

Eyebright



Botanical name: **Euphrasia officinalis**

Medicinal plant of the natural medicine and the traditional Chinese medicine

Eyebright is a classic medicinal plant that is known since the Middle Ages. Its branched stalks show small leaves with up to 10 cm long, pointed teeth on the edges that are often arranged in leaf bundles. From June until September it produces white blossoms with a yellow and purple coloration and a darker spot in the center that remind one a little bit of eyes. After blossoming, the Eyebright develops until mid October flat capsule fruits that contain a couple of seeds each. Active agents:

Eyebright is often used in the homeopathy, the natural medicine and the Chinese traditional medicine in the form of teas, compresses or eyewash. For preparing compresses, you just have to mix a little bit of the herb (not the roots) with water, boil it up and let it simmer for a short time. The cloths can be soaked in the tea, wrung out and eventually put on the eyes. Eyebright is also said to ease off indigestion, most likely because of its contents of bitter compounds that come into effect in teas. For internal use, half a liter boiled water can be poured over a tablespoonful of dried Eyebright to make a tea - after simmering for about ten minutes, the brew can be passed through a sieve.

Natural location The Euphrasia can be found worldwide, but is native mainly in the northern hemisphere, where it often grows on pastures, less fertilized productive meadows, as well as dry riverbanks and in clear forests.

Cultivation The Eyebright is a hemiparasite and needs other plants, particularly grasses. In your garden it can easily be cultivated into an already established grassy lawn, while the earth should be loosen up beforehand and the seeds should be mixed with a bit of sand at a ratio of 1:2. Alternatively, a good way of cultivating Eyebright would also be the planting of the seeds together with grass seeds into a bigger bowl. The Euphrasia is a light germinator, therefore, the seeds only need to be gently pressed into potting compost or slightly fertilized garden soil. It is also a cold germinator, which means the best time for propagation would be between October and November, or alternatively between March and April.

Place Since Eyebright grows naturally on low fertility meadows, it doesn't require any special location for cultivation.

Care Eyebright and the grass plants surrounding it should not be fertilized. The plant is quite sensitive to excessive nutrients and may even die off if stressed too much. A more lazy gardening is rather supportive in this case.

During the winter The Euphrasia can be annual or perennial, a special care for hibernation is not necessary.