

Homemade Food And Natural Remedies

Self-sufficiency in the Kitchen



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Be your own provider

Nobody expects you to be self-sufficient all at once. It's a progressive process, even for the most determined people. But you know what? **Start today!** Don't postpone it any longer.

The decisions we make every day-even down to which grain was used to make the flour in your morning toast-are part of a chain of thousands of other decisions that, taken together, have a profound effect on the resources of our planet and the health and prosperity of our families. The urge to take back some control of our own lives and futures has never been stronger.



There are so many things that we would like to do, but time and/or money tends to be the main stumbling block. So work is partly the problem and partly the solution. Should we live to work or work to live? A few of us are able to say that our work is fun, fulfilling, and we would choose to do it even if we weren't being paid.

However, the vast majority of us have yet to find a way of living our dream. The dream of being self sufficient. There's nothing quite like fresh, quality food, enjoyed just after it's been picked and prepared. It may be old-fashioned, but it's safe and it's fun. And it gives you the priceless feeling of independence.

In this guide I will show you how to make your one food like cheese and butter, but also how to stay away from dangerous diseases with

natural remedies made from herbs. Shortly, I'll teach you how to be your own provider and start a self-sufficient life in the kitchen.

Your kitchen, your rules

You may not be aware of this, but everyone can be a natural cheese-maker or artisan baker with little effort. You just need the “know how” instructions and a little enthusiasm. I can give you the first part and I'll let you take care of the second.

The kitchen is the heart of many homes. It's where you start the day by having your cup of coffee and where you enjoy family meals. But it's also where you use your energy to prepare fresh and high-quality food for your loved ones. In order to do that, you need to get organized and always keep the place clean.



The first step to creating an eco-friendly kitchen is to avoid any food waste and prevent any from reaching a landfill site. This means eating products before their expiration dates and buying in bulk, which reduces packaging and travel costs to and from stores.

Sort the contents of your pantry by food type and arrange products like the aisle of a supermarket so that you can easily see what you have and what needs replacing. In our pantry we have one clearly labeled shelf for open condiments and another marked “Closed for

storage,” which prevents us from opening too many jars at the same time. You may also find that pull-out baskets are useful for fresh produce.

Remember, too, that “best before” dates on products simply refer to the time when food is at its best, so it will usually be okay to eat for a while after that date. The only foods you should avoid after their expiration date are eggs. If more perishable food is close to its expiration date and you are going away for a few days, or you have other meal plans, then freeze it.

Another great way to reduce food waste is to be creative and make meals with leftovers. Try established leftover recipes or experiment with your own. You could try throwing old apples into a pan with sausages or using some stale cookies as a crumble topping. The possibilities are endless.

Homemade Bread

Nothing makes a home feel more cozy than the smell of freshly baking bread. And it's SO darn easy to make homemade bread (and I don't mean with a bread machine).



There's really no reason not to. It's cheap, it takes very little work, and it ensures that you aren't buying bread that's loaded with preservatives and other ingredients you can't pronounce.

Bread is a great source of energy, because it is rich in carbohydrates. The human body slowly turns these carbohydrates into sugar, which the body utilizes for energy.

Yeast

Yeast-leavened breads are the most commonly found breads; they rise when the yeast converts the sugars in the flour into alcohol and carbonic gases. After the alcohol has evaporated, the carbon dioxide makes bubbles in the dough, giving it that unmistakable fluffy texture.

Yeast is a temperamental ingredient that needs warmth to flourish, but don't expose it to temperatures over 95°F (35°C) or you'll kill it. Fresh yeast looks like soft putty with a strong yeasty smell. Refrigerate it or freeze it in 1-in (2.5-cm) cubes. I prefer it to dried yeast, but if you are using dried, use half the weight stated for fresh in the recipe.

Kneading

Pummeling your dough is not only a very important part of the bread making process, but it is also a superb stress-buster. While you're dissolving your pent-up tension, you're also distributing the yeast evenly through the dough to



make it rise properly. It can be treated harshly and will love you for it.

Push and pull the dough until it becomes silky and elastic. After a while, do the window pane test: stretch a portion of dough between your hands until it forms a thin sheet that you can see light through. (If it tears, it's not ready.)

Now put the dough aside until it has doubled in size. You'll know the bread is fully risen if it springs back to its original size when you stick your finger in it.

