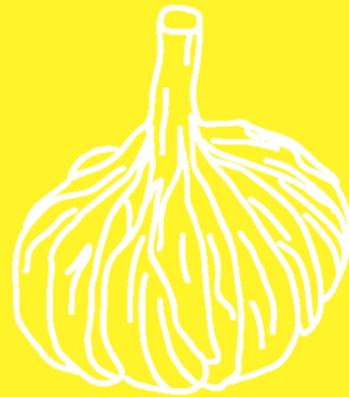


GET RADICAL BOIL ROOTS

**A Kitchen Witch's
Guide to Wellness
in the Time of
COVID-19**



Prepared by [Gina Badger](#)

Art by Bonnie Rose Weaver

with collaborative feedback and contributions from [Claire Chuck Bohman](#),
[Tracey Brieger](#), [Renée Camila](#), [Vadi Arzu Erdal](#), [Sarah Holmes](#), [Vanessa
Radman](#), [Samantha Ray Roberts](#), [Fern Tallos](#), [Bonnie Rose Weaver](#)

This is a living document created 14/Mar/2020;
last updated 8/Apr/2020, 3pm PST.

To be notified when updates are released, [join the Long Spell mailing list](#).
If you, dear reader, think something is missing, notice a mistake, or have
general feedback, [please fill out this form](#).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THIS GUIDE

A Note on Sustainability and Choice of Herbs

PART I: PREVENTATIVE CARE

Key to Plant Entries

Herbs to Support Immune Function

Herbs to Support Lymph

Herbs to Support the Lungs

Herbs to Support Liver Function

Herbs to Support Digestive Function

Herbs to Support the Nervous System

PART II. EARLY INFECTION PHASE

Herbs to Alleviate Symptoms of Respiratory Infection

PART III: RESOURCES

Sample Preventative Care Protocols

Respiratory Steams

Oral Hygiene

Referral List: Clinical Herbalists

Where to source herbs?

Recommended medicine-makers, growers &/or suppliers

Research

Best Practice Guidelines for Dispensing

WELCOME TO THIS GUIDE

The Kitchen Witch's Motto

“The medicine you have on hand is exactly the medicine you need.”

Our immune systems are equipped with powerful mechanisms to fight off infections, and there are many ways we can support and develop this innate capacity. In this guide, we highlight some time-tested, accessible immune-boosting practices, foods, and herbal medicines.¹ It may feel like a lot of information at once, so how will you know what to focus on? Start with what is accessible to you right now, what you feel drawn to, and/or whatever feels most urgent. Create a [simple protocol](#) with a few plant allies you have on hand, and rotate through different approaches to support your system on many fronts. Pay attention to the specifics of your symptoms and what you already know about your body's pre-existing strengths and weaknesses. Work with what you have, start now, and keep at it. And remember—while herbs are powerful, nutrition and lifestyle go a loooooong way in building immunity and staying healthy.

We will say this again and again: there is no right way to do this, no right herbs or protocol to use. Please please please do not rush out to the grocery store or herb shop to buy a bunch of stuff! STAY HOME, you have everything you need. <3

This guide is especially made for kitchen witches and community herbalists, i.e. folks with some basic knowledge of working with herbs, access to plant medicines, and/or ability to make preparations. We encourage general readers without familiarity with herbs to seek out a knowledgeable person in your network to resource, support, and learn from. This is also a

¹ There are other considerations in addition to the factors of building immunity we have outlined here. In particular, if you are recovering from a previous cold/flu, have chronic infections (i.e. thrush/candida, UTIs, athlete's foot, jock itch, fungal toenail), experience chronic inflammation, and/or autoimmunity, these are stressors on your immune system, and addressing them will help your body to fight off new illness. Many of the herbs discussed here can be helpful to those ends, but we will not go into detail for each of them.

good time to consult with a clinical herbalist if you have the resources to do so. See [Referral List: Trusted Clinical Herbalists](#) to set up appointments with folks who are currently offering sliding-scale consultations.

We assume that as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the great majority of mild cases will be treated at home, in community, using folk knowledge and commonly available practices, foods and herbal medicines—perhaps without ever being diagnosed. There is great value in resourcing the caregivers in this role because they will help keep people out of hospitals and ease the pressure on our healthcare infrastructure. If you are offering care of this kind, remember to also take care of yourself! We're in this for the long haul, and we need to take it slow and steady.

[Severe cases](#) should be treated at an emergency medical facility. If you or someone you are caring for is having severe respiratory difficulty (if they are unable to speak a full sentence without stopping to breathe), call 911 and let them know that you suspect COVID-19 infection so that first responders can come prepared.

COVID-19 is a new type of infectious respiratory disease caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 for which there is no established treatment. Closely related viruses caused the 2003 SARS (Sudden Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak as well as the 2019 MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak. In preparing this guide, we consulted research based on those other epidemics, clinical information shared by TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) practitioners who have treated COVID-19, as well as western herbalists who have been working to adapt those protocols to the North American context, including some who have begun to support people with COVID-19. We have listed our sources [below](#).

This guide's authors are practicing herbalists, many of whom have trained in energetic clinical herbalism at the Blue Otter School of Herbal Medicine with Karyn Sanders and Sarah Holmes. In creating this guide, we have also drawn on the full breadth of our training and clinical experience, which includes a strong ethical orientation with respect to Indigenous land and medicine traditions. The info we offer in this guide is based on historical and contemporary usage of these plants, held alongside what we are learning about COVID-19. We do not claim to have a comprehensive understanding of COVID-19 or to have authoritative experience supporting people who are infected. Our goal has been to review, in a short time, as much as possible and to make recommendations for accessible approaches to building

immunity, as well as supporting people who are experiencing the initial mild upper respiratory phase of this disease.

As you consult this document, please keep in mind that we are not medical doctors and this is not medical advice. It's beyond the scope of this document to outline all possible drug-herb interactions, but this is an important consideration in working with herbs especially at higher acute/therapeutic doses. If you or someone you are caring for is taking pharmaceutical medications, please consult with a knowledgeable person before adding herbal medicines to the mix. Please be proactive about safety concerns and ethical sourcing. This public health emergency is unprecedented in our times, but we also know it will not be the only one. We must hold ourselves to the highest standards of [sustainable practice](#), in every sense of that word.

Finally, please hold that herbal medicines are drawn from sentient beings. They carry wisdom and experience beyond what we can grasp at any particular moment. Do not come to them with an expectation that they will cure you. Rather, approach them with humility and an intention to build reciprocal relationships, and allow this interdependence to be your anchor in these frightening times.

A Note on Sustainability and Choice of Herbs

In our clinical practices we prioritize the use of weedy, widely available herbs, the ones in our gardens and kitchens,² and we have focused on those plants here. In an effort to respect Indigenous knowledge and resources, we avoid commercial use of sacred Indigenous plants as well as plants from traditions and geographies that we are unfamiliar with.

That said, because of the best information currently available on herbal protocols for coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV-2, some herbs in this document are widely used in TCM and come from that tradition, and some come from Indigenous medicine traditions.

