



How to Make an Overnight Infusion

Herbal infusions bring substantial doses of nourishing herbs to you, providing minerals and nourishment that cannot be obtained from herbs in capsules or teas. An infusion is much stronger, and can be used for regular consumption of herbs. It is easy to boil water while you are brushing your teeth before bed, to add the herbs, cover and leave overnight. Strain in the morning and you have your day's dose of herbs!

Steps

- 1 Choose nourishing food grade herbs.** You may prefer to seek those that are not too pungent, bitter or resinous for a strong infusion. Food grade herbs include oat-straw for bones and as a nervine, red clover as an alternative for minerals and after breast cancer, nettles for minerals and to prevent allergies, and other herbs such as alfalfa, cleavers, hawthorn, ground astragalus, jiaogulan and holy basil.
- 2 Use single herbs at first.** You can mix after you have a sense of the taste and reactions that your body has to them. Mint, basil, anise hyssop or other aromatic herbs can be added to enhance the taste.
- 3 Boil the water.** Get a stainless steel or glass pot with a lid and add 1 US-quart (950 ml) of water. Bring to a boil. You can also use a large French press coffee pot and boil the water in a kettle, or use less water (1 pint is easier to drink).
- 4 Add herbs.** Take 1/2 ounce of herbs- one cup of most leafy herbs-pat down to fill the cup. Add to the boiling water and immediately remove the water and herbs from heat.
- 5 Cover and leave overnight or for at least three hours.**
- 6 Strain.** In the morning (or ~6 hrs later), strain the result, squeezing out the liquid from the herb. This is a day's dosage. You can **pour a glass and refrigerate** the rest or put it into a water bottle and sip all day.

Tips

- Do the world a favor and compost your herbs afterward.
- You may double the recipe and make enough for two days, but the infusion gets funky after the second day. Decoctions hold a little longer, but it is best to integrate this into your daily routine and make a new pot.
- Herbs can be divided into three divisions: food grade herbs which nourish the body, medicinal herbs which should be taken for disease, and toxic herbs which should only be used in small doses as prescribed by a knowledgeable clinical herbalist. You want food grade herbs for this kind of preparation.
- Roots or tough herbs may need to be decocted, simmered at a low temperature for 10-15 minutes. Non aromatic herbs like oatstraw or nettles will yield more minerals if decocted briefly. Aromatic herbs will lose their volatile oils if you decoct them, so just infuse as above.
- You may get better yields if you bruise/crush, cut, and/or slowly freeze (as in a freezer) leaves and branches prior to use, as the ice shards that form in the plant will tear open cell membranes and may free other substances you want. Your millage may vary.
- If you use a French press, you need herbs that are not decocted. Put the herbs at the bottom, boil the water, pour in, press about halfway down and leave covered overnight. Plunge to the bottom and pour out in the morning.

Warnings

- Do not use strongly medicinal or low dose herbs in this form unless directed by a knowledgeable clinical herbalist, such as one certified by the American Herbalists Guild or the NCCAOM.
- Highly resinous herbs like thyme or St. John's wort and highly bitter herbs like black walnut, red reishi or quassia are not appropriate for this preparation because they will taste bad.

Sources and Citations

- <http://www.acupuncturebrooklyn.com/how-tos/how-to-make-an-overnight-infusion>

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