

# Forsythia Shrubs Give Beauty and Herbal Health



Our forsythia shrubs have been blooming for a few weeks. Often, one of the first signs of spring approaching is the bright yellow flowers up and down the spindly limbs of the forsythia shrub. Periods of extended off season warm days can cause the forsythia shrubs to bloom early. The plant is fairly hardy, though. It can withstand some moderate late spring cold weather and still keep blooming.

Lately, the forsythia shrubs have drawn my attention. I don't know if I was craving the bright yellow blooms to uplift the winter mood. In any case I wondered often about this common shrub and wanted to know what other uses it might have besides brightening our early spring. (Have you tried [Forsythia Jelly?](#) Sounds good!) I wasn't at all expecting to find herbal uses

for the common shrub. My interest grew when I learned the forsythia shrubs are common in ancient Chinese herbal remedies for some common maladies.



## ***Forsythia suspensa***

Forsythia is part of the same family as the olive tree. It also produces a fruit after flowering. This is something I haven't noticed before but I will be looking for the fruit this year, after the flowers have died off.

Forsythia comes in eleven different varieties. The most common is the ornamental grown [\*Forsythia ? intermedia\*](#) .

The variety, *forsythia suspensa*, is listed as one of the 50 Fundamental Herbs in Chinese medicine. Along with *F. viridissima* the *Forsythia suspensa* was the early species brought to the western countries. *F.suspensa* is a weeping

variety that often roots its limbs to the ground. Just like olive oil, forsythia contains the plant lignan, pinoresinol. These lignan food chemicals are important as antioxidants for our body.



## **Propagating and Pruning Forsythia Shrubs**

Forsythia blooms in the early spring. It is easy to make new shrubs by letting the branches root in the soil while still attached to the parent plant. Start a new plant by bending the branch to the soil and anchor it in the ground. After it roots, it can be cut free from the parent shrub. Transplant if necessary. Rooting the flowering branches is also an easy way

to create more shrubs to plant in your yard. Cuttings from forsythia shrubs can be forced to bloom by cutting and bringing indoors and kept in a vase of water. It's a fun way to bring some bright yellow inside during a dark winter.



our shrubs really need a good pruning!

The forsythia isn't very picky about its [growing conditions](#). This is good for me, a haphazard gardener! If you give it some decent, well drained soil, almost full sun, and a light feeding of compost your Forsythia shrubs will give you a bright yellow show of color.

Pruning should be done after the shrub has flowered. The flowers form on the old branches and not on the new season's growth.



Forsythia fruit herb used in traditional chinese herbal medicine isolated over white background. Lian Qiad. Fructus forsythiae.

## **Forsythia Shrubs as Medicinal Plants**

Lian Qiao is the Chinese name for Forsythia. Because it has so many medicinal properties, you may find it offered in herbal skin preparations along with honeysuckle and dandelion. Mostly, the raw fruit of the Forsythia is used to make teas, extracts, and oils. The raw fruit preparations have been shown effective against boils, skin infections, acne and inflammation.

In addition, the leaves and stems, fruit and roots can also be used for homegrown medicinal purposes. Because the plant contains high amounts of oleanolic acid, it can help maintain the heart muscle. Another good quality is an effect on

maintaining healthy blood pressure levels. Most relevant to me was the information that a [decoction of Forsythia can prevent vomiting](#). I really dislike the stomach virus! In addition, traditional Chinese medicine shows forsythia to be a strong, broad-spectrum antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory agent. Making a tea of forsythia leaves might alleviate symptoms of sore throat, diarrhea, and flu.

As a result of looking into more information on the forsythia shrubs in my yard, I will be rooting more plants this year. I am hoping the local garden centers carry some other species. I believe the forsythia shrubs we have are the common *F.intermedia*.

***Disclaimer- I am not a medical professional. All information shared here is for information and entertainment only. Do your own research and consult your health care provider before treating yourself with any product, plant or mixture.***



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