



Mind Body and Sole
2018

Summer Garden Open House
'Common Herbal Preparations'

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Herbal Preparations

Tea

Teas are one of the most simple and effective herbal preparations. They are made by steeping dried herbs in boiled water for about 20 minutes, straining and drinking. Use dried herbs when making tea because the drying process breaks down the cell wall allowing the medicinal properties of the herbs to be extracted into the water. Then steep the herbs in the boiled water, rather than boiling the herbs in the water in order to preserve the maximum amount of the medicinal properties of the herbs.

Teas can be made with one herb or several in combination.

- 1 T dried herb
- Water
- Teakettle
- French press or Tea Ball
- Measure one tablespoon of dried herb into your French press or tea ball.
- Bring a cup of water to a boil in your tea kettle.
- Pour water into French press or over tea ball in your tea cup. Cover and let steep for 20 minutes.
- Remove tea ball and drink or press herbs to bottom of press and pour tea into a cup and drink.

Infusion

Infusion is one of the more confusing terms in the world of herbal medicine. A Nourishing infusion is an herbal preparation where one ounce of a nourishing herb (like nettle or oat straw) is allowed to steep in boiled water for at least 4 hours.

These nourishing herbs are very much like food for our bodies. They are high in vitamins and minerals and are a wonderful way to get these nutrients into our bodies. When we drink them as an infusion (or a tea) our bodies are much more able to assimilate them than when they are taken in pill form.

Consider these nourishing infusions to be your multi-vitamin in a jar.

Infusions made with water as their base have a pretty short shelf life. They can be stored in the refrigerator for a couple of days, but you should generally drink them the same day you make them.

- 1 ounce of dried (cut herb)
- 1 quart of water
- 1 quart mason jar or French Press

- Weigh out one ounce of dried herb and put it into your quart jar. Using dried plant material is very important, since drying the plant breaks down the cell wall which allows the nutrients to move from the plant material into the water.
- Our boiling water over the herb to fill the jar.
- Stir, so that all of the plant material is covered by water.
- Cap the jar and allow it to steep for at least four hours. Strain and drink. You can drink this infusion at room temperature or heat it or chill it. You can also add honey or milk or cream or mix the infusion with juice or another tea like peppermint. Experiment to see what you like best.

Tincture

Tinctures are made by infusing herbs in alcohol. The alcohol will extract many of the medicinal constituents of the herbs including alkaloids and flavonoids. Because 100 proof vodka is 50 percent alcohol and 50 percent water, tincturing a plant will also extract water soluble constituents like glycosides and saponins.

Making a tincture is a great way of preserving these medicinal constituents since tinctures will last on your shelf for several years. Tinctures are also a very convenient way of getting herbs into your systems. It is easy to take a dropperful of tincture when you are sick and to take tinctures with you if you are traveling.

Glycerin provides an alternative to alcohol for tincture making for those who wish to make tinctures without alcohol content. However, a glycerin based tincture only has a shelf life of one year.

- Enough dried herb to fill a 1 pint jar ½ full
- 1 pint 80 proof or 100 proof vodka
- 1 wide mouth pint jar
- Cheesecloth
- Fill your pint jar half full with dried herb
- Pour enough vodka over the herbs to fill the jar up to the point where the lid rings start
- Stir well to release any air bubbles and top off with vodka if necessary to be certain that your herbs are well covered with alcohol.
- Cap your jar with a metal canning or other lid.
- Label
- Stir or shake your tincture every day for a week
- Allow your tincture to infuse for 5 more weeks (six weeks total).

- Strain your tincture through cheesecloth, squeezing as much alcohol as possible from the herb.