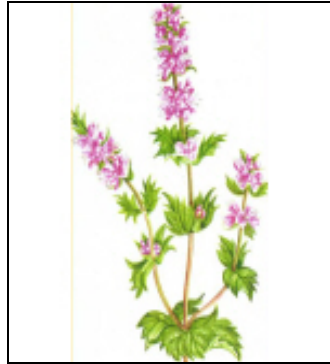


~ Ask Granny Earth ~

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Mint

## ASK GRANNY EARTH

**Although I love the taste of Mint, I'm lacking information on what it's good for medicinally. Can you help?**

**Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*):** Piperita comes from the Latin 'piper', meaning pepper. One of the oldest household remedies, Peppermint grows prolifically; an indication that it is a much-needed remedy. Traditionally used to settle the stomach, it's also good for chills, fevers, flu, dizziness, dysentery and heart problems, including palpitations/anxiety. For these conditions make a tea using one ounce Mint to a pint of boiling water. Drunk on a regular basis, it will help cleanse and strengthen the entire body.

**Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*):** Spicata in Latin means - to grow spikes. This would describe the shape of Spearmint's flowers. The whole plant is soothing to the nerves. Therefore, Spearmint is used for settling the stomach in cases of colic, gas, dyspepsia and nausea. It is also used to treat inflammation of the kidneys and bladder. Spearmint should not be boiled when making tea. Externally, it can be used as a poultice for headaches.

The Mint family is comprised of 25 species, grown for culinary herbs, essential oils and medicinal teas. The generic name, *Mentha* is derived from

the Greek legend of Menthe, a nymph who (because of the love Pluto bore her) was metamorphosed into the Mint plant.

All Mint has creeping root-stocks which produce erect stems that grow to 2 feet tall. They bear pointed, bright green leaves with finely toothed edges and smooth surfaces. The small pinkish flowers are densely arranged in whorls of the upper leaves, forming slender tapering spikes that bloom from July through September. You can harvest it for drying when it's in full bloom. Cut long stems and hang upside down in a warm dry place for several weeks; skin the leaves and store in a bag for later use. The plant will continue to grow, giving you another bloom later in the summer. Mint prefers a moist soil and a partially shaded area. Once started, it will take over - pull it out and give away to friends.

Mint contains over 200 phytochemicals, including menthol and menthone which give it that unmistakable smell and taste. It makes a very relaxing drink before going to bed.