

# DR. CHRISTOPHER'S Herbal Legacy Newsletter

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## Too Hot for Therapy? -David Christopher MH



With the rising hot temperatures we ask: Is it too hot for pungent herb therapy? Logically it does seem counterproductive to use a lot of hot pepper, black and red, during these heat waves. However, certain nerve receptors in the mouth are activated by these pungent herbs and can trigger the brain's thermoregulatory center to induce sweating. This perspiration then evaporates, cooling the skin, thus lowering body temperature. Even drinking hot herbal tea can have this same effect of raising heat to perspire and then cooling down through evaporation. So if we drink a hot cup of Lemon balm tea we cool off as mentioned above and then the process continues because of the refrigerant qualities of the herb. How cool is that? On page 667 of Dr. Christopher's textbook *School of Natural Healing* we find a whole category of refrigerant herbs including catnip, purslane, watermelon and wild strawberries.

A Canadian study in the journal *Acta Physiologica*, reported that in 2012 male cyclists stored less body heat (core body temperature) after consuming a hot drink (122 F/ 50 C) compared to when they consumed a colder beverage, again because of the evaporation.

If you look at the world consumption of hot spicy foods, we see an increased consumption of these foods in countries that are in closer proximity to the equator. So, if you are using these pungent herbs for cardiovascular therapy or to improve your digestion, you can keep using them throughout the summer and get the added benefit of cooling off.

**David Christopher** is a Master Herbalist and the director of *The School of Natural Healing*. He also co-hosts the popular radio show "A Healthier You" and is a popular international teacher and lecturer.