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## NEUROLOGICAL STAMP

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### *Mentha piperita* (peppermint)

The mints (*Mentha* species) are among the oldest of European herbs and are widely cultivated in temperate zones. Medicinal mints date from the 1st century AD. In Elizabethan times more than 40 ailments were reportedly remedied by mints. Menthol, a derivative of peppermint, has been used in upper respiratory ailments and as a soothing rub for sore muscles. Mints are also used in both home remedies and pharmaceutical preparations to relieve the stomach of intestinal gas that is often caused by certain foods. The many varieties of after dinner mints reflect its use in this role.

*Mentha pulegium* (European pennyroyal) taken in large doses has produced convulsions and coma.

Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) is shown as part of a set of stamps issued by East Germany in 1960 illustrating medicinal plants (Stanley Gibbons E 490, Scott 496).

L F HAAS

