

QAL

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Queen Anne's Lace

QAL : a form of natural birth control

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[excerpted from her blog // more information, including links to some study info:
<http://www.mollyduttonkenny.com/blog-mdk/using-queen-annes-lace-for-managing-fertility>]

Queen Anne's Lace is a lovely, delicate wildflower, which goes by many names with many different peoples, texts, and regions, including: "Daucus Carota" (Latin Name), "Wild Carrot", "Black Carrot", "Bishop's Lace", "Cow's Lace", and "Bird's Nest". Queen Anne's Lace is native to Europe and Central Asia and has been naturalized to North America, South Africa, and Australia. She brings up her lacy flowers in late summer, and when people work with her medicine they're usually trying to avoid having babies.



More specifically, Queen Anne's Lace works as an **implantation inhibitor**. This means it prevents a fertilized egg from implanting and developing into a pregnancy.

Queen Anne's Lace is *not* a contraceptive (as it does not prevent ovulation, ejaculation, fertilization, or conception). Nor is Queen Anne's Lace an abortive (as it does not disrupt an early pregnancy that is already well established and healthy). Rather, it disrupts normal hormonal shifts in the body that would enhance and develop healthy endometrial lining for a pregnancy to implant. It makes the uterus inhospitable to grow a pregnancy.

Protocols and Dosages

There is scientific disagreement as to whether Queen Anne's Lace has primarily estrogenic properties, or if she works more with progesterone. There is also conflict as to whether the *introduction* or the *withdrawal* of Queen Anne's Lace is the key to her efficacy, and what the ideal timing is.

What seems to be true is this: she is not a daily contraceptive, she needs to be introduced, and then withdrawn, surrounding a specific potentially fertilizing event, on a specific schedule.

Queen Anne's Lace, in whatever manner who choose to work with it, should be used surrounding a potentially fertilizing event:

Optimally, in three doses:

1st dose: 8-12 hours surrounding potential fertilization

2nd dose: 8ish hours after the first dose

3rd dose: 8ish hours after send dose

Then stop.

These doses should be spaced over a minimum of 24 hours and an absolute maximum of 72 hours.

These doses should be based on *potential fertilization* (i.e. "unprotected" sex), NOT daily, NOT only at specific times of a cycle.

Doses can be any of the following (*but should stay consistent. For example: If 1st dose is tincture, all doses should be tincture*):

Dried Seeds:

Choose one of the following:

- About a teaspoon, chewed well and swallowed with juice/water on an empty stomach. *This is the oldest historical method of consuming Queen Anne's Lace for implantation inhibition.*
- About a teaspoon, ground by mortar and pestle or clean coffee grinder, and mixed into a small amount of juice or water, taken on an empty stomach
- About a teaspoon, ground by mortar and pestle or clean coffee grinder, into a cup. Pour 8oz boiling water over, let steep for 15 minutes, consume on an empty stomach

Dried Flowers:

- Place 2-3 dried flower heads into a teacup. Pour 8oz boiling water over, let steep for 15 minutes, consume on an empty stomach

Fresh Seeds:

- Use in a tincture, as detailed below:

Fresh Flowers:

Choose one of the following:

- Place 3-6 fresh flower heads into a teacup. Pour 8oz boiling water over, let steep for 15 minutes, consume on an empty stomach

Tincture:

- 30-60 drops in a small glass with a few tablespoons of cool water taken on an empty stomach

Many species in the parsley family have estrogenic properties, and some, such as wild carrot, are known to act as abortifacients. (reference Riddle, John M. (1994). *Contraception and Abortion from the Ancient World to the Renaissance*. Harvard University Press. p. 58)

The seeds of wild carrot (Queen Anne's Lace, *Daucus carota* L., Family Apiaceae) have a long history of use relating to fertility, especially as an anti-fertility agent. The seeds of *Daucus carota* L. (DC) have been described as an abortifacient, emmenagogue, contraceptive, and aphrodisiac in a variety of publications throughout European history. These documents also indicate use by women for over 2,000 years as a means to control fertility. (emmenagogue - a substance that stimulates or increases menstrual flow)

A note on identity - Confusion and debate surround the correct identification of the carrot in the classical era and it is possible that varieties of carrot and the closely related parsnip were used interchangeably. The writings of Galen and Dioscorides suggest the actions of *Staphilinos*, *Daucos* and *Pastinaca* were so similar one could be used in place of another. These herbs are discussed as having both fertility and anti-fertility activity, yet these ancient works do not form any consensus.