You are free to experiment with flours. Try traditional breads from your local bakery and a variety of flours in your baking instead of buying tasteless, fluffy loaves from the supermarket. Here are some of my favorite flours:

Wheat flour, which is a rich source of fiber as well as protein and vitamins B and E. It is also rich in gluten, rises very well, and produces a workable, stretchy dough.

Rye flour, a traditionally dark, heavy flour with a slightly sour taste and an excellent chewy texture, is a favorite in much of eastern Europe. It is low in gluten and a popular choice for people with wheat intolerance.

Barley flour is extra-delicious if you toast the barley flour first. It makes a lovely, sweet-tasting bread. We mix one-third barley flour with two-thirds wheat flour for a good loaf. Barley is also low in gluten.

Spelt flour is made from the earliest known grain and is especially high in protein, vitamins, and minerals as well as being naturally low in gluten. The loaf can be fairly dry, so add some wheat flour if you want it to rise well.

Wholegrain Bread

Ingredients:

1 1/2 lb (600 g) spelt or wholegrain flour
2 tsp yeast
1 1/2 cups (400 ml) water
3 oz (100 g) mixed seeds
2 tsp salt



Instructions

- Mix the flour and yeast in a bowl and add the water (in cold weather, use tepid water to activate the yeast).
- Work the mixture into a dough, spread it on a work surface, and knead it thoroughly until it is elastic. Sprinkle the salt over it and then most of the seeds.
- Use a scraper to bring in the edges of dough. Consolidate it into a neat shape.
- Put the dough in an oiled bowl, spray with oil, cover with a damp dish towel, and leave it in a warm place to rise.
- Knock back the dough, divide it into halves, and put them in oiled loaf tins.
- Spray with water to make a sticky surface, and sprinkle with seeds. Cover with plastic wrap and leave for 2 hours.

- Bake at 400°F (200°C) for 20 minutes.
- Knock out of the tins and bake on a tray for another 10 minutes to form a crust.

Homemade Cream and Yogurt

If you milk a cow or goat and then leave a bowl of the milk to stand at room temperature, the cream will separate naturally and rise to the surface. You can then skim it off with a skimmer—a flat, saucer-shaped utensil about 8 in (20 cm) across, traditionally made out of wood or tin, and perforated with small holes to allow the excess milk to drain away.

The alternative way to separate cream from milk is to use a specially designed shallow trough, often made of slate, with a drain in the base. Pour the milk in and wait for the cream to rise. Once the cream is almost solid, pull the plug and the milk runs away into a vessel below, leaving you with a trough of cream.



If you are buying milk to make cream, you need non-homogenized (cream-top) whole milk. Some farm stores, supermarkets, and home delivery dairies sell it. You can't use homogenized milk because the homogenization process stops the fat, or cream, from separating out.

Souring milk for yogurt

Yogurt is milk that has been soured with lactic-acid bacteria. It's easy to make your own: simply stir about 2 tbsp (30 ml) of store-bought live yogurt into about a quart (liter) of full-fat or reduced-fat milk. Cover the container and leave in a warm environment to work overnight.

The yogurt is ready to eat when it has a thick consistency, at which point it's probably best to move it to the refrigerator. However, if you want to keep your yogurt culture alive and use it to make more than one batch, keep it in a hay box, and every time you take out some yogurt to eat, replace it with the same quantity of fresh milk.



Souring cream for butter

Cream can easily be turned into butter. First, you need to sour the cream by encouraging bacteria to turn some of the lactose into lactic acid. This will happen naturally in warm weather; for a quicker result and on cooler days, add a few teaspoons of already soured cream or yogurt to the cream and stir to mix.

Clotted cream

Clotted cream is made by heating milk so that the cream becomes very thick and forms a yellow crust. Leave fresh milk for 12 hours at room temperature, then heat it to 197°F (92°C). Cool it immediately by pouring it into a bowl. Once cool, leave it in the refrigerator for a further 24 hours, then skim off the delicious homemade clotted cream.

Homemade Butter

Shaking sour cream (see opposite) turns it into butter. You can simply use an electric mixer to do this—you don't need a butter churn. If the cream is at a temperature of about 68°F (20°C) then the butter will “come” (change from cream to butter) in a matter of minutes.

Ingredients

1 quart (1 liter) heavy cream
3 tsp live natural yogurt
Salt

Tools

Electric mixer
Wooden cutting board
Butter pats and stamp
Mold or wax paper



- 1. Pour the cream** into a clean sterilized bowl.
- 2. Add the live yogurt** and mix for a few minutes.

