

## HERB OF THE MADONNA

(*Sedum telephium* L.)

### Cultivation

The plant should be planted in the ground or in a pot that is at least 20 cm. in diameter (over the years, you might need to move it to a larger pot, up to 1 meter in diameter). The plant can take full sun. It should be watered every 5-6 days.

When the first buds begin to appear (June-July), gather all of the leaves, which, at this point, should have a thickness of about 2 mm.

After cutting the main stem of the plant, pick off each leaf one at a time, wash them, let them dry, and put them in the freezer or airtight sealed.

The plant should always remain outside. It is not sensitive to the cold.

### Regarding its vegetation:

During the winter, until February, the plant will lose all of its old leaves. Around February – March, the new vegetation will begin.

### Uses

#### Fresh Leaves

The leaves are ready when the plant begins to bloom. At this point, around the 24th of June, the holiday of Saint John the Baptist, the leaves should have reached the maximum thickness and should give out a characteristic smell when they are cut open (unlike the normal herbaceous odor that the leaves have in the months prior to this).

Peel the underside of the leaf as shown in the illustration above then place a th leaf directly onto the affected surface, cover with medica tape (FIXOMULL STRETCH or similar)

#### Frozen Leaves

Remove leaves from the freezer, and after some minutes of exposure to room temperature, proceed as with fresh leaves.

The leaves must be removed and substituted to the affected area every 12-24 hours.

### WARNINGS

Sometimes patients have an allergy to the leaves of the plant. The allergy manifests itself in itchiness followed by little blisters, around the area of application. Such an allergic reaction can present itself after 4-5 days from the beginning of the treatment; in this case, it is necessary to immediately interrupt the application of the leaves, otherwise the allergic reaction will only become more apparent.

In the event that after stopping the treatment of the leaves, the allergic reaction persists, it is necessary to apply an ointment of zinc oxide, easily found in a pharmacy. After doing so, it is safe to resume treatment with the leaves, but only for brief periods, alternating with the zinc oxide ointment.

### WHERE TO FIND THE PLANTS:

#### IL BRUCO

located at N.O. San Giovanni di Dio  
Via di Torre Galli, 3 - Florence

**Tel. 348.7203627**

Or

**Smorti Pinzauti Piera**, located at Via Barni, 3/a  
(Galluzzo, Florence) – tel. 055.2047185

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The great naturalist and physician Linneus, named this plant “Sedum telephium,” a name which reveals two of its characteristics:

From its genus (Sedum), it takes perhaps its carriage: remaining seated; from its species (telephium), its vulnerable virtue. According to Greek mythology, King Telephus, after being wounded by Achilles, was left with a sore on his thigh which never healed. Therefore, the doctors call this type of lesion a “Telephian wound.”

We call this herb, “Herb of the Madonna,” because a cutting of this plant, cut for the day of St. John the Baptist and placed at the Madonna, will remain alive without water, until the next year when it might even bloom.

When I was an infant in Impruneta, picking this leaf to cure inflammatory surfaces was something that came naturally. When I was seven years old, my mother cured my paronychia with a leaf from the plant, and I remember re-

#### INDICATIONS FOR USE:

Abscesses  
Gum swelling  
Bartholin cyst (bartholinitis)  
Calluses  
Sebaceous cysts (inflamed)  
Complications of injuries  
Subcutaneous foreign bodies  
Delayed cicatrization  
Subcutaneous fistulas  
Furuncles (boils, pimples)  
Hidradenitis of the axilla  
Psoriatic hiperkeratosis  
Mastitis  
Osteitis of the small bones  
Paronychia (felon, whitlow)  
Insect bites  
Pilonidal sinus (pilonidal cyst)  
Radiodermatitis  
Tendinitis  
Trophic ulcers of the legs  
Second and Third Degree Burns

alizing at that time the most striking characteristic of the leaf’s power - the maceration of the skin, or as I said then, “the boiling of the finger,” after remaining in contact for the entire night with the juice of the plant.

The case of witlow example, is a base enough observation; normally doctors, and especially surgeons, give it little attention in its initial phase of treatment, suggesting instead to the patients in great pain, to do everything possible, even taking salt water baths. The patient then goes to the pharmacist, who looking in his arsenal, will recommend anything from sodium ipoclorite to ictyol or others medicated bandaids. Perhaps the inflammatory process actually does stop as a result of these painful therapies. But perhaps, instead, even worse hardships lie ahead, requiring the poor patient, already insomniac from the pain, to return to his doctor, at which point the doctor sends him to the surgeon for an operation: or rather, more commonly, the doctor sends him to the emergency room, where, after a long waiting period, the patient is subject to various treatments, all according to where and with whom the procedure takes place, which often end up doing more bad than good. All surgeries foresee bloody operations to the finger, witch is one of the reasons why this disease is sinonimous with great suffering.

Unfortunately (though not always), notwithstanding the pain that the patient must endure throughout the healing period, the inflammation and infection sometimes reach the bone of the finger, which can lead to the amputation of the falanx.

I have seen, first hand, many such cases, and knowing that with just a few applications of the Herb of the Madonna -- with no loss of blood and with no pain or infection -- this simple herb cures. I can only recommend, highly, its use, especially since the only known side effect of the Herb of the Madonna is an allergy which can manifest itself a few days after the start of usage.

Telephium was used and studied by many over the centuries, but the only one that understood and summarized it perfectly was the monk and doctor and botanist Vallom-

broas Fulgenzo Vitman, who in his De Medicatis Herbarum Facultatibus (1770) describes its virtues:

**Ulcera detergit.. (to wipe away ulcers):** The leaf, removed of its inferior cuticle and placed on sores, ulcers, cutaneous necrosis, etc., either dissolves the superficial substances, aids the trophism and the granulation.

**...et ad cicatricem perducit...** (and it brings them to heal): ...It makes the sores heal in a way that the epithelium, originating from the edges of the ulcer, can spread out on the tissue of granulation.

**..tumorum suppurationem promovet ...** [encourages inflamed external parts of the body (phlogosis) to discharge pus]: It encourages the formation of abscesses.

And in fact, this is a notable property, interesting on both the therapeutic and speculative sides; fresh or defrosted leaves, placed over an area where the inflammatory process has just begun can cause regression catching it early enough, before pus has formed. Subsequently the leaves can cause a boost aof white blood cells, rapidly stimulating the gathering of the pus.

**...et Dolores mitigat... (and the pain gets better):** The fourth and last virtue, that of lessening the pain, is especially appreciated during the inflammatory process-- for example, that of a dental abscess—and explains why this plant is grown all over the world.

