

Common Name: **Hemp**

Genus: *Cannabis*

Species: *sativa*

Family: Urticaceae

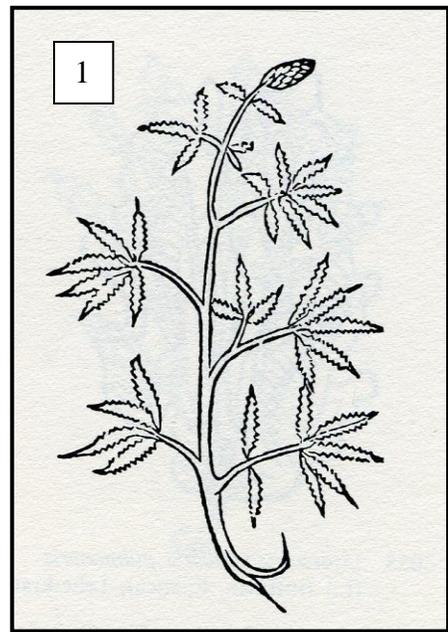
AKA: Hempte



Historical Uses:

Medical: “Cannabis is a plant of much use in this life for ye twistings of very strong ropes, it bears leaves like to the Ash, of a bad sent, long stocks, empty, a round seed, which being eaten of much doth quench geniture, but being juiced when it is green is good for the pains of the ears.” (1)

“Hemp is warm and grows when the air is neither very hot or very cold, just as its nature is. Its seed is sound, and it is healthy for healthy people to eat it. It is openly gentle and useful in their stomach since it somewhat takes away the mucus. It is able to be digested easily; it diminishes the bad humors and makes the good humors strong. But nevertheless, whoever is weak in the head and has a vacant mind, and that person will have eaten hemp, it easily makes the person suffer pain somewhat in his or her head.



Typical growth habit of young plants

However, whoever is sound in the head and has a full mind, it does not harm. Whoever is seriously ill, it also makes that person suffer pain somewhat in the stomach. However, whoever is only moderately ill it does not cause pain when eaten.

However, let whoever as a cold stomach cook hemp in water, squeeze out the water, wrap it in a cloth, and then place the hot cloth often over the



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Fine example to the serrated and lobed leaves

stomach. This comforts the person and restores that place. Also, the cloth made from hemp heels ulcers and weeping wounds because the heat in the hemp has been tempered.” (2)

“The seed consumed wind, but if used too liberally it dryeth up the natural seed for procreation: though, being boiled in milk, and taken a little at a time is a good

remedy for a dry cough. An emulsion made of the seed is given with good success for the jaundice, especially in the beginning of the disease, if there be no ague accompanying it, for it openeth obstructions of the gall, and causeth digestion of choler; it stayeth lasks and continual fluxes, easeth the colic, allayeth the troublesome humors of the bowels, and stayeth bleeding at the mouth, nose, or any other place; it will destroy the worms either in man or beast; and, by dropping the juice into the ears, it will kill the worms, and bring forth earwigs and other insects gotten therein. The decoction of the root allayeth inflammations, easeth the pains of the gout, the hard tumors or knots in the joints, and pains and shrinking of the sinews, and the pains of the hips. The fresh juice, mixed with a little oil and butter, is an exceedingly good cure for burns.” (3)

Household: “*Matthiolus* saith, that the seed given to hens causeth them to lay eggs more plentifully.” (4)

Folklore/Astrology: “Warm and dry in the second degree, and is under the rule of Saturn. To dream of it is bad luck, but it was sown by girls attempting to conjure up the forms of their future husbands.” (5)

Other: “The plant, which came from Thrace and Scythia, was a novelty in the time of *Herodias*. Its origin is India where it is used under three forms, bhang, or leaves pounded in water as a beverage, ganja, the young shoots on the stem, which are smoked, and hashish, resin from the tops of the plants, which is eaten or smoke depending on its



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Close-up of a female seed head

freedom from impurities. The cult of assassins derived its name from hashish, and ate it to excite their courage. Green twigs of it placed in bedding will drive away bedbugs. The plant which is narcotic, eases pain, induces sleep, soothes the nervous system by acting on higher nerve centers of the brain and relieves gout, neuralgia, rheumatism, convulsions, insomnia, and delirium tremens.” (6)



Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Flowering tops of female plant, seeds.

Medicinal: “In ancient Egypt, marijuana was used to treat inflammations of the eye and to ‘cool the uterus’. First records of marijuana’s use in India date back to about 800 BC, where it was recommended for congestion.”(7)

“Internally for nausea and vomiting associated with cancer chemotherapy, to reduce ocular pressure in glaucoma, ease muscular stiffness and tremors in multiple sclerosis, and help AIDS patients gain weight. Externally for corns, sores, and varicose ulcers. Seeds are used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat constipation caused by debility or fluid deficiency.” (8)

“Modern research shows marijuana to be a sedative, an anti-inflammatory agent, and an analgesic as effective as codeine. Research has focused on the constituent THC, but it is clear that the complex of constituents within marijuana has a significantly wider range of applications. Clinical studies from 1975 onward have shown that the cannabinoids are powerfully antiemetic, especially in those having chemotherapy to varying degrees, clinical trials indicate that marijuana or its cannabinoids relieve symptoms in multiple sclerosis (such as tremor, muscle spasms, and poor coordination), in spinal cord injuries, epilepsy, glaucoma, chronic pain, and loss of appetite.” (9)

Culinary: “Seeds are an ingredient in whole food cuisine and beers, and used as a condiment in Japanese cuisine, notably in the spice mix *shichimi*. Seed oil is used for culinary purposes. Dried herb is an ingredient of Moroccan candy and is important as a flavoring in Rastafarian cooking.” (10)

Economic: “Hemp fiber is best produced by plants in cooler latitudes, the best being obtained from Italy, but much from Russia. About one and a half-million hundredweight are imported annually for cordage sacking and sailcloth. A varnish is made from the press to seeds.” (11)

“Subspecies sativa is a source of fibers for rope making. Oil pressed from seeds of this subspecies is added to cosmetics.” (12)

Cautions: Depending on the location this plant is illegal to grow and may be illegal to possess.

Area of Origin: Native to Caucasus, Iran, northern India, and China

Physical description: Annual with erect branching habit. The leaves are serrated and segmented. Both male and female plants flower. The female plant produces seeds and is more desirable for medical use.

Plant type: Annual

Form: Upright

Height: Growing to 12 feet (4 m).

Flower color: Green

Flowering period: Summer

Soil type/requirements: Deep, loamy soil

Hardiness: Hardy

pH Value: 6

Sun requirements: Full sun

Propagation: By seed

Cautions: Growing this plant could be illegal in many areas.

Sources

1. Dioscorides, book 3, plant 165
2. Von Bingen, page 13-14
3. Parkinson, page 71
4. Gerard, page 708-709
5. Anderson, page 63 – 64
6. Ibid
7. Chevallier, page 181-182
8. Bown, page 152-153
9. Chevallier, page 181-182
10. Bown, page 152-153
11. Grieve, page 396
12. Bown, page 152-153

Illustrations/Images:

1. Schoffer 1484
2. <http://metro.co.uk/2016/04/20/happy-420-history-of-marijuana-and-how-the-plant-spread-across-the-world-5829086/>
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