

- 5 | Maceration:** Seal the jar tightly and place it in a cool, dark place. Tinctures can take anywhere from 4 weeks up to 6 months to fully extract, depending on the herbs you are using. 2 months works well for most herbs. Shake the jar gently every day, if possible, or a few times a week, to facilitate the extraction process. This is especially important when using powdered herbs.
- 6 | Straining:** After the maceration period, strain the liquid through a fine mesh strainer, cheesecloth, or muslin cloth into another clean glass container. Squeeze the herbs to extract as much liquid as possible.
- 7 | Bottling:** Transfer the strained liquid (now your herbal tincture) into amber or dark-colored glass dropper bottles. Label the bottles with the herb's name, date, and other relevant information.
- 8 | Storage:** Store your tinctures in a cool, dark place. Properly stored tinctures can last for several years.

DOUBLE EXTRACTION TINCTURE

A double extraction tincture (dual-extraction) involves a two-step process using both water and alcohol as solvents to extract a wider range of active compounds from the plant material. This method is often used when working with medicinal mushrooms and lichens. If only a water-based decoction is used with Reishi Mushroom, for example, it extracts the beneficial polysaccharides (including the betaglucans) and the glycoproteins but not the triterpenes (like ganoderic acid in Reishi), as they are not soluble in water. Both water and alcohol are needed to extract all of the medicinal compounds.

Method #1

Starting with the alcohol extraction

Feel free to scale down this recipe. You'll need 8 ounces (224g) or more of dried mushroom or lichen, 24 ounces (750ml) of 80 to 100 proof alcohol (40 to 50% alcohol), and 16 ounces (500ml) distilled water.

- 1 |** Fill a quart-sized (1 liter) canning jar half-full with diced dried mushrooms, then fill it to about 1/2 inch (1.25 cm) of the top with alcohol. Stir and cap it, shaking it every day for 2 months. Then strain out the alcohol and set it aside for later.
- 2 |** Make the water decoction. Put 16 ounces (500ml) of water into a ceramic or glass pot with a lid and put the mushrooms into it (you may use the same mushrooms you just strained). Cover and simmer the mixture until half of the water has boiled off. This will take a few hours. If the water level drops too quickly, add more so that you can continue simmering your mushrooms. The end result should be 8 ounces (250ml) of your decoction.

- 3 |** Allow the water to cool, and then strain out the mushrooms. Mix the water and alcohol (you should have about 24 oz (710ml) of alcohol tincture – thus your final ratio is 3:1 of alcoholic tincture to your decoction) together to create the finished double-extraction. It has a high enough alcohol content (~30%) that it should be shelf-stable for many years, as long as it is stored in a sealed container.

Method #2

Starting with the water extraction

You can use a crockpot for this recipe or place the herbs and water into a jar, which is then covered and placed into a crockpot of water on low or a pot of water on low on the stove. Feel free to scale down this recipe. You'll need 8 ounces (230g) or more of dried mushroom or lichen, 24 ounces (710ml) of 80 to 100-proof alcohol, and 16 ounces (500ml) of distilled water.

- 1 |** Cut up the herbs into very small pieces. Place the distilled water and the dried herbs into the crock-pot and stir well. Cover and cook on the lowest possible setting for 3 days. It will cook down to about 8 oz (250ml) of medicinal decoction (water).
- 2 |** Allow the herb and water mixture to cool slightly, and pour it into a large glass jar. Add the alcohol while the mixture is still quite warm but not hot. Make sure the jar is large enough that you are adding 24 ounces (710ml) of alcohol, or split everything evenly between 2 jars.
- 3 |** Cap the jar tightly, label and date the jar, and allow it to macerate for 6 to 8 weeks, shaking the jar daily.
- 4 |** Strain out the herb (cheesecloth works well for this) or carefully decant the tincture off. Store it in a tightly capped glass jar. Label and date.

Both single and double extraction tinctures have their uses in herbal medicine and natural remedies. The choice between the two methods depends on the specific properties of the herbal material and the desired therapeutic effects. It's important to note that making tinctures requires a good understanding of the plants being used, proper preparation techniques, and safety precautions to ensure the final product is safe and effective for use.

DOSAGE AND USAGE:

Dosages vary depending on the herb and the purpose of use. 1/2 to 1 teaspoon is a normal dose for adults. However, it's recommended to consult a qualified herbalist or healthcare professional for specific dosing instructions. In general, tinctures can be taken straight by the dropper (just under the tongue) or diluted in tea or water.

Similar to alcohol-based tinctures, liquid extracts can also be made using vinegar or glycerin as a solvent for a tastier option or for those who prefer not to use or are sensitive to alcohol. Herbal vinegars and glycerites are typically less potent than alcohol tinctures as they do not extract as many active constituents, and

while they are more shelf-stable than infusions and decoctions, they have a shorter shelf life than tinctures.

Glycerites

Glycerites, or herbal glycerin extracts, are liquid herbal preparations that use glycerin as the solvent instead of alcohol. Vegetable glycerin is a clear, odorless liquid produced from vegetable oils such as palm, soy, or coconut. While glycerin has a sweet taste, it is not metabolized by the body like sugar and will not spike blood sugar levels. These “tinctures” are a great alternative for those who want to avoid alcohol or for situations where alcohol consumption is not suitable, such as for children, individuals with alcohol sensitivities, or those in recovery.

Here's how to make a non-alcoholic glycerite:

INGREDIENTS:

- Dried or fresh herbs
- Vegetable glycerin
- Water

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preparation:** Choose the herbs you want to use for your glycerite. Dried herbs are generally preferred to prevent microbial growth in the glycerin. If using fresh herbs, wilt them slightly to reduce moisture content.
- Herb Preparation:** If using dried herbs, chop or grind them to increase their surface area. This helps with the extraction process. If using fresh herbs, chop them finely.
- Mixing Glycerin and Water:** The glycerin used for making glycerites is typically vegetable glycerin, which is sweet and acts as a natural preservative. For the solvent mixture, a common ratio is a 3:1 ratio = 75% glycerin and 25% water. This helps create a balanced extract that both extracts the herbal constituents and prevents spoilage.
- Extraction:** Fill the jar with clean, chopped fresh plant material or half-full of ground dried plant material and cover them with the glycerin-water mixture. Stir to ensure the herbs are fully saturated.
- Maceration:** Seal the jar and place it in a cool, dark location for about 4 to 6 weeks. Shake the jar gently every day or so to aid in the extraction process.
- Straining and Bottling:** After the maceration period, strain the liquid to remove the plant material. Squeeze out as much liquid from the herbs as possible. Transfer the glycerite to dark glass bottles for storage.

It's important to note that glycerites have a different consistency and shelf life compared to alcohol-based tinctures. Glycerites tend to be sweeter and have a thicker texture. They also have a shorter shelf life than alcohol-based tinctures, usually around 1 to 2 years.

Vinegar “Tinctures”

Vinegar “tinctures”, also known as herbal vinegars, are liquid herbal preparations that use vinegar as the solvent to extract the active compounds from plant materials. They are a versatile and easy-to-make alternative to alcohol-based tinctures, and they are particularly well-suited for extracting minerals and water-soluble compounds from herbs. Herbal vinegars can be used in culinary, therapeutic, and cosmetic applications.

Here's how to make an herbal vinegar tincture:

INGREDIENTS:

- Dried or fresh herbs
- Apple cider vinegar or another type of vinegar
- Glass jars with lids

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Choose Herbs:** Select the herbs you want to use for your vinegar tincture. Either fresh or dried ingredients may be used, however if you do use fresh plants, be sure to store in a cool place or even better, the refrigerator. Vinegar is ideal for extracting minerals from mineral-rich plants such as dandelion leaf, horsetail leaf and stem, and red clover aerial parts. It is also used to extract alkaloids from herbs.
- Prepare Herbs:** If using fresh herbs, chop them finely to increase the surface area. If using dried herbs, crush or grind them slightly to enhance extraction.
- Fill the Jar:** Place the prepared herbs into a glass jar. Fill the jar loosely, about halfway, with the herbal material.
- Add Vinegar:** Pour the vinegar over the herbs until they are fully covered and there's about an inch of extra liquid above the herbs. Apple cider vinegar is a popular choice due to its mild flavor and health benefits, but other types of vinegar like white vinegar or red wine vinegar may also be used.
- Seal and Shake:** Seal the jar with a tight-fitting lid. Shake the jar gently to ensure the herbs are well-saturated by the vinegar.
- Steeping Period:** Place the sealed jar in a cool, dark location for about 2 to 6 weeks.
- Shake the Jar:** Shake the jar gently every day to facilitate the extraction process.
- Straining:** After the steeping period, strain the liquid to remove the herb material. You can use a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth for this.
- Bottling:** Transfer the strained vinegar tincture into dark glass bottles for storage. Label the bottles with the herb's name, date of preparation, and other relevant information. Keep in mind that herbal vinegars are primarily water-based and may have a milder extraction of certain compounds compared to alcohol-based tinctures. Herbal vinegars will remain shelf-stable for approximately six months and can last longer if refrigerated.

Herbal tincture making can be a rewarding way to harness the medicinal properties of plants, mushrooms, and lichens. However, it's crucial to gather accurate information, exercise caution, and seek guidance from professionals to ensure you create safe and effective tinctures.

Oil Infusions



Herbal oil infusions are a process of extracting the beneficial compounds from herbs using oils as a solvent. These infusions are commonly used in aromatherapy, skincare, and culinary applications. The resulting herbal oil can be used for massage, skincare products, hair care, cooking, and more.

Here's how to create herbal oil infusions:

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

1 | Herbs: Choose dried herbs that are free from moisture to prevent spoilage. It's okay to use fresh herbs in an infusion that you use up fairly quickly, but you don't want moisture in something you're going to store. Common herbs used for infusions include lavender, chamomile, rosemary, calendula, and arnica.

