

# Traditional remedies for winter

## EASY STEP BY STEP RECIPES

From onion syrup, to  
ginger tea and fire  
cider



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## About me

My name is Laura Carpenter and I am a herbal educator.

I love bringing 'lost herbal knowledge' back into the everyday,

I run courses at all levels, from the absolute beginners, right up to professional development for herbal practitioners.

You can find out more about me on my website. [www.lauracarpenter.co.uk](http://www.lauracarpenter.co.uk)







# Before we get started we need to take a moment to talk about safety

It is important to remember that just because herbal medicine is natural **does not mean that it is automatically safe**. Some people can have reactions to herbal medicines, and although this is rare it is important to bear in mind.

## **Are you taking any medication?**

If you are taking any form of medication it is important to check that it is safe to take a particular herb with that medication before proceeding. Some herbs can directly interact with a drug and some can stop the drug working altogether.

## **Pregnancy**

If you are pregnant or there is a chance you might be, you must only use herbal medicine with the supervision of a medical herbalist.

If you are unsure about a herbal medicine and how you might react to it, the safest thing to do is not take it and consult a medical herbalist for more information.

It is important to recognise when a condition is more serious, and to know your limits. If you become ill with something you'd normally go see the doctor about, it is important that you still go as normal.

# Natural immune boosters

Winter remedies are essential for keeping you and your family well during the winter and all year round. We will be looking at traditional and modern recipes, how they work and how to make them.

## Why boost immunity?

If you are lucky enough to have a naturally high functioning immune system you may not experience any colds or viruses for many years at a time. Or you may be someone who gets a lot of colds, if you have small children who are at nursery or school that is not always due to a lower functioning immune system it's because of the sheer number of viruses your body is faced with on a daily basis.

Even if you think you do have lower immunity that's not generally a cause for concern, and often a change in diet or environment can increase your immunity naturally.

We often use the term '**boost immunity**' in common every day language to mean reducing the number and severity of colds and flu. This may not be backed by scientifically but many are traditional.



## Natural ingredients thought to be 'immune boosters'

- Probiotic yoghurt
- Garlic
- Green tea
- Mushrooms
- Ginger
- Spinach
- Apples
- Blueberries
- Brazil nuts
- Carrots
- Beetroot
- Elderberries
- Almonds
- Broccoli



# Cold and flu tea

Teas, or infusions, are when a medicinal plant is soaked in hot water. Traditionally an infusion is where the herb is steeped in hot water for several hours.

Teas are steeped for much less time and are weaker but still valuable in their medicinal uses. If you've bought a ginger tea bag for example, you'll need 4 tea bags in a cup for a medicinal effect.

A simple infusion is when a herb is steeped in hot water, and usually left for 10-15 minutes to infuse and the herb is then removed, leaving a tea type liquid, often quite strong.

Infusions are often used for acute conditions such as colds and flus. The heat of the liquid and its journey through the body is most beneficial in acute conditions, for example, drinking peppermint tea for indigestion.

## Basic recipe

- Elderflower (*Sambucus nigra*) 25g
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) 25g
- Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) 25g

*Alternatives include:* Boneset (*Eupatorium perforatum*), eyebright (*Euphrasia officinalis*), chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*).

Make a strong infusion of 10-15g of the herb mix to one cup of water and drink hot. Take 8 to 10 cups a day.

### Here are some of my favourite winter tea blends to try:

- Hawthorn and rosehip
- Ginger and lemon (the classic) - boil up the ginger and water in a pan for 10 minutes for the best results





# Herbal Jelly Sweets

This fantastic recipe (reproduced with permission) is by herbalist [Dawn Ireland](#).

These natural jelly sweets are vegan and great for kids (and big kids). They're easy and fun to make.



## Basic recipe

- 155g elderberries (see alternatives below)
- 275g water
- 5g each of dried herbs: elderflowers, ground ginger, thyme

Boil up for 10 minutes.

Press juice and strain.

For every 200ml juice add the following:

- 25ml of herbal tincture (optional - 10ml elderberry, 10ml elecampane, 5ml thyme)
- 2 heaped teaspoons agar agar flakes (natural thickener from red seaweeds)
- 20g sugar/alternative (or honey)

Heat well, stir continuously whilst agar flakes dissolve as you bring to the boil.