3. The consistency starts to change to make soft peaks.

4. Continue mixing until the cream looks like scrambled eggs and turns pale yellow. After 2–3 minutes more, small globules of butter form. Add a little cold, clean water when the mixture looks like a firm mass of butter globules and keep mixing for 1 minute on low speed. Pour off the milky by-product (buttermilk) and keep it for making pancakes (see box).

5. Use butter pats or wooden spatulas to transfer the butter to a wooden cutting board for washing. (Butter pats are grooved paddles.)

6. Mix and squeeze the butter with the pats. Keep adding more water to wash the butter—this stops it from turning rancid later on.

7. Collect the buttermilk as it washes off. Continue rinsing the butter with water and collecting buttermilk until the liquid runs clear.

8. Layer the butter in a mold, salting it with at least 2 percent of its weight in salt.

9. Push the layers down to drive out air bubbles.

10. Stamp the butter to decorate. If you don't have a mold, roll up the butter in wax paper instead.

Homemade Cheese

The alternative to buying your cheese is making it yourself. It can be a wonderful pastime for you and your family. There is nothing quite like the feel of creating something. There are only a few simple steps necessary to make cheese and most decently equipped kitchens have the necessary equipment. But, to make cheese that will knock your friends and family off their feet you'll need some special tips.



Some of the basic things required are as follows;

- A heavy stainless steel pot with lid. A non-reactive pot is important because the acidifying milk can dissolve aluminum. Enamel pots would work as well. A heavy bottom is important to evenly disperse the heat and prevent scorching. Scorching affects the flavor and is a cleanup hassle. The size of the pot should be large enough so that you have at least an inch of head space above the milk. A cover is needed for the steps when the milk must sit for periods of time. I bought a high quality five gallon pot like this years ago (expensive). I have never been sorry.
- Measuring cups. You may need measuring cups ranging from 1/4 cup to a quart. Obviously you can improvise, but accurate measurements improve your success rate. Measuring spoons are occasionally needed.
- Thermometer- An accurate thermometer which reads in the range of 32-225 F (0-100 C) is very important. A candy or meat

thermometer can work. There are several reasons that accurate temperature is important. The texture of the cheese depends a great deal on achieving a temperature to within one degree. Also, after milk for yogurt is scalded, it must be cooled to 130 F for optimum bacteria action.

- Whisk. Thorough mixing of starter and rennet is important. A whisk is the obvious choice for this step.
- Cheese cloth. The purpose of "cheese cloth" is to catch the curd and allow the whey to drain out. For this you can use cheese cloth bought at any local store. Some other options that have been said to work well are large plain white cotton handkerchiefs, or white non-terry cotton dish towels.

The Process

To pasteurize raw milk, use a stainless steel pot, or double boiler, heat to 145* and maintain for 30 minutes (if you are planning to age your cheese for longer than 60 days, you do not need to pasteurize).

Ingredients

- 2 gallons of milk
- 1 packet Direct set culture
- 1/2 rennet tablet dissolved in 1/4 cup cool water
- 1 Tablespoon salt

Heat milk to 85* to 90* add starter culture, stir in well, maintain temperature for 45 minutes (turn heat off).

Add rennet into the milk stir gently for one minute. Make sure it is stirred all the way from bottom to top.

Cover your container and let it set undisturbed for 45 minutes. (curds should have formed nicely). Leave it in the pot and cut the curd into 1/2 inch blocks length and depth of the pot then cut diagonally, let the pot cool slowly, for about 45 minutes, the curds will shrink and the whey will seem to grow, as your curds shrink, stir gently. Cover your pot for



about 10 minutes, pour your curds into a cheesecloth lined colander, knot your four corners together or tie it, hang the bag to drain for 1 1/2 hours, pour your drained curds into a bowl and break them up with your fingers, mix in the salt. Pack the curds firmly into a lined mold to the shape you wish, place your cheese cloth over the mold and place 10 pounds of pressure on it.

1. Place a large, smooth bottomed dinner plate inverted in the bottom of a canner (to keep assembly up out of the expressed whey).

2. Place pressing frame can on top of plate. Here I am using a 9 inch length of 6 inch PVC pipe cut from a discard from a construction site. In the past I have used large a tin can with both ends cut out. I prefer the PVC pipe because it does not corrode, and the cheese is removed much easier.



