



Best Antiviral Herbs

Antiviral herbs are plentiful for those of us who prefer an antiviral natural immune system supplement over chemical drug treatments.

When a virus strikes, most people make a beeline for their doctor's office. However, contrary to what many people believe, most traditional medicines are ineffective against viruses.

While there are a select few that can reduce the severity of a virus, most people are advised to treat the symptoms and rest.

Natural antiviral treatments, on the other hand, are a very powerful option for treating viruses.

When antiviral herbs and antiviral essential oils are used, healing time is reduced, and side effects are practically unheard of.

And since most natural antiviral treatments have multiple uses, you may find the symptoms that accompany the virus are relieved as well.

Some of the best antiviral herbs include garlic, oregano, astragalus, echinacea, schizandra, mullein, elderberry, green tea, and licorice.

* **Garlic** – Medicinal usage of garlic dates back to ancient Egypt. It contains many compounds that experts believe offer antiviral, antimicrobial, and antibacterial benefits. Studies have shown that garlic is an effective antiviral herb when used against the common flu virus as well as common bacteria such as Bacillus, Streptococcus, and Staphylococcus. **Garlic is a powerful antiviral herb and is most effective when used fresh. The bulb can be eaten whole, diced up, or juiced.** For those who find the taste of garlic unappealing or are concerned about bad breath, garlic capsules and tablets are widely available.

* **Oregano** – Another one of the effective antiviral herbs, oregano has been used for hundreds of years to fight infections. It has **antiviral, antibacterial, antifungal, and antiparasitic properties.** A study at Cornell University found that oregano was very effective against 30 different germs. When used as an antiviral remedy, oregano can be taken in capsule form, made into herbal tea, or taken diluted in extract form. Simply using it in food for seasoning will offer some health benefits but will not provide the concentrated amounts of antiviral essential oils needed to combat a viral illness.

* **Astragalus** – Astragalus is another powerful antiviral herb that strengthens the immune system. It is a very effective antiviral herb for battling the common cold and flu. **In addition to aiding the body in fighting off viruses, astragalus has a warming effect, which helps comfort the body.** Astragalus is available in several forms. It can be sliced and boiled as part of a meal, made into an extract, or taken in capsule form.

* **Echinacea** – Echinacea is well known for its immune-boosting properties. **It is believed that it can increase interferon production as well as stimulate white blood cell production, enabling the body to fight more effectively against viruses.** Echinacea, as well as the other antiviral herbs mentioned, is best taken early on when a viral illness is suspected in order to significantly enhance its effectiveness. Echinacea is generally available in capsule or extract form and can also be made into a delicious tea.

* **Schizandra** – Schizandra is commonly found in traditional Chinese medicine. It is highly antiviral and has been used **successfully against viral hepatitis.** Capsules are the most commonly found form of schizandra, but some herb markets may carry the dried berries.

* **Mullein** – A lot of health benefits can be derived from the mullein plant. It provides antiviral, anti-inflammatory, calming, expectorant, antihistamine, and emollient properties. **For viruses that come with congestion,** it is an excellent choice. Mullein is available as a tea, syrup, infusion, tincture, and decoction.

* **Elderberry** – Elderberry has been used as an herbal remedy against colds, flus, and upper respiratory infections for nearly 3,000 years. Recent studies have shown that it is effective against all strains of the flu virus and can prevent the spread of viruses. While it is available in multiple forms, the most effective remedies are as lozenges or syrup.

* **Green Tea** – Studies of green tea have found that two catechins called epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) and epicatechin gallate (ECG) were very effective in inhibiting replication of the influenza virus. Green tea is generally taken in tea form, although capsules are available as well. Green tea does contain caffeine, so those sensitive to caffeine should use it with caution.

* **Licorice** – Licorice is a broad-spectrum antimicrobial effective against yeast, fungi, bacteria and viruses. Science has identified eight constituents of licorice with antiviral properties as well as twenty-five with antifungal properties. Like echinacea, licorice can boost interferon production. Individuals with high blood pressure should avoid using licorice, however, as it can raise blood pressure, cause sodium retention, and promote potassium loss.

Antiviral Essential Oils

There are also some excellent antiviral essential oils that are helpful when fighting viral illnesses. Oils such as eucalyptus, tea tree, juniper, and lemon balm are great choices and also have other medicinal properties that are helpful when treating illness as well.

* **Eucalyptus Oil** – Eucalyptus contains three known antiviral compounds- quercetin, hyperoside, and tannic acid. There are multiple ways eucalyptus oil can be used. One of the most common uses is simply adding a few drops of oil to a warm bath. The scented steam is especially useful in viruses that cause congestion. You can also mix a few drops of eucalyptus oil into a carrier oil such as sunflower or canola oil and use as a massage oil or apply to pulse points.

* **Tea Tree Oil** – Tea tree oil is another effective herb with antiviral properties that is known to treat a wide variety of problems. The oil can be applied full strength to affected areas three times a day. For sore throats, mix a few drops of oil to half a cup of warm water and gargle, but do NOT swallow.

* **Juniper Oil** – Studies have shown that juniper oil contains a potent antiviral called deoxydodecylphylloxy n. In studies, juniper oil has been found to be effective against both the herpes and flu viruses. It can be used in a diffuser, as a massage oil, in a soothing bath, rubbed on in lotion form, or applied as a compress. Use during pregnancy is not recommended, as juniper oil can stimulate the muscles of the uterus.

* **Lemon Balm Oil** – Another herb with antiviral properties, lemon balm oil has many uses. When researched as part of a study on treatments for cold sores and genital sores caused by the herpes simplex virus, researchers found that lemon balm oil helped heal sores and prevented the virus from spreading. Test subjects also reported that it provided relief from redness and itching as well. Lemon balm oil can be used topically, diffused, or taken internally.