

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Cancer Center

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FOR THE MEDIA

Feverfew may benefit patients with migraine headaches .

One or more compounds found in feverfew are thought to prevent migraines. One such compound, parthenolide, was found to block the formation of inflammatory proteins. A feverfew extract was shown to reduce the number of migraine attacks and also decrease the mild headache that occurs before a migraine attack. Feverfew also showed anticancer effects in lab studies. Human studies are needed.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

- To prevent migraine headaches

A few studies support this use. Post-feverfew withdrawal syndrome (consisting of muscle stiffness, anxiety, headaches, nausea, and vomiting) can occur after patients discontinue using this herb.

- To treat arthritis

Although compounds in feverfew show anti-inflammatory activity in the laboratory, a clinical trial did not support this use.

- To relieve painful and heavy menstruation

No scientific evidence supports this use.

- To treat psoriasis

Although compounds in feverfew show anti-inflammatory activity in the laboratory, human data are lacking.

## What are the side effects?

- Stomach upset
- Red, itchy rash
- Mouth ulcerations when chewing fresh feverfew leaves
- Withdrawal symptoms (post-feverfew syndrome): May occur when patients stop taking feverfew after a long period of time. These include muscle stiffness, anxiety, moderate pain, headache, nausea, and vomiting.

## What else do I need to know?

Do Not Take if:

You are allergic to ragweed, chrysanthemums, marigolds, or other members of the Compositae family .  
You are taking Cytochrome P450 3A4 substrate drugs : Feverfew may increase the risk of side effects of these drugs. Clinical relevance is not known.

You are taking anticoagulant/antiplatelet drugs: Feverfew may increase the risk of bleeding. Clinical relevance is not known.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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