

10 Essential Herbs For Your Home

and how to use them

by Jill York



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Home and how to use them
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Resources:

Dinsley, J. (n.d.). Charcoal Remedies. Retrieved July 2, 2015.

Bulk Herb Store. (n.d.). Retrieved July 2, 2015.

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Introduction

One of the most frequent questions I'm asked from readers is which herbs I would recommend starting out with. Or if I could choose only 5 or 10 herbs to have on hand, which ones would they be? I totally understand where these questions are coming from because I was living in overwhelm-land when I first started using herbs, and I had these questions myself.

The problem is, there is not an easy answer.

The herbs I would recommend could be different for each family based on their health needs or where they are in life. For instance, do you have babies in the house? Are you pregnant or nursing? Are you older with aches, pains, or arthritis? Do you deal with asthma, allergies, or depression? Any of these circumstances would bring about various recommendations.

What I have done in this ebook is given a brief overview of 10 of *my* favorite herbs that are a must-have to keep around for my family. I have far more herbs on my shelf than what I am listing {because I am slightly addicted to collecting them and trying new recipes ;) }, but these are 10 herbs that are a must for my family.

Do you feel overwhelmed by all the herbs out there? Let me make your life easier and get you started with some of the basics.

Do you want to know *how* to use the herbs? I've got you covered. There's nothing more frustrating than getting a box of herbs in the mail {or even better, getting herbs from your garden that you've grown yourself} only to have no clue how to use them. I'm going to list a favorite way that I use each herb to help get you started.

This short ebook is in no way exhaustive of each herb and the ways you can use them, so I encourage you to grab some good books and start learning and experimenting with these amazing herbs God has given us! I feel confident that you will be amazed at what they can do for you!

P.S. Some of my favorite authors for excellent information on herbs are Rachel Weaver, Tammi Hartung, Rosemary Gladstar, and John Kallas.



Echinacea is the first herb I ever bought and used for my oldest daughter when she was just a wee little thing. I was so excited at how quickly she got well when I gave echinacea to her compared to when I just let an illness run its course without any assistance. [Sweet Echinacea by Herbs for Kids](#) is what I specifically gave her because it tastes good and is very effective!

Extensive research has shown that echinacea stimulates and aids the immune system. It has antifungal and antibacterial properties, making it one of my very favorite natural antibiotics.

Probably my favorite way to consume echinacea is in Bulk Herb Store's Double E Immune Booster. You can use echinacea by itself, but I really enjoy this mix that has other immune boosting herbs. When I feel a cold, virus, or anything coming on, I make a quart of this tea by adding 8 teaspoons of the herbal mix to 4 cups of boiling water. Remove the pan from the heat, cover, and steep for at least 20 minutes. Strain the herbs and drink the liquid. It's important to not drink all of the tea at once. Spread the tea consumption throughout the day so that your body is getting the herbal properties all day long. I pour the tea into a quart jar with a lid and drink $\frac{1}{4}$ of the jar 4 times a day. You can also just make echinacea tea and drink it the same way.

Read about the Double E Immune Booster [HERE](#).
You can find echinacea in its dried form [HERE](#).



An elderberry bush has 2 different stages that I like to take advantage of for home remedies. This picture shows the elderflowers, which is the first growing stage of this plant in the spring. Elderflowers are a good remedy for fevers. I have found myself out in the woods on more than one occasion gathering elderflowers to aid a feverish child.

Elderflower Tea

- Add 2 teaspoons of [elderflowers](#) to a cup of boiling water.
- Cover and steep for 5-10 minutes.
- Strain the herbs and drink.
- Add raw honey to sweeten if desired.

This tea must be drunk very warm/hot to be effective for a fever. Give ½ cup of tea to children, and 1 cup to adults. Drink as needed.



About the end of June, the flowers of the elderberry bush in my area change into beautiful berries. These sweet berries are the elderberries. {Elderberries are also included in the [Double E Immune Booster](#)}. Elderberries have been studied extensively in Israel for their ability to fight and prevent the flu. One of my favorite recipes for elderberries is syrup. We like to take at least 1 tablespoon a day to prevent the flu, or take a spoonful hourly if we have the flu.

Elderberry Syrup

1/2 cup dried **elderberries**

3 cups water

1 cup raw honey

1. Bring berries and water to a boil and simmer for about 30 minutes.
2. Mash berries and strain through a cheesecloth or a fine strainer.
3. Stir in honey while hot and pour into jar.
4. Store in the refrigerator for 3 months.



