

Tormentil Root – The Resilient Astringent of the Earth

Botanical Profile

- Latin Name: *Potentilla erecta*
- Alternative Names: Septfoil, Bloodroot (Europe), Erect Cinquefoil
- Plant Family: Rosaceae
- Parts Used: Rhizome (Root)
- Origin: Native to Europe and Western Asia, thriving in acidic soils and wild meadows

Tormentil Root is a powerful astringent herb long used in traditional European herbalism for its ability to tone, bind, and restore integrity to tissues. At Peridotflow, we call upon this root when the body or spirit feels leaky, inflamed, or vulnerable—its earthy firmness helping restore strength and cohesion from within.

Powerful Astringent for Diarrhoea and Gut Healing

Tormentil Root's high tannin content makes it one of the most potent plant astringents. It is particularly useful in cases of acute or chronic diarrhoea, dysentery, and gut inflammation. Its drying and toning properties help reduce excess fluid in the bowels while soothing mucous membranes.

Mouth, Throat, and Gum Health

Used traditionally as a gargle or mouthwash, Tormentil helps address bleeding gums, mouth ulcers, sore throats, and tonsillitis. It tones and heals irritated oral tissues and can be used as a rinse or lozenge ingredient in holistic dental care.

Skin and Wound Applications

Applied topically, Tormentil is used for weeping eczema, sores, insect bites, and bleeding wounds. Its strong astringency helps draw tissues together, reduce swelling, and promote the healing of cuts or abrasions.

Urinary and Reproductive Tract Support

Tormentil's drying nature supports excessive vaginal discharge, postnatal healing, and mild urinary incontinence. It can be included in sitz baths, douches, or supportive blends for restoring pelvic tone and integrity after childbirth or surgery.

Bleeding and Capillary Fragility

Its haemostatic properties make it helpful for mild internal bleeding, nosebleeds, or bruising associated with fragile capillaries. Traditionally, it was carried as a root charm to stop bleeding and used in tonics to strengthen blood vessels.

Folklore & History

In Celtic and Western European folk traditions, Tormentil was seen as a plant of protection, often used to 'bind' or ward off illness. Its deep red root when cut symbolised strength, courage, and blood vitality. It was used in early battlefield medicine and often kept as a dried charm for grounding and protection.

Traditional Usage

Traditionally used as a decoction for diarrhoea, as a gargle or compress for inflammation, and as a tincture in anti-bleeding formulas. It was valued for internal and external wounds, particularly those slow to heal.

Herbal Actions

Astringent, Vulnerary, Anti-inflammatory, Haemostatic, Tonic, Antibacterial

Energetics & Tissue States

Temperature: Cooling

Moisture: Drying

Tissue States: Leaky, Lax, Inflamed, Atrophic

Active Compounds

- Tannins (15–20%) – strong astringent and tissue toning
- Tormentil red (dye pigment) – haemostatic and antioxidant
- Ellagitannins and flavonoids – anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial

Dosage & Preparation

- Decoction: 1–2 tsp of chopped root per cup, simmer 20 min
- Tincture: 1–2 ml up to 3x/day
- Mouthwash: Infuse and gargle or apply with a cotton swab
- Compress: Soak cloth in decoction and apply externally

Safety & Contraindications

- Safe in moderate doses
- High doses may cause constipation due to astringency
- Not suitable for very dry constitutions or chronic constipation
- Avoid during pregnancy unless under professional guidance

Herbal Pairings

- Marshmallow root – to soften dryness in the gut
- Calendula – for wound healing support
- Yarrow – for bleeding and tissue tone
- Lady's mantle – in reproductive tonics
- Plantain – for mucosal healing and inflammation

Peridotflow Perspective

At Peridotflow, we turn to Tormentil when there's a need for spiritual or physical boundaries. It's an herb for those who feel emotionally 'leaky', energetically overexposed, or physically inflamed and loose. Tormentil teaches the wisdom of containment, helping the body hold its structure and the soul maintain its shape.