

# dogs naturally

September - October 2019

**LET YOUR DOG  
BE YOUR GUIDE**

**VOCABULARY  
FOR DOGS**

**KEEPING CELLS  
HEALTHY**

**SHARED  
DISEASE**

**A HOLISTIC VIEW  
OF KIDNEY DISEASE**

**SUPER BUGS  
SUPER PROBLEMS**







## Bugleweed

Botanical Name: *Lycopus europaeus* or *americanus*

Family: Lamiaceae

Parts Used: Leaves and flowers

**B**ugleweed is a native plant to Europe. It was naturalized in the US in the 17th century for the many medicinal qualities and constituents that the aerial parts offer.

The plant has clusters of white flowers that are bugle-shaped, hence the common name. It's also called water horehound and odorless mint. This species is not to be confused with carpet bugle, which is *Ajuga virginicus*.

The leaves and flowers are a natural source of phytochemicals that scavenge free radicals, flavonoids, various tannins, lycopene, organic and volatile components, phenolic derivatives like caffeic acid, ellagic and rosmarinic acid, and magnesium.

Bugleweed is known for its ability to improve stubborn respiratory conditions, such as a chronic low cough, bring balance to hormone levels, lower hyperthyroid activity. It reduces mammary inflammation and helps manage that particular pain. For unsettled nervousness, it can take the edge off and bring a sense of calm (though **use caution** if you're also giving other calming herbs).

The Lithospermic acid in bugleweed decreases the thyroid hormone thyroxine and keeps antibodies from binding to or depleting cells in an overactive thyroid gland. Because there are no salicylates in

bugleweed, it makes a nice formula for cats with an overactive thyroid. It especially has synergy with lemonbalm, using a 50-50 ratio of the liquid extract in water or part alcohol, decocted with raw honey added.

For dogs who tend to be restless in the night and don't sleep soundly, bugleweed can be a good addition to their evening meal. It helps to balance circadian rhythms, promoting an uninterrupted sleep pattern and a more restful night for everyone. If you're using the powdered herb, give ¼ tsp for every 20 pounds of body. To make bugleweed tea, use 1 oz of dried bugleweed herb (making sure that it's *Lycopus* and not *Ajuga*) to 4 oz of distilled water. Bring this to a slight boil then turn to simmer for 20 minutes. Cool to room temperature before using. For every 10 pounds of body weight, use 1 teaspoon of the tea in food or on its own, not further diluted.

Bugleweed can be used topically to prevent bacterial or fungal infections. It reduces topical inflammation and pain while promoting cell growth. You can make a tea (as above), or make a salve with the fresh plant's flowers and leaves infused in either sweet almond oil or extra virgin olive oil. Fill your jar with the plant material then add the oil to the top of the jar. Remove

all air bubbles before sealing (I use a clean chopstick and gently move it around the plant and oil until the bubbles have gone). Seal tightly and leave in sun for three to five weeks, depending on the temperature. When it's ready, add 8 oz of organic melted raw beeswax to 2 oz of sieved oil. Let it harden to the consistency you like, adjusting the oil or wax accordingly.

**Cautions:** Bugleweed should not be used with hypothyroidism or with thyroid enlargement or for a dog on thyroid medication. Also note the caution above if you're using any other calming herbs.

Bugleweed should not be used in pregnant or lactating animals. 🐾



*Joyce Belcher is an herbalist and formulator of pet supplements and herbal medicinals for veterinarians and is the founder of Herbs for Life Inc and Sustenance Herbs. She lives in Kittery, Maine with her husband, Aja the Poodle and two cats; they are all rescues. Visit Joyce at [sustenanceherbs.com](http://sustenanceherbs.com)*