

PLANTAIN FACT SHEET

Greater Plantain (*Plantago major*) and Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*)

Plantain grows in meadows and fields, and on waysides and paths. Culpepper said it "removes heat", and it is indeed soothing for inflamed tissues, especially the skin, the lungs, and the lining of the digestive tract.

Both types of plantain contain flavonoids, tannins, silica and mucilage, and can be used externally to heal stings, insect bites, wounds, burns, other minor skin problems. Plantain ointment is also effective against haemorrhoids.

For bleeding gums and toothache, plantain tea can be used as a mouthwash. The tea is also good for cooling fevers, and can be used as an anti-histamine, anti-bacterial and anti-allergic, and to stimulate lymph flow.

It is traditionally thought of as a blood cleanser, diuretic, and expectorant, and has been used to treat nerve pain (as in shingles), kidney and bladder problems, and coughs.

Greater PLANTAIN *Plantago major*

Greater Plantain is also known as "Rat Tail" because of the way the seeds are arranged on a long spike. It is one of the most versatile herbs, and the leaves, seeds and roots can provide a rich source of minerals, including potassium and magnesium.

Ribwort PLANTAIN *Plantago lanceolate*

The young leaves of Ribwort Plantain make a good green leafy vegetable for salads, and are excellent in stir-fries and stews, or just steamed. They have similar properties to Greater Plantain, and make an excellent wet dressing for wounds and swellings.

