

orrhea, anemia, bronchitis, catarrh, colds, colic, debility, diarrhea, dysmenorrhea, fever, flatulence, headache, hysteria, indigestion, insanity, insomnia, nervousness, neuralgia, neurasthenia, nightmare, scurvy, stress, and tuberculosis. Leaves were sometimes chewed to alleviate toothache. Little sacks of catnip are tied around babies' necks, the aroma said to settle the stomach. Equal parts of catnip tea and saffron were once recommended for scarlet fever and smallpox. A tablespoon of the leaf juice, two or three times a day, is claimed to restore the menstrual flow when all else fails. A catnip poultice is said to reduce swelling. The herb should be infused only; boiling is said to spoil it.<sup>44</sup> The tea should be covered to slow the escape of volatile ingredients. According to Kloss, "a high enema of catnip will relieve hysterical headaches. Such enemas, not condoned by the medical profession, are also suggested for colic, convulsions, dysmenorrhea, dyspepsia, dysuria, fever, fits and worms."<sup>44</sup> One wireless flash<sup>211</sup> states "catnip tea, for example, has a pick-me-up effect, and has been used as a folk remedy for years to treat colds, stomach ailments or jittery nerves. The tea is fortified with vitamins and is high in calcium and iron."

Freshly harvested flowering tops yield 0.3 to 1.0% volatile oil by steam distillation, the major constituent nepetalactone (70 to 99%). Dry seeds contain 18.4% protein, 21.2% fat, and 3.2% ash. The seeds contain 57% linolenic, 18% linoleic, 12% oleic acid, and 6% saturated fatty acids.<sup>33</sup> The variety *citriodora* contains acetic acid, butyric acid, citral, citronellol, dipentene, geraniol, limonene, nerol, tiglic acid, and valeric acid.

**Toxicity** — Classified by the FDA (*Health Foods Business*, June 1978) as an Herb of Undefined Safety. Tyler, however, says, "There just may be some basis in fact for the cup of hot catnip tea taken at bedtime to insure a good night's sleep (nepetalactone is somewhat similar in its chemical structure to the valepotriates, the sedative principle of valerian). Besides its relatively inexpensive, it tastes good, and no harmful effects from using it have been reported."<sup>37</sup> Even Tierra, who advocates catnip enemas, says that smoking catnip "may cause headaches."<sup>28</sup> The LD<sub>50</sub> intraperitoneally injected for catnip oil is 1300 mg/kg, the minimal lethal dose is 1000; for nepetalactone the LD<sub>50</sub> is 1550, the minimum lethal dose is 1500; for nepetalic acid the LD<sub>50</sub> is 1050 mg, the minimal lethal dose is 500.<sup>212</sup> Citronellal, geraniol (oral LD<sub>50</sub> in rats 3600 mg), and citral (oral LD<sub>50</sub> in rats 4960 mg) are also reported. List and Horhammer<sup>33</sup> report, also, carvacrol (oral LD<sub>50</sub> 810 mg), pulegone (ipr LD<sub>50</sub> 150 mg), thymol (oral LD<sub>50</sub> in), caryophyllene, epinepetalactone, isodihydronepetalactone, "methyl nepetonat". In addition to the toxins carvacrol, saponin, tannin, and thymol, *N. cataria* contains camphor, beta-caryophyllene, dihydronepetalactone, epinepetalactone, humulene, nepetalactone, nepetalic acid, nepetalic anhydride, nepetol, and pulegone.