

Herbs for Homemade Remedies

Recently I told you about my penchant for [alternative medicine](#). A big part of that is using homemade remedies, many of which come from backyard herbs. Reading [The Lost Book of Herbal Remedies](#) from cover to cover I was itching to try many of the herbs in my kitchen or garden.

Oregano

Oregano imparts a unique and subtle flavour to Mediterranean dishes, so is a staple in many kitchen spice cupboards, including mine. It is a hardy, low-growing, perennial plant, perfect for the front of your garden beds. The tiny leaves can be used fresh or dried and crumbled for storage. The leaves can be sprinkled in dishes or steeped as a tea. Oregano oil can be extracted from the leaves and stems or purchased as an essential oil but must be used cautiously (diluted with carrier oils) as it is quite potent on its own.

Uses for oregano include:

- eliminating skin blemishes and dark spots
- contains omega 3, heart-healthy fatty acids
- improves cholesterol levels
- treats yeast, fungal and viral infections
- asthma and bronchial infections
- weight loss, metabolism stimulation
- boosts immune systems with its vitamins A and C

Rosemary

Another common herb, rosemary is also found in many kitchens. It lends flavour to roasted meats, especially lamb, or potatoes. Its tiny, needle-like leaves can be sprinkled directly on food or steeped in a tea.

According to research, rosemary is beneficial to:

- improve concentration and memory
- treat circulation issues and headaches
- reduce joint and gut inflammation
- treat fungus and bacterial infections
- increase energy
- treat hair loss
- treat bad breath

Thyme

Varieties of thyme are endless as hardy garden perennials. Their leaves can also be sprinkled on food in the kitchen. Thyme oil or thymol is a respected disinfectant known to kill bacteria and viruses. To wipe down household surfaces, I swear by Soluguard, a product from [Melaleuca](#) that combines thyme and lemon.



thyme and lemon disinfectant

Thyme can be used for the following ailments:

- a disinfectant as above due to antiseptic, anti-viral, anti-fungal, anti-parasitic properties
- sore throats, bronchitis, and coughs
- gum disease, cavities

- acne
- boosting the immune system
- stomach flu symptoms
- epileptic seizures
- lice, crabs, worms, and scabies
- skin lesions, sores, and warts

Dandelion

Everyone knows what a dandelion looks like. All parts of this common weed are edible. The flowers and leaves can be added fresh to salads and the roots dried for tea. The flowers can also be fermented to make dandelion wine.

The many advantages of dandelion include:

- using the roots for liver, kidney, gallbladder, and GI issues as they remove toxins, help digest fats, and restore electrolyte balance
- the leaves can be used as a diuretic and antibiotic to treat urinary tract infections
- high levels of iron, other minerals, and vitamins prevent anemias caused by deficiencies
- enhances milk production and treats mastitis for breastfeeding women
- reduces inflammation in arthritic sufferers
- protects bones from osteoporosis
- controls blood sugar by stimulating the production of insulin and eliminating excess sugar from bloodstream

Chives

The pretty purply-pink flower heads on chives are very recognizable in our gardens. The leaves can be clipped at the base of the plant and used to:

- lower cholesterol

- prevent strokes
- detoxify
- flush our systems as a diuretic
- boost the immune system

Ashwagandha

Ashwagandha is not as common (at least in my neck of the woods) but can be ordered from health food stores. Its berries, leaves, and roots are all useful.

The many benefits of ashwagandha include:

- anti-inflammatory, for managing arthritic pain
- improves immune function by reducing stress hormones and increasing white blood cell production
- protects the brain from degenerative disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's
- anti-oxidant properties that help treat colon, stomach, breast, ovarian, and lung cancers.
- improves memory

These are just a few herbs for possible homemade remedies that caught my eye. There are many more out there; do your own research!

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