2 | Oil: A carrier oil is needed for the infusion. There are several carrier oils that can be used for herbal infusions, each with its own unique properties and benefits. The choice of carrier oil can impact the final product's texture, aroma, and therapeutic qualities. Here are some common carrier oils used for herbal infusions and their benefits. Use organic products.

- Olive Oil is rich in antioxidants and healthy monounsaturated fats. It's deeply moisturizing and suitable for most skin types. It has anti-inflammatory properties and can help soothe dry, irritated skin.
- Coconut Oil is well-known for its moisturizing and nourishing properties. It's solid at room temperature but melts upon contact with the skin. It's especially beneficial for dry and damaged hair, and it has antimicrobial properties that can help with various skin conditions.

- Jojoba Oil closely resembles the skin's natural sebum, making it a fantastic moisturizer for all skin types. It's lightweight and non-greasy, making it suitable for facial and body use. It can help regulate oil production and is often used in skincare products for acne-prone skin.
- Sweet Almond Oil is rich in vitamins and minerals, making it nourishing for the skin. It's easily absorbed and helps soothe dry and sensitive skin. It can also promote a healthy complexion and improve the appearance of scars.
- Grapeseed Oil is a lightweight oil that absorbs quickly. It's high in linoleic acid, which can be beneficial for oily and acne-prone skin. It's also rich in antioxidants and can help tighten and tone the skin.
- Sunflower Oil is high in vitamin E, which is known for its antioxidant properties. It's moisturizing and can help maintain the skin's natural barrier function. It's suitable for all skin types, including sensitive skin.
- Apricot Kernel Oil is rich in essential fatty acids and vitamins. It's moisturizing, soothing, and helps improve the skin's elasticity. It's often used in massage oils and skincare products for its light texture.

- Avocado Oil is deeply moisturizing and rich in vitamins A, D, and E. It's suitable for dry and mature skin, as well as hair care. It can help improve skin texture and promote a healthy scalp.
- Argan Oil is known for its nourishing and hydrating properties. It's rich in essential fatty acids and vitamin E, making it beneficial for skin and hair health. It can help improve skin elasticity and promote shine in hair.

When choosing a carrier oil for herbal infusions, consider the intended use of the infused oil (e.g., skincare, hair care, culinary), the properties of the herbs being infused, and your personal preferences. Always use high-quality organic carrier oils and herbs to ensure the best results.

- 1 | Glass Jar:** Use a clean, dry, and airtight glass jar to hold the herbs and oil.
- 2 | Strainer or Cheesecloth:** You'll need a strainer or cheesecloth to separate the infused oil from the plant material.
- 3 | Dark Bottle:** After straining, store the infused oil in a dark glass bottle to protect it from light.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | Preparation:** Make sure the herbs are completely dry to prevent mold growth. Crush or bruise the herbs slightly to release their essential oils and enhance the infusion process.

2 | Choosing a Method:

- Cold Infusion (Folk Method): In this method, herbs are placed in a jar and covered with oil. The jar is then sealed and left to sit for 4-8 weeks, allowing the oil to gradually extract the herbal properties. Give the jar a gentle shake from time to time. This method is gentler and better for delicate herbs.
- Heat Infusion: Heat speeds up the infusion process. Combine herbs and oil in a heatproof container and gently warm the mixture using a double boiler or a low-heat setting. Be cautious not to overheat or burn the herbs. It's important to keep everything at 110F or below to avoid degrading the quality of the oil and herbs.

- 3 | Infusion Time:** The infusion process can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks, depending on the method used and the herbs chosen. For a heat infusion, allow the oil and herbs to simmer together for at least 30 minutes, up to several hours for a more potent infusion. Some medicinal herb oil recipes call for 12 to 24 hours in a slow cooker.

Cold infusions require more time for the oil to extract the herbal properties fully (usually 4-8 weeks).

- 4 | Straining:** Once the desired infusion time has passed, strain the oil to remove the plant material. Use a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth to ensure that no plant particles remain in the infused oil.

- 5 | Storage:** Transfer the strained herbal oil into a dark glass bottle. Dark glass helps protect the oil from light exposure, which can degrade the oil and reduce its shelf life.
- 6 | Shelf-life:** Infused oils keep for a long period of time, usually 1-2 years.
- 7 | Labeling:** Clearly label the bottle with the name of the infused oil and the date it was made.

USAGE:

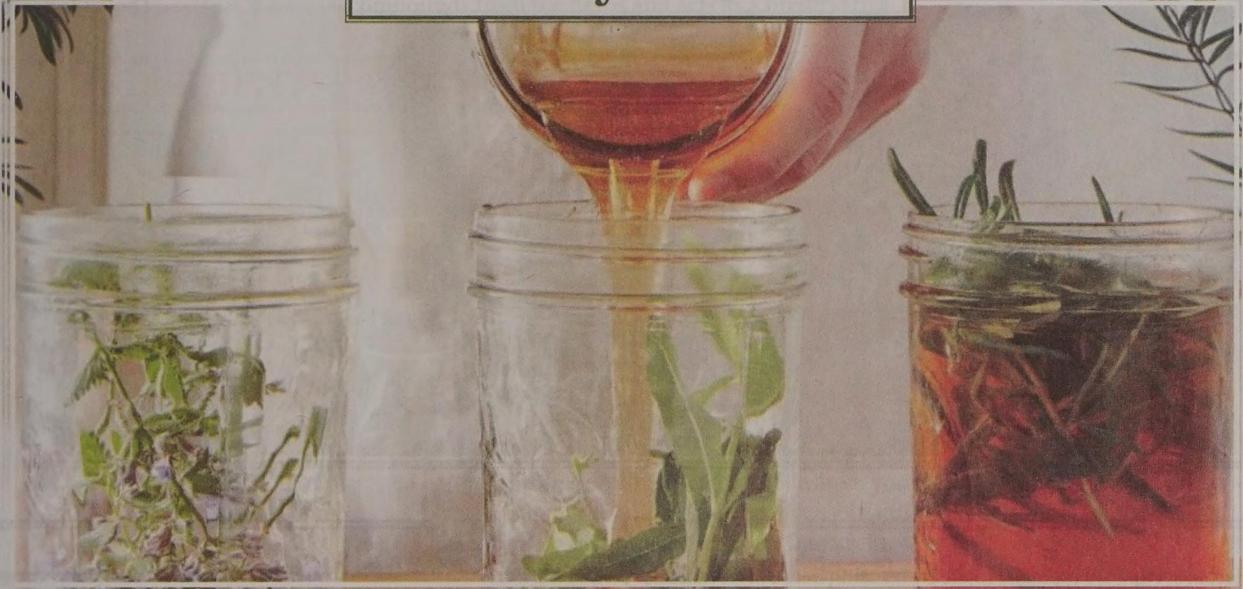
- **Massage:** Use the herbal oil as a massage oil to help relax and soothe muscles.
- **Skincare:** Incorporate infused oils into your skincare routine for moisturizing, aromatherapy, or as a base for homemade skincare products (Balms, creams, salves etc.).
- **Hair Care:** Apply herbal oil to your hair and scalp for conditioning, promoting hair growth, and addressing specific hair concerns.
- **Cooking:** Some herbal oils, like rosemary or basil-infused oils, can be used in cooking to add flavor to dishes.
- **Salves:** Herbal oils are the base for salve-making. More on this in Section 2.7.

Be aware that herbal oil infusions are not suitable for all herbs. Some herbs may cause allergic reactions or skin sensitivities, so it's essential to research the properties of the herbs you're using and perform a patch test before applying them to larger areas of the skin.





Oxymels



Oxymels are herbal preparations made by combining vinegar and honey, creating a tangy and sweet mixture infused with the properties of herbs. These preparations are used for their health benefits and are both flavorful and versatile.

Oxymels can offer digestive support, immune-boosting effects, respiratory relief, anti-inflammatory properties, and antioxidants, depending on the herbs used. They can be taken by the spoonful, diluted in water, or used in culinary applications.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

- **Vinegar:** Choose apple cider vinegar, white wine vinegar, or any other mild vinegar.
- **Honey:** Use raw, unprocessed honey for its health benefits and flavor.
- **Herbs:** Select dried or fresh herbs with medicinal or culinary properties.
- **Glass Jar:** A glass jar with an airtight lid for the infusion.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Herb Selection:** Choose herbs based on your desired health benefits or flavor profile. For example, thyme and sage may be used for respiratory health, while rose petals and elderflowers offer a delicate floral taste.
- 2 | **Preparation:** Chop or crush the herbs slightly to release their flavors and properties.
- 3 | **Infusion:** Fill your glass jar a quarter of the way full with your chosen chopped herbs (if you are using fresh herbs, instead, fill the jar three-quarters of the way full) and pour vinegar until the jar is three-quarters full, topping the rest of the jar with raw honey. Seal the jar and let it sit in a cool, dark place for about 2 weeks, shaking daily.
- 4 | **Straining:** After the infusion period, strain out the herbs using a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth.
- 5 | **Bottling:** Pour the oxymel into a clean glass bottle, seal it, and store it in the refrigerator. It will last for several months.

Oxymels can be taken by the spoonful for health benefits, added to sparkling water for a refreshing drink, or used in salad dressings and marinades.



Syrups and Elixirs



Herbal Syrups

Herbal syrups are typically made by infusing herbs or botanicals in a mixture of water and sweeteners, such as honey or sugar. The herbs are steeped in the liquid to extract their beneficial compounds, and the resulting syrup is often used to manage coughs, sore throats, and other respiratory issues.

Examples of herbs commonly used in herbal syrups include:

- Elderberry: Demonstrated to have immune-boosting properties and often used to alleviate cold and flu symptoms.
- Marshmallow Root: Used for its soothing and demulcent properties, often found in cough, throat, and gut syrups.
- Thyme: Known for its antibacterial properties and used to address respiratory issues.

