HERB HERBERT FAVOURITE HERBS

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# Catnip Nepeta cataria

There are about 250 species of perennials in this genus. The name nepeta is suppossedly a derivative of the name Nepeti, a Roman town where nepeta's where widely cultivated.

The catnip, Nepeta cataria, is a medicinal herb with little merit as a garden plant. It owes its name to its stimulant effect on cats, which eat and roll in the plant with obvious pleasure. The leaves contain a chemical known as neptalactone which gives the plant it's 'narcotic' effect on cats.

# **HARVEST**

Plants are cut when in bud and dried for use in infusions. Pick leaves when young for culinary purposes and use fresh or dried.

> Don't forget Herbs book, "Wonderful World of Herbs."

# **DESCRIPTION**

Nepeta cataria is a tall, pungent, hairy perennial with erect, branched stems and grey-green, heart shaped leaves. white, purple-spotted, tubular flowers are borne in whorls from summer to

mid-autumn.

PARTS USED Whole plant, leaves

### **PROPERTIES**

A bitter, astringent, cooling herb with a pennyroyal-thyme aroma. It lowers fever, relaxes spasms, increases perspiration, and has a sedative effect.

# **USES OF THE HERB**

Culinary

Leaves are infused for a mint-like tea and may be added to sauces and stews.

Medicinal

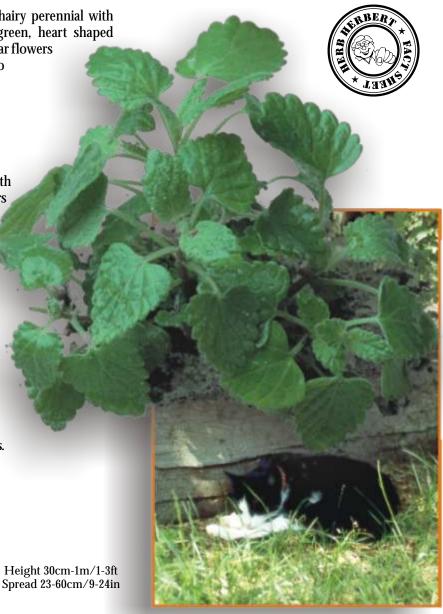
Internally for feverish illnesses, colds and influenza, stomach upsets.

Économic

Dried catnip is used to stuff cat toys.

# **CULTIVATION**

Moist, well-drained soil in sun. Cut back hard for a second harvest. Powdery mildew may damage leaves. Pests: Aphid, beetles.



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