

COLD & FLU SEASON PREPARATIONS

HOW TO COMBAT THE NASTIES & KEEP IT COZY

Before we dive in, a reflection of some early winter thoughts. These thoughts really knit together an outline of the bodies experience during colder months.

Winter, is ruled by water. In herbalism, we relate water to nourishment & cleansing. During the winter months those are our focuses. To nourish, is to purify. To purify, is to detox.

We see this come up physically & spiritually. Winter is also affiliated with the North. The elders of the world are said to reside in the North, perpetual winter. I visualize my elders standing strong, unaffected by the somewhat harsh & abrasiveness of winter. In order to stand strong & unaffected, you must first build endurance & gain wisdom. This becomes a mental image I hold close & visit often on my hardest days. It is a reminder of all that we gain through periods of inner winter.

When I think on some of the things our bodies experience while adjusting to the winter months, this visualization of finding wisdom & endurance against cold winds is very strong for me. Most of us experience sniffles, tickled throats, coughs, swollen lymphs, less energy, maybe some aches & pains, and often times one real good bout of cold or flu during this season. If we take a look at why we experience this year after year, we can really see pretty clearly what our body is telling us.

When the body experiences a cold, it is quite literally looking for warmth.

With less movement & sweating, our bodies are prone to more damp stagnation. This is why herbs like ginger, black pepper, cinnamon, garlic & cloves are so prominent in winter cold care.

It is important that instead of trying to snuff out and move through these symptoms, we listen and nurture ourselves.

TOP 10 REMEDIES

Cold & Flu Preparations

THE BOUNTIFUL BENEFITS OF VITAMINS D & C

Preparing for Cold & Flu season can feel a lot like preparing for battle...

And it is but you will soon be armed with our tried & true methods for strengthening your first line of defense:

The Immune System

Vitamin D : Increases our antimicrobial peptides which support the respiratory tract.

As winter approaches we experience less and less sunshine.

Less sun = less Vitamin D

Less Vitamin D = higher susceptibility to bacterial & viral infections.

Less sun also means less access to *fruit* which is the most common source of the equally important:

Vitamin C : Replenishes the Immune System & supports the body's natural functions that fend off infection.

1

BEST PRACTICES:

Daylight Savings ends in November & begins again in March. This is the best period of time to increase your intake of Vitamins D & C and stock up on your favorite remedies for the season.

2

ELDERBERRY SYRUP

Okay, i know, i know, we're all worn out on Elderberry Syrup. But it's a fact that Elderberry can both prevent and shorten the duration of a cold or flu by HALF. Elderberries naturally contain vitamins A, B, & C and stimulate the immune system. All you need to craft your very own syrup, is a handful of berries, household spices such as Cinnamon, Clove, Cardamom & Anise, any citrus peels or juice & some filtered water. Make it, buy it, just take it!



3

FIRE CIDER

Take your fire cider! Acidifying the body stimulates immune cells. It also warms up the body which is exactly what a cold calls for. Fire Cider is an incredible anti-inflammatory and antibacterial, making it great for the bacteria that can cause a sinus infection. Not to mention the digestive tract benefits! This is a remedy we have on hand year round. Though you can get as creative as you'd like, this one is also easily made with basic household ingredients. The key ingredient you may have to source is Horseradish root. Otherwise, pull together some raw ACV, Garlic, Onion, perhaps some Ginger, Honey & spices.



4 HERBAL TEA

Find a tea blend you really enjoy. Something tasty & effective. Perhaps make one! We love our You Give Me Fever Tea & Throat Coat. Mucilaginous herbs such as Marshmallow Root, Slippery Elm & Mullein are a must for sore throats. Choose a sick mug - again, something cozy that you really like.



5 SORE THROAT SPRAY

An herbal throat spray should be filled with powerful antibacterial, antiviral, anti-inflammatory & analgesic herbs. This helps prevent infections while mildly numbing the throat. Typically during a respiratory irritation, mucus is draining in the back of the throat. This makes the herbs in our Sore Throat Spray like Propolis, Yarrow, Myrrh & Spilanthes, even more important than simply easing discomfort.

