

# Herbal Bites

Jo Francks, M.H.

This past winter I have been experimenting with different herbal ideas to have available for travel or easy ways for kids to take their herbal supplements. One of the things I came up with is herbal bites. They are made with dehydrated fruit powder and concentrated herbal teas. It is a process to make these fun little bites but it is very rewarding.

Start by dehydrating the fruit you would like to use. I started with bananas because I had some that were just at the right stage of ripeness for dehydrating. I have used apples and other fruit as well. Dry the fruit until it is brittle. When it is cool blend it to a fine powder. Store this in an airtight container until you are ready to make your amazing herbal bites. Select the herbs you would like to use for the recipe. I first used echinacea. I made a decoction from echinacea roots using 2 tablespoons of the cut and dried root and 2 cups distilled water. Let the herb sit in the water for a couple of hours to soften, then bring the water to a low simmer while covered. Simmer covered for about 20 minutes then remove from heat and let steep for an hour. Strain the liquid, return it to your pot and, on a low heat with the lid off, simmer the liquid down to ½ cup. This is what Dr. Christopher called a 7-power tea because it is ¼ the volume of what you started with which in this case was 2 cups.

When you have your herbal decoction complete you are now ready to make the herbal bites. Start with ¼ cup of the fruit powder and slowly add the herbal liquid stirring well as you go. Add enough liquid until it is a consistency to drop on the dehydrator tray in dollops using a teaspoon. You may use all the liquid or have some left over. Add more powder if you have extra liquid. If you run out of your decoction you may add some water until you get the right consistency. Drop the mixture by small spoonfuls on a solid dehydrator tray and dry them at around 105 degrees. This is a very small batch and will only make a few bites so feel free to double or triple the recipe. Once they are dry, store them in an airtight container. They will keep for many months or longer.

Have fun experimenting with different herbs and fruits. I have made some with apple powder and concentrated ginger tea with some cinnamon to use for motion sickness while traveling. It's fun and exciting to get your kids involved in this. Kids love the chews and they don't even have to know it's good for them.

Some other possibilities would be to use herbs for sleep and nervousness such as valerian, chamomile, or passionflower. Immunity herbs could include echinacea, elderflowers and berries, calendula, or even garlic. For nutritional support you could add rose hips, alfalfa, spirulina powder, or Jurassic Green powder. Hawthorn berries could be used for heart. There are so many possibilities.

*Jo Francks is a Master Herbalist working at The School of Natural Healing.*