

# Making Herbal Teas *by Danie Moore*

We're going to be talking a lot here about the benefits of herbs of all kinds and you should know that there are several ways to take herbs. Just walk into your local herb shop and you'll see capsules, tinctures or extracts and bulk herbs. And when in bulk, they come as leaves, roots and bark. So what's best to get the most out of your herbal healing?

The answer is, it depends on the herb you're taking, but I'm a big proponent of taking herbs in their most simple and direct form: as an herbal tea. Teas are great because they allow for larger doses to be taken without causing indigestion and you can take a more potent and therefore more effective dosage. Since herbs are not chemicals or drugs, most of the time, you're not going to take one or two little capsules, and experience much of their full therapeutic benefit. But take the example of a root like marshmallow, a soothing demulcent herb used to ease throat pain, urinary pain and more, its quite powerful to brew up your own tea but if you try taking many capsules of it a day, it may not agree with you as well and you wont get the same effect as drinking it's whole herb tea. So how do you make herbal tea? There are two main methods: infusion and decoction. An infusion is made of the leaves you make it just as you would a cup of black tea.... you boil water and then steep the herb in the water until it reaches drinking temperature, and then you strain, and drink it. A decoction is made from the roots, bark, seeds, or fruit of an herb, which, because of their hard or woody constitution must be boiled for 15-25 minutes in order to obtain its constituents in the solution.

If you are going to make a tea made of both, you may boil the roots and then add the leaves to steep when you remove it from heat. Usually you would make such a tea in 1-2 quarts of water. If you are making a decoction, then the 2 quarts will boil down to approximately 1 1/2 quarts by the time you are done, and this must be taken within 24 hours, as it will spoil and smell bad--you can refrigerate your tea for one day only, if you like.

## About the Author

Danie moore is an herbal and natural health specialist. To read more of his articles, visit <http://www.danniemoore.com/>