

NORA Tea

Nourishing Tea for Pregnancy and Lactation

NORA Tea is an important part of your Prenatal Care. It is very nourishing, especially for the Pregnant or Nursing Mama. It stimulates your system for optimal health by: (a) increasing mineral absorption, (b) building your blood supply, and (c) maximizing the health of your liver. This tea may prevent or minimize many common pregnancy complaints. In my experience it also prevents possible complications during birth and postpartum by promoting proper contractibility of the uterus, which facilitates release of the baby and placenta, preventing a long labor (due to uncoordinated contractions) and hemorrhage. In the Commonwealth of Virginia at this time, licensed midwives are not permitted to carry emergency medications. Therefore prevention is even more important.

After your baby is born, it will help your milk come in quickly, and the amount of production to stabilize. Also, it will help reduce the amount and time of lochia flow (bleeding) postpartum. That said, it is not a miracle substance and is simply a preventative measure that I consider a wise choice to include in your care. Please read the following information about the nutrients in these herbs and I think you will agree.

NORA Tea consists of four ingredients: Nettles, Oat Straw, Raspberry Leaf, & Alfalfa. Begin to drink NORA Tea after the 16th week of pregnancy. Try to drink a quart daily. If you find it difficult to drink every day, try drinking half a quart per day or at least 2-3 times a week.

Mix 2 parts (8 oz.) Raspberry Leaf and Nettles to 1 part (4 oz.) Alfalfa and Oat Straw. Mix well and place in a ziplock baggie. A large plastic Rubbermaid type container works well for mixing it. You can also add either Peppermint, Spearmint, Lemon Balm, or Rose Hips (a sour taste) for flavor. Buy small amounts at a health food store, in order to try them.

To Prepare: (In the Evening) Place half an inch of herb in the bottom of a quart size canning jar (a handful or two). Experiment with the amount of herb and taste to find what works for you. But please make sure there is about ½ an inch in the jar. Fill the jar to ½ to ¾ of an inch from the top with boiling water. Cover the jar with a lid or small plate to retain the essential oils and let sit overnight. In the morning, strain using a small mesh strainer into another canning jar and your “tea” (technically an infusion, a concentrated tea) is now ready. Since this is a highly nutritious drink it is also strongly flavored. Some women love it and cannot get enough of it!! Some tolerate it and others have a difficult time. These suggestions are offered to help you maximize the amount you do drink. Feel free to experiment, so that you are sure to drink it frequently

Add ice.

Add honey, blackstrap molasses (source of iron), molasses, sorghum, or maple syrup to sweeten.

Mix with half and half (or a desired quantity) with fruit juice.

Add a squeeze of lemon, or lime, especially nice with Lemon Balm.

Cut half and half with water.

Cut half and half with an herbal tea such as a Zinger.

Please do NOT use artificial sweeteners in this tea. If you are thinking about using a different herb in order to flavor the tea, or have any questions, please consult me.

Nettles:

Scientific Name: *Urtica Dioica*

Active Ingredients: Histamine, Tannin, Saponins, Acetylcholine Formic Acid, Sterols, Chlorophyll, Glucoquinine, Serotonin, Iron, & Vitamin A, C, D and K in an easily absorbable form, very high in minerals, including silicon.

Actions: Astringent, diuretic, nutritive, detoxifier, galactagogue, decongestant, hypoglycemic & tonic.

Astringent means it reduces discharges. Galactagogue means it supports the production of breast milk.

Nettles is one of the most widely applicable plants we have. It strengthens and supports the whole body. It is one of the most powerful plants we have to deal with allergic rhinitis, or more commonly known as pollen allergy or hay fever. Studies are also showing that it has a broad range anti-inflammatory usage, so is useful with migraines, arthritis, lupus pain etc. It is an extremely nutritive plant, high in vitamins and minerals, particularly iron, silica and potassium, and is showing broad antifungal effects as well. Thru its diuretic effect it promotes detoxification and works to prevent bladder infections. It also strengthens the kidneys and adrenals, an important function during pregnancy with their increased work load. The readily assimilated high calcium content helps to diminish muscle pain in all areas of the body during pregnancy including the legs, round ligaments, cervix, back and also during labor as well.

