

# MIDWIFE COURTNEY

WELLNESS - FERTILITY  
PREGNANCY - BIRTH - POSTPARTUM

## Favorite Herbs for Women's Health - NORA

Herbal Medicine is one of my top areas of interest in women's health. There is so much that herbs have to offer us! From daily teas, to more intensive regimens, to vaginal steaming, herbs offer an array of benefits that support overall wellness, hormone balancing, increased fertility, healthier pregnancies and better recoveries postpartum. Different herbs have different benefits to offer, and there are some herbs that are beneficial to most people most of the time. These herbs are known as nutritive herbs – the more regularly you consume them, the greater the benefits are to you over time. Here are my top four favorite herbs that benefit nearly everyone in their reproductive years:

### N - Nettles

Nettles' botanical name is *Urtica dioica*, and it is a vascular tonic, antiallergenic, diuretic and nutritive herb. It has a long, historic use as both a food and an herbal tonic. It is an extremely nutritive plant that is high in vitamins and minerals, and it strengthens and supports all body systems. Some benefits of Nettles include strengthening the kidneys, adrenals and blood vessels, which promotes detoxification and prevents hemorrhoids and varicose veins. It also aids in healing many common issues, including acne, fatigue, anemia, menstrual irregularities, and sugar/caffeine cravings. It is also a galactagogue, which means it promotes milk production for those who are lactating!

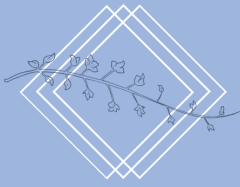
#### **Nutritive Components:**

Vitamins A, C, K, Calcium and Manganese, Magnesium, Riboflavin, Iron, Potassium, Vitamin B6 and Phosphorus

### O - Oatstraw

Oatstraw's botanical name is *Avena sativa*, and it is a nervine and nutritive tonic. Known to be gentle and supportive in nature, it is the ideal herb to gently nourish the entire body over time, especially for those who feel constantly rundown or low on energy. It helps to gently restore the mind and body from stressors of daily life. It has even been used since the middle ages to boost mental capacity and reduce insomnia. In addition to strengthening the nervous system and helping you cope better with stress, Oatstraw is also great at helping to balance hormones, blood sugar and the digestive system. In pregnancy, it can be helpful for high blood pressure, varicose veins and hemorrhoids, and can also help increase milk supply for those who are lactating.

**Nutritive Components:** The entire plant is rich in minerals and trace nutrients such as silica, magnesium, phosphorus, chromium, iron, calcium, alkaloids, protein, the vitamin B complex, and vitamins A and C



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## R - Red Raspberry Leaf

Red Raspberry Leaf's botanical name is *Rubus idaeus*. It is a uterine tonic, astringent and nutritive herb. It is most commonly used during pregnancy, however it is an excellent herb for women's reproductive and general health during every stage of life, toning the uterus, kidneys, urinary tract and mucus membranes, and stabilizing the digestive system. In pregnancy and birth, it is known to tone the uterine muscles in preparation for labor, making contractions more effective, which may shorten the length of labor. Uterine toning also helps to decrease bleeding postpartum, and the nutrients in RRL are supportive of lactation. It has been known to help with dysmenorrhea and uterine fibroids.

**Nutritive Components:** Vitamins A, C, K, Calcium and Manganese, Magnesium, Riboflavin, Iron, Potassium, Vitamin B6 and Phosphorus

## A - Alfalfa

Alfalfa's botanical name is *Medicago sativa*, and it acts as a nutritive and phytoestrogens herb. Since it grows in rich soils, it is incredibly rich in trace minerals, which are important for many body functions, including building and oxygenating blood, synthesizing DNA, regulating hormones, regulating blood sugar, regulating the metabolic system, aiding in nutrient absorption, aiding in bone formation, proper neurological and chemical reactions, and more. In the body system, alfalfa acts as a general tonic, purifies the blood and balances blood sugar in pregnancy. It is also known to prevent osteoporosis and reduce vaginal dryness.

**Nutritive Components:** Vitamin C, K, Copper, Manganese, Folate, Thiamin, Riboflavin, Magnesium and Iron

And what's the herbal recipe I promised you? It's the combination of all four herbs listed above! Traditionally called NORA Tea, it is equal parts Nettles, Oatstraw, Red Raspberry Leaf and Alfalfa. You can make your NORA Tea one cup at a time, by steeping 1/2 tablespoon of each herb together in an herb ball. Or you can make a stronger infusion by filling 1/2 of a large mason jar with equal parts of each herb, fill to the top with hot water, cover, and let sit overnight. Strain and refrigerate tea to enjoy all day!

\*This information is for educational purposes only. This information has not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This information is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Please consult your care provider before introducing any herbs into your daily regimen.

### Sources:

Romm, Aviva Jill. *Botanical Medicine for Women's Health*. Churchill Livingstone/Elsevier, 2010.

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