

Black Walnut

Juglans nigra

Years ago it was the nut I was after. I hated those messy green hulls. I discovered the best way to get off those nasty green hulls was to dump the whole bushel basket full of walnuts fresh off the tree, or the ground under the tree, in the drive way. After a few days of comings and goings, there was the prize. That grooved black HARD walnut. Then came the cracking. And picking out the nut. And black fingers for weeks. Walnuts are not only tasty, they are nutritious, a good source for high-quality oils.

Now, as an herbalist, it's not the nut I'm after, but the green husk. That once pesky, dirty hull has become my prize.

The black walnut has been in folk remedies in North America for generations. It's cousin, the butternut and 2nd cousin, the English walnut, are used extensively in Europe for the same types of ailments.

Black walnut is versatile and can be used for a host of conditions. The active ingredient, juglone, is anti-fungal and anti-parasitic. Taken internally, it is one of the best friends your gastrointestinal system can have. Tinctures are best for parasite infestation...don't be embarrassed, everyone gets them. Really. Got giardia? Get green...! Tincture is great for diarrhea and constipation. Seem impossible? See, that's the great thing about herbs. They can treat seemingly opposite conditions. Candida? Athlete's foot? Black walnut. Infectious skin disorder? Black walnut.

Do not use long term as the hulls are very strong. As with any herbal remedy, pay particular attention to dosage and frequency.

I only have one walnut tree, and she doesn't have a tree house, but she supplies me with plenty of walnuts. My stillroom has multiple jars of black walnut tincture brewing. Steeping quietly in the dark. Making good medicine.