INGREDIENTS:

- Dried or fresh herbs of your choice
- Water
- Sweetener (raw honey, sugar, maple syrup, etc.)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Choose Your Herbs:** Select the herbs you want to use in your syrup. Consider the potential health benefits and flavors of the herbs.
- Prepare the Herbal Infusion:** In a pot, combine water and your chosen herbs. The ratio of herbs to water can vary, but a common starting point is around 1 ounce (28 grams) of dried herbs to 1 quart (about 950 ml) of water. You can adjust this based on your preferences and the potency of the herbs.
- Simmer:** Gently heat the mixture over low to medium heat. Avoid boiling, as this could degrade some of the beneficial compounds. Let the herbs steep in the water for about 20-30 minutes.
- Strain:** After steeping, strain the herbal infusion to remove the plant material using a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth.
- Add Sweetener:** Return the strained liquid to the pot and gently warm it. Add your chosen sweetener (such as raw honey or sugar) while stirring until it's fully dissolved. The amount of sweetener varies based on taste preferences. Some people like a sweeter syrup, using a 1:1 ratio of honey to decoction, while others use a 1:2 ratio, using less honey. The 1:1 ratio will store longer, as honey doesn't spoil easily.
- Cool and Store:** Allow the syrup to cool before transferring it to clean, sterilized glass bottles or jars. Typically, these syrups will last about six months in the refrigerator if you use a 1:2 ratio.
- Store the syrup in the refrigerator to extend its shelf life.

Herbal Elixirs

Herbal elixirs are more concentrated herbal preparations, often created by steeping herbs in alcohol or another solvent. The alcohol helps to extract the active compounds from the herbs and acts as a preservative.

INGREDIENTS:

- Dried or fresh herbs of your choice
- Alcohol (such as vodka, brandy, or rum)
- Optional: Sweetener (raw honey, sugar, maple syrup, etc.)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Select Herbs:** Choose the herbs you want to use in your elixir, considering their potential benefits and compatibility with alcohol.
- 2 | **Prepare the Herbal Extraction:** Place the herbs in a glass jar and cover them with alcohol. The ratio of herbs to alcohol can vary, but a common starting point is around 1-part herbs to 4 parts alcohol by volume. Ensure that the herbs are fully submerged.
- 3 | **Seal and Steep:** Seal the jar tightly and place it in a cool, dark place. Allow the herbs to steep in the alcohol for about 4 to 6 weeks, shaking the jar gently every few days to encourage extraction.
- 4 | **Strain:** After the steeping period, strain the liquid to remove the plant material. Use a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth.
- 5 | **Optional:** Add Sweetener: If desired, you can add a sweetener like honey or syrup to the strained elixir. Mix well until the sweetener is fully dissolved.
- 6 | **Bottle and Store:** Transfer the strained elixir to dark glass bottles with airtight caps. Store the elixir in a cool, dark place to preserve its potency.

Remember that the potency and effectiveness of herbal syrups and elixirs will vary based on factors such as the quality of herbs used, the extraction method, and individual preferences. It's also important to research each herb's potential interactions with medications and possible side effects before preparing and using these preparations. If you're unsure, consult with a healthcare professional or experienced herbalist for guidance.





Lozenges, Gummies, and Capsules



Lozenges, gummies, and capsules are popular dosage forms used in apothecaries and herbal medicine. Each form has its advantages and considerations when it comes to preparing and using herbal remedies.

Here's an overview of each:

Herbal Lozenges

Herbal lozenges are solid, candy-like preparations that dissolve slowly in the mouth, allowing the active herbal compounds to be absorbed through the mucous membranes. They are often used for soothing sore throats and coughs. They can be formulated to taste pleasant, making them suitable for children and those who have difficulty swallowing pills.

INGREDIENTS:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup herbal infusion or tincture
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup natural sweeteners (such as honey or maple syrup)
- 2 tablespoons binder (vegetable glycerin)
- Powdered sugar (optional for coating)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | Prepare an herbal infusion or tincture using the desired herbs. You can make a strong infusion by steeping about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of dried herbs in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of hot water for about 15-20 minutes. For a tincture, use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of alcohol (such as vodka) and approximately 2 tablespoons of dried herbs. Let the tincture sit for several weeks, shaking it daily.
- 2 | Mix the herbal infusion or tincture with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of your chosen natural sweetener (like honey or maple syrup) and 2 tablespoons of vegetable glycerin. Adjust the sweetener to taste if needed.
- 3 | Heat the mixture gently in a double boiler (preferable) or microwave until it's well combined and forms a thick, smooth consistency. If using a double boiler, heat it over low heat, stirring constantly until it thickens.
- 4 | Drop small spoonfuls of the mixture onto a silicone mat or parchment paper. Optionally, roll the drops in powdered sugar to prevent sticking.
- 5 | Allow the drops to cool and harden. Once firm, store them in a dry, airtight container.

Herbal Gummies

Herbal gummies are chewy, gelatin or agar-based treats infused with herbal extracts. They are a fun and flavorful way to consume herbs, especially for those who prefer a sweeter taste. Gummies can be formulated for immune support, digestive health, as a sleep aid, and more, depending on the chosen herbs.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup of herbal infusion or tincture
- 3 tablespoons of gelatin or vegetarian/vegan alternative (such as agar-agar or carrageenan)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sweeteners (e.g., honey, fruit juice)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | Prepare an herbal infusion or tincture using your chosen herbs.
- 2 | In a saucepan, combine the herbal infusion or tincture with the sweetener.
- 3 | Gradually sprinkle and whisk in the 3 tablespoons of gelatin (or alternative) until it's fully dissolved and the mixture becomes smooth.
- 4 | Heat the mixture over low heat, stirring constantly, until it's warm, but avoid boiling.
- 5 | Carefully pour the mixture into silicone molds or an ice cube tray.
- 6 | Allow the gummies to cool and set in the refrigerator for approximately 2-3 hours.
- 7 | Once set, remove the gummies from the molds and store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Remember that the exact quantities and choice of herbs for gummies or lozenges may vary depending on your personal preferences and the specific herbs you're using for the infusion or tincture. Adjust the sweetness and consistency to your liking.

Herbal Capsules

Herbal capsules are a convenient way to take herbal supplements in a precise and measured dosage.

INGREDIENTS:

- Herbal powders or finely ground herbs

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | Obtain or prepare herbal powders by grinding dried herbs into a fine consistency using a mortar and pestle or a grinder (a coffee grinder works well).
- 2 | Use empty vegetable-based or gelatin capsules. You can purchase these from health food stores or online. Capsules come in three sizes; "0," "00" and "000."
- 3 | Carefully open the capsules and fill them with the desired amount of herbal powder using a small funnel or a capsule-filling machine.
- 4 | Once filled, reassemble the capsules by pressing the two halves together.
- 5 | Store the filled capsules in a cool, dry place in an airtight container.

Remember to research the herbs you plan to use and their appropriate dosages before creating any herbal remedies. If you are going to make any sort of herbal mix, you'll need a scale to measure out your various herbs. Be sure to mix powdered herbs well, so that your capsules all have the same herbal concentration.

When creating herbal lozenges, gummies, or capsules, it's crucial to ensure the quality of the herbs used, accurate dosing, and proper sanitation during the preparation process. Keep in mind that individual dosages and formulations may vary based on the specific herbs, desired effects, and individual health considerations.



Balms, Salves, Creams, and Lotions



Balms, salves, creams, and lotions are popular topical applications in herbal apothecaries. They allow for the external use of herbal remedies to address various skin concerns and provide localized relief. Each has a different texture and consistency, making them suitable for different applications.

Balms

Balms are semi-solid mixtures that typically include herbal-infused oils or extracts combined with beeswax or another solidifying agent. They have a thicker texture and provide a protective barrier on the skin. Balms are great for providing moisturization, soothing dry or irritated skin, and delivering herbal benefits directly to the skin's surface. While balms may feel greasier than lotion, those oils are doing their job at nourishing your skin. They are particularly suitable for areas that need a concentrated and longer-lasting application.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup herbal-infused oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup beeswax or plant-based wax (e.g., candelilla or carnauba wax)
- 10-15 drops essential oils (optional for fragrance and added benefits)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | Prepare the herbal-infused oil by infusing 1 cup of dried herbs in a carrier oil of your choice. You can use the double boiler method or a slow cooker for this step (see Part 2.3).
- 2 | Strain the herbs from the infused oil and measure out 1 cup for your recipe.
- 3 | In a double boiler, melt $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of beeswax or plant-based wax.
- 4 | Once the wax is completely melted, add the 1 cup of herbal-infused oil and mix thoroughly.
- 5 | If desired, add 10-15 drops of essential oils for fragrance and additional benefits. Adjust the quantity based on your preference for scent.
- 6 | Pour the mixture into clean and sterilized containers, such as tins or jars. Before pouring the entire batch, test the consistency by dropping a small amount onto a surface. To achieve a harder consistency (e.g., for lip balm), simply add more beeswax. For salves, use a 4:1 ratio of infused oil to beeswax. For harder-consistency balms, add slightly more beeswax as needed.
- 7 | Allow the balm to cool and solidify in the containers before sealing them securely.