3. Lay a very clean cloth over the can.

4. Push cloth down into the can to form a "bag." A rubber band stretched around the top is helpful to hold the cloth in place for the next step.

5. Add salted curd into the cloth "bag." Note that the curds should still be warm to allow molding and cohesion into a wheel. The final wheel may crumble if the curds are too cool.

6. "Sweep" all of the curd into the press.

7. Pull up on the corners of the cloth to remove wrinkles between curds and can. Shake to settle the curds and reduce folds in the cloth.

8. Place wooden block follower on top of cheese. I am using a follower I cut from cypress.



9. Press wooden block ("follower") down on top of curds. Pull up evenly on the cloth all around the circumference to remove wrinkles.

10. Attach inner tube rubber band through canner handles with chopsticks.

11. Pull up on attached rubber band, insert a Mason jar underneath so that the band will press the jar onto the wooden block. A half gallon jar exerts more force than a one quart jar.

12. Press down on the jar to exert added initial pressure on curd. Align the tension of the rubber band so that the jar is vertical (and the follower board is horizontal).

14. Apply pressure for 12 hours.

After 12 hours, remove the pressing frame from the canner. The cloth is peeled down from the cheese and the follower is removed.

The edge will be cut smooth, the cheese rubbed with salt, wrapped in a handkerchief, and cured in the fridge for 2-3 weeks.

And there you have it the very basics of how to make some awesome cheese.

Homemade Liver Pate

Chicken

Ingredients

- 450 grams of fresh chicken livers
- 1 table spoon of fresh thyme leaves
- 1 and 1/2 glasses of red wine
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 3 cloves of garlic chopped
- 225 ml of double cream
- 100 grams of butter
- 1 and 1/2 tea spoons of salt
- 1/2 tea spoon of black ground pepper
- 1 table spoon of olive oil

Process

In a large frying pan add the oil and fry the onions until soft (do not allow them to color)now add the chicken livers, garlic,



thyme, red wine, salt, and pepper, cook this until the wine has almost gone now add the cream and reduce this down to a thick consistency (when you push the sauce to the centre of the pan it hardly runs back) now add the butter and keep on heat until it's all melted, blitz this mixture in a food processor un till completely smooth put into a container and once cool enough put it in the fridge to set, best over night.

Beef

Ingredients

500g beef liver cut into pieces
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 cup red wine
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1/2 teaspoon dijon mustard
1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 sprig fresh thyme
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 cup butter
salt
2 tablespoons cracked black pepper

Process

Saute the liver and onions in a couple of tablespoons of the butter until the livers are browned and the onions are tender.



Add wine, garlic, mustard, herbs and lemon juice and cook uncovered until most of the liquid has gone.



Cool and blend to a smooth paste in the food processor along with the rest of the butter. (This is easier if the butter is not fridge cold!)

Add salt to taste. Check the consistency of the pate. If it seems dry and crumbly rather than smooth and creamy, add more butter.

Put pate in a shallow dish and press the cracked pepper onto the top of it.

Homemade Chutney

The key to making chutney is to cook the fruit and vegetables for a long time so that most of the moisture evaporates and it has a thick, jam-like consistency. The colors will change and the flavors intensify in the process. Good chutney also benefits from bold and contrasting flavors, so be experimental and don't be afraid to mix together fruits and vegetables.

Ingredients

2 large pumpkins
6 large cooking apples
3 1/2 lb (1.5 kg) tomatoes

5 onions
1 tsp red pepper flakes
1 tsp allspice
1 tsp mustard seeds
1 tsp red peppercorns
1 tsp paprika
1 small bowl of raisins
2 1/4 lb (1 kg) turbinado sugar
4 quarts (liters) red winevinegar

Process

- 1. Peel and roughly chop** the pumpkins, apples, tomatoes, and onions.
- 2. Crush the spices** with a mortar and pestle.
- 3. Place all the ingredients** in a large pan, mix, and bring to a boil. Then turn down the heat and leave to simmer for 3 hours or until the contents take on a jam-like consistency and a wooden spoon drawn across the base of the pan leaves a trail.
- 4. Spoon into sterilized jars**, seal, and label. To sterilize jars, wash in hot water and put in a low oven (275°F/140°C) for 15 minutes, or use a dishwasher on the hottest setting, or microwave for 2 minutes with 4 tbsp of water in each jar.

