



Botanical name: *Verbascum thapsus*

Family: Figworts, also part of the Plantain family

Common name: Mullein

More names: candlewick, Aaron's rod, shepherd's staff, White Mullein, Torches, Mullein Dock, Our Lady's Flannel, Velvet Dock, Blanket Herb, Velvet Plant

Parts of the plant used: flower, leaves, root

When to harvest: second year leaves, flowers June-September; roots in September until before the ground

Herbal actions:

demulcent, expectorant [expels through air passages], antispasmodic, vulnerary, astringent, anodyne [painkiller], anti-inflammatory, nervine, anti-cataharral [remove excess mucous], antioxidant, anticancer, antimicrobial, antiviral, antihepatotoxic [prevent damage to liver], anti-hyperlipidemic activity [reduce bile], diuretic, emollient [softens the skin], analgesic [relieves pain], antiseptic [prevents the growth of disease-causing microorganisms], spasmolytic [relieves spasms], expectorant, narcotic, bactericidal, vermicide [poisonous to worms], alterative [alters the course of an ailment], antiasthmatic, antispasmodic, febrifuge [reduces fever; root]

Active constituents:

flavonoids, mucilage, saponins, tannins, terpenoids, glycosides, aucubin, carbohydrates, proteins, fats and oils, vitamin c

Habitat + ecology:

Mullein is a biennial loving fields, meadows, roadsides, and the cities. genus *Verbascum* consists of about 300 species native to Europe, West and Central Asia, and North Africa.

Planet: Mercury, Saturn

Energy: Cooling

Element: Fire

Taste: Bitter

Meridian/Organ affected: lungs, stomach

Ethnobotany (People + the plant ancestor):

- Mullein comes from the Latin word *mollis*, meaning soft, referring to the plant's woolly stem and leaves, as well as the Latin *malandrium*, meaning malanders, a cattle disease for which mullein was used as a remedy.
- Creek Indians drank a decoction of the roots for coughs; other tribes smoked the roots or dried leaves to treat asthma.
- The yellow flowers once were used as a source of yellow hair dye. Mixed with tumeric can amplify the yellow hues.
- In Appalachia, the plant has been used to treat colds and the boiled root administered for croup. Leaves were applied topically to soften and protect the skin. An oil derived from the flowers has been used to soothe earaches.



- In African slave medicine mullein was prepared to treat rheumatism alongside with white sassafras root; mixed mullein with molasses to make a cough remedy; smoked mullein leaves as a folk remedy for asthma in Southern Appalachia.
- Famous among Greeks that Ulysses took this plant to protect him against the wiles of Circe. Greeks, Romans and the people of Western United States knew it as candle/torch as they used it at funerals or other holy ceremonies. Earning the name "lungwort" because of its use to cure lung disease in both humans and livestock.

Plant magick:

- Opening to the throat chakra
- Belongs to the crossroads + the underworld
- Manifestation of spirits + other world
- Symbol of the sun + fire
- Caller of strength
- Combined with dream herbs to protect + in divination work
- Magick uses: soft leaves can be used as candle wicks, dried stalk can be soaked in beeswax or tallow to make a torch
- Necklace of leaves + roots support teething babies [Abnaki]
- Ceremonially rubbed on body during sweat bath to open our capacity to receive with clearness

Form: spirit, dried flowers + leaves, spirit bath

Medicinal uses:

- Traditional medicine for respiratory imbalances
 - Common cold, cough, fever, pulmonary infections
 - Mumps + other swollen glands
 - Leaves and flowers contain mucilage, which is soothing to irritated membranes, and saponins, which make coughs more productive
- Treating ear infection [infused or essential oil]
- Acts on the lymphatic system, relieving swelling
- Treating urinary incontinence and loss of urinary control due to a swollen prostate because it tones and strengthens the trigone sphincter at the base of the bladder
- Acts as a laxative, good for children
- Long term tonic for individuals with urinary incontinence, recurring bladder infections, interstitial cystitis, benign prostatic hypertrophy, as well as diarrhea with blood
- Leaf + root decoction supportive to pains, cramps + discomfort experienced in the genitourinary tract
- Blood purifier
- Helpful in cases of bruising, swelling, muscle aches, swollen glands, burns, wounds, cuts + nerve trauma [leaf as a poultice]
- Alleviate migraines + headaches [tincture 8-10 drops in cold water]
- Fight influenza, herpes viruses and some bacteria that cause respiratory infections
- Anticatarrhal herbs are to be combined with diaphoretic, diuretic, or laxative to support elimination from other body systems
- Ability to set bones right in place when they have been broken or displaced
- Lubricates + hydrates bones, including spine + joints
- Decoction supportive to "pains" [Cherokee]
- Added to tobacco can be supportive to quitting
- Roots can be used to treat teething

***Contraindications:** No side effects or drug interactions have been documented

Recipes + Comrades

Surface Respiratory tonic:
Eucalyptus, Peppermint + Mints,
Evergreens

Preparation:

infusion, tincture, herbal smoke, infused oil, essential oil



Deep Respiratory tonic:
Chaparral, Usnea, Oregano, White
Sage*

Tea: 4-8oz 2-3 times daily

Tincture: 1-2 dropperfuls 2 times daily

Throat Chakra opening: Lupine,
Bachelor's buttons, Beach plum, Sage,
Comfrey

Rest + Dreaming: Poppy, Mugwort,
Mints

Photos of the plant ancestor:



