

Sweet Basil Herb



Sweet Basil to the Rescue

“Why would you think or believe that the herbal medicines that are provided by God and through nature would be less effective than the manmade synthetic drugs manufactured by drug companies?”

Following up on my comments yesterday regarding the use of mullein tea as a valuable pain relieving and anti-inflammatory herbal medicine I want to mention sweet basil (*Ocimum basilicum*).

Several years ago, as I was getting ready to go to my office there was a knock on my apartment door. When I opened the door, I found one of my patients bent over with severe abdominal pain and bloating. I invited her in and questioned her about her painful situation. It turned out that the cause of her pain was a serious bout of flatulence (*gas*).

As I talked with her I put on a glass pot of water and heated it up just below boiling. To the water I added some sweet basil leaves. I allowed the mixture to simmer and then turned it down to allow the leaves to steep. After the infusion sat for a few minutes I added a small amount of honey and gave it to my unexpected patient. Within 20 minutes she was pain free (*and free of gas and bloating*).

That is one of the amazing benefits of sweet basil leaf tea. Sweet basil will work in most any

form for stomach irritation and flatulence. In some cultures, the raw leaves are eaten with a meal. I have had patients who I have educated on its use rush into a grocery store and buy the dried leaf and chew it in their mouth and swallow the juice. It worked as well as an infusion of the tea. You can also take basil in capsules.

Sweet basil has many other qualities and benefits. It has been used as a medicine by numerous cultures for thousands of years (*there are records going back for 5000 years*). Basil is a good source of vitamin K, beta carotene, and iron, the plant is known to possess anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties. Many of the benefits of basil can be attributed to its volatile oils and flavonoids, as well as, powerful, antioxidants that reduce inflammation, are anti-aging, and promote a healthy cardiovascular system.

The essential oils in sweet basil have been found in research studies to have potent antibacterial qualities. These chemical constituents of sweet basil have been shown in studies to be effective in restricting the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Escherichia coli*, and several other pathogenic bacteria. A study published in a 2004 issue of *Food Microbiology* demonstrated that basil oils can even stop the growth of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

What is sweet basil good for?

Stomach irritation and gastritis

Gastro-intestinal infections

Inflammation leading to plaque formation in arteries

As a general anti-inflammatory

To increase immune function

In the treatment of anemia and clotting disorders

Helps to regulate blood sugar levels in pre-diabetes and diabetes type II

Sweet basil is a pleasant tasting tea that can be consumed throughout the day or you can add the fresh herb to your meals and salads.”

This Article was Written by,
Dr. Gregory Lawton.
My Teacher at the [BHA](#)



Benefits of Sweet Basil

Antimicrobial Agent

Basil has been shown to have strong effects when it comes to inhibiting the growth of bacteria like E. coli, cholera, staph, listeria, and Shigella. This is due to the presence of various oils and constituents that give it a strong aroma along with antimicrobial properties.

Anti-inflammatory Agent

The eugenol in basil reduces inflammation and swelling, acting as both a pain reducer and means of breaking a fever.

Heart Health

Basil is recommended for cardiovascular health due to its high levels of beta-carotene, a powerful antioxidant that stops free radicals from damaging cells. It also prevents the free radicals from oxidizing cholesterol in the bloodstream.

Improves Sleep

This herb is a great source of magnesium, which improves blood flow and can aid in sleep issues.

Reduces Oxidative Stress

Studies have also shown that basil, rich in antioxidant properties aids in lowering blood sugar levels and managing diabetes. Reducing oxidative stress also supports liver function and prevents metabolic syndrome, providing a boost to the immune system at the same time.

Prevents Cancer

Recent research has even shown that the herb has the potential to prevent cancer, thanks to its wide range of phytochemicals and other active ingredients.

Reduces Stress

Basil is thought to reduce cortisol levels, which can help those people who are chronically suffering from depression or stress.

Skin Care

The combination of antioxidant chemicals with antibacterial benefits makes basil excellent for skin health. It aids in preventing acne and keeping your skin younger looking. It also helps reduce signs of aging such as wrinkles and increase skin elasticity.

Contraindications and Warnings

Below

Basil is **LIKELY SAFE** when taken by mouth in food amounts.

Basil is **POSSIBLY SAFE** for adults when taken by mouth as a medicine, short-term. In some people basil can cause low blood sugar.

The above-ground parts of basil and basil oil are **POSSIBLY UNSAFE** when taken by mouth as a medicine, long-term. These contain estragole, a chemical that might increase the risk of getting liver cancer.

Special Precautions & Warnings:

Pregnancy and breast-feeding: Basil is **LIKELY SAFE** for pregnant and breast-feeding women in food amounts. But larger medicinal amounts are **POSSIBLY UNSAFE**. Basil contains a chemical, estragole, which has caused liver cancer in laboratory mice.

Children:

Basil is **LIKELY SAFE** for children in food amounts.
But larger medicinal amounts are **POSSIBLY UNSAFE**.

Bleeding disorders:

Basil oils and extracts might slow blood clotting and increase bleeding.
In theory, basil oils and extracts might make bleeding disorders worse.

Low blood pressure:

Basil extracts might lower blood pressure.
In theory, taking basil extracts might make blood pressure become too low in people with low blood pressure.

Surgery:

Basil oils and extracts might slow blood clotting. In theory, basil oils or extracts might increase the risk for bleeding during surgical procedures.
Stop using basil at least 2 weeks before a scheduled surgery.

Are there any interactions with medications?

Medications for diabetes (*Antidiabetes drugs*)

Interaction Rating: Moderate Be cautious with this combination.

Basil might decrease blood sugar levels.

Diabetes medications are also used to lower blood sugar.

Taking Basil along with diabetes medications might cause your blood sugar to drop too low. Monitor your blood sugar closely.

The dose of your diabetes medication might need to be changed.

Some medications used for diabetes include glimepiride (*Amaryl*), glyburide (*DiaBeta*, *Glynase PresTab*, *Micronase*), insulin, pioglitazone (*Actos*), rosiglitazone (*Avandia*), chlorpropamide (*Diabinese*), glipizide (*Glucotrol*), tolbutamide (*Orinase*), and others.

Words of Caution:

It is always important to check with your doctor and speak with your holistic practitioner, before taking any herbal for medicinal purposes, and especially for low blood pressure or bleeding disorders. Basil is not recommended in high doses for children, during pregnancy, or for women that are breastfeeding. Stop taking it two weeks before any surgery, due to its impact on blood-clotting.



Neuromuscular Wellness

Health + Life + Balance