

Chamomile, German

Matricaria recutita / *chamomilla* - *Compositae* (Asteraceae)

There are a number of species of chamomile spread over Europe, North Africa and Asia and German chamomile is one of the most widely used herbs in the world. The plant grows to about 50cm tall and has small flowers bearing white petals around a bright yellow centre.

<u>Place of Origin</u>	<u>Part of plant used</u>	flower heads
UK, Hungary, Germany, Slovakia	<u>Method of Extraction</u>	steam distillation
<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Yield</u>	1-3%
Colour: Blue - Green	<u>BF</u>	1-3
Perfume notes: Middle	<u>TR</u>	D

Aroma

Chemical Composition

Sesquiterpenes	chamazulene	%	Sesquiterpenols	alpha-bisabolol	%
	farnesene	18			1-50
		25			
Oxides	bisabolol oxides	15-20			

Properties:

Anti-inflammatory, analgesic, sedative, soporific, vulnerary, antiallergenic, antimicrobial, carminative, choloretic, hepatoprotective immunostimulant

Precautions:

Non-toxic, non-irritant, non-sensitising

There have been occasional reports of allergic reactions after contact with constituents of chamomile - azulene and guaiazulene have been identified as the culprits, however allergic reactions are very infrequent considering the widespread use of these constituents in cosmetic and pharmaceutical preparations.

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Indications

Circulatory

Digestive

Colic, dyspepsia, indigestion, nausea, flatulence

Genito-Urinary / Gynaecological

Dysmenorrhoea, PMT

Immune System

Said to stimulate leucocytosis

Musculo-skeletal

Rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, sprains, strains, gout, neuralgia, inflamed joints, sciatica, lumbago

Nervous

Headaches, insomnia, hysteria, irritability, anxiety, Nervous system crisis, hyperactivity, mental agitation, restlessness

Respiratory

Skin/hair

dermatitis, eczema, allergies, urticaria, burns, rashes, wounds, inflammation, herpes, pruritis, psoriasis, pressure sores

Clinical Research

Bactericidal activity against: Staph. Aureus, Bacillus subtilis Fungicidal activity against: Candida albicans

Mechanisms resulting in liver damage and toxicity have been found to be inhibited by chamazulene and guiazulene, leading to German chamomile being a potential hepatoprotective oil.

Azulene has been reported to protect against anaphylactic shock via an action on the pituitary-adrenal-cortical system, although this has not been scientifically validated by recent experiments.

Alpha-bisabolol can shorten the healing time in burned skin by enhancing skin granulation. The consensus is that bisabolol and possibly bisabolol oxides are the most important anti-inflammatory components of chamomile with the azulenes being of some significance as well.

Psychological uses

A very physical oil, the aroma can be unpleasant for some, but it is a useful sedative. Many prefer to use Roman chamomile for psychological treatment.

Summary

Anti-inflammatory