

Artemisia also has other medicinal uses:

Artemisia has many medicinally active ingredients and has a very positive effect on stimulating the immune system. This means that it helps the body fight infection. It does not have any known negative side effects so can be used for a wide range of medical conditions.

Since it stimulates the immune system Artemisia is an important natural medicine for managing HIV. It will **not** cure HIV but by stimulating the immune system it is very helpful for managing HIV. It is recommended to take one glass of artemisia tea every day.

THE NEED FOR A CUSTODIAN

Once Artemisia is in a community it can be easily grown from cuttings. However, it is important to have particular people (custodians) who take special care of the plants in the difficult seasons. It is such a useful medicinal plant that it is worth the effort to make sure plants are available at as many homes as possible. Institutions, such as NGOs, schools, clinics, churches etc. can also take the role of custodian of planting materials. When plants are available, cuttings can be taken and distributed within the community.

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ARTEMISIA

also called Sweet Annie
Wormwood

(*Artemisia annua*)



Artemisia is a Natural medicine that can be grown at home for producing an effective treatment for malaria. Wild species of Artemisia grow all over the world. The plants grown for treating malaria have been developed from plants native to China and Vietnam.

Artemisia is a large herb that grows to about 2 metres tall. It cannot tolerate drought and requires much care in cultivation. Good plants produce abundant small leaves, which are rich in the substance called *artemisinin*, which is very effective in treating malaria. The species *Artemisia annua* has been used for many years by the Chinese to treat fever, and more recently for treating malaria.

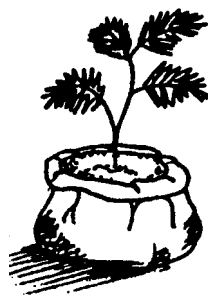
GROWING ARTEMISIA

Once there are some plants in an area, Artemisia can most easily be grown from cuttings. The small side branches root easily. Carefully cut off about 10 cm of a side branch, remove the bottom few leaves and push it into the soil. Keep cuttings from drying out by watering regularly. The cuttings root easily and after about three weeks, when they are

growing well, can be transplanted to a suitable place in the garden. Rooted cuttings start to grow fast and turn to a lighter green which is a sign they have taken.

If cuttings are taken every month and new plants established in different places in the garden, more plants will be kept from flowering and the yield of leaves will be greater.

The cuttings produce plenty of fibrous roots and are easy to transplant. Plant the plants about 60 cm apart. Keep the plants well watered and do not let them dry out as this makes them flower too soon.



Harvest can start as soon as the plants are producing enough leaves. Harvest branches from the bottom of the plant before they dry and turn brown. As the lower branches are harvested the plant continues to grow from the top. When the plants grow old or are under stress, such as in the dry season, they begin to flower. If this happens harvest the whole plant immediately, as flowering causes the leaves to fall. Care of the plants should aim to prevent them from flowering for as long as possible. Once the plant has started to flower cuttings are no longer useful.

Artemisia can also be grown from seed, but the seeds of Artemisia are very small and the seedlings very sensitive, so require a lot of attention.

Use a well-prepared seedbed, with fine soil. This can be made with well-rotted compost and sand. Spread the seeds on top of the soil. Do

not cover them with soil as they germinate in light. Since the seeds are so small they are easily washed away, so water them if possible with a fine spray. Do not let the seedbed dry out. Water it at least twice a day.

Very delicate shoots germinate after 4-6 days. When the seedlings are about 3 cm high, which normally takes about 6 weeks, transplant them into plastic bags or pots, as with tree seedlings. When they are about 15 cm tall, which is about ten weeks after sowing, the seedlings are ready to transplant into open ground.

USING ARTEMISIA TO TREAT MALARIA

Artemisia contains a drug called *artemisinin* that is used for treating malaria. It not only treats the symptoms but kills the parasites in the blood that cause malaria.

For adults: Pour one litre of boiling water over 5 g of dried leaves. Leave the mixture to cool for 15 minutes and if desired filter it through a clean cloth or tea sieve. Divide the liquid into 4 equal amounts (a litre is about four medium sized glasses) and drink one dose every six hours. Alternatively add boiling water to one teaspoon of dried leaves in a glass for each dose. Make a new batch of tea every day and drink the same amount for seven days. The tea has a bitter taste and can be sweetened with sugar or honey. If the fever returns within three weeks, make and use the tea in the same way for a further 12 days.

For children of 30 kg: - Use half the amount of water and half the amount of leaves. For small children of 15 kg, use only a quarter of the amount of water and leaves used for an adult.