

# SEVEN PLANETARY HERBS

☉ **CHAMOMILE** - *Matricaria recutita*. Ruled by Sun. Chamomile grows wild in Europe and west Asia (*Chamomilla*), and other related species are found in North America and Africa (*Matricaria*). Chamomile has a long and well-deserved reputation as a gentle but helpful herb in conditions of tension, irritability, or inflammation. It is warming and stimulating to elimination, especially sweating, but has a gently sedative action to the muscles, nerves, and stomach. It is used for headaches, stomachaches, colic, and all types of cramps. Because it is gentle, yet reliable and good-tasting, it is frequently used for children's disorders. Its flowers help to ease indigestion, nervousness, depressions and headaches. It is ideal for emotion related medical problems such as peptic ulcers, colitis, spastic colon, and nervous indigestion. Chamomile was used by the Egyptians, Greeks, and Vikings as a whole-body healer. The herb has a purifying and calming effect and is burned as incense to deepen meditation. The tea makes a soothing tonic for the nerves, and gamblers who wash their hands in the tea are said to reap more winnings. The tea also eases menstrual cramps, and herbalists sometimes prescribe it to women for infertility. It is also a remedy for asthma, gallstones, diarrhea, toothaches, and middle ear infections. Roman chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile* or *Chamomilla*) is a close relative, used in a similar way. Properties: anti-inflammatory, anti-spasmodic, relaxant, bitter, nervine. Chamomilla is used to treat sensitiveness, irritableness, hypersensitivity, hysteria, thirstiness, hot and numb feelings, pains associated with numbness, bad temper, and anger, teething pains, colic. Earache with soreness around ear, swelling, and flatulence. Externally, it is used for sore skin and eczema. The Egyptians and Romans used the oil for skin conditions such as dermatitis, boils, acne, rashes, and eczema as well as for hair care, burns, cuts, toothaches, teething pains, inflamed joints, menopausal problems, insomnia, migraine headaches and stress related complaints. Apply the oil to bottom of feet, temples or on location, or it may be added to food or water as a dietary supplement. Safe for use with small children and has a calming mixed with bath or massage oils.

♄ **HORSETAIL** - *Equisetum hyemale* (or *arvense*). Ruled by Saturn. Horsetail or shavegrass is used most often for congestive or infectious conditions of the kidneys, as it is a very strong diuretic, as well as an anti-infective and astringent to the urinary system. These astringent properties can also be applied to conditions of unwanted bleeding, such as excessive menstruation, hemorrhoids, or ulcers. Horsetail contains large amounts of minerals, especially silica, and so is used in malnutrition-related disorders which manifest as poor hair, skin, or fingernail condition. It can be irritating to the urinary system, and should be taken in small, frequent doses for short-term therapy only. Uses: pain in the kidneys (especially right), pain in the bladder and urinary passages, constant desire to urinate (and passes large quantities of clear, light-colored urine without relief), nocturnal bedwetting of children, cystitis, and dysuria.

♃ **LEMON BALM** - *Melissa officinalis*. Ruled by Jupiter. Melissa has been cultivated in the Mediterranean region for more than 2,000 years and was a favorite herb of Islamic alchemists. The Muslim herbalist Avicenna recommended lemon balm for heart problems. Its main action is as a tranquilizer. It calms nervous spasms, colics and hearth spasms. The hot tea promotes sweat that that is good for colds, flus and fevers. Its sedative actions have been used to help in the treatment of psychiatric problems, including dystonia. Lemon balm's anti-histamine action is useful to treat eczema and headaches. Considered by Paracelsus to be a cure-all, Melissa was the herb he revered most. It is often useful for tension problems, whether manifesting as headaches, stomach aches, or general tension and irritability. It is also considered particularly good for children, especially in the cranky, feverish, hyperactive-but-exhausted onset of illness stage, and particularly in cases of ear infection. Melissa appears to work as a sedative in tension cases, but at the same time as a mood elevator and antidepressant, and so can be useful for relieving tension in people who might have overly depressive reactions to heavier, downer-type sedatives. It is also used as an anti-spasmodic, especially for menstrual cramps. Melissa is not potent, but reliable and predictable with no known side effects. Today, this sweet-smelling herb is still widely valued for its calming properties, and new research shows that it can help significantly in the treatment of cold sores. Uses: relaxant, antispasmodic, increases sweating, anti-viral, nerve tonic, sedative, colds, influenza, depression, headaches, indigestion, restlessness, allergies, herpes, and bad dreams.

♁ **CHASTE BERRY** - *Vitex agnus castus*. Ruled by Moon. Chaste tree berry or "vitex" is most commonly used to bring balance and health to the female organs and their cycles. Contains progesterone. Used to treat excessive bleeding, irregular cycles, fibroids and other uterine or ovarian growths and inflammations, excessive cramps, amenorrhea, and re-balance healthy hormonal function. Can help with all PMS-related problems- emotional upset, cramps, migraines, acne, swollen feet, etc. Although it works primarily on these second-half problems. The berry is also used for low sexual vitality with corresponding mental depression and loss of nervous energy and produces its chief effect on sexual organs of both sexes. Uses: impotency and premature

old age from abuse of sexual power, weakness from excessive masturbation habit, gnawing itching in all parts, especially eyes, bad memory, nausea with sensation as if intestines were pressed downwards, abdominal distended after meals, breast-milk absent, pupils always dilated, infertility with suppressions of menses and no sexual desire.

