

Valeriana officinalis

Family: *Valerianaceae* – valerian
Parts Used: root (most potent), blossoms, leaves

Valerian has been used for nervous system conditions since the Greeks and Romans. It makes a cheery addition to the garden, even if the blossoms smell a bit like a baby diaper.

Properties

Antispasmodic, analgesic, antiseptic, carminative, diuretic, nervine, sedative, stimulant.
Energetics: warming, pungent
Systems Affected: nervous

Uses

- Nervous systems disorders
- Blossoms cleanse, purify, and enliven the nerves.
- Tension, stress, anxiety, depression, hysteria, and sleeplessness.
- Pain relief, headaches, migraines
- Tremors, cramps, muscle spasms and pain.
- Chronic fatigue, ADHD
- Painful, spastic, or unproductive coughs, croup, etc.
- Palpitations, irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure.

Herb Preparations

Use modest doses for 2-3 weeks, take a week break, resume 2-3 weeks, one week break, and so on.

- Tea (make a decoction, although not very tasty – stinky sock flavor)
- Powder, capsules
- Extract
- Bath, foot soak, compress

Care/Harvesting

A natural woodland plant that can be purchased at a nursery or sow seeds in early spring, giving 12" spacing.
Prefers part share in moist conditions with rich soil. Moderate to heavy water.

- Harvest leaves and blossoms anytime for a mild potency.
- Roots are harvested in the fall of the first year or spring of the second. They begin to deteriorate in quality by the fall of the second year.

Safety

Not recommended if taking pharmaceuticals, or kava.