Salves

Herbal salves are similar to balms but usually contain less beeswax than balms and utilize more herbs. They typically have a smoother, lighter consistency than balms and are usually used medicinally.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 part beeswax to 4 parts infused oil mixture, and common usage is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup per cup of oil. For 8 oz (250ml) of oil, I usually use 2 oz (48g) of beeswax.
- 15 to 20 drops or more of each of your essential oils for every 8 oz (250ml) of infused oil. Vitamin E may be added to help rancidity: $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp for 16 oz (250ml) oil.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- | Follow the same steps for preparing an herbal-infused oil, as mentioned earlier.
- | In a double boiler, melt the measured beeswax or plant-based wax.
- | Once the wax is melted, add the herbal-infused oil and mix thoroughly.
- | Optionally, add a few drops of essential oils for fragrance and benefits.
- | Pour the mixture into clean, sterilized containers. Before you pour into your containers (jars/tins) to set, add a few drops to your container to test the consistency. If it's too hard, add more oil, and if it's too soft, add more beeswax to your mixture. Then complete pouring, label, and date.
- | Allow the salve to cool and solidify before sealing the containers.

Creams

Herbal creams are water-based formulations that often combine herbal-infused oils or extracts with water or hydrosols. They have a lighter texture than balms and are more easily absorbed by the skin. Creams are versatile for providing hydration, supporting skin health, and delivering herbal properties. They are suitable for both face and body and can be customized for different skin types. They can be used for daily moisturizing, soothing sensitive skin, and addressing various skin issues like eczema or irritation.

INGREDIENTS:

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup herbal-infused oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup aqueous phase (distilled water, hydrosols, or aloe vera gel)
- 2 tablespoons emulsifying wax
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon preservative (if using water-based ingredients)
- 10-15 drops essential oils (optional for fragrance and benefits)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- | Prepare an herbal-infused oil as described earlier.
- | In a double boiler, melt the emulsifying wax in the herbal-infused oil.
- | In a separate container, gently warm the aqueous phase (water, hydrosols, etc.).
- | Slowly add the warmed aqueous phase to the oil and wax mixture while stirring continuously.
- | Continue stirring until the mixture forms a stable emulsion.
- | If desired, add essential oils for fragrance and added benefits.
- | Once the mixture has cooled down, add the preservative if you're using water-based ingredients to prevent microbial growth.
- | Transfer the cream into clean and sterilized containers.

Lotions

Herbal lotions are similar to creams but have a higher water content, making them even lighter and more hydrating.

INGREDIENTS:

- Herbal-infused oil
- Aqueous phase (distilled water, hydrosols, or aloe vera gel)
- Emulsifying wax
- Preservative
- Essential oils (optional for fragrance and benefits)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- | Follow the same steps as for making an herbal cream, but adjust the ratios of the aqueous phase and the oil phase to create a lighter consistency.
- | Make sure to use an appropriate emulsifying wax to ensure the lotion forms a stable emulsion.
- | Use a reliable preservative to ensure the lotion remains safe to use over time.

LABELING AND STORAGE:

Label your balms, creams, and lotions with the ingredients used, date of preparation, and intended purpose. Store your products in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight to preserve their quality.

Shelf life: Creams and lotions are water-based so they need to be stored in the fridge in order to prevent spoilage.

USAGE:

Apply a small amount of the balm, cream, or lotion to the desired area and gently massage it in.

Use as needed, following the recommendations for the specific herbs and intended purpose. Before using or selling any herbal skincare products, consider conducting patch tests to ensure they are well-tolerated by different skin types. Additionally, consulting with a qualified herbalist or skincare professional can provide further guidance on formulation and usage.

If you're looking for alternatives to beeswax in creating salves, balms, and creams, there are several options available, especially for those who prefer vegan alternatives. Here are some alternatives you can consider:

- 1 | Candelilla Wax:** Candelilla wax is derived from the leaves of the candelilla shrub. It has a similar consistency to beeswax and is often used as a vegan alternative in cosmetic and skincare products.
- 2 | Carnauba Wax:** Carnauba wax comes from the leaves of the carnauba palm. It's a hard wax that can be used to increase the firmness of balms and salves. It's commonly used in many cosmetic products and is also vegan-friendly.
- 3 | Soy Wax:** Soy wax is derived from soybean oil. It's commonly used in candle making, but it can also be used in skincare products. Keep in mind that soy wax can be softer than beeswax, so you might need to adjust your recipe accordingly.
- 4 | Shea Butter:** Shea butter is a popular natural fat extracted from the nut of the shea tree. It's rich and creamy, making it a great base for salves and creams. It's also known for its moisturizing properties.
- 5 | Cocoa Butter:** Cocoa butter is derived from cocoa beans and has a pleasant chocolate scent. It's a solid fat at room temperature and is often used in skincare products due to its moisturizing and nourishing properties.
- 6 | Mango Butter:** Mango butter is obtained from the kernels of the mango fruit. It's similar in texture to shea and cocoa butters and can be used as a base for various skincare products.

7 | Jojoba Wax: Jojoba wax is technically a liquid wax rather than a true wax. It's derived from the seeds of the jojoba plant and closely resembles the natural sebum produced by our skin. It can be a great addition to balms and creams.

8 | Plant Oils: Depending on the desired consistency and benefits of your product, you can also consider using various plant oils like coconut oil, almond oil, olive oil, and more as a base. These oils can provide excellent moisturization and nourishment.

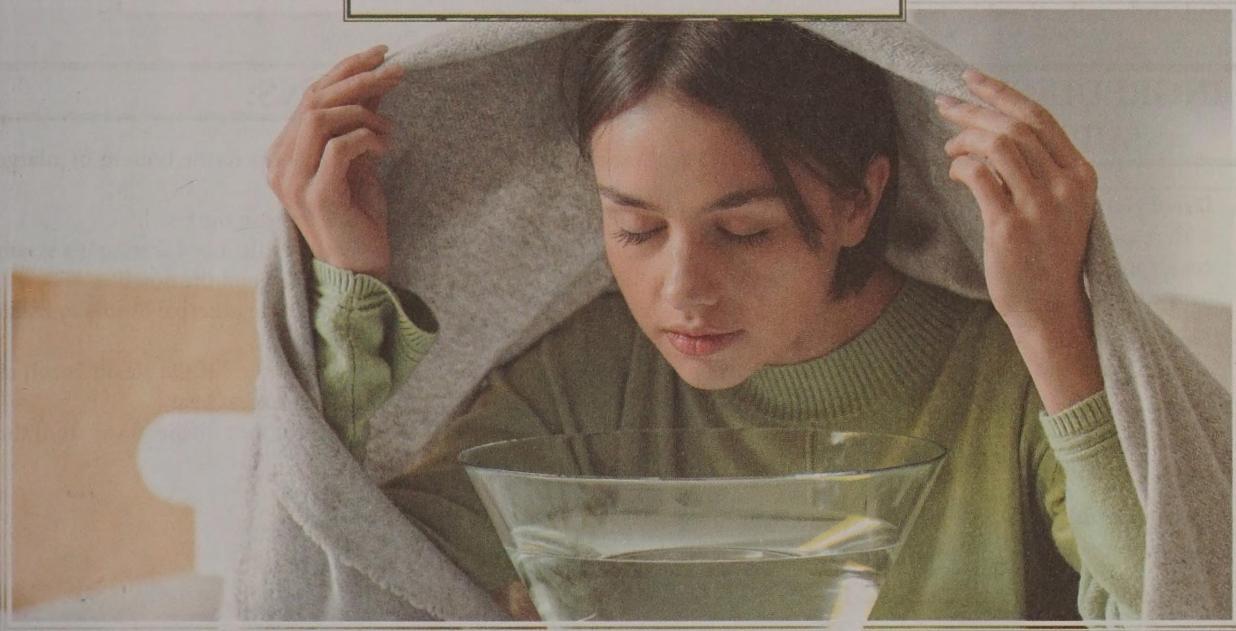
When substituting beeswax with any of these alternatives, keep in mind that each wax or butter has different properties, melting points, and textures. You might need to experiment and adjust your recipes to achieve the desired consistency and performance. Always perform a small-scale test before making larger batches to ensure that the final product meets your expectations.

Creating medicinal balms, creams, and lotions is a rewarding process that allows you to harness the benefits of herbs for topical use. It's essential to practice proper sanitation, use high-quality ingredients, and be mindful of individual sensitivities when crafting these products. If you're new to herbal formulation, consulting with experienced herbalists or skincare professionals can provide valuable insights.





Baths and Steams



Herbal baths and steams are soothing and therapeutic practices that involve using herbs to enhance relaxation, promote well-being, and address various physical and mental concerns.

Here's a guide to creating and enjoying herbal baths and steams:

Herbal Baths

Herbal baths involve adding herbal infusions or preparations to your bathwater for a relaxing and rejuvenating experience.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

- **Dried Herbs:** Choose herbs based on your desired effects. Lavender, chamomile, rose petals, calendula, and mint are popular choices.
- **Muslin Bag or Tea Ball:** To contain the herbs and prevent debris in the bathwater.
- **Bathtub:** Use a clean bathtub with warm water.
- **Optional Additions:** Epsom salts, Himalayan salt, oatmeal, or essential oils for additional benefits.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Herb Preparation:** Place the desired herbs in a muslin bag or tea ball. This prevents the herbs from floating in the bathwater and makes cleanup easier.
- 2 | **Bathwater Preparation:** Run warm water in the bathtub and add the herbal bag to the bathwater.
- 3 | **Steeping:** Allow the herbs to steep in the bathwater as you soak. The warm water will help release the herbal properties into the water.
- 4 | **Relaxation:** Immerse yourself in the herbal-infused bathwater and relax for 15-30 minutes. Breathe deeply and enjoy the aroma.
- 5 | **Cleanup:** After your bath, remove the herbal bag and drain the water.

