Elderberry Tonic for Cold and Flu Prevention

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www.motherearthnews.com/real-food/elderberry-tonic-for-cold-and-flu-prevention-zbcz1508

Elderberry, *Sambucus*, is a seasonal berry that fruits in time for the prevention of cold and flu season. A member of the Honeysuckle Family (*Caprifoliaceae*), elderberries are perennial shrubs with pithy stems that are typically found in valley bottoms or along streams.

*Leaves* are oppositely arranged on the stems with 5 to 9 strongly pointed and sharply toothed leaflets that are 2-5 inches long.

*Flowers* are white with many tiny flowers in clusters.

*Fruit* is in the form of pea-sized berries that ripen from green to dark blue or black with a waxy coating.

**Health Benefits of Elderberries**

North American, European, Western Asian and North African cultures have known the medicinal properties of the elderberry plant for thousands of years. The health benefits of the plant are widespread:

• Antioxidant
• Lowers Cholesterol
• Improves Vision
• Boots Immune System
• Improves Heart Health
• Fights Bacterial and Viral Infections

Most notably, the fruit ripens in time to make an elixir to prevent and treat the common cold and flu.

**Special Notes:**

1. NEVER give Elderberry Tonic to infants 12 months/under.

2. Elderberries can be used as any other berry for pies, jams, breads, stuffing, etc.

3. Consuming raw elderberries causes extreme GI distress in many people. Try a few berries raw before overindulging.

**Recipe** adapted from WellnessMama.com

**Ingredients**

• 2/3 cup Elderberries (fresh or frozen)

• 3-1/2 cups of water

• 2 tbsp fresh or dried ginger root (or powder) (very gingery, may want to reduce to 1 tbsp powder)

• 1 tsp cinnamon powder

• 1/2 tsp cloves or clove powder

• 1 cup raw honey

**Instructions**

1. Pour water into a medium saucepan and add elderberries, ginger, cinnamon and cloves.

2. Bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer until the liquid reduces to almost half (about 45 minutes to 1 hour).

3. Remove from heat and let cool for 15 minutes. Pour through a strainer into a glass jar or bowl.

4. Discard the elderberries (feed to chickens or compost) and let the liquid cool to lukewarm.

5. Add 1 cup of honey and stir well. (Note: honey is added after the mixture has cooled to keep raw enzymes intact).

6. Pour mixture into glass jars to be stored in the fridge for up to three months.

**Recommended Doses**

**Prevention** (can be taken daily)

1. Kids (13 months-12 years old): 1/2 to 1 teaspoon

2. Adults: 1/2 to 1 Tablespoon

**Recovery**

Take the normal dose every 2-3 hours until symptoms disappear.
Cough and Itchy Throat Syrup

Mother Earth News Oct/Nov 2016 p. 56:
Yield: 1 1/2 pints

Directions: Combine herbs, spices, and water in a medium saucepan, bring to a boil, and reduce heat to low. Simmer for approximately 1 hour, allowing the volume to reduce by half (be sure the liquid doesn't simmer away completely). Remove pan from heat and allow to cool. Strain through cheesecloth. Add lemon juice and honey and stir. Keep refrigerated in a glass jar with a tight fitting lid for 1 to 2 months. Suggested dose is 1 to 2 tsps as needed.

- 1/2 c dried elderberries
- 1/4 c ginger root, freshly grated
- 1/4 c marshmallow root
- 1/4 c dried hyssop
- 1 tbsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp fresh thyme, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp black pepper, freshly ground
- 1 quart water
- 1/4 c lemon juice
- 1 c raw honey

Elderberry Marshmallows


Author: Wellness Mama

Ingredients

- 2 cups of water
- 2 Tablespoons dried elderberries
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon powder (optional)
- ½ teaspoon whole cloves (optional)
- ½ inch piece of fresh ginger root (optional)
- 4 tablespoons pasture raised gelatin powder
- 1 cup of maple syrup or honey

Instructions

1. Bring the dried elderberries, spices (if using) and the 2 cups of water to a boil in a small pan. Simmer for 5-10 minutes.

2. Strain out the elderberries and spices and measure out 1 cup of the resulting liquid.

3. Put ½ cup of the liquid in a mixer bowl (or large bowl if using a hand mixer) and add the 4 tablespoons (1/4 cup) gelatin powder. Mix lightly to incorporate and set aside.

4. Combine the remaining ½ cup of liquid and the 1 cup of honey or maple syrup in a saucepan. Slowly bring the water and honey mixture to a boil. If you have a kitchen thermometer, you want it to reach at least 240 degrees. If not, just keep boiling, stirring constantly for about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.