Comfrey is the “comfort” herb. It heals and soothes burns, injuries, broken bones, sprains, pulled muscles, smashed fingers, etc. I will always be grateful for how it healed my leg after surgery and helped me avoid the expense of therapy. I use this herb the most as a salve. Use the salve on any kind of bruise, burn, or injury. Some don't recommend using this herb on broken skin or open wounds, but others do recommend it. Comfrey heals wounds quickly so if you do use it on open wounds, you have to make sure it is cleaned very well and no infection is present so that the skin is not closed over an infection.

Comfrey Salve

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of comfrey oil {See below for instructions on how to make the oil}
- 1 oz. [grated beeswax](#) (about 1/4 cup)
- 1 T. [vitamin E oil](#)
- 15 drops of [lavender essential oil](#)

Directions:

1. Combine herbal oil and beeswax in a pan.

2. Heat the mixture until the beeswax melts.
3. To see if it will harden into the right consistency, put a spoonful of the oil mixture in the freezer for 5 minutes. If it comes out too thin, add more beeswax. If it's too thick, add more olive oil.
4. Remove from heat and stir in vitamin E oil and lavender essential oil. (To preserve)
5. Pour into tins or jars and allow to set.

To Make Comfrey Oil

1. Chop comfrey (or use [dried comfrey](#)) and place into a double boiler. It's important not to put the herbs on direct heat because too many medicinal properties will be killed.
2. Add 1-2 cups of comfrey to the pan, depending on how much you wish to make at once.
3. Pour olive oil over the herb until it is covered by 1 or 2 inches of oil.
4. Simmer gently, covered, in the double boiler for an hour.
5. Strain the herb from the oil and reserve the oil.

Use this oil as is, or turn it into a salve!



[Mullein](#) is one of my favorite herbs for coughs and congestion. The leaves and flowers are both edible, but I use the leaves more often. Mullein leaves have antispasmodic and expectorant properties, which means they relax coughing spasms, while at the same time expel mucus and clear the lungs. This makes mullein an excellent remedy for colds, coughs, allergies, asthma, bronchial congestion, and any respiratory ailments. I use this herb as a tea most of the time. Make a tea using the same directions as I described in the elderflower section.

Mullein leaves can also be smoked! People roll up dried mullein leaves and smoke them to relieve lung ailments and asthma. Deeply inhaling the herb is a way to get it down into the lungs. I personally know a lady that quit smoking by smoking mullein leaves. Not only did it break her addiction, it also pulled out toxins in her lungs that were there from her years of smoking, and helped to heal the damage done to her lungs.

The flowers can also be used to relieve pain and fight infection. Making an herbal oil with the flowers can be used to treat ear infections.

Mullein is one of the herbs in a mixture that I refer to as “Lung Tea”. This is a Dr. Christopher recipe and is so very effective for any respiratory ailment. I've used it many times to help control my daughter's asthma symptoms, as well as clear up cough and congestion in no time. I make a tea and steep for 20 minutes and drink a quart a day when I have a cough or

feel tightness in my chest. For kids, I give a pint a day. Remember that it's important to drink the tea throughout the day and not all at once.

You can find the recipe for Lung Tea [HERE](#).

You can buy mullein [HERE](#).



Slippy Elm bark is the inner bark of the Slippy Elm tree. On a recent herb walk that I attended, I was privileged to watch the herbalist harvest the inner bark from a fallen slippy elm tree. I was surprised at how very simple it was.

Slippy Elm is soothing to the entire digestive system. I buy mine in powdered form. I use this the most for cases of diarrhea and vomiting. To help bring these ailments to a stop, give ½-1 teaspoon to children and 1 teaspoon-1 tablespoon to adults every time a bout of vomiting or diarrhea occurs. The powder can be mixed with anything like applesauce, yogurt, juice, or milk with raw honey. It can also be taken in capsules, but will work quicker if given in loose form.

Other helpful facts:

- This is the best herb to have on hand in case of a famine. It expands when mixed with liquid, making the stomach feel full and providing excellent nutrition.
- This herb does not mix easy with liquid so beat it into the liquid with a whisk or fork.
- This herb is a good treatment for ulcers.
- An excellent herb to give to babies and people of all ages.
- Drink a glass of liquid with or after taking this herb.
- Coats and heals all inflamed tissues of the stomach, kidneys, and bowels. Think Irritable Bowel Syndrom, GERD, Crohn's Disease, Diverticulitis, Ulcerative Colitis, etc.
- Soothes sore throats.

You can buy slippy elm [HERE](#).