Homemade Spiced pickling vinegar

There is a wide variety of vinegars suitable for pickling, such as malt, wine, or cider vinegar. You can also add your own spices and herbs

to clear distilled vinegar. For the contents to remain recognizable and look attractive, use whole spices, as ground spices make the vinegar turn cloudy.

Ingredients

Dried chili peppers
 Juniper and sumac berries
 Cinnamon sticks
 Star anise
 Muslin squares
 Bottle of distilled Vinegar



Process

- 1. Lay two squares** of muslin on top of each other on a work surface. Crush the chili peppers and berries, and then put the spices in the center of the fabric. Gather up the corners and tie with string to form a spice bag. Make sure the string is long enough to loop over and hang from the handle of the saucepan.
- 2. Put the bag** and vinegar in the saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and leave the vinegar and spices to cool for a couple of hours. Take out the spice bag. The flavored vinegar is now ready to use.
- 3. Use the vinegar** to pickle garlic, onions, cabbage, or eggs, for example.

Homemade Chocolate

Ingredients

Milk

Cocoa beans

Sugar

Cocoa butter



Process

- Roast the cocoa beans in the oven or in a coffee roaster. The beans should be roasted between 5 and 35 minutes, at a temperature between 250 and 325 degrees Fahrenheit. Begin roasting the beans at the hottest temperature, gradually reducing the heat until the beans begin to crack. The cracking sound indicates the roasting is complete.
- Shell the cocoa beans by removing the husk (outer shell) from the nib (actual bean). This process can be time consuming, since the most effective way is by hand, and is easier if the beans are roasted properly.
- Grind the shelled beans until they become a fine chocolate liqueur. Some juicers work well for this process; otherwise it must be done by hand and can be rather messy.
- Add cocoa butter, sugar and milk, if you'd like. Every chocolate maker uses a different recipe, so this step allows for some experimenting. Start by adding very little milk and cocoa butter.
- Fold the chocolate continually upon itself. This is called conching, and the longer it is done, the oilier the chocolate

finish will be. (The less it is done, the grittier the chocolate will turn out.) This may need to be done for hours for a smoother finish.

- Cool the chocolate to about 90 degrees Fahrenheit and pour it into the desired mold. Use a mold to make bars or other shapes.

Homemade Plum and cinnamon jam

Plums contain particularly high pectin levels (see box opposite), especially when they are not quite ripe, so there is no need to add a setting agent to this recipe.

Ingredients

5 lb (2.5 kg) dark plums or damsons, halved and pitted
2 cinnamon sticks
6 lb (3 kg) granulated sugar
Preserving pan



Process

1. Put the plums, cinnamon sticks, and 1 quart (1 liter) of water into a preserving pan and heat gently for about 20 minutes until the fruit is really soft and the syrup is reduced.

2. Remove the pan from the heat, add the sugar, and stir until dissolved. Bring back to a rapid boil for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the setting point is reached. Test as described (see box, right).

3. Spoon the jam into sterilized jars. Seal and label.

Homemade Natural Remedies

There are many herbs growing all over the world. Whether you call them weeds or herbs, the plants are everywhere. These versatile wonders are used for everything from beautifying the landscape to



accenting a meal. You will find herbs on drugstore shelves, listed as herbal remedies. There is no end to their use.

As amazing as it may sound, some of the herbs you find growing in the ditches and even in your own back yard can be useful for treating common problems like coughs, bee stings, and sore muscles.

There is always the possibility of an allergic reaction to any form of medication, whether prescribed, over the counter, or even natural herbs.

This is why it is always important to speak with a medical professional before you decide to try any type of self medication with natural herbs. Just as some people are allergic to things like milk and strawberries, someone could be just as allergic to valerian or burdock.

In defense of the natural herb remedies, some of them seem to work better than the prescribed medications. Clove oil can relieve a toothache as well as any gel you can buy. Chamomile tea works wonders as a sleep aid. Peppermint can help with heart burn better than some anti-acids. When you start researching herbal remedies you may be surprised what these little weeds can do for your health.

The great news is that you can make most of these natural remedies at the comfort of your home and have the certainty that you have put real herbs in there and no weird ingredients. Here are some of the home remedies that I've gathered for you:

Homemade easy tincture

1. Chop herbs finely

Either fresh or dried finely chopped herbs can be used. Use of one pint of menstruum to two ounces of dried herbs, or about two handfuls of fresh.

