Herbal Medicine

URL of this page: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/herbalmedicine.html

Also called: Botanicals, Phytotherapy

An herb is a plant or plant part used for its scent, flavor, or therapeutic properties. Herbal medicines are one type of dietary Supplement. They are sold as tablets, capsules, powders, teas, extracts, and fresh or dried plants. People use herbal medicines to try to maintain or improve their health.

Many people believe that products labeled "natural" are always safe and good for them. This is not necessarily true. Herbal medicines do not have to go through the testing that drugs do. Some herbs, such as comfrey and ephedra, can cause serious harm. Some herbs can interact with prescription or over-the-counter medicines.

If you are thinking about using an herbal medicine, first get information on it from reliable sources. Make sure to tell your health care provider about any herbal medicines you are taking.

NIH: National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Start Here

- Botanical Dietary Supplements: Background Information [http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/BotanicalBackground/] NIH (National Institutes of Health, Office of Dietary Supplements)

Overviews

- Dietary Supplement Label Database (DSLD) [http://www.dsld.nlm.nih.gov/dsld/] NIH (National Institutes of Health, Office of Dietary Supplements)

Latest News


Specific Conditions

- Aloe Vera [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/aloevera/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
- Cat's Claw [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/catclaw/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
- Chasteberry [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/chasteberry/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
- Cinnamon [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/cinnamon/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
  Also available in Spanish [http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/es/drugs-procedures-devices/over-the-counter/echinacea-what-should-i-know-about-it.printerview.all.html]
- European Elder (Elderberry) [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/euroelder/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
- Gingko [http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/assets/docs_f_o/ntp_gingko.pdf] NIH (National Toxicology Program) -
PDF
• Goldenseal [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/goldenseal/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Green Tea [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/greentea/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Hawthorn [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/hawthorn/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Hoodia [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/hoodia/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Horse Chestnut [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/horsechestnut/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Kava [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/kava/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Licorice Root [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/licoriceroot/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Noni [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/noni/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Peppermint Oil [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/peppermintoil/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Sage [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/sage/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Tea Tree Oil [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/tea/treecoil.htm] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Thunder God Vine [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/tgvine/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Time to Talk: What You Should Know about 5 Popular Herbs (Evening Primrose Oil, St. John's Wort, Fenugreek, Echinacea, and Aloe Vera) [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/tips/topsupplements] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Valerian [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/valerian/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• What Are Chia Seeds? [http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442472548] (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
• Yohimbe [http://nccam.nih.gov/health/yohimbe/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)

Related Issues
• Alerts and Advisories [http://nccam.nih.gov/news/alerts/] NIH (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)
• Herbal Supplements May Not Mix with Heart Medicines [http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/herbal-supplements/MY01874/METHOD=print] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Pictures & Photographs
- Medicinal Herb Garden [http://nlnm.gov/pnr/uwmhg/] NIH (National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region)

Videos

Clinical Trials

Research

Journal Articles
References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

Organizations

Women
- Black Cohosh [http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/BlackCohosh/] NIH (National Institutes of Health, Office of Dietary Supplements)

You may also be interested in these related MedlinePlus topics:
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine
The primary NIH organization for research on *Herbal Medicine* is the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine [http://nccam.nih.gov/]


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