

CALENDULA



- *Calendula* also known as:
- Garden Marigold, Poet's Marigol
- and Pot Marigold

Interesting Facts

- *Calendula* (marigold) is a genus of about 12-20 species of annual or perennial plants native to the Mediterranean. It is also the flower of the month October.
- The name *Calendula* stems from the Latin "kalendae," meaning "first day of the month."
- The ancient Egyptians valued *Calendula* for its rejuvenation properties, while the Greeks used the brightly colored petals as a culinary garnish. *Calendula* petals can be eaten! More recently, Civil War doctors reportedly used the leaves to treat open wounds on the battlefield.

Story

"How many seeds are there, Mama?" Rysha asked me as we cut off the seed heads of the fading calendula flowers. The flowers in our front yard seem to have tripled in volume this year, thanks to the seed gathering and sowing of last year's efforts. Three little heads bobbed around me in the bright flowers, pulling or clipping the seed heads off and dropping them in my plastic bag. "Okay, kiddoes, let's wait for a few more days for the rest of them - they're still a bit green."

Joe Courage lined the floor of our mini-van with paper, and we spread out the seeds we'd picked. Here they would have 24 hours to completely dry. I held up one little calendula seed cluster.

"Look, Rysha - here's where the petals came out all around... and then the petals got old and blew away. Now all that's left is a ring of seeds around the middle. Look how many seeds there are in one flower! Let's count them..."

We counted the seeds, removing them one at a time, while all three kids pressed close to watch and count aloud. "Thirty-two seeds in one flower! That means this one flower has the potential make 32 more flower plants next year!"

We spread the seeds to dry more thoroughly and, in a few days, we'll scatter them over the front yard for next year's summer school and *Calendula* blossom festival.

How to Grow it:

Sprinkle *Calendula* seed in the Fall or Spring, and water occasionally. This is a hardy plant that does quite well in dry soil, and full sun.

As the young plants come up, separate them and plant 6-12 inches apart. It is recommended to deadhead (removal of dying flower heads) the plants regularly to maintain a long and even blossom production.

Collection: Either the whole flower tops, or just the petals, are collected between June and September. They should be dried with great care to ensure there is no discoloration. To collect the seeds, wait until the flower head turns brown and hard, then clip it off and store in a dry place until you are ready to sow again.

NOTE: Not all household plants called "marigold" are members of the *Calendula* family.





Species

- *Calendula arvensis* – Field Marigold
- *Calendula bicolor*
- *Calendula eckerleinii*
- *Calendula lanzae*
- *Calendula maderensis* – Madeiran Marigold
- *Calendula maroccana*
- *Calendula meuselii*
- *Calendula officinalis* – Pot Marigold
- *Calendula stellata*

Actions:

Anti-inflammatory, anti-spasmodic, lymphatic, astringent, vulnerary, emmena-gogue, anti-microbial.

Uses:

Pharmacological studies, mostly using animals, have confirmed a wide range of activities and uses in this herb. Calendula extracts are anti-inflammatory, antiviral, and stimulate the immune system to increase the particle ingestion capacity of white blood cells. (In this respect, Calendula is similar to Echinacea.) Triterpenoids in Calendula have recently been linked to its anti-inflammatory activity. In addition, Calendula increases granulation at the site of a wound, promoting metabolism of proteins and collagen; in other words, helping grow new, healthy cells.

Calendula is in the same botanical family as Arnica and is used in similar situations. Modern herbalists use Calendula poultices for bruises, impetigo, varicose veins and minor burns. Ointments containing calendula are used for chapped lips, bedsores, ec-zema, and shingles. Calendula can also be made into a weak infusion (tea) and used as an eyewash for conjunctivitis or as a mouthwash for thrush. It is considered safe for children, if there are no allergies to the flower.

Calendula sap, which is taken from the stem, is reputed to be an effective callus remover. Old herbal texts recommend applying Calendula sap directly to calluses, corns and warts.

When taken internally, Calendula is believed to enhance bile production (which aids the liver), assist digestion, and minimize flatulence. Calendula tea was a pre-Civil War era remedy for nausea, headache, fever and menstrual cramps.

Combinations: For digestive problems Calendula may be used with Marshmallow Root and American Cranesbill, taken as a tea. As an external soothing wash or ointment, it can be used with Slippery Elm. A useful anti-septic lotion will be produced by combining it with Golden Seal and Myrrh.

A gargle or tea of Calendula is also used to reduce inflammation of the mouth or sore throat.



Calendula Pod



Calendula Seeds

Warning:

- Frequent skin contact may result in an allergic reaction to the herb.
- Calendula is also known to affect the menstrual cycle (it is used to start a delayed or irregular cycle) and should not be used internally during pregnancy and breast feeding.
- <http://health.learninginfo.org/herbs/calendula.htm>
- <http://www.allnatural.net/herbpages/calendula.shtml>
- <http://www.healthy.net/scr/article.asp?ID=1631>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calendula>

Tea or Wash Recipe:

Recommended adult doses are as follows:

Infusion: pour a cup of boiling water onto 1-2 teaspoons of the fresh or dried florets and leave to infuse for 10-15 minutes. Strain and drink three times a day for ulcers, digestion, bile production, or gargle for sore throat and thrush. Use externally as a wash for cuts, bruises, diaper rash, sore nipples, burns and scalds.

Calendula Quiz:

Give two other names Calendula is known by: 1) _____ 2) _____

Calendula is native to _____

Is Calendula poisonous to eat? _____

Name several ailments that Calendula can be used to treat: _____

Name three of Calendula's "actions:" 1) _____

2) _____ 3) _____

Write a short paragraph about how you might use Calendula to benefit your family:
