



TINCTURES & LIQUID HERBAL EXTRACTS

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1. WHAT IS A TINCTURE? A tincture is an herbal preparation that is a concentrated liquid. The chemical constituents of the herb are dissolved into a solution, usually in alcohol, at a ratio usually of 1 part herb to 3 parts solvent or 30% (1:3).

WHAT IS AN HERBAL EXTRACT? A liquid herbal extract (20 -90%) is a tincture that is more concentrated with a ratio of 1 to 2 or 3 ratio of solvent(alcohol/water) to herb. An example is vanilla extract. Do not confuse with a “fluid extract” or “standardized” that is very concentrated up to 10 times- only need 6-8 drops.

2. WHY USE TINCTURES or EXTRACTS? Tinctures are useful for very strong herbs and for bad tasting herbs that would not be suitable for teas. Tinctures are easier to take than pills and act quicker going into the bloodstream.

3. HOW DO YOU TAKE / ADMINISTER TINCTURES? Always read and follow the label. Some are single or herb blends that may be taken 2 – 5 times per day- usually 2-3 times per day for chronic or maintenance conditions, 4-5 times for acute or cold & flu. The amount you take varies as well. Generally few drops to 2 tablespoons, with weaker herbs more drops, stronger herbs use less. If alcohol is a problem, use a tincture made from apple cider vinegar or glycerin. Take in water, cool/warm tea or directly in the mouth.

Doses for children should be adjusted. Use Clark’s rule: 150 lb adult normal dose- 50 lb child give 1/3 – 1/4 adult amount per child’s weight.

4. How are tinctures and extracts prepared? Typically put together during new moon, and strained out the full moon. The herbs used are fresh or dried depending upon which you use most are dried, powdered or finely cut. Solvents that can be used are vodka, gin, brandy, rum, glycerin or apple cider vinegar. To make, use 4 oz. herb to 16 oz (pint) solvent and mix in a glass jar. Shake daily let sit for at least 2 weeks (6 weeks or longer is best). Then strain with cheese cloth or coffee filter. Store “mother stock” pouring into administering bottles with a dropper top.

Prepare at the Full moon, then strain 6 weeks later at the new moon **to Reduce.**

Prepare at the New moon, then strain 6 weeks later at full moon **to Increase.**

Herb examples:

Fresh: St. John’s Wort, Corn Silk, Passionflower, Violets

Dried: Cramp Bark, Hops, Siberian Ginseng

Semi-dried: Saw Palmetto, Wild Cherry, Clover

Reference: Therapeutic Herb Manual, Guide to the Safe & Effective Use of Liquid Herbal Extracts by Ed Smith.1999 PO Box 116, Williams, OR 97544

