

EYEBRIGHT

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IMPORTANT

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Introduction

Eyebright (Euphrasia Officinalis; also known as Meadow Eyebright, and Red Eyebright) is a small annual herb, native to Europe, which was traditionally used as a wash, or taken internally, to support eye and vision health.

Typically, Eyebright is available in tincture, capsule, and tea/infusion preparations, as well as in the natural herb form.

Eyebright is the name of a group of plants belonging to the figwort family - they have whitish flowers which are streaked with purple. The name "Eyebright" indicates the traditional use as an eye-medicine; with Eyebright being used to treat conjunctivitis and other eye problems. An herbal lotion, or whole plant infusion, is made from the aerial part of the eyebright plant, which is prescribed by herbalists, or which is available as commercial preparations at good health stores.

Traditionally, the same infusion was drunk, and historical writers on herbs, like Culpeper and Parkinson, suggested the drinking of such herbal infusions for the treatment of eye afflictions is very efficacious.

Many places in Europe still use eyebright for the treatment of such eye problems in their folk medicine - this practice is common, especially in the Eastern European countries. In these countries, the topical as well as the internal remedy, which is made from the eyebright herb, is used in the treatment of such disorders as blepharitis* and conjunctivitis**.

***Blepharitis** is a condition where the rims of the eyelids become inflamed. This can cause the eyes to become red, irritated and itchy. Further, dandruff-like crusts can also appear on the eyelashes.

****Conjunctivitis** (also called "pink eye" or "Madras eye") is an inflammation of the conjunctivae, which are the mucous membranes covering the white of the eyes and the inner side of the eyelids.

Usage

Eyebright stimulates the liver to remove toxins from the body; and it has been used internally and externally to treat eye infections and afflictions such as pink-eye. The herb "strengthens" the eye, and helps to repair cellular damage. Eyebright is also used as an anti-catarthal - that is, it helps prevent the swelling of mucous membranes. Consequently, it has been used for respiratory conditions, particularly in the nasal pharynx, and the sinuses.

With disorders such as conjunctivitis and blepharitis of the eyes, Eyebright reduces inflammation in the eyes through its ability to tighten the mucous membranes around the eyes. Consequently, herbal remedies made from Eyebright are often used in the treatment of infectious and allergic reactions which affect affecting the eyes.

Typical Dosage

| Type | Dosage |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Eyebright Infusion | 2-3 cups, 2-3 x daily |
| Eyebright Powder | 3-5 caps, 2-3 x daily |
| Eyebright Tincture | 2-4 droppers full, 2-3 x daily |

Supplementation - Eyebright Caps

As a supplementation to the daily diet, take one or two eyebright capsules 1 to 2 x daily, preferably with food.

Remedies made from eyebright are marketed and used in the treatment of:

- "allergic" symptoms of eyes, nose, and throat
- conditions affecting the eyes
- disorders in the sinuses
- ear infections
- nasal catarrh
- problems affecting the middle ear
- relief from light sensitivity
- simple eye problems
- sinusitis
- treating mucous accumulations in the nasal passages

Anecdotal Claim

An anecdotal claim suggests that eyebright leaves, stamped and applied as a poultice, cures whitlows. However, I have seen no physical evidence of this.

Caution

Caution is advised when using eyebright in the treatment of dry and stuffy congestions - even though eyebright is capable of alleviating liquid mucous, its astringent quality can often worsen dry or stuffy disorders in the inflamed tissues.

Contraindications

Eyebright preparations can cause disorientation, headaches, fatigue, congestion, photophobia, altered vision, and sneezing. Should you experience any adverse affects when using Eyebright, discontinue use immediately and consult your health professional.

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Eyebright Compress

Eyebright compress are made from 1 x tablespoon of the dried herb, boiled for 10 x minutes in 500 ml of water. A compress can also be made from the cooled and undiluted herbal liquid for use as a topical healing agent. An anti-microbial herb such as goldenseal, in infusion form, is often combined with the Eyebright liquid in forming compresses.

Eyebright Tea

The herbal tea is prepared in a similar manner to the herbal infusion. Dosage of the herbal eyebright tea made for drinking can be taken at doses of two to three cups every day.

Good health stores have Eyebright tea bags, which make this simpler. The infused tea can also be used for compresses.

Dried Eyebright Herb

Dosage of 2-4 grams of the dried herb is also given to patients - this can be taken 3 x daily during the treatment period.

Eyebright Tincture

The usual dosage level for eyebright tincture is a single dose of 2-6 ml taken 3 x daily during the treatment period.

Important: straight Eyebright tincture should never be used as eye drops.

Eyebright Solution

- 2 grams of fresh or dried eyebright
- 250 ml of spirits (gin, brandy, vodka)

In a glass bowl, shred the Eyebright in the alcohol.

Put the mixture in a jar, and shake every 2 or 3 days.

After 1 month, strain and decant the solution.

Use as eyewash at a dose of 30 drops in 250 ml boiled water.

Used internally, this solution soothes seasonal allergies, catarrhs, and the common cold.

Eyebright Infusion

Make an infusion using one teaspoon of dried herb in one cup of boiling water for ten minutes. Cool, strain, and use as an eyewash. Do this 3-4 times a day. This may also be drunk or used as a compress.

Eyewash from Eyebright Tincture

Put 3 x drops of Eyebright tincture in a tablespoon of boiled water. When cool, use as an eyewash.

Important: straight Eyebright tincture should never be used as eye drops.

Eyebright Tea Bag Eye Pads

After making the tea from the tea bags, let the teabags cool and then place them on the eyes for 5 x minutes. This is a great improvised compress.

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Dosage

Dosage levels for Eyebright remedies differ for the various disorders, so always follow the manufacturer's directions.

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Magical Uses

Brewed into a tea and drunk, eyebright is claimed to be an aid to mental clarity, spirit sight, and psychic power.

Further, the infusion when placed on cotton pads, and then placed over the eyelids, induces clairvoyance. Nevertheless, the effect is not instant, and it may take a few weeks before "the powers" begin to work.

When eyebright is carried upon your person, it is claimed that it will increase your psychic powers, and it will also help you to see through "deceptions and lies".

Because of its contraindications, Eyebright should be used very carefully. Should you experience any adverse affects when using Eyebright, discontinue use immediately and consult your health professional.

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Appendix - Liver Thoughts

In herbal medicine, eye problems are often related to the liver.

Consequently, a dietary regime of fresh fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes, for several weeks is best.

Avoid all liver-heating and irritant substances, such as alcohol, refined sugar, red meat, spicy foods, and pharmaceutical and recreational drugs.

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