



# Medicinal Uses of Lemon Grass:

While not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), lemongrass reportedly has a wide variety of therapeutic effects. Because the herb has not been studied extensively in people, its effectiveness is based mainly on the results of animal and laboratory studies as well as its centuries-old reputation as a folk remedy. Lemon Grass is one of the most popular plant medicines in Brazil, where it is used to treat nervous disorders and stomach problems.

**Internally Uses:** When taken internally, Lemon Grass has been recommended for stomachaches, diarrhea, gas, bowel spasms, vomiting, fever, the flu, and headaches and other types of pain. The herb (or its essential oil) may be applied externally to help treat acne, athlete's foot, lower back pain, sciatica, sprains, tendinitis, neuralgia, and rheumatism. To treat circulatory disorders, some authorities recommend rubbing a few drops of Lemon Grass oil on the skin of affected areas; it is believed to work by improving blood flow. Like many essential oils, Lemon Grass is also used in aromatherapy.

Make a Tea and drink 1-4 cups per day to relieve congestion, coughing, bladder disorders, headaches, fever, stomach aches, digestive problems, diarrhea, gas, bowel spasms, vomiting, flu symptoms, as a mild sedative, and to promote perspiration - and as a possible cholesterol lowering agent. Rather than discarding the tea bags, use them externally for the problems described below. An Oil can also be made, 3-6 drops of oil which can be put on a sugar cube for the same purposes as above. The leaves can also be dried and made into a powder for use in Capsules.

**Cholesterol Control:** The link between Lemon Grass and cholesterol was investigated by researchers from the Department of Nutritional Sciences, University of Wisconsin, who published their findings in the medical journal *Lipids* in 1989. They conducted a clinical trial involving 22 people with high cholesterol who took 140-mg capsules of Lemon Grass oil daily. While cholesterol levels were only slightly affected in some of

the participants, cholesterol was lowered from 310 to 294 on average; other people in the study experienced a significant decrease in blood fats. The latter group, characterized as responders, experienced a 25-point drop in cholesterol after one month, and this positive trend continued over the course of the short study. After three months, cholesterol levels among the responders had decreased by a significant 38 points. Once the responders stopped taking Lemon Grass, their cholesterol returned to previous levels. It should be noted that this study did not involve a placebo group, which is usually used to help measure the effects of the agent being studied (in this case, Lemon Grass oil).

**Antiseptic and astringent:** Considered an antiseptic and astringent, essential oil of Lemon Grass is also used by some people to cleanse oily skin and help close pores. Some herbalists recommend mixing a few drops of Lemon Grass with a normal portion of mild shampoo to combat greasy hair. Lemon Grass essential oil can also be used as a deodorant to curb perspiration.

Extensively used as a fragrance component in soaps, detergents, cosmetics and perfumes. Employed as a flavour ingredient in most major food categories including alcoholic and soft drinks. Also used for the isolation of citral and for the adulteration of more costly oils such as verbena and melissia

**Insect repellent:** Last but not least, the herb has a strong reputation as an insect repellent. It is an important ingredient in several products designed to keep bugs at bay. Some authorities recommend rubbing the crushed herb directly on exposed areas of skin to avoid insect bites when enjoying the great outdoors.

**Cosmetic:** Another source is the use of *Cymbopogon citratus* in the cosmetic industry, s.a. in soap - and hair care products.