The peppermint plant is one I keep on hand to flavor teas naturally. Just add some of the leaves (fresh or dried) to your pot of tea to have a nice minty flavor. Peppermint tea alone does great things for the body. It is very relaxing and relieves bloating, nausea, and stomach pain. It also strengthens the heart muscles and nerves.

While I do use the actual leaves on a regular basis, I probably use the essential oil more. If one of my girls has a stomach ache, I mix 2- 3 drops of peppermint essential oil with 1 teaspoon of a carrier oil like olive oil, and rub this around their navel. This can offer great relief, and combined with inhaling the oil, it can also prevent vomiting.

You can rub this oil (diluted with the carrier oil) on the back of the neck and bottoms of the feet to reduce a fever naturally. This has become my favorite way to reduce fevers and say goodbye to Tylenol in my cabinet! Peppermint oil lowers fevers within an hour while still allowing the fever to do its helpful work. Do not apply the essential oil near the face of small children under age 6. Children under 6 should not consume this essential oil internally or breathe it deeply, as it can cause respiratory distress in young ones. Do not use peppermint oil in pregnancy before 4 months gestation. I found great, instant relief in my pregnancy nausea when I was further along by applying this oil to my abdomen.

Peppermint essential oil taken internally promotes weight loss, curbs the appetite, soothes the stomach, and can be a remedy for acid reflux disease, heartburn, etc. Simply place 2 drops in a glass of water and drink as needed.

Buy dried peppermint leaf [HERE](#).

Find high-quality, reasonably-priced peppermint essential oil [HERE](#).



I used to strongly dislike the smell of lavender, but I've discovered that that was because I had only smelled the fake fragrance in perfumes and soaps. I have learned to really enjoy the smell of real lavender and its effectiveness for headaches, anxiety, insomnia, stress, etc. I have noticeably felt the stress melt away as I was drinking a cup of lavender flower tea. Make lavender tea as described in the elderflower section. Lavender flowers can be added to a bathtub or foot bath to melt the stress away and relieve headaches.

Lavender essential oil is also an oil I always keep on hand. It can be rubbed into the temples and/or the back of the neck to relieve stress and headaches. I have placed 2 drops on an aromatherapy necklace and had my sinus headache completely disappear within 30 minutes just by breathing it. In my experience it does matter the quality of the oil you use. I've used a more generic brand of lavender oil and it did not help my headache like a higher quality.

Some people recommend always diluting all essential oils with a carrier oil before using them as I described in the peppermint section. However, lavender is one that you are supposed to be able to use "neat" (which means full strength). You can do your own research on that. :)

Lavender is also effective for minor burns. Rub the essential oil on a minor burn for fast relief.

Buy dried Lavender flowers [HERE](#).
Find lavender essential oil [HERE](#).



Activated charcoal (which is not the same stuff you use to fire up the grill :)) has so many uses that it's not possible for me to list them all here. It can be used externally and internally for poisonous bites and internally to absorb poison, toxins, and viruses. It's still used today by many emergency rooms for accidental poisonings.

Activated charcoal can be taken by babies and those of all ages. It has similar uses as slippery elm does for conditions like diarrhea, viruses, Crohn's disease, irritable bowel disease, and ulcerative colitis, yet it is one I like to keep on hand for emergencies.

Slurry Water (Use this method for non-emergencies like viruses, diarrhea, IBS, Crohn's, colitis, etc.)

- Stir 2-3 tablespoons of charcoal into a quart of warm water.
- Let the charcoal settle to the bottom (unless there is an emergency) and pour off the water into a bottle or cup and drink. You can drink it without letting it settle to the bottom. Letting it settle keeps it from having a grainy texture, plus extends the use of the charcoal.
- Once most of the “gray water” is poured off, fill the jar with more warm water and mix with the charcoal already there. Allow the charcoal to settle and repeat process.

Emergency Poisoning

Add 1 teaspoon-2 tablespoons of charcoal to water and drink. Follow with 1 or 2 glasses of water. The amount of charcoal needed depends on the age of the person and how much poison was ingested, or how poisonous the bite was. Repeat the dose again in 10 minutes, and again if symptoms become worse.

Source: Dinsley, J. (n.d.). Charcoal Remedies. Retrieved July 2, 2015.

Buy activated charcoal [HERE](#).



Onions are a remedy most of us have on hand. Onions give flavor to dishes, but they also provide important nutrients. Onions contain iron, folic acid, calcium, fiber, and are high in vitamin C. Do you know they also contain the antioxidant, Quercetin? Quercetin fights aging, diseases, and cancer; it lowers blood pressure and cholesterol while helping to raise the good cholesterol.