**♀ MOTHERWORT** - *Leonuris cardiaca*. Ruled by Venus. Motherwort is native to Europe and was popular as a medicinal plant in early Greece, where it was used to calm pregnant women suffering from anxiety. A traditional remedy for mothers-to-be, it is used in the last few weeks of pregnancy to prepare for a smooth and easy labor. It was also historically used throughout pregnancy to soothe pains and tensions common at this time, although it is now regarded with more caution as a pregnancy herb. Motherwort has a combination of effects which could make it very helpful around pregnancy and childbirth, but it should only be used under qualified guidance at this time, as it can stimulate menstruation. Motherwort is more widely used for suppressed, crampy, or difficult menstruation, and often brings quick relief. It is also calming and tonic to the nerves, heart, and circulation, and so helps with the tension many women experience with PMS, as well as being helpful to both sexes for all types of tension, nervousness, insomnia, and over-stimulated heart conditions. As a cardiac tonic, Motherwort combines especially well with Hawthorne to strengthen the heart and lower blood pressure. Other prominent uses of the herb include decreasing muscle spasms, lowering blood pressure, improvement of fertility, the relief of postpartum depression and menopause. Antispasmodic and sedative, the herb promotes relaxation rather than drowsiness. Motherwort stimulates the muscles of the uterus, and is particularly suitable for delayed periods, period pain and premenstrual tension. Properties: nervine, emmenagogue, anti-spasmodic, hepatic, hypotensive, cardiac tonic.

**♂ NETTLE** - *Urtica dioica*. Ruled by Mars. Nettle occurs in Eurasia and is cultivated elsewhere. It is one of the most applicable plants found. The plant is known for its tiny stinging hairs, and the spice adds an aggressive, biting flavor to foods. The tea is used as a blood tonic and detoxifying agent that also lowers blood sugar. The dry herb is a natural antihistamine and decongestant, and people suffering from arthritis rub it directly on inflamed joints for relief from pain. Nettles have supplied fibers for cloth and paper since the Bronze Age into the 20th century. Throughout Europe, it has been used as a spring tonic and general detoxifying remedy. Nettle leaves contain iron and vitamin C and used for treating anemia and poor circulation. Nettle is a remedy for stinging, burning pains and is one of the best remedies for burns of the first degree. It also affects the breast glands, genitourinary organs, liver and spleen. Uses: kidney-stones, bee stings, ill-effects of eating shellfish, gout, rheumatism, pain in right deltoid muscle, uric acid diathesis, allergic reactions, diminished secretion of milk after childbirth, pruritus vulvae, burns and scalds, sunburn with intense itching, hives, urticaria, chicken-pox. Tea and poultices made from nettle leaves are used to treat eczema and skin conditions. Its astringent properties are used to stop bleeding. Today, nettle is used for hay fever, arthritis, anemia, and, surprisingly, even for nettle rash. Nettle sacred to the Hindu god of fire, Agni, and the German thunder god, Thor. Nettle is held in the hand to stay free from illusion and fear or to bind spoken spells. A popular spring tonic, Nettle contains large amounts of nutrients, especially iron, calcium, silicon and potassium, and are opening and cleansing to the body, stimulating all types of elimination. Nettles are also reputed to be alkalinizing to the blood, and to both remove uric acid and prevent its crystallization in the kidneys and joints, possibly helping with arthritis. Nettle has also shown some activity against allergies, and studies indicate that Nettle root has synergistic activity with Pygeum for the treatment of prostate disorders.

**♀ LAVENDER** - *Lavandula officinalis*. Ruled by Mercury. Lavender is native to the Mediterranean region and is cultivated in France, Spain and elsewhere. It was used for aromatic purposes by the Romans in baths. It is effective to cure headaches, especially when related to stress, to clear depression associated with weakness and depression. Externally, lavender oil has been used as a stimulating liniment to help ease aches and pains of rheumatism. Properties: carminative, relieves muscle spasms, antidepressant, antiseptic and antibacterial, stimulates blood flow. Lavender is an aromatic flower used to make a delicious tea that calms the nerves. One teaspoon per pot of tea is the normal potency. Lavender oil is the most versatile of all essential oils. Therapeutic-grade lavender has been highly regarded for the skin. The French scientist René Gattefossé was the first to discover these properties when he severely burned his arm in a laboratory accident. Lavender may also be used to cleanse cuts, bruises and skin irritations. The fragrance is calming, relaxing and balancing-physically and emotionally. Its aromatic influences are health, love, peace, and higher consciousness. Diffuse the oil or apply topically. Safe for use on small children; may be added to food or water as a dietary supplement.