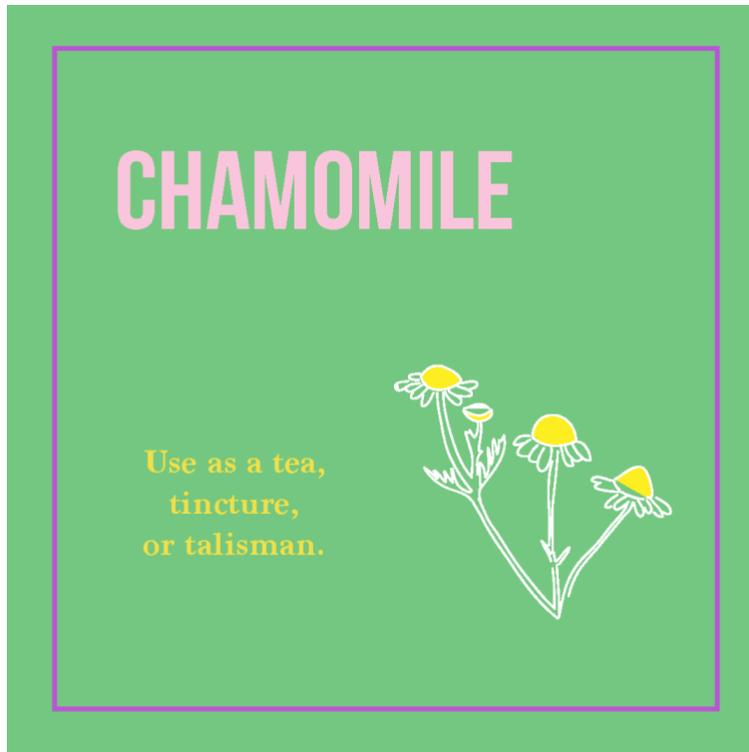
We have deliberately excluded some herbs that are Indigenous to Turtle Island (aka North America) and are at risk of becoming endangered due to overharvesting and habitat destruction, including Lomatium, Ligusticum (Osha), Anemopsis (Yerba Mansa). We do not believe these herbs should be widely used, even though they would likely be supportive for this illness, and you will see others recommend them. We urge you to never use these herbs unless you can verify that they have been organically grown (instead of harvested from the wild, or "wildcrafted"). For more information about endangered and at-risk plant species, please see [United Plant Savers](#).

We believe the herbs we have included in this guide will do what we need clinically *and* can be used without threatening the long-term population health of herbs that are crucial to Indigenous healers and their communities.

Please use your best judgement in sourcing herbs with an eye to upholding traditional knowledge-keepers, prioritizing Indigenous access to traditional medicines, and safeguarding sustainability in the widest possible sense. While this is certainly an urgent situation, it is not the first and it will not be the last, so we must work collectively to uphold the highest ethical standards of practice. If we want the herbs to take care of us, we must in return take care of them.

#rethinkwildcrafting

² With the acknowledgement that some of these plants are widely available because of extractive capitalism.



PART I: PREVENTATIVE CARE

The foundation of wellness consists of rest, hydration, and nutrition. These basics are often overlooked! For protection against viral infections in general, including for COVID-19, we know that it is very important to keep your body warm and to keep the channels of elimination open; sweat, urinate, exhale, and maintain regular bowel movements.

Below are some supportive practices you can start to integrate into your everyday lifestyle. Try not to get overwhelmed. To start, choose 2–3 things from the list that feel like a good fit. Once you've got the hang of those, return for inspiration on how to support your overall wellness.

Increase your water intake

This can have a significant impact because an under-hydrated person's mucous membranes are more vulnerable to this virus.

Maintain balanced nutrition

Eat food that brings you joy! Don't stress about the perfect foods, but some helpful ideas are to "eat the rainbow" with a diversity of vegetables and fruits to get trace minerals, nutrients, and vitamins, especially Vitamin A, C, and E. Also helpful are essential fatty acids (EFAs), Omega 3, 6, 9 from small oily fish, flax, and borage; and fermented foods or probiotics to support the gut microbiome. A simple, well balanced whole foods diet (avoiding foods that are more processed) helps promote healthy digestion, which supports your overall immunity and nervous system.

Consume warming foods and spices

Think about soups, broths, stews, onions, garlic, all spicy condiments and cooking/baking spices. Drink your tea nice and hot; this is a good time to take your herbs as teas instead of tincture when possible.

Stay warm

Bundle up! Even as the weather warms up here in the northern hemisphere. Be especially mindful of protecting your chest, throat and kidneys from drafts. Take hot showers and baths, sauna or steam if you can do so while avoiding public places. Consider a cool rinse, with epsom or sea salt, to help with clearing—but only if you're feeling healthy because a cold rinse if you have cold/flu symptoms can aggravate illness. Bonus: the minerals in the salts are absorbed through the skin and good for you. Do [castor oil packs](#).

Foot baths

Soak feet in a small tub or pot of hot water with 2 tbsp mustard powder, 2 tbsp epsom salt, and 1 tbsp sea salt for 20–30 minutes. Make sure to bundle up your body.

Move your lymph

Dry brushing stimulates lymph; always brush toward your heart with light, gentle strokes. Lymph massage with warm oil is another approach. Place two fingers behind ears, pull down and around to back of neck; use palms in sweeping movements on chest, pulling skin up towards collarbone and then releasing; cup under arms, pumping up towards

body; place palms on back of neck, sweeping down towards spine. Oil can also be infused with lymph drainage supporting herbs.

Nurture your spiritual body

Reach out and connect virtually with a loved one, do something you love, remember to laugh. Sit with a tree, meditate or pray, or anything else that feeds your spirit.

Resource your sleep

Resting and sleeping increase both our immune and nervous systems' ability to function and regulate. Different people need different amounts of sleep, but think a minimum of 7–8 hours per night. Meditation and nervine herbs can help to prime our nervous systems for sleep.

Move your body, spend time outdoors

Move your body in any way that is accessible to you and brings you joy. Spend time in the sun; put your bare feet on earth for at least fifteen minutes per day, or as often as possible. Even under shelter-in-place, daily walks are allowed and recommended, just make sure to maintain physical distance and wear a mask when necessary.

Reduce overall toxic load

Look into more natural household cleaning products and personal care products that you can access at this time, and reduce alcohol intake, drug use, and smoking/vaping as you are able. Especially consider reducing smoking/vaping to support overall lung health.

Reduce exposure to allergens

This includes food sensitivities. Anti-inflammatory diets are a good place to start for making dietary changes if you aren't already familiar with your particular food sensitivities. If you are experiencing seasonal allergies, try working with an overnight infusion (8 hr tea) of Nettles.

Energetically, immune function is connected to boundary work

Immunity is our bodies' capacity to know what's us and not us, who's friendly and who's a threat. This works on all levels. Practices that help us to occupy a right-sized amount of space are supportive to immunity. Examples include looking at interpersonal boundaries, how we expend our energy, tending to trauma around these areas, and ancestral healing work.