Romans used an alleged wonder plant of the carrot and parsley family called silphium (now extinct), a plant which looked very similar to Wild Carrot. silphium stalk - carrots contraception It was a sort of giant fennel that grew wild near Cyrene, an ancient coastal city in North Africa. Silphium had many uses — perfume from its flowers, food from its stalk, and medicine from its juice (or resin) and roots. The Romans didn't discover the plant's properties — there's evidence the Greeks and Egyptians used it as a contraceptive as early as the seventh century BC on the advice of physicians, who recommended a monthly dose that mixed a lump of resin the size of a chickpea with water. The Roman scholar Pliny the Elder described use of the resin (called laser or laserpicium) "with soft wool as a pessary to promote the menstrual discharge." Menstrual discharge, of course, means no pregnancy. One physician in the second century AD named Soranus claimed a special recipe using silphium had been used to terminate pregnancies. In *Contraception and Abortion from the Ancient World to the Renaissance* (1992), medical historian John Riddle claims that modern studies show the recipe and others like it would work. (photo, right, shows ancient silver coin from Cyrene depicting a stalk of Silphium)

John Riddle writes in *Eve's Herbs*, that Wild Carrot seeds are one of the more potent antifertility agents available, and a common plant in many regions of the world. "The seeds, harvested in the fall, are a strong contraceptive if taken orally immediately after coitus." (penis/vagina sex) Research on small animals has shown that extracts of the seeds disrupt the implantation process, or if a fertilized egg has implanted for only a short period, will cause it to be released. There has been some research done on wild carrot seeds mostly in other countries, the results of those experiments have been encouraging. The Chinese view wild carrot as a promising post-colital agent, "recent evidence suggests that terpenoids in the seed block crucial progesterone synthesis in pregnant animals." When asked about the contraceptive effects of wild carrot, some herbalists have described it as having the effect of making the uterus "slippery" so the egg is unable to implant.

Nicholas Culpeper's *Complete Herbal* was first published in England in 1653 and was considered the herbal authority for the common people of its time. Culpeper noted that carrot possessed both pro- and anti-fertility actions. According to Culpeper, the carrot root and seed work similarly to promote menstrual flow ("women's courses") and can be used to treat "the rising of the mother", which may refer to menstrual obstructions. Culpeper also suggested that the seed boiled in wine may help conception. Culpeper advised that "carrot is governed by Mercury, which is said to rule wind (colic and spasm), and remove stitches in the sides, provoke urine and women's courses...I suppose the seeds of them perform this better than the roots".

It has to be noted that, paradoxically Wild Carrot Seeds can also aid fertility, it's all about the timing.

Although it is well recognised and used to have an influence on contraception, it is less well known that it can also have a positive impact on fertility too.

The Wild Carrot (and its seeds) continues to be an enigma. It is a paradox that this plants seeds can perform contradictory functions. It's all about timing. read on. It is quite extraordinary that it supports both conception and contraception.. Both are related depending on whether they (seeds) are ingested before or after ovulation

How might Carrot support fertility? Some women observe increased cervical mucous when using Carrot before ovulation (the follicular phase of the reproductive cycle). Elevated estrogens increase cervical mucous which provides a safe passage for traveling sperm. Carrot works to appropriately support estrogen levels and libido during the follicular phase before ovulation.

Carrot is known to have a purgative effect on the body, cleansing and detoxing.

The seeds renew and refresh the womb by shedding old, stagnant blood. They can be used to promote conception by preparing a fertile ground for healthy embryo implantation. They can also be used as a form of birth control to prevent eggs from implanting by shredding the uterine lining during and after ovulation. To enhance fertility take the tincture or 1 teaspoon of the seeds, chewed or crushed and mixed with water or juice before ovulation. To prevent conception take the same preparation during and after ovulation, and as an emergency contraceptive, take the seeds 8-12 hours after intercourse.

Potions referred to -

Seed Tea – Standard infusion of crushed seeds. Drink 4-6 fluid ounces up to 4 times per day.

Seed Tincture – 1 part fresh seed, 3 parts menstruum (100 percent alcohol). Take 15-30 drops up to 4 times per day ; as a contraceptive, take 15-30 drops per day for 3-7 days and after ovulation.

Root tea – Standard decoction. Drink 4-6 fluid ounces up to to 4 times per day.

(Source - Pacific Northwest Medicinal Plants: Identify, Harvest, and Use 120 Wild Herbs for Health and Wellness (2017 Scott Kloos)

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**Is QAL related to ancient
SILPHIUM, which was
prized in the ancient
Mediterranean as an
herbal birth control?**

Silphium was used by the Romans as a form of herbal birth control. They used it so often, in fact, that the plant went extinct before the fall of the Roman Empire.



Bildagentur-online/Getty Images
DEA/ G. Cigolini/Getty Images

The plant acted as an abortifacient as well as a preventative measure. A single dose of the resin from the plant would induce menstruation, effectively rendering the woman temporarily infertile. If the woman was already pregnant, the induced menstruation would lead to a miscarriage.