Herbal Steams

Herbal steams involve inhaling the steam of infused herbs, which can help open up the respiratory system, relax the mind, and soothe the skin.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

- **Dried Herbs:** Choose herbs with respiratory benefits, such as eucalyptus, thyme, rosemary, or peppermint.
- **Large Heatproof Bowl:** For containing the hot water and herbs.
- **Towel or Blanket:** To create a steam tent and trap the steam.
- **Optional Additions:** Essential oils or citrus peels for enhanced aroma.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Herb Preparation:** Place a handful of dried herbs in the bottom of a large heatproof bowl.
- 2 | **Boil Water:** Boil water and pour it over the herbs in the bowl.
- 3 | **Steam Tent:** Sit comfortably with your face over the bowl, creating a steam tent by draping a towel or blanket over your head and the bowl.
- 4 | **Inhale Steam:** Inhale deeply, allowing the steam and herbal aroma to reach your respiratory system. Close your eyes and relax.
- 5 | **Duration:** Enjoy the steam for about 10-15 minutes. If the steam becomes too hot, you can lift the towel slightly to release excess heat.
- 6 | **Skin Soothing:** For a facial steam, position your face further away from the steam to avoid overheating sensitive skin.



SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1 | Be cautious with hot water and steam to avoid burns.
- 2 | Perform a patch test with the chosen herbs to check for allergies or sensitivities.
- 3 | Consult a healthcare professional if you have respiratory issues, skin conditions, or other health concerns before using herbal baths or steams.
- 4 | Stay hydrated during and after your bath or steam session.

Both herbal baths and steams offer wonderful ways to relax, unwind, and experience the benefits of herbs through aromatherapy and skin absorption. Customize your experience by selecting herbs that align with your wellness goals and preferences.



Poultices, Compresses, and Washes



Poultices, compresses, and washes are topical applications of herbal remedies that offer targeted relief for various skin and muscle issues. These applications involve direct contact with the affected area to deliver the benefits of herbs externally.

Here's a guide to creating and using poultices, compresses, and washes:

Poultices

A poultice is a soft, moist mixture of herbs that is applied directly to the skin to address localized issues like inflammation, wounds, venom, or swelling.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

- Fresh or Dried Herbs:** Choose herbs with properties suited to your purpose, such as soothing herbs for inflammation or wound-healing herbs for cuts.
- Water or Herbal Infusion:** Use water to moisten the herbs and create a paste-like consistency.
- Cloth or Gauze:** To hold the herbal mixture and prevent direct skin contact.
- Optional:** Olive oil, flaxseed oil, or other carrier oils to enhance the poultice's texture.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Herb Selection:** Choose herbs based on their properties and the specific issue you want to address.
- Preparation:** Crush, chop, or blend the herbs to release their juices or oils.
- Creating the Poultice:** Mix the crushed herbs with enough water or herbal infusion to form a paste. Optionally, you can add a bit of carrier oil.
- Application:** Spread the herbal paste onto a clean cloth or gauze.
- Applying the Poultice:** Place the poultice directly onto the affected area.
- Securing:** Wrap the area with a bandage or cloth to hold the poultice in place.
- Duration:** Leave the poultice on for about 15-30 minutes.
- Removing:** Gently remove the poultice and clean the area.

Compresses

A compress involves soaking a cloth in an herbal infusion and applying it to the skin to address various issues such as muscle pain, inflammation, or bruising.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

- **Dried Herbs:** Choose herbs that suit your purpose, such as anti-inflammatory herbs or those that promote circulation.
- **Hot Water:** For creating the herbal infusion.
- **Clean Cloth:** Cotton or muslin cloth for soaking in the herbal infusion.
- **Optional:** Cold water or ice packs for cold compresses.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Herb Selection:** Choose herbs based on their properties and the issue you want to address.
- 2 | **Herbal Infusion:** Prepare a strong herbal infusion by steeping the herbs in hot water.
- 3 | **Soaking the Cloth:** Dip the clean cloth in the herbal infusion, ensuring it's wet but not dripping.
- 4 | **Application:** Apply the cloth directly to the affected area.
- 5 | **Securing:** Use a bandage or wrap to hold the cloth in place.
- 6 | **Duration:** Leave the compress on for about 15-30 minutes.
- 7 | **Cold Compresses:** For cold compresses, use cold water or place the soaked cloth in the refrigerator for a while before applying.

Washes

Herbal washes involve using herbal infusions or decoctions to cleanse and soothe the skin. They can be used for various skin issues, including rashes, irritations, and infections.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

- **Dried Herbs:** Select herbs that match your purpose, such as chamomile for soothing or calendula for healing.
- **Boiling Water:** For creating the herbal infusion or decoction.
- **Clean Cloth or Cotton Balls:** To apply the herbal wash.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Herb Selection:** Choose herbs based on their properties and the issue you want to address.
- 2 | **Herbal Infusion/Decoction:** Prepare an herbal infusion by steeping the herbs in hot water or create a decoction by simmering the herbs.
- 3 | **Cooling:** Allow the infusion or decoction to cool to a comfortable temperature.
- 4 | **Application:** Dip a clean cloth or cotton ball into the herbal infusion.
- 5 | **Gentle Application:** Gently apply the infused cloth or cotton ball to the affected area, patting or pressing lightly.
- 6 | **Repetition:** You can repeat the process several times a day, depending on the severity of the issue.



SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

Proper wound care is essential to promote healing and prevent infections.

- 1 | Gently clean the wound with mild soap and warm water. Avoid using harsh antiseptics, as they can delay healing.
- 2 | Perform a patch test before using herbal applications on larger areas of the skin to check for sensitivities or allergies.
- 3 | Keep the applications clean and follow proper hygiene practices.
- 4 | **Protect the Wound:** Apply an appropriate dressing to cover the wound and keep it clean. Choose dressings that are non-stick and breathable to allow for proper airflow.
- 5 | Choose herbs based on their properties and your specific needs.
- 6 | **Know When to Seek Medical Attention:** If the wound is deep, large, or doesn't stop bleeding after applying pressure, seek medical help. Watch for signs of infection, such as increased redness, swelling, warmth, pus, or fever.

Poultices, compresses, and washes are effective ways to harness the benefits of herbs for external use. They can provide localized relief and are often used in traditional herbal practices to support skin and muscle health.



Essential Oils and Hydrosols



Herbal essential oils and hydrosols are potent and aromatic extracts obtained from plants through various methods. They are widely used in aromatherapy, skincare, and natural health practices to harness the therapeutic properties of plants.

Here's an overview of herbal essential oils and hydrosols:

Herbal Essential Oils

EXTRACTION METHOD

Distillation is a process used for extracting essential oils from herbs or other plants. Not all plants provide essential oils; but for those that do, this is one of the best methods of extracting the essential oils. There are three basic types of distillation, requiring minor differences in the still:

- **Water distillation** – The herbs are immersed in water, and the water is boiled. This works best for herbs that don't break down easily.
- **Water and Steam distillation** – The only difference in the equipment for this and water distillation is the insertion of a rack inside the still, which holds the herbs up out of the water and only allows the steam to have contact with it. This method produces essential oils much more quickly than water distillation.
- **Direct Steam Distillation** – A different sort of still is needed for this method so that the steam can be created in a separate chamber. The steam is then injected into the retort/still that is holding the herbs below a rack holding the herbs. This allows a lower temperature to be used, reducing the potential for heat damage to the essential oil. This is the most common method used commercially, especially for essential oils like rosemary and lavender.

CONCENTRATION

Essential oils are highly concentrated extracts containing the volatile compounds that give plants their characteristic aromas and therapeutic properties.

USAGE

Essential oils can be used in aromatherapy, diluted in carrier oils for topical use, added to bathwater, or used to create natural cleaning products and perfumes.

BENEFITS

Different essential oils have diverse benefits, such as promoting relaxation, improving mood, supporting respiratory health, relieving muscle tension, and addressing skin issues. Examples: Lavender, tea tree, eucalyptus, peppermint, and chamomile are commonly used herbal essential oils.

Hydrosols (Hydrolats or Floral Waters)

EXTRACTION METHOD

Hydrosols are co-products of the essential oil distillation process. They are the water-based byproducts that remain after the essential oil is separated. Simply bottle this by-product and store it in your refrigerator.

CONCENTRATION

Hydrosols are milder than essential oils and contain trace amounts of essential oil components, making them safer for direct skin application.

USAGE

Hydrosols can be used as facial toners, body sprays, room fresheners, and in skincare products.

BENEFITS

Hydrosols offer gentle and hydrating effects, along with subtle aromatic benefits. They are suitable for sensitive skin and can have astringent, soothing, or cooling properties.

EXAMPLES

Rose hydrosol, lavender hydrosol, and chamomile hydrosol are popular choices.

USAGE TIPS:

- **Dilution:** Essential oils must be diluted before applying to the skin. A common dilution ratio is 1-3% essential oil in a carrier oil.
- **Patch Test:** Perform a patch test before using any essential oil on your skin to ensure you don't have sensitivities or allergies.
- **Quality Matters:** If purchasing, choose high-quality, pure essential oils and hydrosols from reputable sources to ensure safety and efficacy.
- **Caution:** Some essential oils can be skin sensitizers or have contraindications, especially during pregnancy or if you have certain medical conditions. Research thoroughly or consult a professional before using.
- **Storage:** Store essential oils and hydrosols in dark glass bottles away from direct sunlight to maintain their potency and prevent deterioration.

When working with herbal essential oils and hydrosols, it's important to have a good understanding of the specific properties of each oil, as well as proper usage and safety guidelines. Consulting with a certified aromatherapist or herbalist can provide you with more detailed information tailored to your needs and preferences.





Herbal Remedies and Recipes
FOR COMMON AILMENTS



Maintaining a healthy body and mind involves a holistic approach that encompasses various aspects of your well-being. Before we dive into herbal recipes, here are tips to support overall health:

BALANCED DIET:

Consume a diverse and balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.

STAY HYDRATED:

Drink plenty of water throughout the day to stay hydrated, which is essential for overall health.

REGULAR EXERCISE:

Engage in regular physical activity, such as walking, jogging, yoga, or any exercise you enjoy.

STRESS MANAGEMENT:

Practice stress-reduction techniques like meditation, deep breathing, or mindfulness to support mental well-being.

