

## Inflammation

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Inflammation is a hot topic these days. It's a natural process, but it remains mysterious. It's a local response to cellular damage that includes, in large part, capillary dilatation, penetration by white blood cells, redness, heat, pain, swelling, and stiffness. The body uses it to initiate the elimination of wastes and of damaged tissue. Still, it's the enemy of conventional and alternative practitioners alike because, if not checked, it can do a lot of long-term damage.<sup>1</sup>

This healing process, allowed to go on too long, generates large quantities of free radicals, which, ironically, contribute to tissue damage. Inflamed tissue gets swollen, so circulation gets compromised, and fresh fluids are prevented from replacing toxic ones. That begets more inflammation, and the cycle continues.<sup>2 3</sup>

And when it goes on for months or years, it creates big problems. We now know that many chronic diseases are now thought to involve some degree of inflammation. Heart disease and cancer top the list, not to mention migraine, hay fever and neuralgia. Chronic inflammatory diseases themselves, such as rheumatoid arthritis and Hashimoto's thyroiditis are part of the group, as well. In industrialized nations, we see this process affecting asthma, Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, kidney disease, lupus, macular degeneration, periodontal disease, skin disorders and stroke.<sup>4</sup>

Natural inflammation remedies often mimic or potentiate adrenal steroid hormones, or increase the body's ability to make these natural chemicals. Some remedies contain healthy fat molecules that the body uses to manufacture anti-inflammatory prostaglandins.<sup>5</sup> In turn, others suppress the production of the pro-inflammatory types of prostaglandins. (This is how aspirin, and the herb it came from, willow, work.) Other plants are rich in polyphenol substances, which reduce oxidation.<sup>6 7</sup>

Licorice root has been used since ancient times as food and medicine. In Chinese medicine, licorice is an ingredient in nearly all herbal formulas for the purpose of "harmonizing" the separate herbs, essentially by reducing inflammation. The most analyzed active ingredient is glycyrrhizin, which has been found to possess anti-inflammatory and adrenal hormone-like activities.<sup>8</sup>

Berberine containing herbs are powerful inflammation fighters. Add goldenseal, barberry, Oregon grape, phellodendron bark and coptis root to the list.<sup>9</sup>

Red and purple fruits are rich in anti-inflammatory compounds.<sup>10</sup> Think hawthorn berry, arjuna bark, schisandra berry and goji berries.<sup>11 12</sup>

Researchers are learning more about the role of inflammation in chronic disease every day, and we can turn to a long list of helpful herbs that have already proven their usefulness.

How to make herbal remedy teas:

Tea dose is based on daily amount, by weight, of dried herb, not volume of brewed liquid. Weigh out (with a scale) daily dose amount of actual, dried herb with a scale, or make a good visual estimate from bulk pack (1 ounce is one-sixteenth of a 1 pound pack, for example). Use at least 16 volume ounces of water per one weight ounce (about 30 grams) of crude, chopped bulk herb. More water may be used, but that will make the tea more dilute, and require more total liquid to be consumed. For strong tasting

tea, swallow quickly. Do not sip. Do not breathe through nose while consuming. Pinch nose closed if necessary. Quickly rinse mouth.

Decoction (roots and barks): Place herb in pan. Add cold water. Simmer, covered, for 1 hour. Strain completely (squeeze) and drink.

Infusion (leaves and flowers): Boil water. Take off heat. Add herb. Cover. Wrap with towel to retain heat, if desired. Steep for at least one hour, or up to 24 hours. Strain completely (squeeze) and drink.

Hawthorn berry, arjuna bark, schisandra berry and goji berries are all sour, but can make pretty decent tea, especially if other flavors are added, Try these with mint.

Food:

Berberine containing herbs (goldenseal, barberry, Oregon grape, phellodendron bark and coptis root) all taste bitter, and are not good choices to add to food.

Goji berries are sweet and sour, and people enjoy eating them straight, like raisins. Add goji berries to desserts or soups. They can be soaked in water first, if you prefer.

<b>How to Take</b>		
<b>Remedy</b>	<b>Preparation</b>	<b>Dose</b>
Licorice root	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Goldenseal root	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Barberry root	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Oregon grape root	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Phellodendron bark	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Coptis root	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Berberine (extracted from plants, e.g., barberry root)	Powder in capsules	1 gram
Hawthorn berry	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Arjuna bark	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Schisandra berry	Powder in capsules	5 grams
Goji berries (dried fruit)	Dried fruit as a snack	Handful

<b>How to Take as Tea</b>		
<b>Remedy</b>	<b>Preparation</b>	<b>Dose</b>
Licorice root	Not suitable for tea	
Goldenseal root	Not suitable for tea	
Barberry root	Not suitable for tea	
Oregon grape root	Not suitable for tea	
Phellodendron bark	Not suitable for tea	
Coptis root	Not suitable for tea	
Berberine (extracted from plants, e.g., barberry root)	Not suitable for tea	
Hawthorn berry	Decoction	5 grams
Arjuna bark	Decoction	5 grams
Schisandra berry	Decoction	5 grams

Goji berries (dried fruit)	Decoction	15 grams
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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.womensinternational.com/connections/inflammation.html>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.nutraceuticalsworld.com/issues/2005-05/view\\_features/silent-inflammation](http://www.nutraceuticalsworld.com/issues/2005-05/view_features/silent-inflammation)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2952901/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://doctormurray.com/inflammation-linked-macular-degeneration/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/arthritis-diet/anti-inflammatory/the-arthritis-diet.php>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.nature.com/ejcn/journal/v64/n3s/fig\\_tab/ejcn2010221t1.html](http://www.nature.com/ejcn/journal/v64/n3s/fig_tab/ejcn2010221t1.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-17145/10-best-polyphenol-rich-superfoods-why-you-should-be-eating-them.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.medicinehunter.com/page/licorice-root-digestive-friend>

<sup>9</sup> <https://doctormurray.com/berberine-an-ancient-remedy-for-modern-humans/>

<sup>10</sup>

[http://www.eatingwell.com/nutrition\\_health/nutrition\\_news\\_information/blue\\_and\\_purple\\_foods\\_for\\_better\\_health](http://www.eatingwell.com/nutrition_health/nutrition_news_information/blue_and_purple_foods_for_better_health)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.chatelaine.com/health/diet/five-health-benefits-of-purple-foods/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/blogs/eat-run/2015/03/23/10-foods-that-fight-inflammation>