

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S  
*Herbal Legacy Newsletter*

## Elderberry: A Valuable Tool for Flu and Other Viruses

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Elderberries have been used for hundreds of years, especially in England, for the treatment of colds, fevers, flu and other maladies. Elderberry has been found to inhibit the replication of both type A and type B flu viruses. Researchers found that elderberry inhibited the enzyme that attaches the virus to human cells preventing the virus from invading cells. They also showed that elderberry activates the immune system by increasing inflammatory and anti-inflammatory cytokine production (Barak, 2002). Another study showed that 93% of flu patients given extract were completely symptom-free within two days; those taking a placebo recovered in about six days.

I made a batch of tincture by soaking some dried elderberries in a quart jar with vodka, it only takes 2 weeks, but I left them in my fridge for a year. When my family caught a nasty virus recently, I decided to make syrup with my extract, per Dr. Christopher's instructions. I gave my children half-tablespoon doses of the syrup several times a day, along with Dr. Christopher's Kid-e-Well tincture. Their illness lasted a few days, compared to our friends who were sick for a couple weeks. I kept giving it to them to help dry up the lingering cough and runny noses. I also used the elderberry syrup and Kid-e-Well for my 2 month-old baby, who manifested RSV-like symptoms. This treatment worked well, along with suctioning mucus out of his nose a few times a day.

Brigitte Mars tells us about tinctures in her book entitled *Elder*, "For these constituents, alcohol will make the most effective tincture, which should last several years. If one cannot use alcohol, apple cider vinegar or vegetable glycerin may be used instead. The shelf life of the latter two, however, will be shorter. Use these within a year or two."

According to the USDA Plant Guide, "Only the blue or purple berries of elderberry are edible... the active alkaloids in elderberry plants are hydrocyanic acid and sambucine. Both alkaloids will cause nausea so care should be observed with this plant. Elderberries are high in Vitamin C. The red berries of other species are toxic and should not be gathered."

It is common knowledge that Antibiotics are not very effective against viruses. My neighbor just lost her sister to the H1N1 virus. This makes me so sad, since there are many effective natural medicines that are anti-viral; Elderberry is one of them. I've planted several Elderberry bushes in my garden so I'll have my own source of Elderberries and flowers for future use.

*Jenni is a do-it-yourself, happily- married, mother of seven energetic kids and a master herbalist - graduate of The School of Natural Healing! Visit her personal website at: <http://www.momessentials.net>.*

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