

Common Herb Name: Black Walnut

Latin Name: *Juglans regia*

Alternative Names: Persian or English walnut, and American walnut.

Family: Juglandaceae

Habitat: Rich fertile woods and hillsides in deep well-drained soils. Main growing regions are Eastern and Central United States from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. They are deciduous and grow well in temperate zones. Thrive best in deep, fertile soil of alkali and should not be planted closer than 60 or 70 ft. apart.



Description: Can grow up to 150 ft. in height with rounded nut shape. Each tree produces both male & female that self pollinate and flowers bloom in April and May.

Parts Used: The bark, roots, fruit hulls, nut and leaves. The nut itself was used to prevent weight gain, calm hysteria, eliminate morning sickness, and strengthen one's constitution. The hulls



were boiled and used to treat head and body lice, herpes, intestinal parasite and worms, skin diseases and liver ailments. Leaves were decocted to cure boils, eczema, hives, ulcers and sores. Walnut oil was employed to treat colic, dandruff, dry hair, gangrene, open wounds, and the green rind of the nut was used to treat ringworms.

History: Origin of the word nut comes from the Latin *nux* referring to fruit inside the shell. *Juglans* in Latin means "the acorn of Jupiter" and *regia* refers to royalty. Afghanistani's word for walnut is charmarghz or "four brains" because the walnut shell appeared like a human's brain. The tree is known to be a centenarian living for 100 years. It is said that Black Walnut trees exude a chemical that prevents some types of other plants from growing around it. The wood is used for fine furniture.

Parts Used: The leaves, (green), nut and bark.

Preparation & Dosage: The leaves are stripped off the tree singly in June and July and dried. Infuse herb in cold water, bring to a simmer, and strain after 3-5 minutes. External, use 3-6 g of herb daily.

Native American Usage: Native Americans knew of the black walnut's medicinal usefulness and squeezed the juice from the outer green husks after hulling the ripened walnuts. The juice served as an antiseptic ointment and a parasite preventative for both humans and animals. In

addition, a tonic extracted from the bark of the tree provided relief from inflammations of the body.

Folk Uses: From ancient time through now, herbalist prescribes the bark, roots or leaves as an astringent, a laxative, a purgative to induce vomiting, styptic to stop bleeding, expel worms or parasites, Anodyne, Anti-inflammatory, Astringent, Blood purifier, blood tonic, and hepatic to tone the liver. Also serves to induce sweating, cure diarrhea, soothe sore gums and skin disease, cure herpes and relieve inflamed tonsils. The brownish-black dye was used by early settlers to dye hair.

Harvest: Black walnut fruit appears in the summer and ripens by early fall. The green-yellow hulls fall to the ground when ripe and cover a hard, black interior shell. You can dent a fully ripened black walnut hull with your fingernail. They should be gathered immediately upon falling to the ground then hulled. The green-yellow hull begins to leak juice shortly after falling to the ground. The juice taints the nuts and stains anything it touches. Crack the extremely strong hull of black walnuts with a hammer, nutcracker or by stomping on them with your foot. To ease cracking, soak the nuts in water for a couple of hours before attempting to crack them. Always use gloves when working with black walnuts because they contain a dye that can stain your hands.

Side Effects & Contradiction: No known health hazards or side effects are known. The tree's roots tend to secrete juglone (5-hydroxy-alphanaphthaquinone), a poisonous substance that actually poisons some plants growing near the tree. Not recommended to plant tomatoes, rhododendrons, any berries, red pine, apple and azaleas within 80 ft. of the tree, as it may injure or kill it.

