

## Garden sage *Salvia officinalis*

Sage is one of the unsung heroes of garden herbs. In addition to its culinary uses, and having beautiful soft foliage and a cleansing fragrance, sage has been used over the millenia for a variety of ills, from soothing sore throats to cooling perimenopausal hot flushes and night sweats. Here are some of the features of sage and how you can use your own home-grown *Salvia officinalis*.

Sage is antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, has anti-oxidant properties, and is a restorative for an over-stressed adrenal cortex. Sage tea can improve mood and mental clarity.

### Sage gargle

Take 8 – 10 fresh sage leaves and wash them. Shake dry, then chop coarsely and crush them. Place them in a cup and fill the cup with boiling water. Cover the cup with a lid (so as not to let the essential oils evaporate) and allow the liquid to cool. Strain and use as a mouth wash or gargle. This is a very strong mix, so spit out rather than swallow.

For inflammation and infections of the mouth and throat.

**Chew a leaf** briefly to press on an ulcer

### Sage tea – 1 or 2 cups a day

Take 3 - 4 fresh leaves and wash them. Shake them dry and then chop coarsely and crush them. Place them in a cup and fill the cup with boiling water. Cover the cup with a lid (so as not to let the essential oils evaporate). Let the leaves steep for 10 – 15 minutes, then strain and sip slowly. Take half an hour before bedtime for night sweats.

Singers use sage tea for soothing throats

For cooling and soothing peri-meno-pausal hot flushes and night sweats.



### Bibliography and further reading

*British Herbal Pharmacopoeia* 1983, BHMA  
*Herbal Medication, a Clinical and Dispensary Handbook*, Priest and Priest  
*Medical Herbalism*, David Hoffmann  
*Women, Hormones and the Menstrual Cycle*, Ruth Trickey

### Cautions:

*Salvia* contains thujone in very small amounts (less than 1%, up to 30% in essential oil). Although it is perfectly safe to use sparingly when pregnant as a herb in cooking, **don't take sage medicinally when you are pregnant or wishing to become pregnant**, as in high doses it is uterine stimulant and can act as an emmenagogue – brings on a period.

IF ANY SYMPTOMS PERSIST, SEE YOUR DOCTOR OR A MEDICAL HERBALIST