



dogs **naturally**

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Special Digestion Issue

LEAKY GUT SYNDROME

IRRITABLE BOWEL
DISEASE

RECOGNIZING
ENZYME DEFICIENCY

MERCURY
AND HEAVY METAL POISONING

INFLAMMATION
AND FOOD

**ALLERGY OR
DIET?**

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Chickweed

Botanical Name: *Stellaria media*

Family: Caryophyllaceae

Part Used: Herb

Chickweed is also called starweed, as *Stellaria* translates to “little star.” It’s one of the most common weeds in the world and is native to most regions, regardless of the temperature. It can bloom as early as March and throughout the summer into early fall. It grows low to the ground and feels delicate, soft and cool to the touch. The common name chickweed comes from the 15th century when the seeds were fed to birds.

Chickweed is packed with large amounts of protein and minerals, making it a nutritious topping for your salad or your dog’s food. It contains very high concentrations of aluminum, iron, magnesium, manganese, silicon and zinc, and moderately high concentrations of ash, cobalt, fat, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, coumarins and vitamin A. Its saponins (substances that bond with oil and water) have anti-inflammatory actions, acting as catalysts for cortisone and hormones. Saponins increase the permeability of mucous membranes, helping the body absorb minerals and other nutrients from the digestive tract.

Chickweed’s medicinal properties are diuretic, vulnerary (used topically), antipyretic (reduces fever), bitter (as a digestive aid); it also balances intestinal flora and lowers bowel transit time, while absorbing toxins from the bowel to help excrete them and regulate colonic bacteria and yeast.

Chickweed is used to dissolve fat and is known as an “obesity cure” for that and its diuretic properties; it works quite well to help dissolve lipomas or fatty tumors when mixed with cleavers and red root that will also help stimulate the lymphatic system. This blend is taken internally and can be used alongside an external oil rub.

Used topically, chickweed is a great drawing agent meaning that it can pull impurities from the eyes, ears, cuts, rashes or infections; it works wonders to solubilize toxins in abscesses, which increases the effectiveness of its antibacterial properties. The anti-inflammatory properties are a great benefit to all of the above ailments, and chickweed’s cooling properties help reduce the heat that accompanies any inflammation or infection.

One of the best extraction methods for using chickweed as a topical healer or drawing agent is to infuse a good quality, preferably certified organic oil such as extra virgin olive oil, avocado oil, moringa leaf oil, or raw sesame oil. Slightly dry the herb out of the sun, spread out on a screen. Depending on the moisture in the air, leave it for an hour or so until it feels drier to the touch.

Place the herb loosely in a glass jar until about three quarters full, then cover with oil about one inch from full. Use a new chopstick to gently move the herb to release the air bubbles. Then, slowly fill the remainder of the jar with the oil up to the rim and cap it. Be sure it’s air free so that anaerobic bacteria doesn’t breed and spoil your oil and plant material. Label your jar, then place it in direct sunlight for four to six weeks.

When it’s complete, you’ll have a gold-ish-green oil to sieve into a clean jar; you can compost the used herb. Use this oil as a part of an ear cleaner for your dog, a component to a healing salve, as an antibacterial rub or for fatty tumors. 🌿



Joyce Belcher is an herbalist and formulator of pet supplements and herbal medicinals for veterinarians and is the founder of Herbs for Life Inc. She lives in York, Maine with her husband, two dogs and two cats; they are all rescues. Visit Joyce at petwellnessblends.com