

## Cooking Instructions - Preparing Your Herbal Tea

### First of all, what can I cook my herbs in?

Your practitioner will inform you if you need a specialised cooking pot. Certain herbs should not be cooked in metal as this changes their action. If you have not been informed that a cooking pot is necessary for your particular prescription, then a reasonably small-medium metal cooking pot with a lid is appropriate.

### Instructions for Cooking One Packet of Herbs

1. All bags are the same. Empty the contents of any one packet of herbs into the cook pot.
2. **Add 3 and a half cups** of cold water and allow to soak for 10 minutes.
3. Bring to the boil and allow to simmer with the lid slightly ajar for 40 minutes.
4. Strain the liquid into a bowl, keeping the cooked herbs in the pot.
5. **Add 2 and a half cups** of boiling water to the pot with the herbs, bring straight to the boil and simmer for another 40 minutes.
6. Strain this liquid into the same bowl to mix with the liquid from the first boil.
7. **Repeat steps 5 & 6 for the third boil.**

After cooking the herbs three times you will be left with roughly 3-4 cups of liquid. All the active ingredients have been extracted through the 3 stages of cooking and an even strength results from combining the liquid from each stage. You can now discard the cooked herbs, they make great compost!

### Dosage and Other Information

- Take 100ml in the morning, 130ml in the evening, or as instructed by your practitioner.
- The tea brewed from one bag of herbs should last around 3-4 days.
- You can leave the tea out of the fridge for up to 3 hours.
- Store your herbal tea in the fridge, it will keep for up to 5 days.
- Drink the herbal tea warm or at room temperature (not straight from the fridge).
- Drink 30 minutes before or after food and 2 hours before or after medication if possible.
- You can freeze your tea if you can't take it for a period of time (i.e going away or if you get a cold and your formula is not appropriate to take when you have an acute infection).
- When you have finished your tea, repeat the cooking process with the next bag.
- Don't stress as this process is just a guide. If you make a mistake somewhere it is likely no problem.
- For more information, consult the FAQ or ask your practitioner.

### Stop Taking the Herbs if:

- If you develop symptoms of cold, flu or gastric flu, or any symptoms associated with an acute illness not discussed at your previous consultation. Resume the herbs when feeling better.
- If you become pregnant and have not discussed this with your practitioner.
- If you develop a rash or allergic reaction.

Please contact your Chinese Medicine practitioner if any of these situations arise.

**Enjoy your herbal tea! The taste improves the more you drink!**

## Frequently Asked Questions - Preparing Your Herbal Tea

### **Do I need to do everything exactly right to get the desired results?**

Not really. Our cooking instructions are a general guide to follow. Therefore, if you find that you deviate from the instructions in some way, there is no need to stress, the herbs are likely still fine to drink.

### **Do I cook the same bag of herbs three times?**

Yes, you cook the same bag three times, straining off the remaining liquid after each boil. You then combine all three boils worth of liquid and that is your tea for the next 3-4 days.

### **Can I drink with or after food?**

While drinking the tea 30 minutes before or after food is ideal, you should take your herbs at the time most convenient for you. If this happens to be close to a meal, then that is no problem. It is better to take the herbs close to food than not at all.

### **What if I end up with less than 3 cups of liquid at the end of cooking?**

If you end up with a little less than 3 cups of liquid at the end of cooking that is fine, you may just have a dosage less of the herbs than usual. If you find the herbal tea is too thick or concentrated it is alright to dilute the entire tea with a little water, (not more than half a cup) to make it palatable.

### **What if I end up with more than 3-4 cups of liquid at the end of cooking?**

If you end up with a little more than 4 cups of liquid at the end of cooking that is fine, your tea will just last a little longer. If you find that you have a lot extra (1 cup or more) then you should put the liquid back on the stove and boil it down until you have around 3-4 cups of liquid left.

### **Can I add more water if it tastes too strong?**

You are welcome to add water to the herbal tea if the taste is too strong, however start off with the recommended dose of tea and dilute that dosage before drinking, so you ensure you have still drunk the required dosage.

### **Can I add more water to the pot if the herbs dry out?**

If the herbs dry out completely while cooking, but have not burnt, then it is alright to proceed with the second or third boil, however you will end up with only 2-3 cups rather than 3-4 cups. Drink the normal dosages until this runs out and cook up a new bag. If the herbs or liquid has burnt, use a new bag.

### **Can I drink the tea in smaller doses throughout the day, i.e. can I sip on it?**

It is alright to drink the tea in smaller doses throughout the day or sip on it, as long as you finish the prescribed dosage in the morning and in the evening.

### **There is a sludge at the bottom of my tea, do I have to drink it?**

You should let the sludge settle, and not drink it. Drinking the sediment will sometimes upset your stomach, so don't think that by stirring and drinking the sediment you are "getting all the good stuff."

### **What should I do if I miss a dose?**

If you miss a dose that is no problem, just take the next dose as normal.

### **I need a herbal pot, where can I purchase one?**

It is important that you do not cook up your herbs in a metal pot unless your practitioner has advised that it is okay for your particular prescription. Many herbs lose their potency when cooked in metal. First, look at home to see if you have a clay, glass or enamel pot in a reasonably small size. This would likely be suitable. If you would like a specialised herbal cooking pot, you may be able to purchase one from your Chinese Medicine Practitioner, a Chinese grocery store, or if you are in the Melbourne CBD Apricot Grove Herb and Tea Company on the 2nd floor of 126 Russell St also stock them.