



Asheville Center For Chinese Medicine

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HERB COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the herbs from 1 bag in a colander and **rinse**. Transfer the herbs to a pot, add **4C water** and **soak for 10 minutes**.
2. Cover the pot, leaving the lid slightly ajar, and bring the water to a boil. **Simmer the herbs for 40 minutes**; approximately **2 cups of tea should remain**.
3. **Strain** the herbal decoction (tea) into a glass or plastic storage container.
4. Put the herbs back into the pot and add **3 cups** of water. Cover the pot, leaving the lid slightly ajar.
5. Bring the herbs to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for **30 minutes**: approximately **2 cups of tea should remain**.
6. **Strain** the decoction into the storage container with the tea from the first boiling and compost or mulch the herbs.
7. You should **now have** approximately **4 cups** of herbs (tea). **Divide** the decoction (whatever amount you have) into **4 portions** and **take one portion twice daily**, morning and evening. One bag will last for 2 days.
8. If you have more or less than 4C of tea at the end of the cooking time, adjust the amount of water used when cooking subsequent bags so that you have approximately 4C of tea at the end. All of the herbs must be covered with water in order to decoct them. If you have too much tea at the end: turn off the heat and remove the lid from the pot at the end of the cooking time. Let the herbs stand for 10-20 minutes, until the appropriate amount of evaporation has taken place. Then strain the herbs, and continue with the cooking instructions.
9. If you would prefer to cook less frequently after the first week, you may cook two bags of herbs together. To do this, use 6-7 cups of water for the first boiling, and 4-5C water for the second boiling.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Ren Shen**: Because Ren Shen (ginseng) is a special and expensive herb it is traditionally decocted separately from the herbal formula, so to get the most out of the herb. Cook the Ren Shen in a separate pot. Cover it with **1" of water**, bring it to a boil and then reduce it to a simmer (covered, lid ajar). **Simmer** the herb for **40 minutes**. **Strain** off the decoction. Put the once boiled **herbs back in the pot** and cook as previously, **Simmering** for **30 min**. **Strain and combine** with decoction from **first boiling**. **Divide** the decoction into **4 portions**. When taking herbs, **combine one portion** of decocted **ginseng** with **one portion** of the decocted **herbal formula**, and take together. **Be careful taking Ren Shen past 7 PM**, as it may cause insomnia.
2. **Minerals and Shells**: Minerals and shells need to be **cooked longer** than other plant substances. To do this, put the shells and minerals in the pot, and cover with about **1" of water**. Bring them to a boil, reduce to a **simmer** (lid ajar) and cook for **20 min**. Then **add** the rest of the **herbs in your bag**, and bring the water up to **4 cups**. Now **continue** with the **previous instructions** for decocting an herbal formula.
3. **Add Last**: These herbs in the separate bag contain volatile essential oils that will be destroyed if over-cooked. Therefore, **add them** during the **last 5 to 10 minutes** of either boiling.
4. **Pediatric Herbs**: Add **4 cups** of water to herbs, cook for **45 minutes** until two cups remain. **DO NOT BOIL TWICE**.
5. **External Prescriptions**: **After decocting** the formula, you may need to **add additional water** to the decoction in order to have enough liquid to soak in. External soaks may be **reused 2-3 times**. **Store** the soak in the **refrigerator** between uses.

PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Should you develop a new symptom or illness (such as a cold or flu) other than the one for which you are being treated, call the office to inquire whether you should continue taking the herbs.
2. Herbs rarely cause side effects. When side effects do occur, they usually cause G/I (stomach) symptoms, such as gas or changes in bowels. When herbs cause side effects, the symptoms stop when the herbs are discontinued. If the symptom persists after you stop taking the herbs, then the herbs did not cause the symptom. If you develop a new symptom you think may be caused by the herbs please call the office to discuss the symptom with the herbalist, who will make suggestions about how to proceed.
3. Preferably, take the herbs on an empty stomach (1/2 hour before meals, or 2 hours after meals). If G/I symptoms (such as gas) occur, try taking the herbs on a full stomach (during or directly after a meal) to see if this will eliminate the problem.
4. Take the herbal decoction at room temperature or reheat (they taste better warm). Preferably, do not use a microwave.
5. If possible, cook the herbs in a glass or ceramic pot. If such is not available, use stainless steel.
6. Consult your herbalist before adding sweeteners.
7. Taking the herbs 2 hours apart from other substances (drugs or supplements) can usually resolve interaction problems.
8. Never increase the dosage without contacting your herbalist.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRANULAR HERBS

Mix the herbs with warm water: **NO** juice or other substances. Consult your herbalist before adding sweeteners. Be sure to drink all of the powder in the cup (don't leave the herbs that settle at the bottom).

If possible, take the herbs on an empty stomach (1/2 hour before meals, or 2 hours after meals). If G/I symptoms (such as gas) occur, try taking the herbs on a full stomach (during or directly after a meal) to see if this will eliminate the problem.

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