

ALFALFA

Common Names:

Alfalfa, Alfalfa

Botanical Name:

Medicago sativa

History:

The Chinese have used alfalfa since the sixth century to treat kidney stones, and to relieve fluid retention and swelling. First discovered by the Arabs, they dubbed this valuable plant the "father of all foods". They fed alfalfa to their horses claiming it made the animals swift and strong.



Where it's grown:

Alfalfa plant is indigenous to the Mediterranean region, but has been cultivated widely all over the world in a variety of climates.

Looks like:

The flower of alfalfa is clover-like in shape and ranges from yellow to violet-blue in colour. The stems of alfalfa can grow up to 100 cm high and almost every part of the plant including the seeds is of medicinal value.

Parts used:

Whole herb and leaf

Active components:

The leaves of Alfalfa are rich in the plant pigment chlorophyll, as well as protein, fibre, vitamins, minerals and nutrients. Alfalfa contains eight essential amino acids and eight digestive enzymes. It is extremely nutritive and a good source of vitamins A, B1, B6, B12, C, D, K and E. Alfalfa is plush with iron, calcium, magnesium, phosphor, sulphur, sodium, potassium, chlorine and silicon. It is a source of thiamine, pantothenic acid, riboflavin, folate, zinc, copper, and beta-carotene.

Use:

Over the years, this plant has developed a reputation as a natural body cleanser, infection fighter and deodorizer. Traditionally, alfalfa was used as an herbal remedy in the treatment of arthritis, gout and rheumatism. It also aids in a variety of health concerns, including heart disease and an array of digestive illnesses such as constipation. The amino acids in alfalfa aid in cell building while enzymes are essential to daily life and carry out regular biochemical functions within our bodies.

The seeds of alfalfa can be made into preparations and applied topically to treat boils and insect bites, while the plant is primarily used as a nutritive tonic and alkalizing herb. Alfalfa boosts strength and vitality and can also fight more serious diseases. Studies have shown that alfalfa has a cholesterol-lowering effect and appears to alleviate asthma and other allergies. It acts as a preventative against cancer and regulates high blood pressure.