

CALIFORNIA POPPY

Latin Name: Eschscholzia californica

Botanical Family: Papaveraceae

Other Names: Golden poppy, flame flower, dedal de oro, Yellow poppy, copa de oro.



Parts Used: Dried Aerial Parts

Country of Origin: Western United States

Common Preparations: Infusion / Tincture

Energy: Cool / Bitter

Actions: Analgesic, Anodyne, Anti-Inflammatory, Antineuralgic, antispasmodic, anxiolytic, diaphoretic, diuretic, febrifuge, hypnotic, nervine, nervous system relaxant, sedative, soporific

At Risk **Endangered**

Dosage: Tincture (1:5 in 25%) dosage is 1 – 4 ml at night for sleeplessness in children.

For antispasmodic indications, use 0.5 – 2 ml 3x/day.

Infusion: pour 1 cup boiling water over 1 – 2 tsp of dried herb and infuse for 10 min. A cup drunk at night will promote restful sleep.

Indications/Applications: California Poppy has been used as a sedative and hypnotic for children, especially in cases of overexcitement and sleeplessness. It can be used wherever an antispasmodic remedy is indicated – for example, for colic pain. It may also be useful to treat gallbladder colic.

Safety Information: California Poppy has additive effects when used with other sedatives.

Contraindications / Interactions: Sedative medications (Benzodiazepines) interacts with California Poppy. California poppy might cause sleepiness and drowsiness. Drugs that cause sleepiness and drowsiness are called sedatives. Taking California poppy along with sedative medications might cause too much sleepiness.

Some of these sedative medications include: clonazepam (Klonopin), diazepam (Valium), lorazepam (Ativan), phenobarbital (Donnatal, zolpidem (Ambien), and others.

Chemical Constituents/Composition:

Isoquinoline alkaloids, including protopine, califonidine, eschscholtzine, allocryptopine, sanguinarine, chelerythrine; flavone glycosides; and carotenoids

Botany:

California Poppy ranges throughout much of the US, Mexico, and Canada, in a variety of habitats below 7000 ft including dry plains, foothills, valleys, desert margins, coastal dunes, and open slopes. California poppy may occur as an annual, or in some areas as a deep-rooted perennial, with upright flowers on branching stems. Its yellow-orange flowers have four smooth petals, often with a darker orange-colored center, and respond phototropically to light levels, closing on cloudy days and at night. California poppy grows from approximately 0.5 – 2 feet, and its lacy blue-green foliage is ternate – finely divided into three lobes – and both basal and cauline. The ripe capsules disperse seeds explosively, sometimes ejecting seeds up to 6 feet from the parent plant. There are currently two recognized subspecies of California poppy. *Eschscholzia californica* ssp. *californica* and *E. californica* ssp. *Mexicana*.

History/ Myth:

According to an unspecified source, Native American tribes believed, (or at least let the early Spanish explorers believe) that the orange petals of the California Poppy filled the soil with gold when they fell and hit the ground.

Scientific Research:

[California Poppy has shown to contain sedative, anxiolytic, and antinociceptive \(the ability to sense pain\) effects.](#)

References:

1. <https://herbarium.theherbalacademy.com/monographs/#/monograph/5086>
2. <https://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supplements/ingredientmono-104-california%20poppy.aspx?activeingredientid=104&activeingredientname=california%20poppy>
3. Hoffman, David. 2004. Medical Herbalism. P. 547
4. <http://www.flowersociety.org/california-poppy.html>