myriad uses of 'catnip'.

The fresh leaves are tasty as a salad garnish and were used as such by the French. The tea steeped from dried herb in boiling water is good for indigestion and gas. Always cover the cup while steeping with a saucer to keep in the volatile oils. Then strain and drink.

For coughs, colds and flu make a strong tea and add honey and a pinch of ginger. The herb has been shown to have anti-VIRUS properties. A sick cat will always eat catnip if it can find it!

For 'nerves' and insomnia, use at bedtime.

For bladder infections and kidney problems, take several cups daily. It is a mild diuretic for water retention.

A good Prostate formula uses equal amounts of Catnip, comfrey leaf, plantain leaf, and spearmint leaf: Combine and steep 1 Tbsn. of herb to quart of boiling, distilled water. Drink entire quart during day. Repeat for 3 weeks. It will clear up prostatitis. A simple and safe remedy.

Catnip can be used in a bath to soothe sore or itchy skin. Steep a strong cupful and strain into the bath.

Catnip tea will soothe children and reduce fever. Add a little honey to make it pleasant to take.

Any kind of cramps and spasms (period pains as well) respond well to catnip, even asthma attacks will often subside to a couple of cups of weak catnip tea.

Headaches and nervous tension respond well to catnip tea.

An enema of mild, warm catnip tea will relieve even severe colic.

An old time herbal lists, restlessness, insanity, colic, fever, hysteria, headache and children's ailments among the things it is good for.

A poultice or fomentation of catnip will relieve painful swellings and help heal bruises.

Taken as a tea and also used in baths it is helpful in chicken pox and scarlet fever.

Finally, soak your tired sore feet in warm water with catnip tea in it and use a cup of cooled strong tea as a hair rinse to combat dandruff.

There you have it; from head to foot!

Oh, don't forget to share it with your cat as well.

One warning however; do not eat the root as the old time herbalists claim it makes even the nicest person nasty. It is said the executioners used to take it to assist them in doing their jobs! =^..^=