

10 Herbs That Kill Viruses and Clear Lungs

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With the way things are in the world today, it's no wonder we're all looking for ways to stay healthy. Keeping your immune system in great shape is always good, but it's a good idea to know what to do if you are sick already. Fortunately, there are plenty of natural ways to keep viruses at bay and to ensure your lungs stay clear, even if you do get sick.

Something to note about these treatments is that they do well in concentrated form. That means you'll probably want to try more than just a cup of tea if you feel something icky coming on. Essential oils, extracts, or concentrated tinctures are all excellent choices when you are being threatened by a virus.

1. Oregano

This potent herb has many great benefits, but it's best known for being very useful in killing viruses and bacteria. It has been proven to drastically reduce viral activity in just 15 minutes and is considered useful against herpes simplex type 1, rotavirus, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

How to use it: To use it against a virus, you can drink the tea daily, add chopped oregano to your food, or take it dried and in capsules. To clean surfaces, mix a few drops of essential oil with water and shake thoroughly before spraying the surface and wiping it down.

Viruses aren't the only reason to take oregano though. It also contains natural decongestants and antihistamines. When you take it daily, it can actually boost lung function, whether or not you're sick.

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2. Peppermint

You probably already know that peppermint is excellent for opening up your lungs and nasal passages. It contains menthol, which reduces swelling in the nose and other membranes to ease breathing, but it also loosens up any mucus forming in the lungs.

How to use it: A hot cup of peppermint tea is a great way to remedy a nasty cold that has settled in your lungs.

Peppermint leaf extract is also quite potent when used against viruses and will greatly reduce the influence of the virus. Not only does it attack the virus, peppermint also reducing inflammatory compounds found in the body, so you'll feel better, too. It treats the symptoms while preventing the virus from wreaking havoc in your body.

3. Lemon Balm

Commonly used as a fragrant addition to food, lemon balm has proven useful against bird flu, herpes, HIV-1, and enterovirus 71. It works to prevent replication of the virus, which is where the trouble starts, and can keep it from spreading in your body.

How to use it: The essential oil is best if you want to really keep it potent, but for everyday use, try making a tea.

This herb is actually useful for aromatherapy and is absorbed easily through the lungs. It contains triterpenes that will help calm your body and ease respiratory issues somewhat. To use the power of aromatherapy, crush the fresh leaves, cup in your hands, and inhale deeply several times.

4. Eucalyptus

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This powerful medicinal plant is often found in over-the-counter cold remedies for the very fact that it is useful in opening up your lungs. It does this by stimulating the cilia in your lungs (the tiny little hair-like protuberances) to clear out mucus and other gunk that may be caught up in your lungs. In addition, it boosts your circulation, making it easier for the body to flush the virus out.

How to use it: you can take it orally in a tea or syrup, or you can apply it to the skin (dilute first). Rubbing eucalyptus oil on the soles of your feet may help your body recover from a virus faster than usual.

Since eucalyptus kills off bacteria, fungi, and viruses, it can frequently be found in nasal rinses, which allow you to flush out mucus, plus kill off the virus. It fights against diseases and can be helpful to keep in your natural first aid kit.

5. Osha Root

While osha root tends to be studied more for its possibilities in cancer treatment, it has also been examined as a potential antiviral. It reduces inflammation and helps prevent oxidative stress, at least in the trial run. There still isn't enough evidence to make big claims, but many people use the root to treat HIV and AIDS.

When it comes to congested lungs, powdered osha root is considered to be very useful in easing congestion. It helps you take deeper breaths by improving circulation and helping the body clear the lungs.

How to use it: You can take osha root in powder form or as a herbal extract or tincture. Start small, as there's no regulated dosage amount as of yet. Take with caution, as the effects have not been fully studied.

6. Ginger

Most people enjoy ginger in their food, or in a nice cup of hot ginger lemon tea. However, if you feel like you're coming down with something, you'll want to take a little more than you would just for flavor. Ginger can break up the mucus in your lungs and boosts circulation, to ease breathing when you are sick.

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Gingerols and zingerone, found in this zingy herb, have been shown to stop viruses from replicating. They can also stop the viruses from spreading throughout your body by blocking the virus from the cells that they attempt to take over.

7. Rosemary

If you have an herb garden, you likely already have rosemary in it. Most people use it for their cooking regularly, but you can also pop it into your medicinal herb cupboard. Rosemary naturally attacks viruses and fights off everything from hepatitis to influenza, thanks to its oleanolic acid.

How to use it: Rosemary tea is greatly beneficial if you're starting to get a cold or dealing with another virus. It is also ideal for clearing out your lungs if you live in an area that is highly polluted. Take a cup of tea daily to ease mucus build-up and to protect your lungs.

8. Dandelion

As a natural anti-inflammatory, dandelion can be helpful in treating lung disease. This common flower is often considered a weed, but it has so much more potential.

How to use it: If your lungs are inflamed due to a disease, then dandelion tea made from dried roots or tincture taken regularly can be helpful.

You'll also find that dandelions have been studied for their antiviral properties, particularly in regards to dengue fever, HIV, and hepatitis B. For a so-called weed, this little flower is rather useful.

9. Licorice

Did you know that licorice root is a natural expectorant? It helps loosen the mucus in your body and flush it out by making you cough. It's best to get that mucus out of your lungs, after all. The root also helps with sore throats and reduces inflammation throughout the entire system.

The Chinese have used licorice for many years to treat an assortment of different diseases. However, this root contains substances like liquiritigen, glabridin, and glycyrrhizin, all of which work to prevent viruses from getting a hold in your body.

How to use it: Licorice root can be made into a tea or a syrup that you can take regularly when you feel a cold coming on.

10. Elderberry

You're likely familiar with elderberries as a way to treat illness in general and as an immunity booster. However, this tiny fruit, commonly made into syrup, is helpful in treating viruses and keeping the lungs clear. In fact, studies have shown that elderberries prevent viruses from getting into cells, reducing the contagion of the virus, and helping shut it all down.

How to use it: If you have an upper respiratory infection, elderberry syrup is a good treatment for this. It can reduce the amount of time that you're sick and also helps reduce the severity of the symptoms.

There are plenty of herbs for any type of issue you're facing, but these 10 are particularly good for both lungs and preventing viruses. Many have other benefits, as well.

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