

# HerbTalk

FALL 2007

JOY OF HERBS, LLC SEASONAL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5

*"The unexamined life is not worth living" (Plato)*

1. *Build your Immune System with healthy food, exercise, relaxation and herbs to ensure a healthy winter for you and your family.*

2.

## Fall – A Time of Letting Go

As the trees let their leaves fall from their branches, so too must we let go of things in our lives that are no longer needed as we ready ourselves for the quiet of winter. Fall is a time of turning inward and reflecting on how much we've accomplished during the year, and then getting rid of the nonessential, and storing the rest away for the depths of the winter ahead. This is part of the natural rhythm and cycle of the seasons and allows us to move from the fullness and ripeness of the Late Summer season into our own winter's rest.

Try to take time this season to do a personal reflection of your own bountiful year, keep what's important and let go of what may be weighing you down. As Plato said so eloquently "The unexamined life is not worth living".

## Building a Healthy Immune System



Now is a great time to work on building your immune system in readiness for exposure to winter viruses and other illnesses. Building a strong base will help protect you from the winter illnesses. The key to a strong immune system begins with **optimum nutrition**. Get rid of the white sugar, refined carbohydrates (all those prepackaged foods and products) and trans fatty acids (also in prepackaged products, French fries, margarine, baked goods) – all of these deplete your immune system.

Make sure you're eating plenty of phytonutrients in the way of **colorful fruits and vegetables**. Fruits and vegetables contain a variety of vitamins and minerals, are high in antioxidants, and contain healthy fiber. Aim for 3 fruits per day and 7 servings of vegetables. Include mushrooms like shiitake, in your cooking and soups. Mushrooms are wonderful immune builders.

**Hot, comforting soups** are a great way to enjoy and increase your consumption of vegetables. To increase the immune-boosting power of your soups and other dishes, add hot spicy herbs, also high in antioxidants, like rosemary, oregano, turmeric, garlic, onions, thyme, sage and ginger, to name a few.

Enjoy **quality, lean proteins**, preferably without harmful hormones and antibiotics (look for organically raised chicken, turkey, beef, wild salmon, etc.). Don't forget **whole grains** in your menu planning, as the grains contain many beneficial nutrients and fiber. Lastly, be sure to drink plenty of **filtered water** to make sure the toxins are being flushed from your system. Some of this fluid

could include herbal teas.

**Supplements** to consider during this season include Omega-3 Fish Oils or Cod Liver Oil (contains Vitamins A and D) which are antiinflammatory and help promote healthy cell membranes, and Vitamin C to support the immune system.

Other ways to support your immune system include taking time to be **outdoors** in the fresh air and taking a brisk walk, bike ride, hike or other outdoor activity. The exposure to the sun will help increase Vitamin D, and the brisk walking will increase oxygen flow to your tissues, move your blood and lymphatic fluid, and overall give you a better sense of wellbeing and a healthy glow to your cheeks. Go out and play!

**Relaxation and sleep** are also very important. Without relaxation, we are in a constant state of agitation and stress, which greatly taxes the immune system. Our bodies require an adequate amount of sleep to do its necessary repair work, especially as the days get shorter. Aim for at least 8 hours of solid sleep every night.

### Herbs for the Immune System



There are many herbs used to support immune system health. Some herbs to consider having available for the coming months include Echinacea, Elderberry, Elderflower, Andrographis, Astragalus, Withania, Rosemary, Garlic, Ginger, Turmeric, Siberian ginseng, Bayberry, Licorice, Eyebright, Osha, Yarrow, Lemon Balm and Sage. These herbs can be enjoyed as food, teas, powders, tinctures and/or capsules. The following is a brief description of some of these herbs for your consideration. If you need an individual formulation to help with your own unique health issues, please contact me for an appointment.

**Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)** – a powerful antioxidant and antibacterial herb, sage is used for colds, digestive problems, stomach viruses, sore throats, laryngitis, tonsillitis and post nasal drip. Sage makes a nice tea.

**Echinacea (*Echinacea angustifolia, purpurea*)** – useful for acute viral or bacterial infection (colds, flu, bronchitis). Echinacea is a good herb to use at the first sign of a cold, i.e. when you have that little bit of scratchiness in your throat.

**Withania (*Withania somnifera*)** – a very useful adaptogen, a category of herb that helps us deal with stress better. Withania reduces stress and helps build the immune system. May be taken as a powder, capsules, or tincture.

**Shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*)** – revered in Japan, Shiitake is used to reduce bronchial inflammation, and inhibit viral growth. It also helps build the immune system.

**Andrographis (*Andrographis paniculata*)** – a very bitter herb, Andrographis is a powerful antiviral. It's often used for colds, flu, sore throats, and other viral infections.

3. Shop wisely for produce

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## Shopping Safely for Produce

The following is a useful table to use when you shop for produce.

Environmental Working Group's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce <a href="http://www.foodnews.org">www.foodnews.org</a>	
Dirty Dozen (Buy These Organic - worst for pesticides)	Cleanest 12 (Lowest in Pesticides)
Peaches Apples Sweet Bell Peppers Celery Nectarines Strawberries Cherries Lettuce Grapes (imported) Pears Spinach Potatoes	Onions Avocado Sweet Corn (Frozen) Pineapples Mango Sweet Peas (Frozen) Asparagus Kiwi Bananas Cabbage Broccoli Eggplant

### This and That



I've greatly enjoyed speaking about herbs throughout Frederick County. During the summer, I presented **herbal seminars at three libraries**, including Urbana, Thurmont and Walkersville. Participants enjoyed herbal tea tastings, and food tastings with herbs and flowers. In October I taught a **seminar at Frederick Community College** on "Growing An Herbal Tea Garden". Those in attendance were able to pick from many organic herbal seeds for spring planting.

This seminar will be taught again in April 2008. I've had the privilege of **speaking at Linganore Counseling and Wellness** about herbs and their many health benefits, where my colleagues had the chance to try teas and tinctures. In November I will be **teaching high school students at Frederick and Linganore High Schools** about the health benefits of herbs. And last but not least, we are near the end of the **Detox and Renewal 5-week Seminar Series** held at Linganore Counseling and Wellness. It's been very rewarding and beneficial for everyone as participants have learned about nutrition and applied those learnings via an elimination and rechallenge program. Each person has enjoyed a detox tea, soothing detox bath with lavender essential oil, and much more. This series will be taught again in the Spring of 2008. More information may be found at [www.joyofherbs.net](http://www.joyofherbs.net) under Workshops. If interested in getting placed on the seminar list, please contact me at [liz@joyofherbs.net](mailto:liz@joyofherbs.net).

Thank you to everyone who came to learn about herbs as it is my pleasure to share what I know to all who will listen. Happy and Blessed Fall!

### Contact information

For further information on herbs, nutrition and wellness, please contact me at [liz@joyofherbs.net](mailto:liz@joyofherbs.net) or call at 301-865-9510. More information about herbal medicine may be found on my web site at [www.joyofherbs.net](http://www.joyofherbs.net).