5. Slowly start pouring the honey/water mixture into the bowl with the gelatin mix (which will be hardened by now).

6. Turn on the mixer or hand mixer and keep on medium as the honey mixture is added.

7. When add honey mix is added, turn the mixer to high and blend with the mixer for another 10-15 minutes or until it forms a stiff cream the consistency of marshmallow cream (it should form gentle peaks).

8. Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with coconut oil, or line with parchment paper, leaving some on the sides to be able to pull up.

9. When marshmallows are whipped, pour into the lined/greased dish and smooth evenly.

10. Let sit at least 4 hours (overnight is better).

11. Flip on to a cutting board and cut with a well oiled pizza cutter or knife. Dust with cinnamon powder and/or coconut sugar if desired to keep from being sticky.

12. Store in an airtight container but not in the refrigerator.
Elder Blossom Tea

http://urbanherbology.org/2011/01/18/elderflower-tea/

Use one or two big umbels per cup of tea. You can use the actual flowers alone (although it’s a bit fiddly to separate them when fresh) or the entire umbels. I simply place whole umbels (sort of folded up) in a small tea pot, add boiled water, cover and infuse for 5 – 10 minutes. If making it in a cup, do cover with a saucer whilst it infuses.

If you would like to harvest Elder flowers to dry and store then collect them just before the shrubs are in full bloom (May/June). Harvest as above, lay out on paper to dry in a warm, well ventilated place. When thoroughly dry the little flowers can be rubbed off the umbels and stored in jam jars, in a dark place, for up to a year. You would use about 1 heaped teaspoon of dried herb per cup of tea.

It is well worth keeping some dried Elderflower in stock over the cold and flu months. Herbals generally recommend that it is freely taken for 4 days during a cold or flu (up to 8 cups daily) and up to a few cups per day at other times.

Elder Blossom Iced Tea

- Several umbrels of fresh elderberry blossoms to loosely fill 1/3 of gallon container or 1/3 c dried elderberry blossoms
- 1 c evaporated cane sugar
- 1 gallon water
- Place ingredients in a glass jar and let sit for 4-12 hours
- Drink cold and enjoy!
- May prepare as a hot tea with honey and then drink cold

Additional Information


**Flu-Fighting Ability**

A study published in the "Online Journal of Pharmacology and PharmacoKinetics" in 2009 found that elder flower extract is very effective in treating flu symptoms. Participants experiencing three or more flu symptoms were given four doses daily of elder flower extract at 175 milligrams, while others were given a placebo. After just two days, 28 percent of the elder flower group were no longer experiencing symptoms and 60 percent had significantly less severe symptoms, while the placebo group showed no improvements in symptom prevalence or severity. Despite these promising findings, the benefits of drinking elder flower tea have not been confirmed.

**Cholesterol Benefits**

A study published in the "European Journal of Clinical Nutrition" in 2004 found that elderberry juice lowered total cholesterol and triglyceride levels in young adults after two weeks of daily doses. Elder flowers themselves have not been studied for their effect on cholesterol, but they do contain quercetin, which was found to reduce cholesterol levels in test tube studies. More research is needed to determine whether drinking elder flower tea improves cholesterol levels.

**Some Precautions**

Regular consumption of elder flower tea has been found to be safe in the short term, but its long-term safety has not been determined. The berries of the elder plant are also used as medicine, but they are toxic when consumed raw. The bark, leaves and seeds of the elder plant are toxic and should be completely avoided. Elder flower may have a diuretic effect and enhance the effect of other diuretics, whether natural or pharmaceutical. Consult with your doctor if you’re taking any medications, as they could interact with elder flowers. Avoid elder flower tea if you’re pregnant or breast-feeding.
Elderberry – University of Maryland
umm.edu/health/medical/altmed/herb/elderberry

Introduction

Elderberry, or elder, has been used for centuries to treat wounds, when applied to the skin. It is also taken by mouth to treat respiratory illnesses such as cold and flu. Some evidence suggests that chemicals in elder flower and berries may help reduce swelling in mucous membranes, including the sinuses, and help relieve nasal congestion. Elder may have anti-inflammatory, antiviral, anti-influenza, and anticancer properties.

Elderberry also contains flavonoids, which have antioxidant properties and may help prevent damage to the body’s cells. In fact, elderberry outranks blueberries, cranberries, goji berries, and blackberries in terms of total flavonol content. However, few studies have been done in humans, so researchers don’t know how effective elder may be.

