Passionflower Tea

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Passionflower tea, in summary:** Passionflower tea (Passiflora incarnata) is modestly evidenced for anxiety and mild insomnia; mild pleasant cup; real caution with sedatives and pregnancy.

Passionflower is a classic evening herbal with a real interaction caveat; here is the short version. This sits in the herbal cluster beside lemon verbena tea.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in May 2026.

> ***Important:*** *this passionflower page is general information only and cannot replace professional advice. Passionflower, a tisane, is neither true tea nor a treatment. Several herbals come with real cautions, and passionflower's is about sedative medicines and pregnancy. Pregnancy, medication or a managed condition? Then passionflower needs a word with a pharmacist or GP before it becomes regular.*

What it is

An infusion of passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*, the species used in herbal tea, distinct from the fruit bearing *P. edulis*). Long traditional use in North American indigenous medicine and European herbal practice; a caffeine-free tisane, not true tea, see what counts as tea.

How it tastes

Mild, grassy, slightly hay-like and gently sweet. Pleasant enough to drink alone; usually blended with chamomile or lemon balm in commercial sleep and relaxation blends, which pairs well.

What the evidence shows

Small randomised trials have found passionflower extract producing measurable reductions in pre-operative anxiety, generalised anxiety symptoms, and mild insomnia at supplement strength (typically 250-500mg extract). The proposed mechanism is modulation of GABA receptors, similar to benzodiazepines but far milder. Tea-strength brewing delivers a gentler version of the same actives. The evidence is modest and real, not a proven treatment; the evening cup itself does meaningful work alongside whatever the herb contributes.

How to brew it

One to two heaped teaspoons of dried passionflower per 200ml of just-boiled water, steeped covered for five to ten minutes. Cover the cup: the active compounds benefit from longer extraction. Best used as an evening wind-down cup 30-60 minutes before bed, as part of a routine that includes low light and no screens. Pairs well with chamomile or lemon balm blends.

Cautions

The interaction caution is real, not boilerplate: because passionflower modulates GABA receptors, it can compound the effects of sedatives, sleep medication, benzodiazepines, alcohol, and some antidepressants. Mention it to a pharmacist or GP if you take any of these. Pregnant or breastfeeding: avoid (uterine-stimulant concerns). If otherwise healthy and unmedicated, occasional to regular cups are well tolerated.

The essentials: passionflower tea

Aspect	Note
Plant	Passiflora incarnata (the herbal species; not the fruit bearing P. edulis)
Traditional use	Anxiety, mild insomnia, restlessness
Modern evidence	Small trials show modest anxiolytic effect at supplement strength
Taste	Mild, grassy, slightly sweet; pleasant
Caffeine	Zero
Brewing	1-2 tsp dried per 200ml, 5-10 min covered
Interaction caution	Real; sedatives, alcohol, MAOIs need a doctor conversation
Pregnancy	Avoid; uterine-stimulant concerns

Common questions

Does passionflower tea help with sleep and anxiety? Small trials show modest anxiolytic effects at supplement strength. Tea-strength is gentler. The evidence is real but not strong enough to call it a treatment; the evening routine adds its own settling effect.

How does it compare to chamomile or valerian? Chamomile is the gentlest classic; passionflower is a step up with more direct evidence for anxiolytic effect; valerian is the heaviest classical sedative. Passionflower sits usefully in the middle.

Can I take it with sleeping tablets? Check first. Passionflower modulates the same GABA pathway as benzodiazepines and can compound sedative effects. Ask a pharmacist or GP before combining with any sleep or anxiety medication.

Is it safe in pregnancy? No; avoid. Uterine-stimulant concerns mean it is not advised during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

Quick take

Passionflower is a gentle tisane for unwinding with modest evidence: pleasant to drink, backed by small but real trials on nerves and sleep, and carrying a real interaction caution with sedative medicines and a clear pregnancy warning. Use it as part of an evening wind-down routine with realistic expectations. Explore the

herbal range or the full tea shop.

Reference noted

- NHS: How to get to sleep
- NHS: Anxiety, fear and panic

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · A single careful pot of passionflower outdoes five exotic bags dunked at bedtime.

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