



# Nettle Tea - How to Make a Natural Spring Tea

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# Benefits of Nettle Tea

- ▶ Nettle tea is used to improve heart action, for headaches and for any internal bleeding. Nettle is said to be extremely beneficial for the kidneys, being useful in expelling gravel from the bladder and dissolving kidney stones. It is a powerful blood purifier that drives out toxins and metabolic wastes by stimulating the kidneys to excrete more water. Nettle tea is said to clean out the entire intestinal tract while activating the body's natural defense mechanisms. It is used as an overall health tonic and to treat high blood pressure, anemia, skin inflammations and more.

# How to find and identify nettles

- ▶ **Stinging nettle or common nettle, *Urtica dioica***, is a perennial flowering plant, native to most of the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, and northern Africa. Nettles usually appear in bunches.
- ▶ Nettles are easy to identify. The dark green, opposite leaves are a few inches long, with a rough, papery texture, and very coarse teeth. The leaf tip is pointed, and its base is heart-shaped. In springtime, the nettle shoots will be close to the ground with only a few rows of leaves. The plant grows rapidly to a mature height of about 2 meters (6.5 feet) in summer. In fall the plant dies back, but re-emerges in the same location the following spring. Once you find a patch of nettles, you can harvest year after year in the same spot.





# How to harvest nettles

- ▶ 'Stinging' nettles are given this name for good reason. If you touch any part of the plant, you will be stung. The sting is mildly painful and can last for hours. Wear gloves, long-sleeved shirt and long pants when hunting for nettles. Use a scissors or garden clippers to cut the top two bracts of leaves, leaving the rest of the plant to regenerate. Set a pot or bag alongside the plant and clip directly into the container. About a cup of fresh leaves is sufficient to brew a cup or two of tea.



# Preparation for Tea



Using snippers and gloves, cut off several leaves from the main stem. You will need enough for a cup of leaves for two cups tea.





# How to brew nettle tea

- ▶ Simply add water to your collected nettle leaves and heat to a near boil. Use about two cups of water for a cup of leaves; there's no need to measure. You can make the tea stronger by steeping longer, or weaker by adding more water. Once the water is near boiling, reduce heat and simmer for a couple minutes. Pour through a small strainer and the tea is ready to drink. Some people prefer a small bit of sugar added to the tea, but I find the taste is just fine without any additives.





# A word of caution

- ▶ Any new substance should be introduced gradually to your body. A cup or two of nettle tea per day is sufficient to enjoy the benefits which nettles offer. Those new to nettles should start out with small amounts.
- ▶ If you will be bringing children along while harvesting nettles, which is a good learning experience for them, be sure to take adequate precautions to keep them from being stung by the leaves. Long clothing and gloves should be worn at all times when handling nettles. Once they are cooked or brewed into tea, they lose their sting.
- ▶ Women who are pregnant or nursing should not drink tea or eat nettles.
- ▶ Always consult your physician prior to drinking or eating nettles while taking medication for a medical condition.
- ▶ ENJOY your NETTLE TEA, “lim limt”