Key to Plant Entries

Tea infusion made with leaves, flowers, and other “airy bits”: steep in boiled water, covered, for 20 mins; standard therapeutic dose: about 5g/day, or 1 small palmful

Tea decoction made with stems, bark, berries, roots and other “dense bits”: gently simmer, covered, for at least 30 mins, up to 24 hrs; standard therapeutic dose: 5g/day, or 1 heaping Tbsp

Tinc a tincture is an extraction in alcohol; for medicinal mushrooms, should be a double-extraction; preventive dose (staying at home): 8–10 drops 1x/day, preventative dose (leaving the house): 10–12 drops 2/day; acute doses range from 1 drop to 1 tsp per dose, up to 6x/day, depending on the plant, the preparation, and the person; consult a more experienced person if you need guidance

Succus fresh plant/leaf/flower juice preserved with alcohol

Elixir alcohol-free extraction, often made with honey and/or apple cider vinegar

Caps capsule of powdered herb

Steam pour boiled water over plant material in a large bowl, tent head with towel and inhale deeply for 3–5 minutes, 3–5x/day

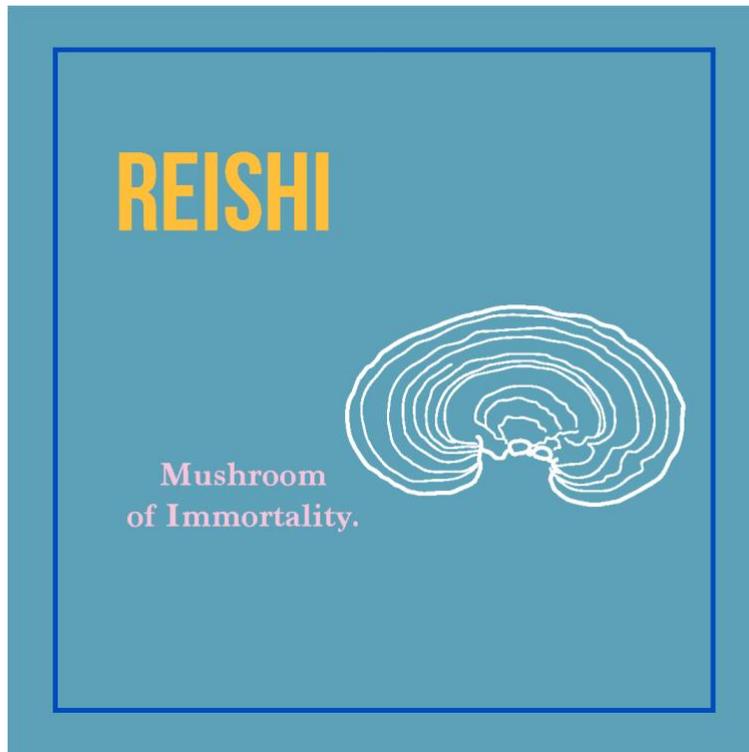
Food eat as food

Oil plant material, fresh or dry, infused into carrier oil for topical use

* Safe for most people

** Avoid if pregnant or nursing; however, exceptions may be made depending on gestational phase and/or dose. For more questions, seek expert advice, as dosing or specifics on this topic is outside the scope of this guide

*** Not safe for long-term internal use by anyone. Recommended for short-term use by generally healthy individuals



Herbs to Support Immune Function

These herbs build your baseline immunity in a number of ways, including increasing the production and activity of white blood cells, which are key actors in our immune response. In addition, many of them are antiviral and/or antibacterial and have affinities for the respiratory system. Long-term immune support should be taken regularly for one to three months to have the best effect; start now, before you get sick! It is important to rotate through at least two different herbs, not unlike changing your exercise routine to develop multiple forms of strength. If accessible, we recommend working with at least one medicinal mushroom plus Astragalus or Elder, and rotate through them, taking each for one month at a time.

Sambucus* (elderberry and elderflower) Tea Succus Elixir

Immune modulator and antiviral with an affinity for the respiratory system; protects dendritic cells (part of immune function); cooling. *As an immune modulator, elder is safe to use during active infection, but those who have autoimmune or other chronic inflammatory conditions may want to discontinue use if they have a COVID-19 infection.*

Astragalus* Tea Tinc

Deep immune tonic (increases number and activity of white blood cells) and modulator; antiviral, antibacterial; known to increase vitality; affinity for chronic issues with overall depletion. *Do not continue to take if you become ill, unless illness becomes severe and immune response/inflammation needs to be modulated/calmed.*

Usnea* Tea Tinc

Builds deep immunity; antiviral; stimulates and protects lungs. *Only harvest windfall; do not pull out of trees.*

Medicinal mushrooms

Ganoderma* (reishi) Tea Caps Tinc (double extraction)

Deep immune tonic and modulator; antiviral; antihistamine; anti-inflammatory; bitter; protects the liver; balances energy levels; supports adrenals; neutral temp. *Caution with autoimmune conditions, lymphoma and leukemia, and meds for diabetes and to lower blood pressure; do not use if you take immunosuppressants.*

Lentinula* (shiitake) Caps Tinc Food (cook for at least 20 mins)

Immune modulator; antiviral and antibacterial; traditionally used for bronchitis and other upper respiratory tract infections; protects the liver; source of interferon, which is part of the allopathic treatment for COVID-19; neutral temp.

Trametes* (turkey tail) Caps Tinc Food (cook for at least 20 mins)

Immune modulator; antiviral and antibacterial; affinity for chest; bitter; protects the liver; neutral temp.

Grifolia* (maitake) Food (cook for min. 20 mins)
Immune stimulant; neutral temp.

Cordyceps* Tea Caps Tinc
Immune, lung, kidney, liver, heart tonic; supports adrenals; neutral temp.

Fire cider* Elixir

[Fire cider](#) is a traditional remedy used by herbalists, kitchen witches, and grandmothers for generations. It's made with horseradish, ginger, garlic, onion, hot peppers and other herbs of choice (work with what you have). These herbs are chopped up into small pieces or blended in a food processor and then steeped in apple cider vinegar. Steep for a moon cycle (5–7 days if you need it sooner) you strain the herbs out and what remains is a very potent remedy. For prevention, take 7–12 drops, 2–3 times a day; for active infection, up to ½ oz 2–3 times a day. *This remedy can irritate some tummies, so be sure to take with food if you have a sensitive stomach.*

Herbs to Support Lymph

Our lymphatic system is an important part of our immune system. It stores white blood cells as well as cleans up our interstitial spaces (the spaces between cells) and returns that fluid back to our bloodstream after filtering it. Simple movement of our bodies moves our lymph. People who have less lymph movement include people living with less mobility, decreased heart function, decreased kidney function. Here, dry skin brushing (gentle!) and lymph massage are particularly helpful in moving lymph. Lymphatic herbs include herbs that help our lymphatic fluid to move as well as some that also support the organs of this system; spleen, tonsils, and adenoids.

Calendula* (calendula) Tea Tinc Oil Food

Surface immune and lymph stimulant with affinity for the chest area; warming.

