

Oats/Straw



Avena Sativa by Prof. Dr. Otto Wilhelm Thomé in 1885

Herb: Oat Straw

Botanical name: *Avena sativa* (Common),
Avina fatua (Wild)

Family name: Poaceae

Description and Background: This plant is neutral energetic with slight warming and cooling properties. Oats are also known as the “Mothers' milk” of plants. It is abundant in vitamins, minerals, protein, soluble fiber, and beneficial oils (Luna, 2022, paras. 5-8). Oat straw is a grass weed with a rolled stem with fine hairs on the leaves and stem. The oat heads grow in a panicle structure, and the ends of the leaves tend to turn counterclockwise at the end.

Parts used:

The seeds and stems are used. The seed is used for oats, the leaves and stem are oat straw, and the bran is the outer layer. These are all used for medicinal purposes (RxList, 2021, para. 2).

Properties:

Oats are a nerve tonic, gentle relaxant, demulcent, emollient, mild cardio-tonic, mild antidepressant, antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, aphrodisiac (Luna, 2022, para. 6).

Uses:

Oat bran or whole oats are used for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and digestion problems. They are also used for preventing heart disease and gallstones.

Oats are used for joint pain, fatigue, withdrawal from nicotine and narcotics, and lowering high uric acid levels. Oats are also used for anxiety, stress, and weak bladder and kidney ailments.

Oat straw is used for the flu, swine flu, coughs, bladder disorders, joint pain, eye ailments, and frostbite.

Topically, oats are used for skin conditions, including itchiness, dryness, oiliness, eczema, dermatitis, chickenpox, and osteoarthritis (RxList, 2021, paras. 3-6).

Preparations and Dose: Oat can be enjoyed as a tea or decoction by combining 4 Tbsp of oat straw, oat tops, or both in 1 qt. of water. Bring it to an almost boil and allow to simmer for 30 minutes. Let cool enough to drink, strain, then enjoy sipping all day (Luna, 2022, para. 11). Oats may also be used as a poultice with ½ cup of oats in a muslin cloth

or washcloth tied off. Soak in warm water until milky. Then splash the water and apply the material directly to the skin. A tincture can be made with 200 grams of dried herb or 400 grams of fresh herb combined with 1 liter of 25% vodka/water mixture. Put it into a sealed jar and shake it daily for two weeks. Strain and put into bottles for storage. A typical dose is 1 tsp, up to three times daily (Neantog Farm, 2020, paras. 5-6). Oats may also be used in a bath form by adding 1 cup of oats in a tied cloth to your bath and letting it steep for 15 minutes before getting in.

Cautions & Contraindications:

Oats are safe for anyone but cause intestinal gas a bloating. Some people may have a skin reaction when used topically, and if you are allergic to oats or straw, avoid it or start with a low dose to test it out. If you have trouble swallowing or chewing food, avoid eating oats, as poorly chewed oats can cause intestinal blockages. If you have a digestive tract disorder, also take caution. If your condition slows the process of digestion, then oats can also get stuck and cause a blockage in your intestinal tract (RxList, 2021, paras. 15-19).

Childbearing Uses: Oats can help lower the risk for hypertension and GDM. It can also soothe skin during pregnancy for striae or other skin irritations. Postpartum oats can help boost a nursing individual's milk supply.

Resources

Luna, R. (2022). *Herb article oatstraw*. Rebecca's Herbal Apothecary.

<https://www.rebeccasherbs.com/pages/herb-article-br-oatstraw.html>

Neantog Farm. (2020, April 28). *Oat straw and how to use it (infusion and tincture)*.

<https://www.neantog.com/garden-articles/2020/4/28/oat-straw-and-how-to-use-it-infusion-and-tincture>

RxList. (2021, June 11). *Oats: Health benefits, side effects, uses, dose & precautions*.

RxList. <https://www.rxlist.com/oats/supplements.htm>

Thome, O. (1885). *Avena sativa* [Illustration]. Wikimedia Commons.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Illustration_Avena_sativa0.jpg