

# Lavender FACTS



Since Roman times, lavender has been used for healing, washing, repelling insects and for its antiseptic qualities.

Lavender is referenced in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible using the name spikenard.

Lavender was considered effective against infection in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the plague and cholera ran rampant.

Roman soldiers took lavender with them to address war wounds as well as the other healing properties known at the time. These included treating upset stomachs, kidney disorders, dropsy, jaundice and easing insect bites.

Lavender was used to treat head lice in the twelfth century and up to 1874 in France.

During World War I, lavender oil and sphagnum moss were used together to dress war wounds since antiseptics were in short supply at the time.

Common lavender *Lavandula angustifolia*, Lavandin *L. x intermedia* (a cross between common lavender and spike lavender *L. latifolia*) and spike lavender are most commonly used commercially. *L. angustifolia* is the popular fragrance known to in the perfume industry. Lavandin, which yields a bigger harvest, is also used in the perfume industry, while Spike lavender is used to repel moths due to the higher camphor content in its oil.

There are about 25 species of lavender.

Historically lavender has been used to treat depression, insomnia, anxiety and fatigue. Current research supports the calming, soothing and sedative effects of lavender when inhaled.

While both the foliage and flowers are fragrant, typically flower buds are harvested and dried to scent potpourri, sleep pillows and other projects.

*L. angustifolia* flowers are preferred and used in teas, cookies and other confections as well as savory dishes. Lavender is a component of "Herbes de Provence" and Lady Grey Tea.

## References:

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