



Herbs For Healing Newsletter



Herb of the month: the nettle

Nettles are not the most popular of plants. They sting and can be a stubborn weed in gardens and along garden fences. .

.Do nettles need even an introduction? We all know the plant. Few of us however know and appreciate their benefits to health.

The young shoots that appear in Spring are an excellent blood tonic. They are loaded with vitamins and minerals: vitamin A, C, E, B1, B2, B3 and B5, and

Young nettle shoots make an excellent blood tonic

Nettles have been shown to cleanse the blood, stimulate bladder and kidneys, improve digestive processes and strengthen the pancreas.

Due to their high mineral content nettles have an alkalinising effect which will help to prevent rheumatic conditions. Nettles together with dandelion increase uric acid excretion, which eases symptoms of gout and rheumatism.



calcium, chlorophyll, iron, zinc, potassium, selenium, magnesium, phosphorus, and manganese.

Nettles, when taken as a herbal infusion or even as fresh juice, act like a tonic and spring cleanse due to their diuretic properties.



Spring is the time of year when fresh fruit and vegetables are in short supply except the ones that are imported from other countries.

This is the time of year to venture out and gather what nature has to offer, for free!

Nettles can be eaten in many forms: as a herbal infusion, fresh leaves mixed with a green salad, cooked as a vegetable like spinach or mixed with fruit and vegetables and juiced.

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A Spring 'Cure'

On the continent of Europe people juice fresh nettles and drink this as a 'spring cure'.

One to three teaspoonfuls of fresh nettle juice diluted with a little water taken daily for one month has a powerful tonic effect, clearing away the 'cobwebs' of sluggishness and phlegm accumulated during the winter months.



Nicholas Culpeper (1616–1654), botanist, herbalist, physician

"..nettle tops eaten in spring, consumeth the phlegmatic superfluities in the body of man, that the coldness and moistness of winter hath left behind"

Culpeper came to this conclusion as a result of experience and observation.

Modern science has found evidence of this claim by analysing the constituents of nettles and their effects upon the body.



Nettles are among the safest herbs on the planet. It is one of the oldest and most famous medicinal plants.

Spring is the time of year which many people look forward to, others dread this time of year because it means runny noses and red eyes: the hay fever season.

A Benefit to hay fever sufferers

A preliminary human study found that nettle capsules helped reduce sneezing and itching in people with hay fever. This may be due to the nettle's ability to reduce the amount of histamine the body produces in response to an allergen.

Some doctors recommend taking a freeze-dried preparation of stinging nettle well before hay fever season starts. A spoonful of local honey together with the nettle can prepare the immune system to the exposure of pollen and thus weaken the symptoms of hay fever.

Source: www.rivercottage.net

Try this delicious nettle soup

- 1 medium onion finely sliced
- 1 pint of bacon stock
- 1 large potatoe, diced and boiled
- Black pepper, Crème fraiche, Butter
- 1 large carrier bag of fresh nettle tops

Cook the onions in butter over a gentle heat until softened and translucent. Add the bacon stock and simmer gently. Skim any scum off the surface. Add the nettles and simmer for 5 minutes add the potato and keep cooking for 5 more minutes. Take off the heat and season. Stir in crème fraiche and serve.

Sometimes if I have a handful of watercress I add it for a bit of extra pep. For even more, add a splash of Tabasco.



In association with:

Transition Town Sturminster Newton

Towards Self-Sufficiency and Resilience

stur.transitiontown1@googlemail.com

www.transitiontownsturminsternewton.wordpress.com



Luzia Barclay DBTh MIRCH
Registered Medical Herbalist

Salisbury Herbal Practice
54 Hamilton Road
Salisbury SP1 3TQ

Telephone: 01722 330663

Email: info@luzia.co.uk

Site: www.herbsforhealing.org.uk