ADEQUATE SLEEP:

Ensure you get enough restorative sleep each night, typically 7-9 hours for adults.

ROUTINE CHECK-UPS:

Regularly visit your healthcare provider for check-ups and screenings to catch and address any health issues early.

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS:

Maintain healthy social connections and engage in activities that bring joy and fulfillment.

LIMIT TOXINS:

Minimize exposure to environmental toxins and pollutants whenever possible.

MODERATION:

Practice moderation in all aspects of life, including food, alcohol, and caffeine consumption.

HYGIENE AND SAFETY:

- Practice good hygiene to prevent illness and infections.
- Follow safety guidelines to prevent accidents and injuries.

Remember that holistic health involves a balance of physical, mental, and emotional well-being. These tips are general guidelines, and individual needs may vary. It's essential to consult with a healthcare professional, such as doctors, naturopaths, dietitians, and mental health experts, to create a personalized plan that supports your specific health goals and needs.

Now, let's get to the recipes. Throughout this chapter, we explore the many ways herbs can benefit you - from aromatic culinary delights to soothing balms. Each recipe is carefully crafted with detailed instructions, making the process an enjoyable and intuitive experience. Whether you're an aspiring herbalist or simply someone seeking a more natural approach to wellness, I hope that you'll find these recipes accessible and gratifying.

As you embark on this journey of natural remedies, it's essential to be fluent in the language of measurements. You might notice that recipes come in a lot of different forms. Most of the time, recipes are listed with specific units of measure. Other times, recipes are given in ratios, listing each component as a part or a percentage.

In the end, the standard of measurement is up to you and will depend on how much of the recipe you would like to make. For example, if you wanted enough for 1 cup of tea, you might choose 1 teaspoon for your "part." Thus, you may use 1 teaspoon chamomile, 2 teaspoons peppermint, and 1 teaspoon lavender. If you choose to fill a jar with enough dried tea blend to store for future use, you might make your "part" 1 cup. Thus, you would use 1 cup chamomile, 2 cups peppermint, and 1 cup lavender.

Here's a conversion chart to help you seamlessly transition between various units, ensuring your concoctions and elixirs turn out as envisioned:

U.S. AND METRIC EQUIVALENTS

Weight	Liquid Capacity	U.S. Liquid Capacity	Volume	Length	Temperature
1 oz=28.35 gr	1 fl oz=29.57 ml	1 c =8 oz	1 oz=30 cc	1 inch = 25.4 mm	250°F=130°C
8 oz=227 gr	8 fl oz=236.6 ml	1 pt=16 oz	8 oz=237 cc	2 inch = 50.8 mm	300°F=150°C
16 oz=454 gr	16 fl oz=473.2 ml	1 qt=32 oz	16 oz= 473 cc		350°F =177°C
32 oz=908 gr	32 fl oz=946.4 ml	½ gal=64 oz	32 oz= 946 cc		400°F =200°C
35 oz (2.2 lbs) = 1 kg	1 U.S. gallon =3.78 l				450°F =230°C

ABBREVIATIONS

tsp, t = teaspoon	oz = ounce	pt = pint	cc = cubic centimeter	Lb. = pound
Tbsp, T = tablespoon	c = cup	qt = quart	gr = gram	°F = Fahrenheit
Fl.= fluid	gal = gallon	ml = milliliter	L = liter	C = Celsius



HERBAL SUPPORT

for the Cardiovascular System

The cardiovascular system serves as the body's transportation and communication network, providing oxygen, nutrients, and essential components to all cells while removing waste products. It plays a pivotal role in maintaining homeostasis, supporting organ function, and responding to various physiological needs. Its proper functioning is crucial for overall health and well-being.

Tips to Maintain a Healthy Cardiovascular System:

HEART-HEALTHY DIET:

- Choose sources of omega-3 fatty acids, such as fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines), flaxseeds, and walnuts
- Reduce consumption of highly processed foods, as they often contain unhealthy fats, sugars, and excessive salt.
- Reduce sodium intake by avoiding processed foods and using herbs and spices for flavor.
- Minimize added sugars in your diet, as excessive sugar consumption can contribute to obesity and heart disease.
- Include herbs like hawthorn, garlic, turmeric, and ginger in your diet. These herbs have been shown to have cardiovascular benefits. You can add them to your meals, use them in cooking, or consume them as herbal teas or tinctures.
- Consider using olive leaf extract as a supplement or adding it to your diet. Olive leaf is thought to have antioxidant properties that may benefit heart health.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

- Engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise weekly to improve cardiovascular fitness.
- Incorporate strength training exercises to build muscle and improve metabolism.

QUIT SMOKING:

Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease. Seek support and resources to quit smoking if you are a smoker.

LIMIT ALCOHOL:

If you consume alcohol, do so in moderation. For most people, this means up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men.

HERBAL SUPPORT

Hawthorn (*Crataegus*)

Hawthorn is known for its potential to support heart health by improving blood flow, reducing blood pressure, and strengthening the heart muscle.

Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

Garlic has been traditionally used to support cardiovascular health, with a focus on managing blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)

Ginger may help lower blood pressure and improve circulation, potentially reducing the risk of cardiovascular issues.

Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)

Turmeric contains curcumin, which has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties that may benefit heart health by reducing inflammation and oxidative stress.

Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)

Ginkgo is believed to improve circulation and protect against heart-related conditions by enhancing blood flow and reducing blood clotting.

Green Tea (*Camellia sinensis*)

Green tea contains catechins, which have been associated with lower cholesterol levels and improved heart health.

Cayenne (*Capsicum annuum*)

Cayenne pepper contains capsaicin, which may help improve circulation and reduce blood pressure.

Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum spp.*)

Cinnamon may aid in regulating blood sugar levels, reducing LDL (bad) cholesterol, and promoting better blood flow, all of which contribute to cardiovascular health.

Motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*)

Motherwort is traditionally used to support heart health by regulating heart rhythm and reducing palpitations.



Cinnamon Infusion

for Blood Pressure



Cinnamon tea contains lots of antioxidants, compounds recognized for their health benefits. Cinnamon is traditionally used to help ease inflammation and support cardiovascular health. Components like cinnamaldehyde and cinnamophilin in cinnamon are known in herbal practices for their roles in maintaining healthy blood pressure levels and supporting vascular health.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cinnamon stick (or 1 tsp of ground cinnamon, *(Cinnamomum verum)*)
- 1 cup of water
- Honey or lemon (optional, for flavor)

NOTES:

While cinnamon can be beneficial, excessive consumption may have adverse effects.

Cinnamon contains a chemical called coumarin.

Eating too much can cause liver damage, cancer, low blood sugar, or breathing problems.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Boil the Water:** Start by bringing 1 cup of water to a boil.
- 2 | **Add Cinnamon:** If you're using a cinnamon stick, break it into a few smaller pieces and add it to the boiling water. If you're using ground cinnamon, you can add it directly to the water.
- 3 | **Simmer:** Reduce the heat to low and let the cinnamon simmer in the water for about 10-15 minutes. This will help infuse the flavor of cinnamon into the water.
- 4 | **Strain:** After simmering, remove the pot from the heat and strain the tea to remove any cinnamon pieces or ground cinnamon.
- 5 | **Serve:** Pour the cinnamon tea into a cup. If desired, add a teaspoon of raw honey or a squeeze of lemon juice for extra flavor. Both honey and lemon have potential health benefits.
- 6 | **Enjoy:** Sip the cinnamon tea while it's still warm. Remember that individual sensitivities can vary, so start with a small amount of cinnamon and monitor your body's response. You can also lower your blood pressure by simply adding half a teaspoon of ground cinnamon to your morning coffee, smoothie, oats, etc.

DOSAGE:

Adults shouldn't have more than one teaspoon of cinnamon per day.

Heart Harmony Elixir

with Hawthorn Berry

(Happy Heart Elixir)



This herbal elixir is crafted with the goodness of hawthorn berries, traditionally known for their heart-boosting properties. Hawthorn berries have been used for centuries to support cardiovascular health, and this recipe combines them with other heart-healthy herbs and ingredients to create a delicious and nourishing elixir for a healthy and happy heart. Feel free to customize this tea with other heart-healthy herbs like lavender or lemon balm for added flavor and benefits.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon dried hawthorn berries (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- 1 teaspoon dried rose hips (*Rosa canina* and/or *Rosa spp.*)
- 2 cups filtered water
- Honey or maple syrup (optional, for sweetness)
- Fresh lemon slices (for garnish, optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Boil the Water:** In a pot, bring 2 cups of filtered water to a boil.
- 2 | **Add the Herbs:** Once the water is boiling, add the dried hawthorn berries and dried rose hips.
- 3 | **Simmer:** Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let the herbs simmer for about 10-15 minutes. This will allow the flavors and beneficial compounds to infuse into the water.
- 4 | **Strain:** After simmering, use a fine mesh strainer or a tea infuser to strain the tea into a cup or teapot. Press down on the herbs to extract all the liquid.
- 5 | **Sweeten (Optional):** If desired, add honey or maple syrup to taste for a touch of sweetness. Start with a small amount and adjust to your preference. Excessive sugar intake can have adverse effects on heart health.
- 6 | **Garnish and Serve:** Optionally, garnish with a fresh lemon slice for added flavor and aroma.
- 7 | **Enjoy:** Sip on this heart-healthy hawthorn berry tea and savor its natural benefits for heart health.

NOTES:

Rose hips are rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, which can be beneficial for overall health. However, excessive consumption may lead to digestive discomfort in some individuals. Consult with a healthcare professional, especially if you have any underlying health conditions or are taking medications, to determine the appropriate dosage for your specific needs.