With its high Vitamin K content, it also is proactive in preventing excessive bleeding after the birth. Because it strengthens the blood vessels and maintains arterial elasticity it helps prevent hemorrhoids and varicose veins, because of this, it also helps to maintain a normal blood pressure. After the birth, it helps in the production of breast milk making it nutrient rich for the newborn.

Oat Straw:

Scientific Name: *Avena Sativa*

Active Ingredients: 50% starch, proteins, alkaloids, saponins, flavones, sterols, Vitamin B, silica, & calcium, magnesium, silicon, potassium, & iron.

Actions: Nervine tonic, anti-depressant, nutritive, demulcent, vulnerary.

Demulcent means soothes irritated tissue. Vulnerary means aids in healing of wounds.

Oats is one of the best remedies for “feeding” the nervous system. It is useful for exhaustion and depression. It strengthens the whole nervous system, making it a preventative and protective herb to enhance your ability to cope with stress.

While being stimulating and energy giving, they are also relaxing and an aid to sleep. Oats is also a uterine tonic and works on strengthening the thyroid and balancing hormone production. It can be helpful for high blood pressure, varicose veins and hemorrhoids. It’s also a soother for the digestive tract. It also lowers blood sugar and is useful for fluid retention.

It is one of the best sources for magnesium, helping irritability and calcium absorption.

Raspberry Leaf:

Scientific Name: *Rubus idaeus*

Active Ingredients: volatile oils, pectin, citric acid, malic acid, tannin, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, & zinc, Vitamin A, B, C & E. Has the highest known herbal source of manganese.

Actions: Astringent, tonic, toning, pelvic and uterine relaxant.

Raspberry leaves have a long tradition of use in pregnancy to strengthen and tone the tissue of the womb, assisting contractions and preventing excessive bleeding. Raspberry also tones the mucous membranes throughout the body; soothing the kidneys and urinary tract and preventing excessive bleeding after the birth. Raspberry works on the digestive tract, stabilizing it. It continues its good benefits after birth by working to help milk production and recovery.

The tonic and relaxant actions on the smooth muscles of the uterus act to reduce the pain of uterine contractions during childbirth and makes them more effective and productive, shortening the duration of labor.

Currently there is some controversy surrounding the use of Raspberry Leaf during pregnancy, which is unfortunate since its use has been associated with pregnancy and birth since ancient times. The concern is early miscarriage. For this reason, I recommend using NORA tea after 16 weeks of gestation, by the obstetric calendar. I sincerely hope this controversy is settled quickly, so that women can again enjoy Raspberry's wonderful help in dealing with the nausea of pregnancy, without concern for their growing baby.

Alfalfa:

Scientific Name: *Medicago sativa*

Active Ingredients: Vitamin K, iron, chlorophyll, Vitamin A, B-6, E, D, & K, beta-carotene, biotin, folic acid, pantothenic acid, fatty acids, saponins, high in copper.

Actions: bitter, general tonic, alterative, diuretic

Alfalfa has a history going back to ancient times, cherished for its nourishing abilities for people and their animals. It has a deep tap root and grows in rich soils, making it very rich in trace minerals that it pulls up from deep below the surface. It purifies the blood, and is a powerful tonic. It balances the blood sugar preventing the swings of hypoglycemia common in pregnancy. It soothes the digestive tract, contains the digestive enzyme betaine, and the saponins balance the intestinal flora.

Peppermint: (*Mentha piperita*)

Soothes the digestive system and circulatory system and relaxes the nervous system.

NOTE: Discontinue usage of Peppermint after you give birth as it is a lactation suppressant.

Spearmint: (*Mentha Spicata*)

Same usages as Peppermint, it is a different species in a plant family.

Lemon Balm: (*Melissa Officinalis*)

Soothes the digestive system, reduces stress, and has a tonic effect on the heart and circulatory system. Traditionally it has been used to bring the afterbirth. Combats allergies.

NOTE: Using large amounts of Lemon Balm may inhibit the body's utilization of Thyroid hormones. Added as a flavoring to NORA tea, I feel is a safe usage of the herb, and not a "large amount," which would mean 12+ cups daily.

Rose Hips: (*Rosa canina*)

Nutritive, one of the best natural sources of Vitamin C we know of. Excellent tonic, aids the gall-bladder, kidneys and bladder. Strengthens connective tissue and helps relieve stress.

Bibliography

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