Gallium* (cleavers) Succus Tea Food

Cleans and cools surface lymph; lymph tonic; cooling. Cleavers is a common weed that can be easily harvested from a clean area without worry of overharvesting.

Trifolium* (red clover) Tea Food

Cooling to hot lung conditions; demulcent for lungs and throat and antispasmodic for dry cough; antihistamine; decent lymph mover if it's all you have; cooling. *Safe for use in pregnancy and nursing and for kids and babies.*

Ceanothus* (red root) Tinc

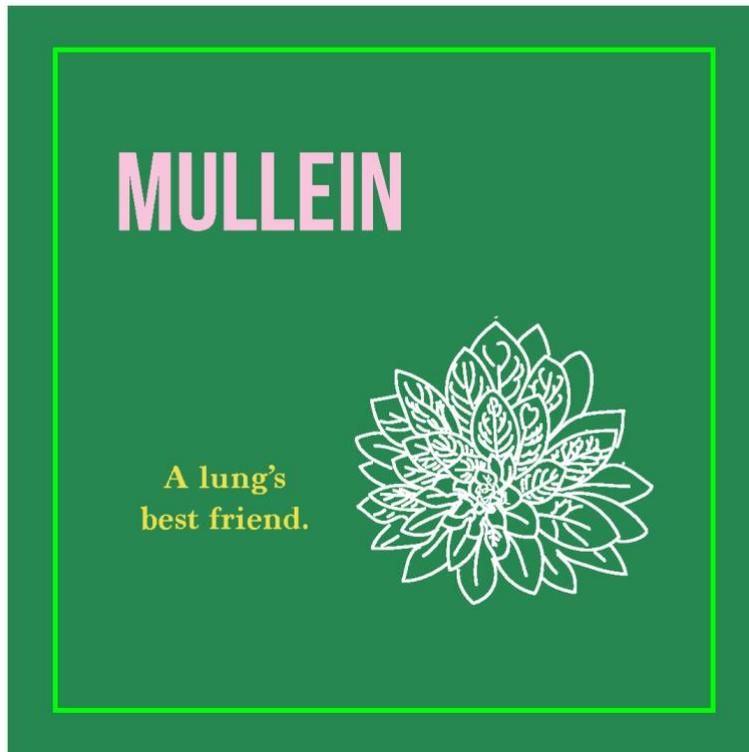
Not as common a plant, but if you have the tincture on hand, red root is a fantastic cleaner/filter of the lymphatic system, with an affinity for the body above the belly button; if your first cold symptom is a sore throat; cooling.

Viola odorata* (violet) Succus Tea Food Elixir Oil

Gentle yet powerful; lymphatic with an affinity for chronic lung conditions. Aids in bringing movement to slow, sludgy lymph flow. Especially useful as an infused oil when administering lymphatic massage; cooling.

Laurus nobilis (bay laurel)** Tea Food Steam Oil

Commonly found in the spice drawer and added to soups; may be added to food to aid digestion issues and increase appetite (one of the symptoms associated with COVID-19 is loss of appetite). Powerful lymphatic. Supports respiratory system when applied as infused oil. Rubbing into swollen lymph nodes may bring down inflammation / swelling; warming. *Not enough known about long term use if pregnant or nursing.*



Herbs to Support the Lungs

When we breathe in our lungs take in oxygen and serve every cell in the body this vital element. Yet the exhale is just as important; besides being part of our interdependence with plants, it is a route of excretion. A good inhale, followed by a good exhale, followed by a pause is good for both our lungs and our nervous systems.

Make it easier on your lungs by avoiding heavy particulate matter. This includes but is not limited to indoor sources like wood smoke, cooking smoke, flour dust, hair spray, recreational smoking or vaping; outdoor sources like car exhaust, sawdust, pesticide spraying, lawn mowing, etc. If you live or work in areas with heavy particulate matter in the air, cover your mouth and nose when possible and consider a **steam** to help your system clear out what you have inhaled. Some bioregions are also experiencing heavy pollen blooms, or recent widespread wildfire smoke, so that is aggravating respiratory systems as well.

Herbs for the lungs can warm, cool, moisten, or dry—to name just a few actions. It is very important to be mindful, especially as we are dealing with a virus that attacks the lungs, that we pay attention to what these herbs are doing and not just take a bunch of lung herbs that are actually working against each other. Be careful to not overly dry, or overly moisten the lungs, and take into consideration pre-existing conditions.

Verbascum* (mullein) Tea

Superb lung tonic; gentle, safe support to overall lung function with affinity for the cilia, which are attacked by COVID-19. Strong choice for preventative, acute and repair of lung health. *Strain through a coffee filter/clean cloth to remove fine hairs that can irritate the throat.*

Althea* (marshmallow root) Tea

Soothes dry throat or cough, nourishes and protects mucous membranes in the body. *Combine cold infusion with juice if the mucilaginous texture is unpalatable.*

Inula (elecampane) Tinc**

Chronic wet lung issues, wheeziness; warming and drying; indicated as prevention for someone with a preexisting lung condition, or as acute treatment if illness progresses to pneumonia stage.

Glycyrrhiza (licorice) Tea Tinc**

Moistening and soothing, indicated for dry cough; antiviral (theoretically, may block virus from attaching to ACE-2 linkages); promotes mucous membrane repair; protects dendritic cells (part of immune function); cold. *Not for safe for those who have high blood pressure; not safe with most pharmaceutical meds.*

Grindelia* (gumweed) Tinc Oil**

Supports lung function, especially with impacted mucus.

Thuja* (cedar) Steam Tea Tinc Oil**

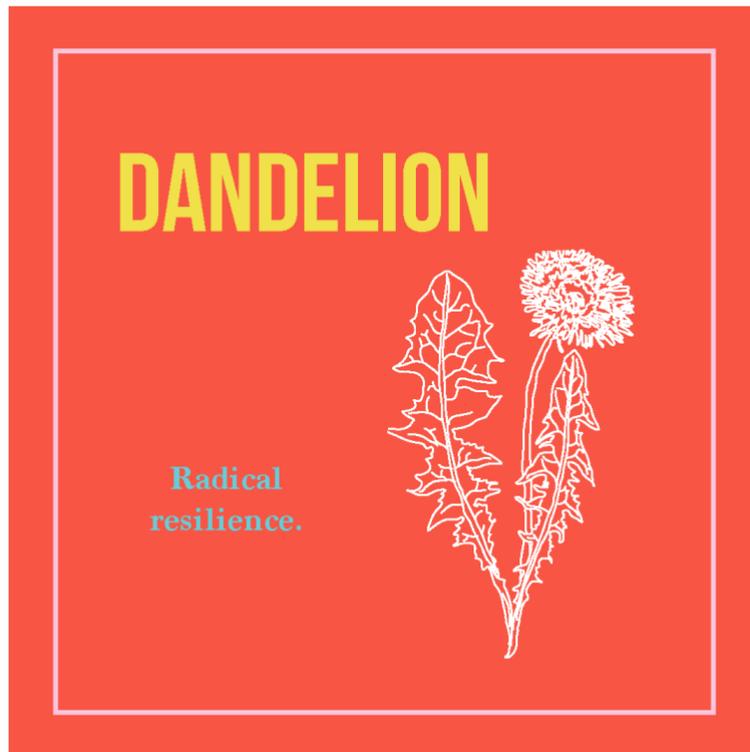
Immune stimulant; antiviral with affinity for the respiratory system; brings up impacted mucus; neutral temp. Alternately: evergreen needles/leaves of any kind, i.e. pine, juniper, redwood. *Not safe for high-dose or long-term internal use. See [steam protocol](#).*

Angelica archangelica (angelica) Tea Tinc**

Expectorant (helps get mucus up and out), indicated for a mucous-y wet cough; helpful for wet gurgly digestive upset; warming.