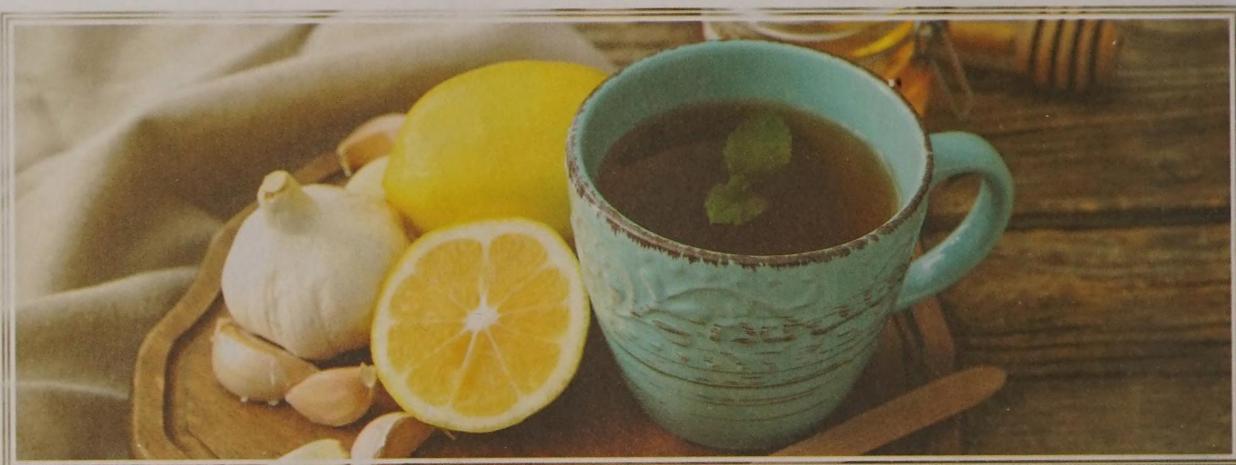
DOSAGE:

It is recommended to drink 1 to 2 cups of this tea per day for heart health support.

You can enjoy this tea hot or cold. It's a great addition to your daily routine for heart health.

Garlic and Lemon Tonic

for Cholesterol Management



This garlic and lemon tonic is a natural remedy that combines the cholesterol-lowering properties of garlic and the antioxidant-rich benefits of lemon. Garlic contains compounds like allicin, which have been shown to help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol levels in the body. It can also support overall heart health. Lemons are rich in antioxidants, particularly vitamin C, which can help protect blood vessels from damage caused by free radicals.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4-5 cloves of fresh garlic (*Allium sativum*)
- 1 organic lemon
- 1 tablespoon raw honey (optional)
- 1 cup of filtered water

INSTRUCTIONS:

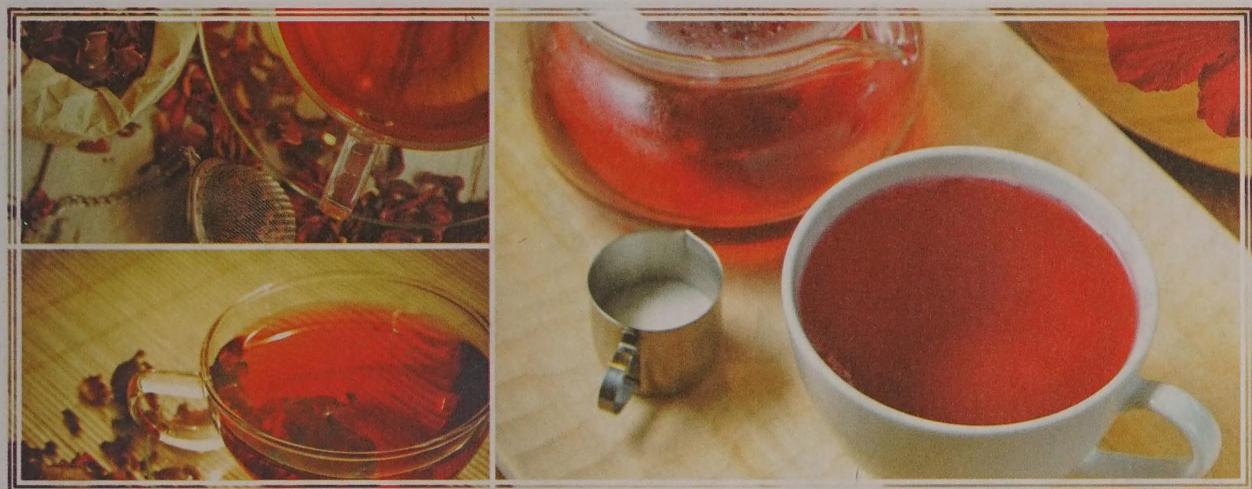
- 1 | **Prepare the Garlic:** Start by peeling and crushing 4-5 cloves of fresh garlic. Crushing the garlic helps release its active compounds, which are beneficial for cholesterol management.
- 2 | **Prepare the Lemon:** Wash and scrub the organic lemon thoroughly to remove any pesticides or residue. You'll be using both the juice and the zest, so make sure to grate the lemon zest before juicing it.
- 3 | **Boil the Water:** In a small saucepan, bring 1 cup of filtered water to a boil. Once it reaches a rolling boil, remove it from the heat and let it cool for a couple of minutes.
- 4 | **Combine the Ingredients:** In a heat-resistant glass or mug, add the crushed garlic and lemon zest. Pour the hot water over them.
- 5 | **Squeeze Lemon Juice:** Cut the now-zested lemon in half and squeeze the juice into the glass. Lemon juice is not only a flavorful addition but also helps with cholesterol management.
- 6 | **Optional Sweetener:** If you find the tonic too strong, add 1 tablespoon of raw honey to make the tonic more palatable.
- 7 | **Mix Well:** Stir the mixture thoroughly to ensure that all the ingredients are well combined. Let it steep for about 5-10 minutes. This allows the flavors to meld together and infuse into the water.
- 8 | **Strain and Serve:** After steeping, strain the tonic to remove the garlic and lemon zest. You can use a fine mesh strainer or a piece of cheesecloth to do this. Discard the solids.

DOSAGE:

Consume this tonic once a day, ideally in the morning on an empty stomach for better absorption.

Hibiscus Tea

for Cardiovascular Support



Hibiscus tea is traditionally consumed for its potential to support cardiovascular health. It is known for its antihypertensive properties, which may help manage high blood pressure, a factor in reducing risks associated with heart disease and stroke. The tea is also rich in antioxidants, including anthocyanins and vitamin C, which are traditionally used to help combat oxidative stress and inflammation, both of which can contribute to heart disease.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons of dried hibiscus petals (*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*)
- 2 cups of water
- Optional: Honey or lemon for added flavor (to taste)

NOTES:

If you are already taking medications for hypertension, consult your healthcare provider before incorporating hibiscus tea into your routine. They can help you adjust your medication if necessary.

Hibiscus tea may interact with certain medications, including antihypertensive drugs and diuretics. Always inform your healthcare provider about any herbal remedies or supplements you are using.

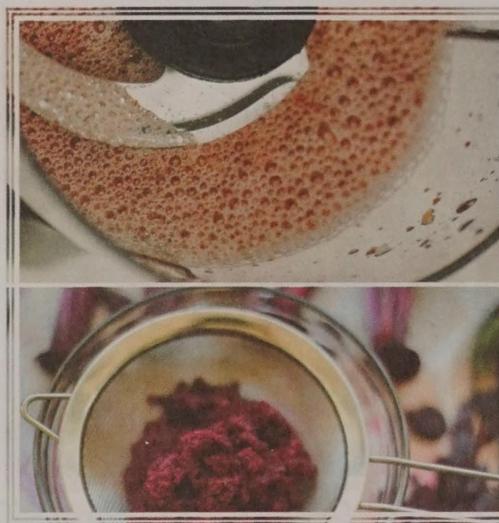
INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Boil the Water:** Start by boiling 2 cups of water in a kettle or a saucepan.
- 2 | **Rinse Hibiscus Petals:** While the water is heating, rinse the dried hibiscus petals under cold running water to remove any dust or impurities.
- 3 | **Add Hibiscus Petals:** Place the rinsed hibiscus petals into a teapot or heatproof pitcher.
- 4 | **Pour Boiling Water:** Once the water reaches a rolling boil, pour it over the hibiscus petals in the teapot or pitcher.
- 5 | **Steep:** Cover the teapot or pitcher and let the hibiscus petals steep in the hot water for about 5-10 minutes. The longer you steep, the stronger the flavor will be. Adjust the steeping time to your taste preference.
- 6 | **Strain:** After steeping, strain the tea into cups or mugs to remove the hibiscus petals. You can use a fine mesh strainer or a tea infuser.
- 7 | **Add Optional Flavorings:** If desired, add a touch of honey or a squeeze of fresh lemon to your tea for added flavor. Adjust the amount to suit your taste.
- 8 | **Serve and Enjoy:** Your hibiscus tea for cardiovascular support is ready to be enjoyed. Serve it hot or allow it to cool and serve it over ice for a refreshing iced tea option.

DOSAGE:

- You can enjoy hibiscus tea daily as part of your beverage routine.

Beetroot and Aronia Juice for Circulatory Health



Beets are rich in folate (vitamin B9), which plays a crucial role in supporting blood vessel health. They are also high in nitrates, which are converted into nitric oxide in the body. This process may help relax and widen blood vessels. Similarly, aronia is traditionally recognized for its potential to support heart health by helping to manage plaque formation in arteries. Both aronia and bilberry extracts are used for their traditional role in promoting tissue relaxation and improving blood flow, which can be beneficial in maintaining flexible arteries and supporting blood pressure management.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium-sized beetroot, peeled and chopped (*Beta vulgaris*)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh or frozen aronia berries (*Aronia melanocarpa*)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water
- Optional: 1-2 tablespoons of honey for sweetness (adjust to taste)

NOTES:

Remember that individual dietary needs and preferences vary; adjust the serving size and sweetness to suit your taste and health goals.

