

WELLNESS NEWSLETTER



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WELCOME LETTER

QUICK TIPS TO STAY HEALTHY DURING THE WINTER MONTHS (AND ALL YEAR LONG)

TRADITIONAL HERBAL SYRUP PREPARATION

Hello School Family,

Welcome to the Wellness Committee newsletter. To get the ball rolling, we decided that we would begin this project by trickling articles in as they come to mind. Please forgive the abstract format, as you know, "wellness" comes in many forms and means something different to everyone. From what we put into our bodies, to how we move them; from the relationships we cultivate, to the support we seek. Those of us on this committee are so passionate about the subject of wellness. We hope you enjoy our write-ups and are able to take away little bits of knowledge.

Thank you for reading! We wish you well!

The Wellness Committee of the Verdi Eco School

Quick Tips to Stay Healthy during the winter months (and all year long)

1. Wash your hands often (or use hand sanitizer if washing is unavailable).
2. Drink plenty of water. Hydration is crucial for staying healthy and keeping your body functioning properly. You should be drinking half of your body weight in ounces each day in water (or other hydrating beverages).
3. Eat healthy, nourishing foods. Include lots of fresh and whole foods in your diet.
4. Avoid excess sugar. Which can be hard, especially this time of year! But sugar can interfere with the way your body fights against illness and disease. Bacteria feed on sugar so too much in your body can make the infection stronger.

5. Exercise can help boost your body's natural defenses against illness and infection. Just 30 minutes of exercise 3-4 times a week has been shown to increase your level of T cells which are part of your body's defense against infection.
6. Have your kids change clothes after school and wash their hands really good when they get home (grownups too if you come into contact with a lot of people during your day)
7. Increase your antioxidant intake. An easy way to do that is through the food you eat. Antioxidant rich foods include: dark green vegetables, sweet potatoes, berries, grapes & pomegranates.
8. Increase your vitamin C intake. You can do this through your diet or by adding a good quality supplement. Foods rich in vitamin C include: Broccoli, cauliflower, sweet & white potatoes, tomatoes, leafy greens, red & green peppers and winter squash.
9. Add a daily dose of elderberry syrup to your daily routine. Elderberries are rich in vitamins A, B and C and have been used a traditional herbal cold and flu remedy for hundreds of years. They contain antioxidants, bioflavonoids and other proteins. The juice destroys the ability of a cold or flu virus to infect a cell. Kids can take 1 teaspoon and adults one tablespoon daily when well and increase to four times a day if you feel like you are coming down with something or are sick. The recipe below is the traditional preparation of elderberry syrup.
10. Get enough sleep. This much easier said than done for most of us! But the cells in your body that fight infections are reduced when you have periods of not getting enough sleep.

Traditional Syrup Preparation

Syrups are used to utilize therapeutic components of herbs, as well as enhance the bodies wellbeing.

Syrups act as a more palatable vehicle for herbal extracts; traditionally syrups are sweeter and have a thicker consistency. This application is preferred for a variety of ailments: digestive disturbances, respiratory agitations, mineral and nutrient absorption issues, and in this case (elderberry) we'll be looking at a syrup specific for immune support.

What you'll need:

Single herb or herbal formula

Stainless steel cooking pot with a tight fitting lid

Strainer

Cheesecloth

Glass container

Label and/or sharpie

Raw honey/molasses/glycerin (kosher)

Directions:

Place herbs in pot. Add 1.5 cups of water per every ounce of herb(s) (ie 2 oz of herb to 3 cups of water) and cover with a tight fitting lid. Bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat until a medium simmer is consistent. Leave the mixture to simmer for 90 minutes. When the 90 mins are up, strain. Place cheesecloth into strainer and pour liquid through strainer into a bowl or measuring cup. Be sure to squeeze the herbs in cheesecloth and get the absorbed liquid out. Discard the used herbs into the garden or compost. They make wonderful fertilizer!! Rinse pot and place back on the stove. Pour measured herbal liquid back into the rinsed pot. Now you will reduce the liquid by half (ie if you have 2 cups of liquid, you will reduce it to one cup). You will have created a liquid concentrate. Add 50% preservative (ie one cup of concentrate to one cup of raw honey/molasses/kosher glycerin). use preservatives as you wish, unless otherwise directed. Once the concentrate and preservative are mixed well, place your syrup in a glass container and label. Syrup with 50% preservative will last approx 8 weeks. Use preservatives as you wish, unless otherwise directed. Once the concentrate and preservative are mixed well, place your syrup in a glass container and label. Syrup with 50% preservative will last approx 8 weeks.



Additional herbs to add to syrup :

Rosehips (high in vitamin c)

*Nettle (high vitamin a and c, highly nutritive, reduces inflammation)

*Orange Peel (high vitamin c, immune support, protects respiratory system)

*Cinnamon (loaded with antioxidants, anti-inflammatory and is delicious)

*Ginger Root in small amounts (anti-inflammatory, warming , and also tastes good)

*Echinacea (boots immune system, antimicrobial, reduces inflammation)