

Additionally, there are chills, and fever, sore throat, catarrh, and cutaneous eruption. The name boneset attained popularity about 1800 from a particularly virulent flu that swept the East Coast and was attended by intense bone pain. The herbalist Matthew Wood found a specific reference from the early nineteenth-century physician C. J. Hemple, who noted that *Eupatorium perfoliatum* "so singularly relieved the disease . . . that it was familiarly called bone-set." Part of the reason why the name boneset might have been adopted in that region at that time is that the Native Americans who used boneset for broken bones were northeastern Indians, and the severe, painful, bone flus that swept the country in 1800 also were confined to the northeast.

The plant, indigenous to North America, was extensively used by native peoples for hundreds if not thousands of years specifically for intermittent fevers and chills, with pain in the bones, weakness, and debility. Interestingly, all *Eupatorium* species are used alike throughout the world. Other species, though also used for colds and flus, tend to be primarily used for urinary tract and uric acid problems (like Joe Pye weed, gravel root). Interesting also is the traditional use of boneset (and many of the *Eupatorium* species) for snakebite as an antivenin throughout the world. Echinacea is also used in this manner, and like echinacea, boneset stimulates phagocytosis: the number and aggressiveness of white blood cells in the blood.

Clinical trials have shown that boneset stimulates phagocytosis better than echinacea, is analgesic (at least as effective as aspirin), and reduces cold and flu symptoms. In mice it has shown strong immunostimulant activity and cytotoxic action against cancer cells.

Increasing numbers of practicing herbalists report that boneset is a reliable and effective immunostimulant, *especially in infections that just*

Things to Know about Boneset

Boneset is unpleasantly bitter to most people. It can cause vomiting if large doses are taken hot, so care is indicated unless that is your desire.

It is inexpensive and a reliable alternative and better for most of the things for which echinacea is wrongly prescribed. The homeopathic tincture (6x) has been found in human trials to be exceptionally effective in the treatment of colds and flus. During the nineteenth century, few farmhouses did not have bundles of boneset hung from the rafters for use at the first onset of chills and fever.