The vibrant color of this juice can stain surfaces and clothing, so be cautious when handling it, and clean up any spills promptly.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Prepare the Beetroot:** Start by washing, peeling, and chopping the beetroot into small, manageable pieces. This will make it easier to blend.
- 2 | **Blend the Ingredients:** Place the chopped beetroot, aronia berries, and water in a blender.
- 3 | **Blend Until Smooth:** Blend the mixture until you achieve a smooth and well-incorporated consistency. The vibrant color of the beetroot will give the juice a rich, deep hue.
- 4 | **Sweeten to Taste (Optional):** Taste the juice. If you prefer a sweeter flavor, you can add 1-2 tablespoons of honey. Blend the juice again briefly to ensure the honey is well mixed. Adjust the honey quantity to your taste preference.
- 5 | **Strain the Juice:** To remove any solids and achieve a smoother texture, strain the juice through a fine-mesh strainer or a piece of cheesecloth into a glass or pitcher.
- 6 | **Serve Immediately or Refrigerate:** Your beetroot and aronia juice is ready to be enjoyed. Serve it immediately for the freshest taste, or refrigerate it for later use. Fresh juice is best, but it can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 2-3 days.
- 7 | **Enjoy:** Sip and savor this nutritious juice, knowing it's contributing to your circulatory health.

DOSAGE:

$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 cup (120-240 ml) of this juice per serving for circulatory health benefits.

Blood Vessel Care

with Butcher's Broom



Butcher's broom is a traditional herbal remedy known for its potential benefits in supporting blood vessel health and circulation. It contains compounds called ruscogenins that may help strengthen blood vessels and reduce symptoms associated with poor circulation, such as varicose veins and swollen legs.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1-2 teaspoons of dried butcher's broom root (*Ruscus aculeatus*)
- 1 cup of boiling water

NOTES:

You can adjust the amount based on your preference and tolerance. It's important to be mindful of your body's response and consult with a healthcare professional if you have any concerns or experience any adverse effects.

Butcher's broom tea has a slightly bitter taste, so sweetening it is optional but makes it more palatable. You can also add a pinch of black pepper for extra strength. It is known for its ability to stimulate circulation.

INSTRUCTIONS:

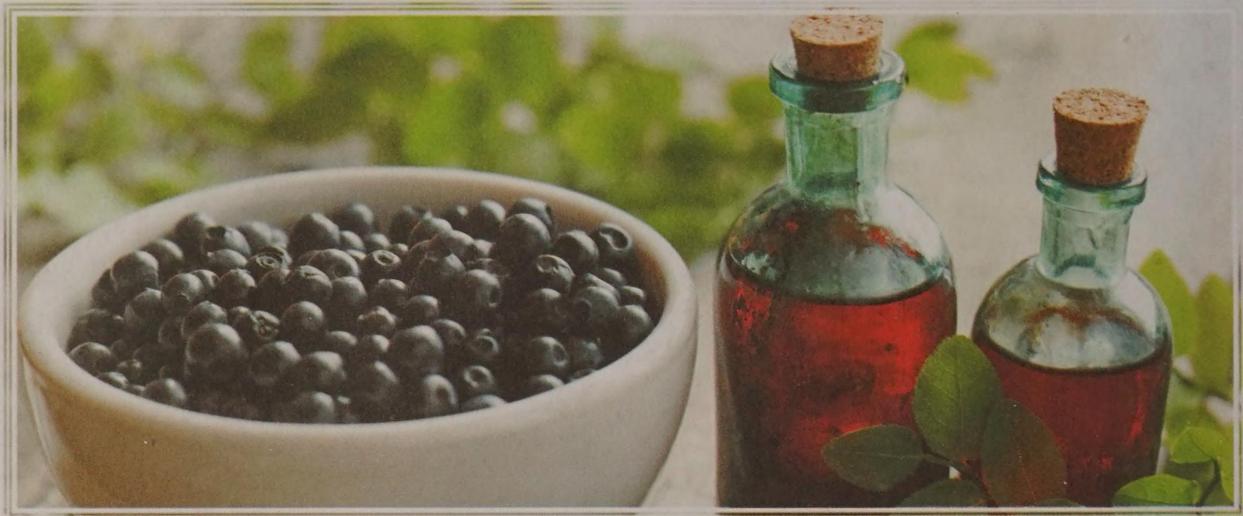
- 1 | **Boil the Water:** Start by boiling 1 cup of water in a kettle or a saucepan.
- 2 | **Prepare the Butcher's Broom:** While the water is heating, measure out 1-2 teaspoons of dried butcher's broom root and/or leaves. You can adjust the amount based on your preference and tolerance.
- 3 | **Place the Herbs in a Cup:** Put the dried butcher's broom root and/or leaves into a heatproof cup or mug.
- 4 | **Pour Boiling Water:** Once the water has reached a rolling boil, carefully pour it over the butcher's broom in the cup.
- 5 | **Steep:** Cover the cup with a saucer or small plate to trap the steam and let the tea steep for about 10-15 minutes. This allows the butcher's broom to infuse its beneficial compounds into the water.
- 6 | **Strain:** After steeping, strain the tea to remove the butcher's broom root or leaves. You can use a fine-mesh strainer or a tea infuser for this step.
- 7 | **Optional Sweetener:** If you find the tea too bitter, add a touch of honey or another natural sweetener to taste. Stir well to dissolve.
- 8 | **Serve and Enjoy:** Your butcher's broom tea for blood vessel care is ready to be enjoyed.

DOSAGE:

Enjoy this tea as part of your daily routine in the morning or evening for blood vessel support. Start with 1 teaspoon and increase to 2 teaspoons if desired.

Bilberry

Heart-Drops



Bilberries are small, dark berries closely related to blueberries and are known for their potential heart-health benefits. Bilberry tincture is a convenient way to harness these benefits.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup fresh bilberries (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) or frozen, if fresh are not available
- 1 cup high-proof vodka or brandy (at least 80 proof)

NOTES:

While the recipe mentions using fresh bilberries, you can also experiment with other bilberry varieties like European bilberries or huckleberries if they are available in your region.

Each variety has slightly different flavors and potential health benefits.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- | **Prepare the Bilberries:** Rinse the fresh bilberries thoroughly and allow them to air dry. If using frozen bilberries, make sure they are fully thawed.
- | **Mash the Bilberries:** Place the bilberries in a clean, glass jar and gently mash them with a spoon or a muddler. This will help release their juices and active compounds.
- | **Add Alcohol:** Pour the high-proof vodka or brandy over the mashed bilberries, ensuring they are completely submerged. The alcohol will extract the beneficial compounds from the berries.
- | **Seal the Jar:** Seal the jar tightly with its lid.
- | **Shake and Store:** Give the jar a good shake to mix the contents. Store it in a cool, dark place for at least 4-6 weeks. During this time, shake the jar gently every few days to agitate the mixture.
- | **Strain the Tincture:** After the steeping period (4-6 weeks), strain the tincture through a fine-mesh strainer or cheesecloth into a clean, glass bottle. Squeeze the solids to extract as much liquid as possible.
- | **Label and Store:** Label the bottle with the contents and date. Store the bilberry tincture in a cool, dark place. When stored properly, it can last for several years.

DOSAGE:

1-2 dropperfuls (about 20-40 drops) of bilberry tincture daily.

Horse Chestnut Cooling Gel for Varicose Veins



The main active component in horse chestnut is aescin, typically comprising 16-20% of the extract. Aescin is traditionally used for its potential to reduce inflammation and support circulation, particularly in the legs, and is often used in the management of varicose veins. Witch hazel, known for its astringent and anti-inflammatory properties, alongside aloe vera, valued for its soothing and moisturizing effects, are commonly combined in traditional practices to support the management of vein-related concerns like varicose veins.

INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ cup of dried horse chestnut seeds or ½ cup of fresh horse chestnuts (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)
- 1 cup of witch hazel extract (*Hamamelis virginiana*)
- ¼ cup of aloe vera gel
- 10-15 drops of lavender essential oil (optional)

NOTES:

Be careful not to confuse the horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) with California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) or Ohio buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*). They are different plants with different effects. You can also take approx. 300 mg of horse chestnut seed extract that has esculin, a poisonous chemical, removed to reduce some symptoms of poor blood circulation.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 | **Prepare the Horse Chestnut Powder:** If you're using fresh horse chestnuts, peel and finely chop them. If you're using dried horse chestnut seeds, grind them into a fine powder using a coffee grinder or a mortar and pestle.
- 2 | **Create the Infusion:** Place the horse chestnut powder or chopped chestnuts into a glass jar. Pour the witch hazel extract over the chestnuts until they are fully submerged. Seal the jar with a lid and shake it well to mix the ingredients. Store the jar in a cool, dark place for at least two weeks. Shake the jar gently every day to ensure a thorough infusion.
- 3 | **Strain the Infusion:** After two weeks, strain the infused witch hazel through cheesecloth or a fine strainer to remove any solid particles. You should be left with a clear liquid.
- 4 | **Combine with Aloe Vera Gel and Essential Oil:** In a clean bowl, mix the strained horse chestnut-infused witch hazel with the aloe vera gel. If desired, add 10-15 drops of lavender essential oil for its soothing properties and pleasant scent. Stir well to combine all the ingredients thoroughly.
- 5 | **Transfer to a Container:** Pour the mixture into a clean glass jar or container with a secure lid for storage.
- 6 | **Storage:** Store your homemade gel in a cool, dry place. Refrigeration is not necessary but can provide an extra cooling effect when applied.

DOSAGE:

Apply the horse chestnut cooling gel to your varicose veins by gently massaging it into the affected areas. Use it as needed for relief, but avoid excessive use.