

HERBAL DECOCTIONS

This method is used for hard woody substances such as roots, bark, and stems that have constituents that are water-soluble and non-volatile. Decoctions extract mainly mineral salts and bitter principles. Decoctions are intended for immediate use. Store for a maximum of 72 hours in the refrigerator.

Basic Recipe

1-oz herb or root
1-pt water

Place the water into a pot made from a non-reactive material (such as stainless or enamel). Do not use aluminum. Cut or crush the herb or root and add it to water in the pot. Do not cut or crush in advance, as vital constituents can be lost. Turn on the heat to medium. Simmer your decoction with the lid off until the volume of water is reduced by one quarter, so three quarters of a pint remains. Cool and strain. Take in divided doses according to the use. Store for no more than 72 hours in the refrigerator.

Cough Syrup

1 tablespoon licorice root
1 tablespoon horehound
1 tablespoon marshmallow root
1 teaspoon elecampane root
1 teaspoon ginger root
1 pint water
4 tablespoons honey
4 ounces vegetable glycerine
1/8 teaspoon anise essential oil (optional)

Simmer herbs in water for 10 minutes, then steep for 20 minutes. Strain the tea, stir in honey and glycerin while the tea is still warm. Add the essential oil. Store in a cool place away from light.

This syrup will last 2 weeks. In the refrigerator it will last for several months. Take 1 tablespoon 2-3 times per day before food. This recipe is suitable for children at a reduced dosage, but not for babies who should not ingest honey.



Horehound
Marrubium vulgare

THERAPEUTIC ACTIONS OF HERBS IN COUGH SYRUP FORMULA

Licorice root – demulcent and expectorant, is good for dryness of the lungs, coughs and colds, counteracts sore throat, also detoxifies poisons, strengthens digestion, treats stomach ulcers, improves energy (chi tonic).

Horehound – expectorant, diaphoretic, and diuretic good for coughs, lung problems, hoarseness and good for fevers, also restores normal glandular secretions and relieves palpitations.

Marshmallow root – demulcent emollient and alterative, laxative, good for dryness and inflammation of the lungs, also alleviates painful urination and pain of kidney stones.

Elecampane root – expectorant, antiseptic, carminative, stimulant, astringent, used for chronic cold lung conditions with expectoration, good for cough, bronchitis and asthma. It strengthens digestion and inhibits the formation of mucus from weak digestion.

Ginger- diaphoretic, carminative, stimulant, emmenagogue, used to warm the body internally, aids digestion and assimilation, relieves colds and cramps and spasms, also is circulatory and disperses herbs in a formula throughout the body.

Anise essential oil – expectorant, carminative, antispasmodic, stimulant, used as an expectorant for coughs, helps bring up phlegm from the lungs, also used for digestive difficulties and increases peristalsis of the stomach and intestines.

Honey – tonic, demulcent, nutritive, expectorant, laxative, used in formulas makes herbs more tonic and moistening, alleviates dryness of the bowels.

Vegetable Glycerine - is a clear, colorless, and odorless liquid with an incredibly sweet taste having the consistency of thick syrup. It is used as an agent in cosmetics, toothpaste, shampoos, soaps, herbal remedies, pharmaceuticals, and other household items. Because it is soluble in both, water and alcohol, its versatility is a major benefactor in its purported growth and popularity within the manufacturing sector. It is invaluable as a natural source ingredient with emollient like properties which can soften and soothe the skin and it assists the outer epidermis in retaining moisture. This helps to explain why it is one of the most popular cosmetic additives used today. Other uses include its solvency action that aids herbalists in extracting botanical properties from plant materials without the use of alcohol. This is especially helpful for those with alcohol sensitivities as most liquid herbal extracts contain alcohol. But given its severely limited shelf life, extracts made from vegetable glycerine typically have a shelf life of 14-24 months whereas alcohol extracts can have an extended shelf life of 4-6 years.