Eucalyptus (eucalyptus) Steam Tea Oil**

Expectorant with antiviral activity; helps open up blocked airways; indicated for asthma and bronchitis; regulates inflammation in the body. Essential oil in a carrier oil or infused oil can be applied to chest / back / nose as a decongestant; warming. *Not recommended when pregnant or nursing.* See [steam protocol](#).



Herbs to Support Liver Function

The liver is a big, hardworking organ with a lot of jobs! Liver function is one of the main ways our bodies sort out what is useful and what we need to eliminate, so it plays a crucial role in eliminating waste products created while fighting infection.

Arctium* (burdock root) Tea Tinc Food

Tonic to liver, intestinal tract, lymph, blood, and kidneys; reduces chronic inflammation due to eczema, psoriasis, and other autoimmune

skin-related imbalances; neutral to cooling. Called *gobo* in Japanese, this vegetable root is delicious in food: pickle, steam, add to chai or soups or stir fries.

Taraxacum* (dandelion root) Tea Tinc

Stimulating and decongesting to the liver; bitter, stimulates production of bile, increases digestive enzymes; cold, stimulating.

Ceanothus* (red root) Tinc

Not as common a plant, but if you have the tincture on hand, red root is a fantastic cooling bitter support to the liver (if anger is a prominent component of your emotional landscape, it's likely you have a hot liver); if your first cold symptom is a sore throat; cooling.

Herbs to Support Digestive Function

Our digestive system houses a huge component of our surface immunity, our frontline defenses that mobilize the most quickly when our bodies encounter pathogens, which includes our microbiome. Additionally, supporting our digestion is important for immunity because it ensures that we are able to absorb all of the good nutrients in our food, and because it can reduce dietary intolerances which lead to chronic inflammation and constant stress on our immune function.

Bitters

Tasting the flavour bitter initiates a cascade of physiological reactions that optimize digestive function (including promoting bile flow, liver function, and secretion of digestive enzymes). A great place to start supporting your digestion is with what goes on your plate. For bitter foods, think olives, olive oil, bitter greens like arugula, radicchio, dandelion leaf, mustard leaf, and artichokes. If tinctures are accessible, you can try taking 5 drops of a bitter herb, 10 minutes before eating. If taking bitter herbs as tea, steep for at least 30 minutes, up to overnight, or simmer (covered) for 20 minutes, turn off heat, and allow to steep until cooled to a pleasant temperature.

Matricaria* (chamomile) Tea Tinc

Eases panic and anxiety that affect digestion, particularly tension, gas, and indigestion; relief of aches and pains with the flu. *Excellent and safe for pregnant people and children.*

Achillea (yarrow) Tea Tinc**

Astringent (tones tissues, aiding to balance fluid retention), diaphoretic (makes you sweat); warming.

Calendula* (calendula) Tea Tinc Oil

Anti-inflammatory in the digestive system; gently cleans liver and gallbladder; heals mucous membranes of the digestive tract; warming.

Plantago* (plantain) Tea Tinc Oil

Astringent and healing to tissues, for topical or internal use. Found in most lawns; be sure to harvest from clean, unsprayed areas. The seeds, known as psyllium, are good fiber for folks who tend toward constipation; cooling.

Verbena (blue vervain) Tinc**

Ideal for nervous tension associated with Type-A personalities; extremely bitter (this is why we recommend it only as tinc); cooling.

Leonurus (motherwort) Tinc**

Tonic to the heart and circulatory system; eases heaviness in the chest; heart palpitations; emotional holding; extremely bitter (this is why we recommend it only as tinc); neutral temp.



Warming Carminatives

This category of herbs aid digestion without increasing digestive secretions like bitters do. Think chai spices, or anything you'd want to put in a ginger cookie :) We recommend taking warming carminatives together with bitters, either in your food, as a tea, or as a tincture. You can combine one or two from the above list with one or two of the below into a formula.

Zingiber* (ginger) Tea Tinc Food

Warming circulatory tonic that boosts surface immunity; anti-inflammatory; antimicrobial; expectorant (softens and brings mucous up and out); excellent for nausea; warming.

Elettaria* (green cardamom) Tea Tinc Food

Mucilaginous, indicated for sore throat; helpful for indigestion and gas.

Foeniculum* (fennel) Tea Tinc Food

Mucilaginous; indicated for sore throat; helpful for indigestion and gas.

Alternately: Cinnamomum* (cinnamon) **Tea Tinc Food**; Szyzygum* (clove) **Tea Tinc Food**; Illicium* (star anise) **Tea Tinc Food**; Piper nigrum* (black pepper) **Tea Food**



Herbs to Support the Nervous System

The impact on our nervous system is somewhat secondary to our primary concerns with COVID-19. However, managing stress, anxiety, fear and panic improves our immunity. Herbalists use the term nervine to describe a plant that acts on the nervous system. The majority of nervines calm and cool the nerves, which can soothe difficult emotions. Many nervines are sedating to varying degrees, so they may help you sleep or ease your stress down a notch.

Matricaria* (chamomile) Tea Tinc

Eases panic and anxiety that affect digestion, particularly tension, gas, and indigestion; relief of aches and pains with the flu. *Excellent and safe for pregnant people and children.*

Avena* (milky oat) Tea Tinc

Rebuilds the tissue of the nervous system; like a cool, calm balm for your nerves, works both acutely and builds over time; warming. Oatmeal is made from a different stage of the same plant, so if you can't find milky oats, try eating oatmeal. *Safe for kids and good for everybody.*

Melissa* (lemon balm) Tea Tinc

Uplifts mood, anti-viral; helpful when anxiety, fear, or panic affect digestion; cooling.

Scutellaria* (skullcap) Tinc (fresh plant) Tea

Gentle nervine to take the edge off of difficult feelings and support relaxation; cold.