There are several species of elder, but Sambucus nigra, or European elder (also called black elder), is most often used for medicinal purposes. Avoid dwarf elder (Sambucus ebulus), which can be toxic. Use a trusted preparation of elder because raw or unripe fruit, as well as the leaves, seeds, and bark, contain a chemical related to cyanide, which is poisonous.

Medicinal Uses and Indications

Colds and Flu

Elderberry may help treat cold and flu symptoms by reducing congestion and possibly making you sweat more. One study suggested that using a standardized elderberry extract, Sambucol, could shorten the duration of flu by about 3 days. Sambucol contains other herbs plus vitamin C, so no one knows whether elderberry by itself would have the same effect.

Another preliminary study found that a lozenge with elderberry extract (ViraBLOC) helped reduce flu symptoms when taken within 24 hours of symptoms starting. In the lab, one study suggested that elderberry could kill the H1N1 virus (“swine flu”) in test tubes, but researchers do not know whether it would be effective against H1N1 in people.

Bacterial Sinusitis (Sinus Infection)

One study examined the use of a proprietary product, Sinupret, to treat bacterial sinusitis along with an antibiotic (doxycycline or vibramycin) and a decongestant. People who took the combination did better compared to those who did not take Sinupret. However, Sinupret contains other herbs along with elderberry, so no one knows whether taking elderberry alone would work as well.

Available Forms

Elderberry is available as a liquid, syrup, and tincture, as well as in capsule and lozenge forms. Dried elder flower is usually standardized to at least 0.8% flavonoids. Sambucol is standardized to 38% elderberry extract for adults and 19% for children. Sinupret contains 18 mg of elder flower.

How to Take It

Pediatric

DO NOT give elderberry or any product containing elder to a child without first talking to your pediatrician.

Adult

- Sinupret: 2 tablets taken 3 times a day for bacterial sinusitis
- Sambucol: 4 tbsp. a day for 3 days for colds and flu
- Tea: Steep 3 to 5 g dried elder flower in 1 cup boiling water for 10 to 15 minutes. Strain and drink 3 times per day.

Precautions

The use of herbs is a time-honored approach to strengthening the body and treating disease. Herbs, however, can trigger side effects and interact with other herbs, supplements, or medications. For these reasons, you should take herbs only under the supervision of a health care provider.

DO NOT use unripe or uncooked elderberries. They may be poisonous.

Elderberry appears to have few side effects when used properly for short periods of time (up to 5 days).

Pregnant and breastfeeding women should not take elderberry.

If you have an autoimmune disease, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus, ask your doctor before taking elderberry, as it may stimulate the immune system.

Possible Interactions

If you are being treated with any of the following medications, you should talk to your health care provider before taking elderberry:

Diuretics (water pills). Diuretics help the body get rid of excess fluid and increase the amount of urine your body makes. Elderberry may also act as a diuretic, so taking it along with a diuretic could make that drug stronger and raise your risk of dehydration.

Diabetes medications. Elderberry may lower blood sugar levels. If you are also taking drugs for diabetes, taking elderberry may increase your risk of developing hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar.

Chemotherapy. Elderberry may interact with some chemotherapy drugs. If you are undergoing chemotherapy, ask your oncologist before taking any herb or supplement.

Laxatives. Elderberry may act like a laxative and should not be taken at the same time as other laxatives.

Theophylline (TheoDur). Elderberry may reduce levels of theophylline, a drug taken for asthma and other respiratory conditions. That could make the drug not work as well.

Drugs that suppress the immune system. Because elderberry may stimulate the immune system, it could interfere with medications taken to suppress the immune system. These medications include corticosteroids (prednisone) and medications used to treat autoimmune diseases. People with organ transplants should also avoid elderberry.
Elderberry Dumplings

http://www.food.com/recipe/elderberry-dumplings-394508

BERRY MIXTURE

- 1 cup berries
- 1 large apple, grated
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ¾ cup water

DUMPLING MIXTURE

- ¾ cup flour, sifted
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup lemon peel, grated
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 egg

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all the berry mixture ingredients, heat them gently and keep them warm while you make the dumplings.

2. Make the dumplings: Add the other dry ingredients to the sifted and measured flour.

3. Mix the milk and the egg in a small bowl and stir them into the flour combination until the dough is just blended.

4. Now pour the hot berry mixture into a casserole and drop in small spoonfuls of the dumpling batter.

5. Bake the dish at 400°F for 25 to 30 minutes until the pastry balls are lightly browned.

6. Serve the dessert warm with cream or vanilla ice cream.