

Herbs That Can Help Get Us Through Winter

The cold winter months not only bring in coughs, colds, and flu, we find it harder to stay warm and our circulation tends to be less effective at throwing out toxins. Not least, we feel less energized and able to find that extra bit of energy. Here are 5 key herbs to help with all those winter aspects.

Cinnamon Stick

A fragrant winter favourite, this herb is able to bring circulation as far as cold fingers and toes. It is also a potent antiviral and antibacterial, making it a vital herb for the worst of the flu season. Not only does it fight these microbes, its constituent, cinnamaldehyde, provides welcome pain reduction and is sedative. It continues to be useful post colds and flu, during the often debilitating convalescence stage. It is also a blood sugar stabilizer useful for helping calm down any post-festive sweet tooth over-indulgence.

Ginger Root

This is 'the' classic for warming up circulation and helping colds and flu and it is often twinned as an herbal tea with cinnamon to warm and detoxify. However, it is most effective as an antiviral and antibacterial when freshly grated and eaten raw. (You can add a little honey if you wish or simply chew a teaspoon of it as it is.) The gingerol, zingerone, and shogaol and other constituents are 6-15 times stronger in the fresh root, and if the aim is to work as an antimicrobial, do not make as a tea or cook with it. Reserve the latter for digestive assistance and circulatory help.

Siberian Ginseng Root (eleuthero)

(This adaptogen is not a ginseng and can be used as a daily food.) It is perfect for the winter months as it increases the body's ability to resist infection, lessening the likelihood of picking up colds, and stops the "cold" wearing us down and making us more exposed to microbes. In fact, because of this, we are less likely to gravitate to eating weight-gaining carbs and other cold-weather foods. As an adrenal building herb, it enforces energy conservation generally and fortifies against "winter" stress in all its varying guises, from cold, to support while detoxing.

Elderberry

These anti-viral berries are of increasing interest as findings show they appear to "inactivate" any given flu and virus strain. It helps to shorten and reduce its symptoms and severity. Of course, it has been made and used as a home remedy as a syrup for centuries, to treat tickly coughs, colds, and fevers. If taken at the onset, nastier versions like flu, bronchitis, and pneumonia are less likely to progress. It is good taken throughout the colder winter months on a weekly basis, and daily during a cold.

Nettle Leaves

The leaves are a good winter detox choice. In winter it is harder to sweat and naturally get rid of accumulated toxins. Nettle's high levels of flavonoids and potassium makes it excellent for moving on waste products via the increased urine production. Nettle is also a specific to help clear the skin, so it is perfect for preventing "detox skin", where toxins can congregate. Use either as an organic powder of 1 tsp (5g) in smoothies or as an herbal leaf tea.

Recommended Products:

- Mother Earth Organic Root Cider – Barrier Island Organics

Recommended Reading:

- *How to Optimize Curcumin Absorption – With Golden Milk Tea Recipe*
- *Elderberries and Recipes*
- *The Amazing Herbal Power of Ginger*
- *Cinnamon – Ceylon Vs Cassia, Health Benefits, and Other Interesting Facts*
- *Five Common Weeds to Cultivate for Health and Nutrition*

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