Nepeta* (catnip) Tea Tinc

Relaxing and gentle; particularly good when anxiety, fear, or panic affect digestion; cooling. *Safe for kids.*

Passiflora (passionflower)** Tea Tinc

Gently relaxes muscles and nerves; can ease nerve pain and musculoskeletal pain; supportive of sleep, can be sedating in larger doses; cooling. *Do not combine with other nervous system depressants; not recommended for folks with low blood pressure or in high doses with sleep apnea.*

Lavandula* (lavender) Tea Tinc

Antibacterial, slightly uplifts mood, reduces anxiety and depression; cooling. *Consider visiting a local bush, or engaging with it via soaps, lotion or essential oil.*

Eschscholtzia (california poppy)** Tinc

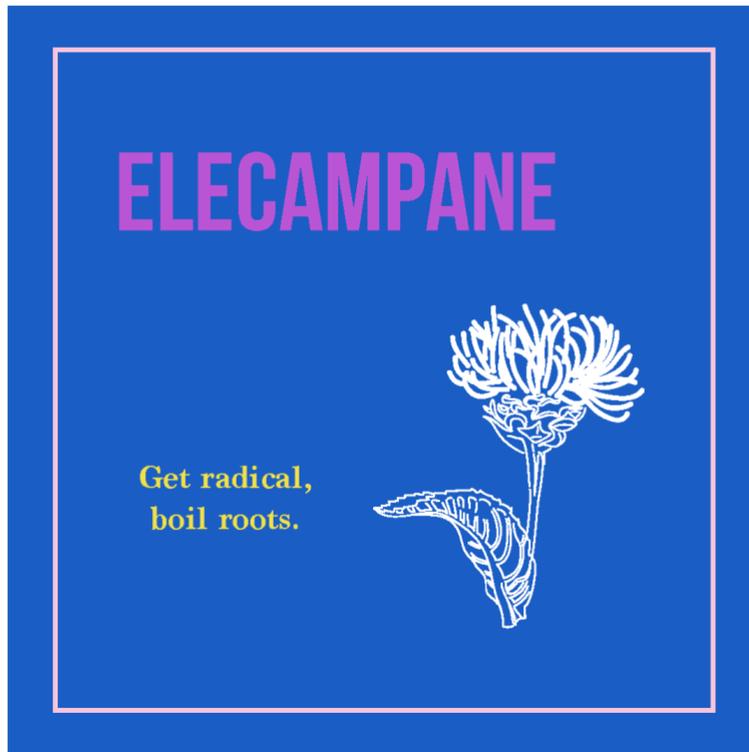
Strong relaxant/hypnotic, can use for panic/anxiety attack or insomnia; calming, centering, if you're feeling fearful or vulnerable; neutral temp. *Do not combine with other nervous system depressants.*

Ocimum sanctum (tulsi/holy basil)** Tea Tinc

Relaxing; aids in reducing emotional and physical stress.

Rosa spp.* (rose) Tea Tinc

General balm for grief; soothing and uplifting to the emotional heart; cooling.



PART II. EARLY INFECTION PHASE

You, or your person, is sick! You don't know if it's [COVID-19](#) or something else. What should you do? We know that COVID-19 moves quickly, with several phases that require different treatment approaches.³ This section applies if you know or suspect you have a mild/early phase COVID-19 infection (symptoms include: mild fever, fatigue, dry cough, digestive upset with loose stool, pale or red tongue with thick white/grey/yellow coating). If a doctor or other primary care provider is accessible, screening for testing and medical oversight is recommended at this stage, as symptoms may progress quickly. Call your provider to check in; do not go in person.

If you or someone you are caring for shifts into more severe symptoms (including shortness of breath/trouble breathing, persistent fever or alternating fever and chills, cough with yellow or thickening mucous, bloating and constipation, chest tightness), seek professional medical support and/or transfer to an urgent care facility. If difficulty breathing becomes severe (unable to speak a full sentence without stopping to breathe), call 911 and let them know that you suspect COVID-19 infection so that first responders can

³ Readers with fluency in TCM energetics will find descriptions of disease progression useful (see [Research](#)).

come prepared. For readers who are interested in more in-depth research on herbal treatment for acute illness, or who want to read more about COVID-19 disease progression, see [Research](#) below.

Herbs to Alleviate Symptoms of Respiratory Infection

In addition to the herbs listed in the preventative section, many of which are also applicable during acute illness, the herbs in this section may come in handy once you begin to feel sick. For the most part, they are herbs with an affinity for the lungs or the respiratory system in general, and/or which are known to have antiviral properties.

Antiviral herbs support the body to fight off viruses. Some antiviral herbs, like reishi, also support deep immunity. Others, like elderberry, work more on surface or acute immunity. Remember how we mentioned that it is useful to work with a few different herbs to build deep immunity and [rotate through them periodically](#)? The same is true of variable antiviral herbs, which we recommend rotating on a weekly basis.

Antiviral herbs that address acute issues are to be approached with more caution by folks living with autoimmune conditions, because they may exacerbate autoimmunity. If you or someone you are caring for has an autoimmune condition, please seek the advice of a practitioner before using antiviral herbs.

Thymus* (thyme) Tea Steam Tinc

Powerful antiviral and antibacterial; helpful in cases of secondary bacterial infection.

Inula (elecampane)** Tinc

Chronic wet lung issues, wheeziness; warming and drying; indicated as prevention for someone with a preexisting lung condition, or as acute treatment if illness progresses to pneumonia stage.

Allium* (garlic) Food (raw or warmed; crush and let sit for 10 minutes)

Antiviral, antifungal with affinity for gut and lungs; expectorant; lowers blood pressure, tones the heart; warming. DO NOW: chop up a clove of garlic and eat with a spoonful of honey or nut butter; repeat 1–2 x daily. Should not be taken by those who use anticoagulant medication.

Thuja* (cedar) Steam Tea Tinc**

Immune stimulant; antiviral with affinity for the respiratory system; brings up impacted mucus; neutral temp. Alternately: evergreen needles/leaves of any kind, i.e. pine, juniper, redwood. *Not safe for high-dose or long-term internal use. See [steam protocol](#).*

Glycyrrhiza (licorice) Tea Tinc**

Moistening and soothing, indicated for dry cough; antiviral (theoretically, may block virus from attaching to ACE-2 linkages); promotes mucous membrane repair; protects dendritic cells (part of immune function); cold. *Not for safe for those who have high blood pressure; not safe with most pharmaceutical meds.*

Eriodictyon (yerba santa) Tinc**

Not as common an herb, but if you have some on hand, it is indicated for damp and wet lung conditions; slightly lung stimulating; anti-inflammatory; warming.

Asclepias tuberosa* (pleurisy root) Tinc**

Not as common an herb, but if you have some on hand, it is indicated for hot and wet lung infections; pulls fluid out; heals lungs and heart tissue from damage caused by chronic inflammation/infection; cold.

PART III: RESOURCES

Sample Preventative Care Protocols

Let's fight overwhelm together. As best you can, limit stress around the "perfect" protocol. Do what you can do with ease. The following are example protocols to give you ideas about how to incorporate herbs into routines that work for your bodies and lives. Get pumped! Create a protocol with herbs and herbal preparations you know, love, and have access to. Remember that herbs help your body systems do what they're meant to do—when following different "immune boosting" protocols, take breaks from taking herbs to let your body integrate the support (for example, take one week off per month, or two weeks on, two weeks off).

