

# ANOTHER HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS

FACT SHEET

## Aloe Vera

*Aloe Vera (A. barbadensis/A. chinensis)*



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**T**here are approximately 320 species of perennials, shrubs and trees. The earliest record of Aloe was in 1500 BC on Egyptian papyrus. It has also been used by many other ancient cultures throughout history such as Greeks, Romans, American Indians and Chinese to name a few. It is also mentioned in the bible.

### DESCRIPTION

Aloe Vera is a clump forming, succulent perennial belonging to the Lily family. It forms rosettes of thick green, spotted leaves with a clear gel inside, which is the part used. Aloe Vera 'A. barbadensis' is larger growing form than A. chinensis. It does not pip for 3-4 years unlike A. chinensis, which sends out pips almost immediately.

### PARTS USED

The gel within the leaves.

### PROPERTIES

A bitter herb that is anti-inflammatory and promotes healing.

### USES

#### Medicinal

Aloe Vera has been described as 'Mans Medicine Chest'. Aloe Vera contains many vitamins and minerals. Used internally as a general tonic, to treat ulcers, gastric disorders, constipation, headache and insomnia. Applied externally to heal cuts, abrasions, burns and stings.

#### Economic

Often used in cosmetic and skin care products.

### CULTIVATION

Being a succulent, over watering is the main problem, especially in winter when the soil remains moist. Water heavily when dry. Semi-shade. Aloes grow better in pots especially in southern states. A porch is a good position for winter frost protection.

### HARVEST

Leaves are removed from the plant as they are required. The green part of the leaf should be sliced away from the gel with a sharp knife, then washed to remove any yellow sap from the gel. For external use, just a slice a piece off the leaf to reveal fresh gel and rub this directly on the affected part.



A. chinensis



A. barbadensis