The important thing is to completely cover the herbs, leaving a couple of extra inches of liquid about the herbs to allow for swelling as the herbs absorb the liquid. Leave some headroom in the jar. If using vinegar, warm first before pouring it over the herbs.

- 2. Place in a glass jar, labeled with the current date and name of the herb**
- 3. Add sufficient liquid menstruum to completely cover the herb**

There are three basic menstruums, or solvents used to extract the chemical



compounds of herbs in tinctures, alcohol, glycerin, and vinegar. Alcohol is the most used because it can extract fats, resins, waxes, most alkaloids, and some of the volatile oils, as well as many other plant compounds.

Water is also necessary to extract the water soluble plant chemicals. Using an 80 to 100 proof alcohol such as vodka, brandy and gin provides the alcohol-water ratio you need without having to add anything. If pure grain alcohol (190 proof) is used, water will have to be added. Don't use city tap water that contains chlorine, use either distilled or pure spring water

4. Cap with a tight fitting lid, put the jar in a dark place at room temperature, and shake at least once daily.
5. After 2 to 3 weeks, strain the contents through several layers of cheesecloth.
6. Allow to settle overnight in a clean jar
7. Restrain through a filter paper
8. Store in a labeled, amber glass bottle away from light and heat.

The Chinese macerate herbs for months, sometimes even years. For stronger tinctures a suggested time can be 4 to 6 weeks. The duration depends on the mixture and on your patience, in time you will develop your own style. I use a kitchen cupboard that I open on a regular basis, so I don't forget to shake the bottle. Tinctures will keep for 6 months. The standard dose is one tablespoon in a wineglass of water once or twice a day.

Liniments are made exactly the same as herbal tinctures, except they are meant for external use. Make sure and label your liniments

"FOR EXTERNAL USE ONLY", when using a solvent that is inedible such as rubbing alcohol.

Using vinegar to tincture herbs

Alcohol has mostly displaced vinegar as a menstruum for making liquid herbal extracts, as it is far more efficient in extracting and preserving the medicinal properties of herbs. Vinegar is however passable solvent and useful in cases where you wish to avoid alcohol. When used in conjunction with alcohol, vinegar can sometimes assist in the extraction of alkaloid (base) substances from herbs. Such an extract containing both vinegar and alcohol is known as an acetous tincture.

Homemade Digestive tincture

This tincture is ideal for those who suffer from burping, bloating, or indigestion. If you have wolfed down a meal too quickly and regretted it, the time spent making this remedy will be more than worthwhile. Take it before or after eating to stimulate your digestive enzymes. Do not use it during pregnancy.



Ingredients

3 1/2 oz (100 g) rosemary
3 oz (85 g) bay leaves

1/4 oz (10 g) wormwood
1 3/4 cups (400 ml) vodka
Canning jar
Press
Muslin
Dark-colored bottle

Process

- 1. Pick your herbs** and remove any insects. Chop the herbs into 3/4-in (2-cm) pieces and place in a large jar. Pour the vodka over them, close the lid tightly, and shake the jar well. Continue to shake the jar daily for at least 2 weeks.
- 2. Strain the contents** into a cup using muslin or cheesecloth and squeeze as much of the liquid out of the herbs as possible with your hands or with a small press, if you have one.
- 3. Transfer the tincture** into a dark glass bottle, label it with the contents and date, and store in a cool, dark place. Take 1 tsp in a small cup of water up to three times a day.

Homemade Echinacea Tincture

Echinacea is excellent for supporting the immune system during a cold. It is probably more beneficial to make tincture with fresh Echinacea, but it is often easier (and still highly effective) to make it with dried material since not everyone grows or has access to fresh

flowers and roots. When using dried Echinacea, try to find some that has been dried recently and as always, organic is preferred.

Ingredients

1 1-pint glass jar (make sure it is clean)
¼ cup dried Echinacea
1 pint vodka

Process

Place dried Echinacea in the pint jar.
Pour vodka over the top. You may use a little less than 1 pint of vodka. Fill to the shoulder of the jar so there is a little room at the top. Seal tightly with lid.



Label jar with the date and the expected date your tincture will be ready. Also include the ingredients on your label. You probably think you will remember, but trust me, that doesn't always happen!