Daily Protocol 1

Tea:

Ginger and licorice root decocted for 30 minutes, 3 cups daily.

Broth

Shitake, Astragalus, onion and garlic broth. Cooked in the crock pot for 8 hours. Use 1 cup daily to cook with. Sauté greens in it or use it instead of a cup of water when cooking grains.

Steam

3 Tbsp of Rosemary from the plant in your front yard in a bowl of hot water. Sit under a towel with it for 20 minutes once daily.

Daily Protocol 2

Tincture

Elderberry, Elecampane, Mullein, Ginger
Take 10 drops 3 times daily.

Steam

3 Tbsp dry thyme from your spice cabinet in a bowl of hot water. Sit under a towel with it for 20 minutes once a day.

Raw Garlic

Mash up a clove of garlic, let it sit for 10 minutes, mix it with a spoonful of honey and eat 2 times daily.

Daily Protocol 3

Tea:

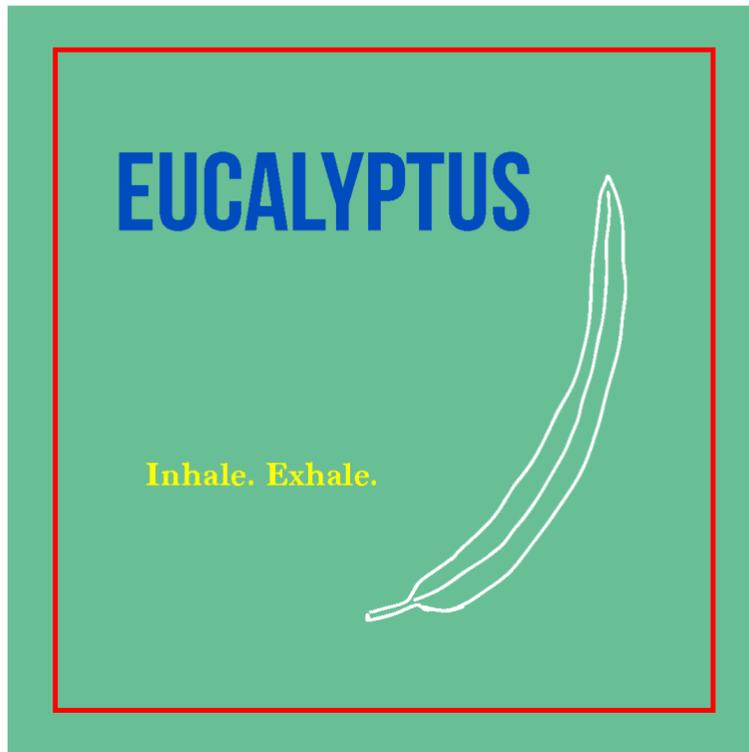
Immune & Respiratory Elderberry, Astragalus, thyme, licorice decocted for 1 hour. Drink 2 cups a day.

Tea

Nervine & Stress Relief Lemon balm, chamomile, oatstraw, fennel steeped in 1L boiled water, covered, for 30 minutes. ½ cup every hour for stress relief throughout the day.

Steam

2 Tbsp rose petals in a bowl of hot water. Sit with it under a towel for 20 minutes once a day.



Respiratory Steams

The Unsung Champ of Respiratory Health

Steaming is a way to get the active properties of herbs in direct contact with our lungs. In the context of a respiratory virus, that is incredibly helpful. Steams are low-cost and effective as heck for prevention and treatment with. It's worth considering which plants are available and abundant in your local bioregion. Bonus: steams can also be amazing stress relief. Try this with chamomile or rose petals.

To make yourself a steam:

- Put 2–3 tablespoons of an aromatic herb (an herb that has a strong smell like thyme, rosemary, mint, eucalyptus, pine needles, cedar, etc.)⁴ in a bowl—a large glass mixing bowl works well
- Pour just-boiled water over the herbs

⁴ We do not recommend steaming with essential oils because they are a very resource-intensive product that does not make most respectful use of plant material. That being said, if you have essential oils on hand and want to make use of them, use no more than 3 drops per steam.

- Cautiously (so as to not burn your sweet face) bring your face over the bowl
- Tent your head/neck/shoulders and the bowl with a thick towel (we like to do this sitting at a table with the bowl on the table)
- Breathe it all in for at least 5 minutes, up to 30 minutes

Totally fine to take breaks during your steam. This is a great thing to do once daily for prevention or 2–3 times daily during illness. After your steam, you can pour the herbs and water into a pot, turn the stove on low and let those aromatic vapors fill your home. Pro Tip: do pay attention to the water level in your pot. More than once have we burned a pot because all the water evaporated with the stove still on. Yikes.

Oral Hygiene

Keeping Our Mouths & Throats Inhospitable to Viral Pathogens

As we learn more about SARS-CoV-2 and the infectious respiratory disease associated with it, we also see an increase in the bacterial pneumonia co-infections that arise from overgrowth paired with a weakened immune system. Practicing good hygiene externally—proper handwashing, social distancing, sanitizing exposed surfaces, not touching our faces, removing clothing when reentering our homes from being out in the world, wearing masks, frequent showers, washing pillows + face towels often, etc—limits vectors of contagion as well as the quantity of pathogens we are exposed to / expose others to. However, once the pathogens have entered our nose and mouth, research suggests that the COVID-19 causing virus may incubate anywhere from days to weeks, colonize the throat, and, if not inhibited, move into the lungs.

Practicing vigilant oral hygiene, staying hydrated, and keeping our throats moist may, in turn, limit the spread and severity of the infection and prevent harmful bacterial and/or fungal overgrowth in our mouths from entering our lungs. Here are some daily protocols for prevention. They will also improve your overall tooth + gum health and maybe even your breath!

Brushing + Flossing + Tongue Scraping

Increase toothbrushing to 3x/day. Toothpastes with baking soda/salt are great antimicrobial options. Try to floss everyday, pairing with tongue scraping before gargling so that any dislodged pathogens can be spit out instead of hanging around your mouth and throat all night. Wooden spoons work great for scraping and don't leave a metallic taste in the mouth. To clean toothbrushes, soak overnight in a 3% hydrogen peroxide wash. You can put metal spoons in this wash as well. Switch out your brushes more often than usual. To clean wooden spoons, pour 3% hydrogen peroxide over them and wait five minutes before wiping down with clean cloth; wash with warm water and soap, making sure to dry before storing.

Gargling

You can use mouthwash for gargling but keep in mind that mouthwashes containing alcohol may irritate the throat or dry it out. Warm water and sea salt make for an easy but effective gargle as well. This gargle may also be useful in soothing a sore throat due to cold and flu, allergies, or other viral infections.

