

## Herb of the Month: Nettle

Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), also known as Stinging Nettle, Common Nettle, Devils leaf, Net Plant and Greater Nettle, can be found in temperate climates growing as a weed throughout the world. The name *Urtica* comes from the Latin "urere" which means "to burn" in reference to the stinging hairs and *dioica* means: "two dwellings" as male and female flowers grow on different plants. It stands two to three feet tall, bearing dark green serrated leaves with small inconspicuous white flowers with tiny hairs on the leaf and stem. When any skin comes into contact with it, the hairs can inject an irritant causing a stinging and burning sensation. You can cut the sting by instantly rubbing fresh herbs such as rosemary, mint or sage on the affected areas. Nettles have been used as a vegetable and folk remedy for centuries. Once the leaf has been steamed, the hairs are no longer harmful. It is most nourishing and best to pick the leaf before it flowers. The leaf can affect a

wide range of problems and act as remedy and whole body tonic, including minerals such as calcium, Also present are beta- carotene, and histamine, acetylcholine, and betaine. has traditionally been used to help ating from long illness. Current (complex sugars) and lectins (large the most active constituents. The leaf has been shown to be anti- from making inflammatory chemicals potent remedy for allergy symptoms its high histamine content and anti-inflammatory properties. Nettles are also used as a hair-, skin- and nail tonic.



an excellent general detoxifying Nettles are a rich source of nutrients, iron, silica, and other trace minerals. vitamin C, as well as chlorophyll, Due to its rich nutritional profile, it with anemia, exhaustion, and recuper- research indicates that polysaccharides protein-sugar molecules) are probably

inflammatory by preventing the body known as prostaglandins. It also is a from pollen and hayfever because of

Nettle Root is a promising treatment in benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). BPH is a noncancerous enlargement of the prostate gland that constricts the urethra. It is thought that the herb may limit the amount of testosterone, the male sex hormone, and estrogen, the female sex hormone, circulating in the blood, or it may inhibit an enzyme, aromatase, that leads to the formation of testosterone. The German health authorities have concluded that nettle root extract is an effective treatment for urinary problems caused by BPH, but only when the prostate is slightly to moderately enlarged. For females it is said to help with excessive menstrual flow. This month we are featuring Nettle leaf for its allergy relief and detoxifying qualities in this high pollen season. Look for specials through out the supplement department.

