

Herb of the Moth:

Vitex

Chaste

tree

berry (*Vitex angus castus*) is native to Greece and Italy. This small tree-shrub grows up to 15 feet in height.

Fragrant, bright purple, rose and white flower clusters bloom late in the summer, while aromatic dark green foliage and stems give way to a peppery, purple fruit ready for harvest in late fall.

Vitex is the perfect example of a modern medicinal plant. From the writings of three of the best-known herbalist and healers of 400 B.C. to 100 A.D., we know that the chaste tree was highly revered. It is known that Vitex was one of Hippocrates' favorite herbs.

The berry of the plant is what is used medicinally. It is known as a supreme female herb, the hormone balancing herb. The volatile oil in chaste tree herbal preparations has been shown to produce a progesterone-like effect by acting on the pituitary gland, stimulating the release of leutenizing hormone (LH) and inhibiting the release of follicle stimulating hormone (FSH). That process stimulates the progesterone production. Thus, Vitex regulates hormonal balance and the menstrual cycle, including normalizing estrogen along with progesterone. It treats PMS and it's associated symptoms of migraines, depression, cramps, endometriosis, herpes, edema in the legs, distended sensitive breast, acne (in male and females), and mood swings. It also is used for infertility, menopause, for uterine fibroids, and to increase lactation for mothers milk. The dose of the berry varies depending on the need of the person, but in general, for tea 1 teaspoon of crushed berry in a cup of hot water infused for 15 minutes. Drink 3 cups a day, or take 3-4 caps or 20-75 drops to 1 tsp tincture 1-4 times a day. This herb should be taken long-term for optimum effects, 6 months or longer, although benefits may be felt after ten days. It is good to take a break for a day or two after ten days of taking an herbal preparation. This gives the body a rest, and you can start your treatment again for the next ten days. Here at the Good Earth we have the berries in bulk and capsule and tinctures for your personal needs.

