**Feverfew for Migraines**

**Common Names:** feverfew, bachelor’s buttons, featherfew  
**Latin Name:** *Tanacetum parthenium*, *Chrysanthemum parthenium*, *Matricaria parthenium*

**Background**

- Feverfew grows naturally throughout Europe and North and South America.  
- Historically, people have used feverfew for fevers, headaches, constipation, diarrhea, difficulty in labor, and dizziness.  
- Today, people use feverfew as a dietary supplement for migraine headache prevention, problems with menstruation, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, allergies, asthma, tinnitus (ringing or roaring sounds in the ears), dizziness, nausea, vomiting, and for intestinal parasites. Topically, people use it as a skin cleanser to reduce or prevent skin infections and for toothaches.  
- The dried leaves—and sometimes flowers and stems—of feverfew are made into capsules, tablets, and liquid extracts, and teas.

**How Much Do We Know?**

- Only a few studies have looked into feverfew’s use for migraine headache. There’s little or no evidence about feverfew for any other health conditions.

**What Have We Learned?**

- Some research suggests that feverfew may help to prevent migraine headaches, but results have been mixed. However, evidence-based guidelines from the American Academy of Neurology and the American Headache Society suggest that a feverfew extract may be effective and should be considered for migraine prevention.  
- There’s not enough evidence to know if feverfew helps other conditions.

**What Do We Know About Safety?**

- No serious side effects have been reported from feverfew. Side effects can include nausea, digestive problems, and bloating; if the fresh leaves are chewed, sores and irritation of the mouth may occur.  
- People who take feverfew for a long time and then stop taking it may have difficulty sleeping, headaches, anxiety, and stiff and painful muscles.  
- Do not take feverfew while pregnant because it may affect uterine contractions.  
- Handling the plant may cause skin irritation.
Keep in Mind

- Tell all your health care providers about any complementary or integrative health approaches you use. Give them a full picture of what you do to manage your health. This will help ensure coordinated and safe care.

NCCIH Clearinghouse

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Key References


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