

Make Infused Medicine with Herbs by Cristina Babiak MD

Infusions allow for the medicinal essence and flavor of herbs to be released and available for home use in various forms that may not last as long on the shelf as commercially prepared tinctures and pills but may work at least as well, are less expensive and are fresh local.

Grebbe is a word referring to removing leaves from the stalks of culinary herbs since the stalks are hard to eat. Infusion herbs are not grebbed since stalks concentrate minerals, nutrients and stronger flavors than leaves. Store the dried leaves in a dark place in a tightly sealed jar to preserve the flavor. Use fresh stalks, leaves and flowers for infusions when available with bright color, potent taste and smell.

Vinegars infused with thyme, mints, sage, lavender, and rosemary from your garden will help fight infections, calm nerves, improve blood flow and heal sunburn and sores. Cut herb stalks into 1/2 inch pieces and pack them in a clean glass jar. Pour apple cider vinegar over the herbs, filling to the top. Metal lids corrode so use plastic, glass or cork. Store 4-6 wks in warm place then enjoy on salads, in soups, or mixed half and half with honey to stop invasions. Delicate herbs like fresh fragrant rose petals and lemon balm taste better with a lighter vinegar like rice or white wine. Oxymels are herbal preparations that date back as far as the ancient Greeks. They are made by combining herbs with both honey and vinegar. These sweet and sour preparations are specific to the respiratory system, especially when there is a lot of mucous present. Honey itself is anti-microbial well as slightly expectorant. To make oxymels, pick fresh mints, lemon balm, thyme, oregano or rosemary. Wilt for 1-2 days then dry and chop. Fill clean dry jar with fresh herb. Fill 1/3 or 1/2 with honey then with vinegar. Stir well. Use plastic lid or wax paper over metal lid. Stir and shake for several days. Let sit for 3-4 weeks. Strain off material with cheesecloth in funnel or leave it in. Use by spoonful for cough, congestion, sore throats and congestion, for salad dressing, soup or marinade. Garlic Honey: Smash raw unpeeled garlic and fill jar 1/3 full. Pour on raw local honey. Stir and smash. Cover. Let sit 3-4 weeks. Take 1 tsp as needed to prevent, fight infection of any kind. MERSA is sensitive to this powerful antibiotic. Cayenne oxymel.

Oil infusions can be eaten, rubbed into skin, scalp and muscles, mixed with melted bees wax to make salves, mixed with sugar or salt to make scrubs. Fill clean dry jar with fresh herb wilted 1-2 days. Pour olive or almond oil over to submerge with 1 inch dry at top, stir, cover, place in sunny spot for at least 2 weeks, shake, sing, pray... strain through cheese cloth. Can simmer low with double boiler or crock pot instead of sun. Cover and store in cool place until used within few months.

Vodka or brandy infusion: chop fresh herbs into jar, cover well with alcohol, soak 4-6 wks warm place. Tea best for chronic disorders: 1 Tb leaves and flowers /cup hot or warm water. Cover, steep, strain and drink 1 Qt warm all day or simmer roots, berries, seeds 1 hour. Gladstar's Herbal Recipes, www.mountainroseherbs.com . Grow 101 Herbs that Heal by Hartung

Supplemental References for Books, Magazine and Websites **By Cristina Babiak MD**

The following books, magazines and websites were referenced by Dr. Babiak during her May 8, 2013 presentation.

BOOKS

1. Healing Spices: How to Use 50 Everyday and Exotic to Boost Health and Beat Disease by Bharat B. Aggarwal.
2. Growing 101 Herbs That Heal: Gardening Techniques, Recipes and Remedies by Tammi Hartung.
3. The Green Pharmacy Herbal Handbook: Your Comprehensive Reference to the Best Herbs for Healing by James Duke.
4. The Green Pharmacy: New Discoveries in Herbal Remedies for Common Diseases and Conditions from the World's Foremost Authority on Healing Herbs by James Duke.

All of the above books are currently available through the Sarasota County Library System.

The following are available from Amazon and other sources:

1. Medicinal Seasonings by Keith Scott MD.
2. Herbal Recipes for Vibrant Health and Medicinal Herbs A Beginners Guide by Rosemary Gladstar.
3. Herbal Medicine: The Wild Medicine Solution by Guido Mase.
4. The Book of Herbal Wisdom: Using Plants as Medicines by Matthew Wood.

MAGAZINES

The Herb Companion (www.herbcompanion.com)

WEBSITES

1. www.greenmedinfo.com
2. www.eattheweeds.com