6 LUNG SUPPORT

In our family, colds go straight to the lungs, so bronchial care is vital. Look for herbs with expectorant properties & soothing, coating abilities. You will want damp herbs (our cold + cough syrup) such as Grindelia or Yerba Santa for those deep rooted, dry coughs & wheezes. Look for ingredients like Pearly Everlasting, Lobelia & Elecampane for damp, over productive coughs (Lung Mend Tincture).



7 LYMPH DRAINAGE

Our lymphatic system is quite important. Swollen lymphs are a good sign your body is working to rid a bacteria or virus. The lymphatic system aides in waste management. It can occasionally get backed up which is why we love practicing a little extra lymph love this time of year. Cooling, expectorant herbs like in our Chest Rub or lymph moving herbs like in our Gust oil work really well but you can also just use plain olive oil. Gently massage your face, focusing on the sinus areas, out and down toward the neck, then under arms & groin region. We especially love our Gua Sha tool for the face & neck areas.



8 EAR & NASAL OIL

Okay, I may lose some of you here, but once you try it, you might change your mind. If you suffer from allergies or are prone to sinus infection, you're probably familiar with that pressure that can arise in the ear canal from not being able to breathe freely through the nose. Double... whammy. Now i love a good neti pot session, but this is a little different. We are utilizing natural antibiotic & anti-inflammatory herbs to open the passages. You can make an oil at home with garlic, mullein flower, a touch of ginger, oil of oregano and CBD if you have it. Some like to add herbaceous herbs like peppermint & eucalyptus but we keep it simple. Take things to a whole new level by massaging around the sinuses after dripping a couple drops back.



TREATS!

When i'm sick, the absolute hardest part for me is avoiding all my treats that can promote mucous, such as yogurt, ice cream, chocolate and yeah.. you guessed it, cookies. So, i just have to replace the dairy portion with a nut milk. Hot cacao really satisfies my sweet tooth. So does honey! I make sure im prepared with love honey and drinking chocolate. Touch of almond or coconut milk and bam. I also have been known to go so far as to make a spiced coconut whipped cream which is dangerously easy. Can of coconut milk in refrigerator, puncture the bottom of the can and drain the liquid. You will be left with just the creamy fat. Whip it in a mixer or with a hand mixer until fluffy. Add spice, everything nice & maybe some herbal powders. Candied ginger, herbal marshmallows & honey lozenges are also wonderful options.



NOURISHING BROTHS

Cooking when feverish and sick is not fun. Being prepared with broth all winter is not only an incredible way to keep the gut happy, but is also a very quick & easy meal or base to a meal.

We prefer bone broth in this house but our herbal sipping broth or Miso broth is just as wonderful for getting in that dense nutrition. In fact, i love our herbal sipping broth so much it is the 2nd main ingredient in our bone broth.

So pull out your veggie scraps, garlic, fresh culinary herbs, mushrooms, maybe some seaweed (i LOVE Dulse flakes), maybe some fermented pastes such as Miso or Gochujang, maybe some Fire Cider or Kimchi Juice & make yourself some broth. The act of crafting broth and simmering it on the stove alone feels healing.



MORE TIPS

Some of my favorite immunostimulant, cold fighting herbs include:

Yarrow
Anise
Garlic
Ginger
Turkey Tail
Lobelia
Propolis
Myrrh
Spilanthes
Yerba Santa
Grindelia
Pearly Everlasting
Wild Cherry Bark
Astralagus
Elderflower & Berry
Oregon Graperoot
Yellow Root
Rose Hips
Marshmallow Root

Some ways to incorporate these herbs include.

- Make a tea blend or two
- Infuse honey with choice herbs & yummy spices
- Make a powdered herb blend that you can add to elixirs, smoothies stocks syrups or cough drops
- Make traditional, herbal marshmallows
- Make an Electuary or Pastille