

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S
Herbal Legacy Newsletter

Herbal Preparations

by Jo Francks, MH

We had a lot of fun in our preparations class. Everyone was able to go home with their own extract to tend and take care of until it was ready to strain and bottle. It was such a success that I wanted to share the handout with everybody so you all can make some of these preparations to help get you through this season of cold weather.

Tincture: An alcohol extract is usually referred to as a tincture. There is a lot of information available on making tinctures. I use fresh or dried herb and 100-proof vodka or Everclear which is 190-proof. Proof means that ½ of the proof is the percentage of alcohol. So 100 proof would be 50% alcohol. This is fine for most dried herbs and some fresh herbs. If made properly, tinctures will last many years. They are good for long term storage and for emergencies. Alcohol tinctures are absorbed by the body much faster than capsules, and they are best used in emergencies because they are absorbed quickly. Use a clean glass jar; fill the jar ½ to ¾ full with dried herbs or to the top with fresh herbs. The dried herbs will absorb some of the liquid. Fill the jar to the top with your menstrum of choice, alcohol, glycerin/water, or vinegar. Cap tightly, label, and shake 2 or 3 times a day for 2 to 6 weeks. Strain through cheese cloth or muslin and store in dark glass bottles with plastic lids (metal lids corrode). Don't forget to label them! Many herbalists prefer to start their tinctures on a new moon and pour it off on the full moon. The moon has a pushing and pulling effect, pushing on the new moon and pulling on the full moon.

Vegetable Glycerin: Good for those who don't want to ingest alcohol and for children. It is sweet, and is easier to get children to take if they can't swallow capsules. Glycerin extracts will last 3 to 4 years. Dilute with distilled water by 50%. The last 2 or 3 days I add some low heat to the glycerin extract to help get more out of the herb.

Glycerin is a natural component of all fats. It tastes sweet, but it is not a sugar and does not cause a rapid rise in blood sugar levels. Glycerin can actually act to stabilize blood sugar levels. Glycerin is also an anti-fungal agent so it does not encourage yeast growth. Dr. Edward Shook claimed that herbal glycerites helped to rapidly remove inorganic drugs and other toxins from the body.

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ELDERBERRY FORMULA

- 3 parts Elderberry extract
- 2 parts thyme extract
- 2 parts oregano extract
- 1 part garden sage extract

This formula has been used for colds and flu. The herbs help build the immune system and help with lung congestion and sinus problems. Make each extract individually then mix them together.

Apple Cider Vinegar: Is a good preservative for an extract but won't last as long as alcohol tinctures. Use the Apple Cider Vinegar from a health food store. Read the label carefully because some are apple cider flavored distilled vinegar. You want the kind with the mother floating around in it. Bragg's is a good brand as well as Spectrum.

PROFESSOR CAYENNE'S SUPER TONIC

- 1 part fresh chopped White Onions, or the hottest onions available
- 1 part fresh chopped Garlic Cloves
- 1 part fresh grated Ginger Root
- 1 part fresh grated Horseradish Root
- 1 part fresh chopped Cayenne Peppers, the hottest peppers available

Fill a glass jar $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way full with equal parts of the above ingredients. Fill the bottle to the top with raw organic, unfiltered, unbleached, non-distilled apple cider vinegar. Close and shake vigorously and then top off with more vinegar if necessary. Begin this formula on the NEW moon and strain and bottle on the Full moon, (approximately 14 days). Filter the mixture through a clean piece of cotton, bottle and label.

Make sure that when you are making this tonic that you shake it every time you walk by it, a *minimum* of once per day.

Remember that all the herbs and vegetables should be fresh (and organic if possible), and to use dried herbs only in an emergency.

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