Silphium rapidly grew in popularity due to its proactive and reactive contraception properties, making the small town of Cyrene one of the biggest economic powers at the time. The plant contributed to their economy so much that its image was even found printed on Cyrenian currency.

It was also used as an extremely effective form of contraception.

“Anecdotal and medical evidence from classical antiquity tells us that the drug of choice for contraception was silphium,” said historian and Greek pharmacologist John Riddle.

According to Riddle, the ancient physician Soranus suggested taking a monthly dose of silphium the size of a chick-pea to prevent pregnancy and “destroy any existing.”



Wikimedia Commons

The ruins of the ancient city of Cyrene.

Legend has it that silphium was first discovered after a “black” rain swept across the east coast of Libya over two and a half millennia ago. From then onwards, the herb spread its broad roots ever further, growing luxuriantly on lush hillsides and forest meadows.

It might sound strange – after all, North Africa is hardly famed for its greenery, but this was Cyrenaica, a land of tiered highlands with an abundant water supply. Today parts are known to receive up to **850mm of rain** (34in) per year, which is nearly as wet as Britain.

Either way, the ancient lust for true silphium proved too much. Pliny the Elder wrote that Roman landlords had been forced to fence off the herb’s meadow habitat to stop local sheep from devouring the whole lot. “They might have grazed it right down to the roots and killed it,” says Parejko.

Theophrastus described the plants as having **thick roots covered in black bark**. They were extravagantly long; if you were to hold one up against the human body, it would be around the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger (an ancient unit of measurement known as a cubit). Though the plant was “most peculiar”, he said it had a hollow stalk a bit like fennel and golden leaves which resembled those of celery.

It could absolutely still be there. It's not an easy country to survey – Monique Simmonds

The ancient coins which bear its image show a plant with flowers arranged in what botanists call a “large apical umbel”, which Parejko describes as a disc like the end of a watering can. “It would have looked quite conspicuous,” says Simmonds.

Theophrastus compared it to another herb, *Magydaris pastinacea*, which grew in Syria and on the slopes of Mount Parnassus near the Greek city of Delphi. He believed both were “spineless under shrubs” related to fennel.

He may have been onto something. Scientists now think that, like asafoetida, silphium may have belonged to a group of fennel-like plants, the *Ferula*. They are actually related to carrots and grow wild as weeds across North Africa and the Mediterranean. Incredibly, two of these plants – giant Tangier fennel and giant fennel – still exist in Libya today. It's possible that one of these is silphium.



Silphium was so fundamental to Cyrene's economy, the locals stamped its image on their money (Credit: Alamy)

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@2022 **Queen Anne's Lace** is one of my plants. As a purveyor of empty lots in the abandoned intown of my youth, I first came in contact with her beautiful crowned flowers swaying in wind of the then abandoned cityscape. Later I discovered her formal names: "Daucus Carota" (Latin Name), "Wild Carrot", "Black Carrot", "Bishop's Lace", "Cow's Lace", and "Bird's Nest." Like ancient Silphius,* she is a wildflower, not a plant that is cultivated. And she is one of the plants that is always around me wherever I live: I suspected she had medicine for me. . . And, indeed, she was there when I finally decided to come off the birth control pill in my thirties. Although I was initially thrilled at having the technology to prevent having babies, after 10 years, I was feeling resentful about the pill's place in my daily routine. My first thought upon waking up was a worry: better take that pill! They came in weird little containers. They were pink plastic circles of pills: you popped one out for each day of the month. And when I missed one, it made me quite sick. Planned Parenthood was my sanctuary of affordable, easily accessible support and protection as a young woman wanting the freedom from pregnancy. We were seemingly in a relationship for the long haul. Going off "the pill" was instinctual for me, but also supported by the knowledge going around my female friend group about "natural family planning" as it was called. I couldn't believe that no one had told me how to track my own cycles of fertility (though monitoring my body's ovulation). With this new info, I felt almost ready to face the world without the pill. but it was not until I found Molly Dutton-Kenny's blog and several other online references about Queen Anne's Lace that I completed my freedom from conventional medicine's solution to birth control. I read her research and recommendations, and felt connected to the plant enough to experiment. I have found her to be a mild, and effective back up plan for managing fertility. Now, I no longer need her, but given the current political climate around women's right to choose in America, I want to share what I know and what I grow! I maintain a field of Queen Anne's Lace in the empty lot next to my studio, HOUSE of TAU. Although I no longer need her, I harvest her every year. let me know if you'd like some seeds.

my recommended use:

as monthly protection: ingest a tablespoon of ground seed with honey and/or peanut butter every 8-12 hrs around ovulation cycle.

as a "day after": ingest a tablespoon of ground seed with honey and or peanut butter. every 4-5 hrs for 2-4 rounds. you will feel the symptoms of your period coming on.

*see page pg 9