The way I use onions the most is in an easy peasy homemade cough syrup!

Homemade Cough Syrup

Consistent coughing can often be tied to mucous trapped in the lungs. Onions are an expectorant and help to thin and loosen phlegm. One of my favorite cough syrups that I got from reading Dr. Christopher contains onions and raw honey. I love it because it is so very effective, and also because it can be safely taken every 15 minutes if a cough is bad enough.

Recipe:

- 1 Onion
- Raw Honey

Directions:

1. Cut onion and place it in a double boiler. If you don't have a **double boiler**, place a smaller pan inside a larger pan. Be sure to refill water in the bottom pan because it will most likely boil all the water out before the syrup is done. It's best not to cook this over direct heat if at all possible because it would kill too many beneficial properties in the raw honey.

2. Cover onion with raw honey 1/2 an inch above the onion.
 3. Simmer until the onion is translucent. This can take an hour or two depending on how thick the onion slices are.
 4. Strain the liquid from the onion pieces, and you now have a very effective cough syrup!
- Dosage: Adults take 1 tablespoon, children take 1 teaspoon up to every 15 minutes or as needed.



Garlic is such a powerful natural antibiotic, that when anyone in my family is laying low with a fever or some type of infection or virus, I'm anxious to get it in their system! Fresh garlic can be added to foods to boost the immune system. Garlic contains a property called allicin that can effectively kill viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi, yeasts, and molds, even many that cause serious disease in humans. It is commonly used for sinus infections, flus and respiratory viral infections.

Below is a list of bacteria, viruses, mold, and parasites that garlic can kill or inhibit:

- *Acinetobacter calcoaceticus*
- *Aspergillus flavus*
- *Aspergillus fumigatus*
- *Aspergillus parasiticus*
- *Aspergillus niger*
- *Bacillus cereus*
- *Candida albicans*
- *Candida lipolytica*
- *Cryptococcus neoformans*
- *Cryptosporidium*
- *Debaryomyces hansenii*
- *Escherichia coli*
- *Hansenula anomala*

- *Herpes simplex virus type 1*
- *Herpes simplex virus type 2*
- *Histoplasma capsulatum*
- *Human cytomegalovirus (HCMV)*
- *Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)*
- *Human rhinovirus type 2*
- *Influenza B*
- *Kloeckera apiculata*
- *Lodderomyces elongisporus*
- *Parainfluenza virus type 3*
- *Vaccinia virus*
- *Vesicular stomatitis virus*
- *Micrococcus luteus*
- *Mycobacterium phlei*
- *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*
- *Paracoccidioides brasiliensis*
- *Pneumocystis carinii*
- *Proteus vulgaris*
- *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*
- *Rhodotorula rubra*
- *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*
- *Salmonella typhimurium*
- *Salmonella typhimurium*
- *Shigella dysenteriae*
- *Shigella flexneri*
- *Staphylococcus aureus*
- *Streptococcus faecalis*
- *Torulopsis glabrata*
- *Toxoplasma gondii*
- *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*

([Source](#))

Eating a lot of garlic internally is great, but my favorite way to get the power of garlic into the body when someone is sick is by making a quick 5-minute salve. I got this recipe from [Be Your Own Doctor](#) written by Rachel Weaver. This is one of my very favorite books that I refer to often!

Homemade Antibiotic Garlic Salve

1/3 cup coconut oil

2 tablespoons olive oil

8 cloves peeled garlic {must be raw garlic}

5 drops of lavender essential oil

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend well.
2. Strain through a fine strainer and pour liquid into a glass jar.
3. Keep refrigerated.

To use, rub the salve on chest, back, and bottoms of feet at least 4 times a day. Apply hourly for more serious conditions like pneumonia, croup, whooping cough, asthma attacks, etc.

About the Author



Jill York is an herbalist and homeschool mother of 4. She loves all things vintage, dark chocolate, long walks in the beautiful outdoors, and a good book. She dreams of living on a self-sufficient homestead someday complete with cows and pastures.

In her early adulthood years she suffered from unexplained health problems, and found healing in the world of natural medicine. Because of this experience, she has a passion to help others find healing using the herbs God created, and help them do it frugally by making remedies themselves.

She is most thankful for Jesus Christ, who daily bestows mercy and grace that she does not deserve. If you do not personally know Jesus or have peace in your heart of where you will spend eternity, click [here](#) for more information.

You can connect with Jill on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#), and [Instagram](#).