

Arctostaphylos uva ursi
Family: *Ericaceae* - heather
Parts Used: leaves

One of several species referred to a bearberry, due to the love of these berries by bears. Mainly used for anything to do with the urinary tract.

Properties

Antimicrobial, astringent, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, antifungal, astringent, analgesic, diuretic, antilithic

Energetics: cooling, drying
Systems Affected: urinary

Uses

- Tones and builds the urinary system.
- Kidney and bladder stones.
- Bladder and urinary infections, cystitis, nephritis, urethritis, etc.
- Painful urination, increases the flow of urine, helps with bedwetting.
- Vaginal infections, discharge, and diseases.
- Promotes contractions, helps with difficult labor and postpartum bleeding.

Herb Preparations

- Tea
- Mouthwash, gargle (sore, inflamed gums)
- Powdered, capsules
- Extract
- Poultice, compress (apply to burns, boils, wounds, and sores)
- Fresh, chew leaves

Foraging/Harvesting:

Found in rocky outcrops, gravel, poor, sandy soils. An evergreen, branching, ground cover. Leaves are shiny-leathery, oval shaped. Flowers are white to pink, and urn shaped. Berries are a dry, red ball.

- Leaves are best harvested in the fall before the first frost but can be used anytime.
- Berries can be harvested as food (not medicinal) when they are bright red.

Safety

Do not use during pregnancy. Large or frequent doses may be irritating to the stomach. Long term used could result in constipation. It may turn urine a greenish color, but not harmful.