To make yourself a salt water gargle:

- Mix ½ tsp of sea salt with 6–8 oz of warm water, stirring until fully dissolved
- Take a mouthful at a time and swish around, tilting your head back and gargling with as much contact with your throat as you can handle
- Spit and repeat as many times as desired
- Discard excess salt water mixture to avoid reusing if contaminated

To make / use a tooth and gum tonic:

- Mix equal parts of any/all of these tinctures: Mahonia* (oregon grape root), Monarda* (bee balm), Calendula* (calendula), Populus balsamifera* (black cottonwood), Spilanthes* (electric daisy), propolis*
- Add 1–2 drops of myrrh, clove, tea tree, or peppermint essential oil per oz (optional)
- Store in a sterilized dropper bottle by your sink
- To use, add 30–50 drops to a mouthful of warm water or aloe juice
- Swish for 10–20 seconds
- Spit but don't rinse

Oil Pulling

Oil pulling, or kavala, is an ancient ayurvedic oral hygiene technique. It can be practiced as another form of gargling and done after brushing, as it will work over time to support a healthy microbiome while removing harmful, anaerobic bacteria like *Streptococcus salivarius* and fungi like *Candida*. You can use sesame oil (traditional), coconut oil, or olive oil for this protocol. Because bacteria are encapsulated in a lipid membrane, exposing them to oil binds them and removes them from your mouth. When you remove invading pathogens, it gives your innate host defenses and beneficial bacteria a chance to restore homeostasis.

To do an oil pull:

- Put ~1 tbsp oil in your mouth
- Optional: add 1 drop of mint, clove, or cinnamon oil for a more tolerable flavor
- Swish around, sucking through your teeth as you go
- Start at 5 minutes, working your way up to 15–20 over the course of a week or so (it feels really gross at first but you get used to it; it is vital to work up to full duration for the vitamin E in the oil to potentiate detoxing)
- Spit in trash (so your sink doesn't clog)
- Rinse with a mouthful of warm water

Throat Care

Staying hydrated is the most important way to care for your throat and keep it moist and slippery (theoretically, pathogens then slide down and denature in your stomach acid instead of hooking in and moving on to your lungs). Drink sips of warm water and herbal teas throughout the day. Incorporate demulcent herbs into your tea rotation: violet leaf,

cinnamon bark, various mallows—both leaf and root, plantain, chickweed, mullein, rose, licorice, sea moss, meadowsweet, boxed teas like Throat Coat and Breathe Deep. Demulcent herbs are rich in mucilage (think okra or aloe) that soothes and protects mucous membranes.

Regular respiratory steaming will keep your sinuses/throat/lungs from drying out while delivering antiviral/antibacterial volatile oils that support your immune defenses. See [steam protocol](#).

You can also make an antiviral + demulcent throat spray for when you are out in the world and at risk for greater exposure. You will need .5 oz propolis, 1 tbs raw honey, 1 tsp sea salt, 1 tsp raw apple cider vinegar, 1 cup chamomile tea, oil of oregano (optional), yarrow flower essence for energetic boundaries (optional).

To make throat spray:

- Start by brewing a STRONG cup of chamomile tea, keeping it covered as it cools to keep antiviral volatile oils in the cup (if using tea bags, 2–3 per cup and make sure it's a quality tea company for maximum oil content)
- Steep for at least 20 minutes before straining
- When tea is fairly cooled down, add sea salt; stir until dissolved
- Add honey; stir until dissolved
- Wait until fully cooled, add 2 drops of oil of oregano, ACV, and propolis tincture
- Add 5 drops of yarrow flower essence
- Store in a sterilized bottle with a spray top

Propolis tincture is usually 70% ABV and has its own preservative qualities, as do honey / salt / vinegar for that matter, so this mixture keeps fairly well. Put what you are using daily in a 1 oz spray bottle while storing the backup in the fridge. To use: 2–4 sprays to the back of the throat, keeping your tongue flat.

Neti

Rinsing your nasal passages (an ancient Ayurvedic practice called neti) can help with allergies, sinus problems or colds, and make them less susceptible to illness. Instructions including a video are [here](#).

Referral List: Clinical Herbalists

[Please click here for a current list.](#)

Where to source herbs?

- Try the grocery store. Or your local apothecary that is shipping or offering curb-side services. Since supply chains are backed up and we want to reduce activity outside of the home, these are going to be the most reliable options. Also many sellers are out of herbs or severely behind on orders. Out of practicality, seek local and easy-to-find options first.
- We generally don't recommend that non-Indigenous people wild-harvest plant medicines or buy from medicine makers who do; we encourage building relationships with and buying from Indigenous growers, harvesters and medicine-makers or settlers who grow their own medicine, or to grow medicine yourselves. Check out the hashtag #rethinkwildcrafting for more on this topic.
- Always check the [list of plant species at risk](#) of becoming endangered before purchasing herbs. This list includes plants such as Lomatium, Ligusticum (osha), and Anemopsis (yerba mansa). Please do not buy these herbs if they have been harvested from the wild ("wildcrafted"). Instead, please consider buying them organically grown and supporting farmers working for their conservation. More information at <https://unitedplantsavers.org/>
- If you do harvest your own herbs, carefully consider where you are gathering from. For example, California Poppy is abundant in CA this time of year. This plant can clean soil but there's a lot of it in the Bay Area that's not good to harvest because of the toxicity of the soil where it's growing. Aerial parts are less likely to accumulate heavy metals.
- Lots of clinical herbalists are available for virtual clinical consults (see above) and would be happy to put herbs in the mail for you. See below for a list of practitioners currently offering sliding scale consultations.

Recommended medicine-makers, growers &/or suppliers

[Please click here for a current list.](#)

Research

Good Primer-Level Resources

- Attic Apothecary, [Tips for Prevention and Increasing Immunity against HCoV](#)
- Rosalee de la Foret, [Herbs for Immunity](#)
- Herbalista Free Clinic, [Cold-Care Kitchen Medicine](#)
- Sarah Holmes, [Support During the Pandemic](#), Herbal Highway 24/Mar/2020
- Hood Herbalism, [Remedies: Plant Allies in the Time of COVID-19](#)
- Elise Krohn et al, [Immune & Respiratory Herbs](#)
- Dr. Diana Quinn [Herbal Resilience Guide](#)
- [Herbal Resilience Guide](#), by a collective from Sitting Bull College and reviewed by Linda Black Elk among others

Clinical Resources for Further Research

- Pacific College of Health and Science [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Treatment with TCM in China](#)
- [Official Treatment Protocols Include Chinese Herbal Medicine Formulas for Novel Coronavirus](#)
- Yang Liu et al., [Viral dynamics in mild and severe cases of COVID-19](#)
- Stephen Buhner [Herbal Treatment for Coronavirus Infections](#)
- UCSF Surgery Grand Rounds, [COVID-19 Update](#)
- Matthew Wood [Coronavirus](#) (you will have to create a free account to access)
- Matthew Wood [COVID-19 disease progression and western herbal therapeutics](#) (you will have to create a free account to access)
- Chen Juan et al., [Medical Records from a... \(TCM\) doctor Fighting COVID-19](#)

Other Resource Lists

- Larken Bunce for Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism, [Resources for Herbalists and Community Health Workers](#)
- Danielle Gehl Hagel, Eramosa Herbals, [Herbal Resources for COVID-19](#)

Best Practice Guidelines for Dispensing

[Please follow this link for up-to-date guidelines.](#)