

### **Powdered Extracts (dried teas)**

Alcohol and water (tincturing) remove the more stimulating properties of herbs (resins, etc.). These are most effective for moving and directing the energy of the body (specifics, stimulants). They are best when taken in 10-day cycles with a 3-day break between to relieve symptoms, reduce pathogenic heat, and stimulate body processes.

Hot water breaks down cell walls and extracts the more tonic principles (minerals, giant-molecular-weight sugar molecules—polysaccharides; protein-bound polysaccharides, etc.). These are useful long-term (3-9 months or longer) for strengthening the immune, adrenal, hormonal, nervous, and blood systems, and other parts of the body.

For acute conditions, and to adjust or stimulate the energy of the body, I often recommend tinctures to my patients. For “constitutional” remedies, for instance to strengthen and tonify the lung, kidney, hormonal, or nervous systems, I often recommend mostly teas or dried teas. While some of my patients enjoy making teas, many do not have the time or patience, or they do not like the bitter or strong flavors of some herbs. In my clinic we have a large selection of dried teas, such as ginger, licorice, American ginseng, red ginseng, dong quai, nettle leaf, astragalus, and even formulas for strengthening different body systems. We place the extracts in cellophane bags (which are biodegradable) or white plastic recyclable bottles. Patients can easily mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 teaspoon of the powder into warm water to make an instant tea—a very convenient and wonderful way to take daily tonics. I have had fantastic success with these dried teas. Many patients report an increase in energy and better sleep and digestion, with a big improvement in overall health after taking them for 1 to 3 months. Tonics work to supply shortages of nutrients and other valuable constituents the body needs for optimum health. They work slowly but are often dramatic in their effects if taken persistently.

I like to teach people how to make their own dried teas at home. It is easy and requires almost no equipment. You can make up enough for 5 or 6 months, so effort is also minimal. The dried teas have a number of other advantages besides potency and safety—they are relatively cheap to make, they have a shelf life of up to a year if stored in a cool place out of the direct light, and they can be placed into caps to avoid the taste of teas or tinctures. *And* they are alcohol-free.

Here are the instructions for making dried teas, or “powdered extracts” at home.

1. Place the herbs in a large pot in the ratio of 1 part herbs (by weight) to 10 parts of water (by volume)
2. Simmer for 2-4 hours, until a dark, strong tea is created; let cool until warm.
3. Remove  $\frac{4}{5}$  of the boiled herbs, press or squeeze all the water out of them that is possible, using a linen or other fine cloth. Add this water back into the pot with the original tea, and discard (compost if possible) the spent herbs (called the “marc”).
4. Start simmering the tea with the  $\frac{1}{5}$  marc left in the pot; simmer for 1-2 more hours until the water level is reduced by about  $\frac{2}{3}$ ; let cool until warm.

5. Blend this strong tea and marc until a creamy consistency is achieved. Pour this “batter” into the nylon fruit leather trays of a food dehydrator and dry at around 100-120 degrees Fahrenheit until completely dry. (You can also dry these extracts in your oven, turning it down to the lowest setting and you propping the door open to allow the moisture to come off. Although this will work, it is not as good as using a food dehydrator. You lose the least amount of constituents at about 70 to 80 degrees.)
6. Break this wafer up and eat pieces the size of a quarter to a silver dollar 2-3 x daily as a dose. Or powder the wafer and store in an amber glass jar. The powder can make an instant tea by adding \_ to 1 teaspoon to warm or hot water, or placed into “00” caps. A dose of the extract powder is 2-6 grams/day, depending on the severity of the deficient state and the nature of the individual. A reasonable daily dose can be \_ teaspoon of the powder blended in water and tea to drink morning and evening, away from mealtimes. If the blend upsets your stomach, drink it just before mealtimes. Each “00” gelatin capsule weighs about 400-500 mg, so a daily dose can be 2-3 capsules 2 or 3 times daily with meals.

Remember that the dried teas are very concentrated. One-half teaspoon of the powder actually contains all the active and desirable constituents of up to 3 or 4 teaspoons of the herb. These preparations are one of the most potent and effective ways of using herbs.

#### Hints:

1. Try stirring in finely-powdered licorice root, eleuthero powder, and other herb powders to prevent sticking to the trays, which will happen if the herb that is being extracted has a high percentage of simple sugars and starches (i.e., shiitake, codonopsis). This powder is called a “carrier.” Other possible carriers include lactose, gum arabic, etc.
2. Add licorice, orange peel, etc. for flavor and sweetness, especially if the herb being extracted is bitter.
3. Tinctures such as orange peel, ginger, or echinacea can be stirred into the cooled slurry just before drying. This is especially useful for tinctures like wormwood that have delicate essential oils as an active fraction that might be lost in the simmering process.

The following recipe is one of our favorite. It consists of boiled-down nettle leaf, horsetail, and plantain—all of which are super storehouses of easily assimilated vitamins and minerals. The blend can be taken regularly to strengthen hair, skin, nails, bones, and connective tissue, but it is also useful for helping to heal broken bones and nails.

