

Matricaria chamomilla – German Chamomile
Chamaemelum nobile – Roman Chamomile
Family: *Asteraceae* – daisy
Parts: blossoms

There are two main types of chamomile, although there are many species, the most commonly used is German Chamomile which is true chamomile and has the signature, sweet, apple-like flavor. It is a self-seeding annual unlike its cousin, Roman chamomile, which is a perennial and known also as garden chamomile, it has larger blossoms and a more bitter flavor. True chamomile (German) has mild, gentle, and soothing properties while the garden chamomile (Roman) does not so it should not be used as freely.

Properties

Antibacterial, antifungal, analgesic, anticatarrhal, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic, astringent, carminative, cholagogue, febrifuge, mucilage, nervine, sedative, vulnerary.

Energetics: cooling, drying, bitter/sweet
Systems Affected: nervous, digestive

Beauty and Personal Care

- Mild cleanser and deodorizer
- Heals and repairs skin tissue both externally and internally
- Softens skin (soak roughened areas in the tea, use in salves and creams)
- Tightens and tones skin
- Good addition to toners and facial cleansing grains to help remove blackheads and keep skin soft and clean
- Puffy/dark circles under eyes (apply cool tea bags right over eyes or use a compress)
- Perfume or deodorant
- Add powdered herb to Redmond clay for a natural body powder to deodorize feet, under arms and other areas
- Softens, strengthens hair while also working as a mild hair lightener
- Baby body care; use in all personal care preparations such as powder, creams, oils, etc. - gentle and soothing for sensitive skin while leaving a pleasant aroma.

Uses

- Baby and children; colic, fussiness, tummy problems, calming and soothing, teething, sleeplessness, stress and anxiety, irritable, cranky, restless, fever
- Strengthens and supports the nervous system
- Tension, stress, and anxiety
- Helps the body and mind to calm down, resulting in a more restful sleep
- Headaches
- Immune support to aid the body in fighting infection and getting rid of bacteria and viruses.
- Fever, flu, cold, sore throat, cough, etc.
- Soothes gastrointestinal tract and mucous membranes
- Mild pain reliever
- Cramps, muscles spasms, sore muscles
- Joint pain and inflammation
- Digestive support; nausea, morning sickness, stomachache, etc.
- Liver and gallbladder support; has been used for jaundice and gallstones
- Ulcers
- Soothes and strengthens kidney, liver, and bladder
- Infections both internal and external
- Strengthens and tones the womb, helping to ease PMS symptoms and menstrual cramps
- First aid; wounds, cuts, burns, infections, etc.
- Itchy, irritated skin, rashes, and general skin tissue repair
- Eye support; strain, irritation, dark circles, puffiness, infection, conjunctivitis, etc. (use as an eye wash or tea bags over eyes)

Herb Preparations

- Tea, blend with lemon balm and rose petals for the nervous system. Use a weak tea for babies under 2 (1/2 teaspoon per one cup of water)
- Compress, poultice
- Baths, foot soak, steam
- Herbal oil, salve, balm, cream, etc.
- Tincture
- Honey, syrup
- Herbal capsules, powder, sprinkle
- Sleep pillow, herbal sachet
- Eye wash or compress (use tea bags or cloth soaked in tea)
- Douche, enema

Care/Harvesting

German and Roman chamomile are different plants in the garden. Roman is a perennial that is best started with a transplant while German is a self-seeding annual that easily pops up when seeds are sown. I will be focusing on German, since that is the most common one used medicinally.

- Sow seeds directly in the garden in early spring, keep moist until germinated.
- Because the seeds are so light and tiny you can mix them with sand first and then sprinkle around your area of choice or find a transplant in your local nursery.
- Prefers dry, well-drained soil. Provide light to moderate amounts of water.
- Chamomile likes partial shade to full sun.
- Harvest when flowers are fully open and fragrant. You can snip the blossoms off with scissors, but I prefer to run my fingers up the stems and pop off the tops right into a basket. This method is very therapeutic and your receive all the benefits of the chamomile as you do it.
- Chamomile makes a great companion to all other plants (except potatoes) as it tends to keep them healthy and disease free.
- Leave some blossoms on the plant in the fall if you would like them to self-show.

Caution

From the ragweed family so always check for allergic reaction before use.