Once melted pour into silicon sweet or chocolate moulds. Cool and store in the fridge in an airtight container for one to two weeks.

Take up to 8 sweets a day.

## Here are some of my favourite alternatives to try:

- Blueberries, ground ginger and chamomile
- Blackberries, ground cinnamon and eyebright
- Apple and pear, thyme and elderflower



# Syrups

Syrups can be used in colds and flu conditions and in particular they are known for their use with coughs.

## Onion and garlic syrup

Peel and slice a white onion and half a bulb of garlic.

Layer the slices of onion and garlic in a clean jam jar and either sprinkle sugar over the slices or honey.

Build the layers up in the jar/container and then screw on the lid and leave for several hours (ideally overnight).

The sugar or honey will have extracted the liquid from the onion and garlic and it will now be an antiviral syrup.

Take up to up to 20ml of this mixture a day when you have a cold or flu. It will keep in the fridge for up to a week.



## Traditional winter herbal syrup recipe

- 25g in total: turmeric (10g), ginger (10g) and thyme (5g)
- 570ml of water
- 250g honey or 225g brown sugar

Simmer the herb(s) in the water for 30 minutes on a low heat.

Strain the liquid and then return to the pan, reduce to  $\frac{1}{2}$  275ml of liquid.

Add the sugar/substitute or honey and stir in until fully dissolved.

Bottle in a clean, warmed bottle, keep away from heat and light. Keep in the fridge for 1 week. The usual dosage (depending on herbs used) would be 5ml up to three times a day (depending on herbs and purpose).

## Here are some of my favourite winter syrups to try:

- Bay leaf honey/substitute.
- Elderberry and ginger



# Natural chest balm

A balm is often called an ointment but you will usually find there are additional ingredients in balms.

In this recipe we'll be using a herbal infused oil, you can find out more about these in my **Kitchen Pharmacy eBook** and my **YouTube channel**.

If you don't have a herbal infused oil and you don't want to make one, you could buy one or simply replace it with a plain vegetable oil such as olive oil or sunflower oil.

## Here are some of my favourite chest balms:

- Lavender and bay leaf.
- Chamomile and rosemary.

## Basic recipe

- 6.25g beeswax/plant wax (e.g. soy)
- 25ml herbal infused oil (e.g. thyme)
- Clean glass pots (mixture makes approx 30ml)

In a glass bowl over a saucepan of boiling water, melt the beeswax/plant wax and herbal infused oil together. Once the beeswax/plant wax has dissolved, remove from the heat and allow it to cool slightly.

*Add in the following essential oils; 10 drops thyme, 20 drops of eucalyptus, 20 drops of peppermint. **(Adult only - not for children)***

Beat the mixture until it cools down and becomes thick, you may find it easier to spoon the mixture into the pots while it is still quite runny, that way it can cool in the pot and there will be fewer air pockets and less mess.

Allow these to cool and then label. This balm will usually last for 1 year, although it may last longer.





# Fire cider (vinegar)

Fire cider is a traditional remedy that was supposedly taken from Britain to America in the 1800s.

It gained a very good reputation in America as a 'cure all' to treat all health problems. It is now making a come back in the US for coughs and colds in particular.

The recipe and instructional video can be found on my [\*\*YouTube channel.\*\*](#)

## **Here are some of my favourite combinations to try:**

- Bay leaf, rosehip, chilli and black pepper
- Turmeric, black pepper, ginger and chilli

## **Basic recipe**

- 500ml Organic Apple Cider Vinegar
- 32g of grated fresh horseradish root
- 16g of chopped garlic
- 32g of chopped white onion
- 32g of grated fresh ginger
- ½ tsp cayenne powder
- 32g chopped fresh chillies

Place all of the ingredients together in a jar and leave to steep for 8 weeks.

Strain the mixture and put into a clean jar.

The mixture can be used externally on sprains, or internally with honey/substitute for coughs and colds 5ml to a shot glass(!) depending on your sensitivity to the ingredients.

