

# **SIMPLE DIRECTIONS FOR USING HERBS TO MAKE INFUSIONS, DECOCTIONS AND OINTMENTS**

It seems that many health conscious people these days are turning away from prescription drugs and turning to making their own medicines. Healing with herbs and other natural remedies is becoming popular and making your own medicines is quite an art.

Some popular methods of natural healing involve the use of making infusions, steeping to extract various properties, decoctions, the extraction of an essence by boiling and ointments.

Always remember when you are creating your own herbal remedies to use an enamel or nonmetal pot.

## HERBAL TEAS

To make a cup of herbal tea, for drinking or as a face wash, boil 10 ounces of water. Prewarm your teapot, put in 1 tbsp. or less of dried herbs or a large pinch of fresh herbs and pour the boiling water over them. Add honey, if you like. cover and steep to taste, 3 to 5 minutes. Strain and drink.

## INFUSIONS

To make an infusion, fill a teapot with one quart of boiling water. Then throw in a large handful of fresh herbs or an ounce or more of dried herbs. Add some honey, if desired, and let the mixture steep for ten to twenty minutes. Now strain and drink.

## DECOCTIONS

Making a decoction involves boiling your mixture. It is usually made from the tougher parts of a plant, the roots, seeds or the bark. Put one ounce or more of the herb parts in a quart of water and cover the pot. Bring the mixture to a boil and simmer for about twenty minutes. Steep and strain the mixture. Drink or apply externally.

## OINTMENTS

An ointment, unguent or salve is made by combining the decoction of a herb with olive oil and simmering it until the water has completely evaporated. A little beeswax is then added to get a firm consistency. Some gum benzoin or a drop of tincture of benzoin per ounce of fat will help preserve the ointment.