

Catnip, *Nepeta cataria*

Catnip has a well earned reputation for sending cats into states of kittenish friskiness and euphoria. It is now known that the aroma of catnip is an aphrodisiac to our feline friends. In the past though, catnip was better known for its medicinal qualities. It was also consumed in the form of a tea in Europe before the arrival of true tea from Eastern Asia.

Growing Info: Catnip prefers full sun and average, well drained soil. It is a perennial herb of the mint family that will grow from 3-5 feet tall. Water them routinely. In early spring, cut out last years spent stems to make way for the new ones. You can shear back plants after their first flush of bloom to encourage another flowering cycle. It is said that cats will ignore plants started by seed, but will be drawn to those set out as rooted plants. This is presumably because of the bruising of leaves and stems during transplanting which releases the oils that have such an effect on them. It's best to protect any plants you have until they are large enough to withstand a cat's amorous attentions.

Standard Uses: Many people add a few fresh leaves to green salads. Either fresh or dried leaves will make a refreshing, possibly therapeutic tea. Then, of course, you can also take the dried, crushed leaves and stuff them into cloth pouches to make wonderful cat toys.

Medicinal Uses: Catnip tea, made preferably from the fresh cut herb, makes an excellent cure for insomnia and hyperactivity. Add honey for flavor. Also is very good for reducing fevers, the miseries of hayfever, and nausea. A small, honey sweetened cup of warm tea is good for calming hyperactive kids. Rural residents of the Ozark have used mashed fresh catnip leaves as a crude poultice to relieve the pain of aching teeth and gums almost instantly. A strong, cooled catnip tea can be effectively used as an eyewash to relieve inflammation and swelling due to certain airborne allergies, flu and cold and excess alcoholic consumption.

Available for Sale from "The GreenWeb!"

HR123 - CATNIP (NEPETA CATARIA) [P]

Cats love this plant and it is used to flavor teas. Has attractive heart shaped foliage. Also has many medicinal uses as well. (Raise as a garden annual in almost all Zones)

100 seeds \$1.95