



All They Really Need: Trusting the Wisdom of Nature to Raise Resilient Kids

HERBAL MAGIC

Herbs are a wonderful way to treat health concerns. Unlike pharmaceutical medications, they tend to contain multiple components that work together to address the issue. However, just because something is natural does not mean it is necessarily safe or effective. Here are some helpful and safe herbs your family can take when they're under the weather. If you have any doubts about safety, talk to a healthcare provider who is knowledgeable about plant medicine.

To make a tea:

- Pour 1 cup of boiling water over 1 to 2 tsp. (or tea bags) of loose herb. Let steep until cool enough to drink or touch (some herbs are roots or woody and do better when simmered for about twenty minutes; see below for examples).
- Tea can be consumed directly (warm or cold), or used as a base for broth, smoothies, or popsicles. Depending on the flavour, kids may be cooperative or not; try adding a splash of juice or blending with frozen fruit. This may require experimentation—kids love to be involved!
- Four cups more can be added to a bath.
- A cloth can be soaked in the tea and used as a compress.



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Function	Examples	Comments
Herbs that promote immune system balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce or prevent infections • downregulate the allergic response 	Astragalus Codonopsis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using during acute infections. • Avoid using for extended periods. • Use with caution in autoimmune conditions.
Immune stimulants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • upregulate the response of the immune system to infections or vaccinations 	Echinacea Andrographis Elderberry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid in autoimmune conditions. • Only use for short periods.
Herbs that encourage drainage of waste products (lymphatics) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • useful during convalescence of acute or frequent infections 	Pokeroot Cleavers Nettles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only use for short periods.
Herbs that are antimicrobial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address the cause of the infection 	Oregon grape root Garlic Honey ***	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be consumed orally • Can also be gargled or applied to the skin.
Herbs that are “warming” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for a non-serious infection for which a higher temperature may enhance the immune response 	Ginger Cinnamon Garlic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These herbs work well in teas, broths, or smoothies, as well as in baths.
Herbs that are cooling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for high temperatures (>40°C) that are not showing signs of reducing 	Yarrow Peppermint Elderberry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These herbs work well in teas, broths, or smoothies, as well as in baths.
Herbs to calm and reassure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for a child who is anxious or upset because of pain or itching or fever 	Catnip Chamomile Passionflower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These herbs work well in teas, broths, or smoothies, as well as in baths.
Herbs to soothe a sore throat or cough <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soothe and relax 	Honey *** Licorice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be added to other formulas/ teas
Herbs to soothe an upset tummy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anti-nausea and calming 	Ginger Peppermint Chamomile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best taken as a tea.

***Honey should only be used in children over twelve months of age.



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Sample treatments for common concerns

The first step is always to ensure your child is not dealing with a more serious (e.g., bacterial) infection that requires more aggressive management. See additional handout to assess when to worry. For acute illnesses, smaller doses given more frequently are helpful. Aim for six times per day for each of the formulae below, unless otherwise indicated.

Fever-supporting tea (if temperature is below 38°C):

Simmer 3 slices ginger root in 1 cup water for 20 minutes. Add a tiny pinch of cayenne. Drink half a cup at a time or add any warming herb to soups, stews, or smoothies.

Fever-lowering tea (or bath) (if temperature is above 39°C):

Yarrow, echinacea and peppermint: 1 tsp. or 1 tea bag of each per 2 cups boiling water). Drink liberally, half a cup at a time.

Common cold (runny nose, congestion, cough, itchy throat, low or no fever):

- Magic socks
- Elderberry syrup (1 tsp. frequently through the day)
- Fever supporting or lowering tea (if needed)
- Echinacea, licorice, and ginger tea (simmer 2 tsp. echinacea, 1 tsp. licorice, and 1 tsp. ginger for 20 minutes in 4 cups of water). Drink half a cup at a time.
- 1 tsp. honey (if over 12 months of age) as needed for cough and itchy throat

Ear infection (have assessed by healthcare provider first):

- Magic socks
- Fever supporting or lowering tea or bath
- Chamomile, passionflower, or catnip tea to calm and relax
- Elderberry syrup: 1 tsp. frequently through the day
- Ear oil: add 1 clove crushed garlic to 2 ounces of olive oil—let sit overnight; strain and use dropper to apply 5 drops to the ear canal. Move around the ear to help the oil reach the eardrum, using a cloth to absorb excess. Apply 2 to 3 times per day.



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Sore throat (have assessed by a healthcare provider to rule out strep):

- Magic socks
- Elderberry syrup
- Fever supportive or lowering tea
- Andrographis, Oregon grape root, pokeroor tincture (commercial versions available, or 2 parts andrographis, 1 part Oregon grape root, ½ part phytolacca). Gargle and swallow ½ tsp. in ½ ounce water.

Note: This will not taste good, so prepare your child so it doesn't come back into your face! Be ready with a chaser—elderberry syrup can be good.

Cough (have assessed by a health-care provider to rule out more serious concerns like pneumonia or whooping cough):

- Cough compress (1 tbsp. each, fresh grated ginger and crushed garlic in 1 ounce olive or castor oil spread on chest.) You can add one drop of eucalyptus oil, which can be stimulating to the cough.
- Elderberry syrup: give 1 tsp. frequently throughout the day.
- Thyme, ginger, passionflower, and honey tea: simmer 3 slices of fresh sliced ginger in 2 cups of water for 20 minutes. Pour over 1 tsp. thyme and 1 tsp. passionflower. Add honey to taste (if over 12 months of age). Drink half a cup at a time.

Tummy bug (or a nervous tummy):

- Keep hydrated (offer water, smoothies, broths, tea).
- Ginger and chamomile tea (simmer 3 slices fresh ginger in 2 cups water for 20 minutes; pour over 1 tsp. chamomile leaves). Drink as often as the patient wishes.
- Probiotics (Lactobacillus rhamnosus GG; 5 billion CFU twice per day with food).

Frequent infections (or post-infection recovery):

- Astragalus (2 parts), codonopsis (2 parts) and pokeroor (1 part) tincture (commercial versions available). Give ½ tsp. in a bit of water 3 times per day.