

Chaste Tree Berry

The botanical name for chaste tree berry is *Vitex agnus-castus*. Common names for chaste tree berry include: Abraham's Balm, Monk's Pepper, Chaste-lamb tree, Chaste Berry, Texas Lilac and Vitex. Chaste tree is a small shrub with lance shaped leaves and purple flowers. It is native to the eastern Mediterranean and can easily be grown in warm climates.



Hippocrates used chaste tree berries for injuries and inflammation.

Dioscorides used it to increase milk flow in nursing mothers, after giving birth and for inflammation of the womb. He also used chaste tree berries as a treatment for snake bites and spider bites. Theophrastus used it for hemorrhaging following childbirth and to assist in releasing the afterbirth.

Chaste tree berry is an adaptogen, which means it helps the body adapt to changes by working through the adrenal glands, in this case the pituitary to normalize hormone imbalance. Chaste tree berry is specifically effective in balancing the female reproductive system because it encourages the production of progesterone.

Chaste tree berry works to help enhance the body's natural balance of progesterone and estrogen. According to Dr. John R. Christopher, "Chaste tree berry is used to help stimulate the pituitary gland and to increase the production of luteinizing hormone, which tend to result in higher levels of progesterone in the second cycle of the menstrual cycle. When the body is lacking in progesterone, estrogen continues to dominate the luteal phase of the cycle thus causing much of the female problems."

Vitex has been used for the following ailments: Female reproductive system health, PMS, heavy or frequent menstrual cycles, absence of menstruation, certain types of infertility and increasing milk production in nursing women. It works amazingly well for hot flashes and other menopausal symptoms. Another great plus for taking chaste tree berries is that it alleviates constipation associated with hormone fluctuation! It has helped women who have taken birth control pills to level out their menstrual cycles once they are off of the birth control. Vitex has been found to help with subserous fibroid cysts. It is a wonderful herb for women with estrogen dominance. Chaste tree berry is also used to treat acne. Since it is an anti-inflammatory it works well to relieve pain from paralysis and to relieve pain in the joints and limbs.

The berries can be ground and used for a pepper substitute and are ready to harvest between October and November. The leaves of the chaste tree can be crushed and used as a deterrent to keep mosquitos away.

I was working with a woman who was having extreme PMS symptoms. It helped her so much that when her supply of the tincture with chaste tree berry was almost gone she called me and said she needed more and didn't want to run out because she didn't want to go back to how she had felt before.

Another woman who was taking chaste tree berry called and said that her husband asked her to please call and order more. She had run out and had not been taking it for about a month, and the whole family could see the difference it was making with her hormones.

I have personally seen chaste tree berry begin working within the first day or two of use. This does not imply that it is a quick fix, but that the effects have been seen in a short amount of time. For optimum effects, it is best used on a consistent basis. Chaste tree berry can be taken in capsule, tincture or tea form. This is one herb I would highly recommend as a woman and not want to be without!

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