You have now created a menstruum. Leave menstruum at room temperature for four to six weeks. Shake every few days.

After the four to six weeks has passed, strain the herbs out of the vodka. To do this place a layer of cheesecloth over a large measuring cup or small mixing bowl and secure with a rubber band. Pour menstruum slowly into the cheesecloth and allow to drain for a few minutes. Then use your hands to wrap the cheesecloth around the herbs and squeeze out the excess liquid.

You can also lay cheesecloth in the over a colander and set colander over a large bowl or pot. Strain herbs as described above. Discard the herbs.

You now have Echinacea tincture!

As long as your tincture is made with 25 percent alcohol content, it will last indefinitely.

To use:

At the first sign of a cold or throughout a cold take take $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a teaspoon 3 to 4 times a day. per day.

Echinacea has shown to be most beneficial at the beginning and for the duration of a cold. It is not intended as a long term preventative.

Homemade Spiced Propolis infusion

Ingredients

4 oz (100 g) propolis
 2 cups (400 ml) 120-proof alcohol
 Fresh ginger root
 1 lemon
 Cloves
 1-2 tsp honey
 Glass jar
 Coffee filter



Process

1. Harvest the propolis or buy.

2. For the tincture, put the propolis and alcohol in a jar and shake every day for 6–8 days until the propolis has dissolved. Strain the liquid through a coffee filter to remove bits of bee that may be mixed in with it.

3. To make the drink, squeeze the juice from half the lemon and slice the rest, studding each slice with cloves. Cut some slices of ginger root.

4. Squirt a few drops of propolis into a mug and add boiling water with the honey, lemon juice, and slices of ginger root and lemon.

Homemade Elderberry syrup

Elderberry syrup is an excellent remedy for boosting your immune system because it has high levels of vitamin C and antiviral properties, making it effective against colds, sore throats, and even flu. Always use plenty of sugar in syrups, but not so much that the mixture crystallizes when it cools.



Elderberry syrup has a high sugar content, so it can be easily stored over the winter months and is pleasant and convenient to take.

Ingredients

1½ cups (200 g) elderberries
2 cups (400 g) sugar
12 cloves
1 in (2.5 cm) sliced ginger root
Funnel
Glass bottles

Process

- 1. Gather ripe stalks** of European elderberries and strip the berries from the stems with a fork. Put them in a pan and add 1 cup (250 ml) water. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer for about 30 minutes, until the berries yield their juice. Remove from the heat and mash the berries. Then strain the contents of the pan through a sieve and return the juice to the pan.
- 2. Add the sugar**, cloves, and ginger. Return the pan to the heat and stir until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a boil for a further 5 minutes.
- 3. Pour the liquid** into a bottle, seal, and refrigerate. Take 1 tbsp in a mug of boiling water every 2 hours when cold symptoms start and then three times a day until you feel better.

Homemade Insomnia Tincture Formula

Valerian and hops are two of the most potent herbs for sleep, but the bitter and pungent taste puts a lot of folks off.

Using them in tincture form is more pleasant, and the alcohol is a

better solvent for some of Valerian's chemical constituents.



Ingredients:

Chamomile, Hops, Valerian, Passion Flower

Process

Use the general instructions for tinctures (Homemade easy tincture describes before). 1/2 teaspoon (6 drops) each tinctures of valerian, hops, passion flower and chamomile. Use 2 teaspoons total of this combination of tinctures. Mix with a little water, juice, a tablespoon of honey, or add to a cup of hot herbal tea.

Homemade asthma tincture

Indian tobacco (lobelia inflata) is an herbal treatment for asthma.

Take twenty drops of the mixture in water at the start of an asthmatic attack. Repeat every thirty minutes for a total of three or four doses.

Ingredients

Cayenne Pepper, Lobelia

Process

Use the general instructions for tinctures (Homemade easy tincture describes before). Mix three parts tincture of lobelia with one part tincture of capsicum (red pepper, cayenne pepper).

Final Thoughts

Don't ever be ashamed to apply self-sufficiency. You need to remember that self-sufficiency does not mean "going back" to the acceptance of a lower standard of living. On the contrary, it is the striving for a higher standard of living, for food which is fresh and homemade, for the good life in pleasant surroundings, for the health of body through natural remedies and peace of mind which come with hard varied work in the open air, and for the satisfaction that comes from doing difficult and intricate jobs well and successfully.

