

HERB COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

Traditional Herbal Decoction & Granule Guidance

Patient _____	Formula _____	Start date _____	Dose _____
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STANDARD DECOCTION METHOD

1	Rinse & soak	Place the herbs from 1 bag in a colander and rinse. Transfer to a pot, add 4 cups of water, and soak for 10 minutes.
2	First boiling	Cover the pot with the lid slightly ajar. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 40 minutes until approximately 2 cups of tea remain.
3	Strain	Strain the herbal decoction into a glass or plastic storage container.
4	Second boiling	Return the herbs to the pot. Add 3 cups of water, cover with the lid slightly ajar, bring to a boil, then simmer for 30 minutes.
5	Combine	Strain the second decoction into the same storage container. Compost or mulch the cooked herbs.
6	Portion	You should have about 4 cups of tea. Divide the amount into 4 portions. Take one portion twice daily, morning and evening. One bag lasts 2 days.

ADJUSTING WATER & BATCH SIZE

FINAL AMOUNT If you have more or less than 4 cups at the end, adjust the water used for the next bag. All herbs must be covered with water while cooking.	TOO MUCH TEA Turn off the heat and remove the lid. Let the herbs stand 10-20 minutes until enough evaporation has occurred, then strain and continue.
COOKING TWO BAGS TOGETHER If you prefer to cook less frequently after the first week, you may cook two bags together. Use 6-7 cups of water for the first boiling and 4-5 cups for the second boiling.	

HERB USE REMINDERS

Special Instructions, Safety & Granular Herb Guidance

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Ren Shen	Cook ginseng separately in a separate pot, covered by 1 inch of water. Boil, then simmer covered with lid ajar for 40 minutes. Strain. Cook the once-boiled ginseng again for 30 minutes, strain, and combine both ginseng decoctions. Take one portion with one portion of the main formula. Avoid taking Ren Shen after 7 PM, as it may cause insomnia.
Minerals & shells	Cook minerals and shells first. Cover with about 1 inch of water, bring to a boil, then simmer with lid ajar for 20 minutes. Add the rest of the herbs and bring total water to 4 cups, then continue with the regular decoction instructions.
Add last	These herbs contain volatile essential oils that may be damaged by over-cooking. Add them during the last 5 to 10 minutes of either boiling.
Pediatric herbs	Add 4 cups of water to the herbs and cook for 45 minutes until 2 cups remain. Do not boil twice.
External prescriptions	After decocting, add water if needed so there is enough liquid for soaking. External soaks may be reused 2-3 times. Store in the refrigerator between uses.

PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING

New illness or symptom	If you develop a new symptom or illness, such as a cold or flu, call the office to ask whether you should continue taking the herbs.
Possible side effects	Herbs rarely cause side effects. When they occur, they are usually gastrointestinal symptoms such as gas or changes in bowel movements. Symptoms caused by herbs usually stop when the herbs are discontinued. If symptoms persist, call the office to discuss next steps.
Best time to take herbs	Preferably take herbs on an empty stomach: 1/2 hour before meals or 2 hours after meals. If gastrointestinal symptoms occur, try taking them during or directly after a meal.
Temperature	Take the decoction at room temperature or gently reheated. Herbs usually taste better warm. Preferably, do not use a microwave.
Cooking pot	If possible, cook herbs in a glass or ceramic pot. If unavailable, use stainless steel.
Sweeteners	Consult your herbalist before adding sweeteners.
Other substances	Taking herbs 2 hours apart from drugs or supplements can usually help resolve interaction concerns.
Dosage	Never increase the dosage without contacting your herbalist.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRANULAR HERBS

MIX Mix the granules with warm water only. Do not use juice or other substances. Consult your herbalist before adding sweeteners.

DRINK FULLY Drink all of the powder in the cup, including herbs that settle at the bottom.

TIMING If possible, take on an empty stomach: 1/2 hour before meals or 2 hours after meals. If gastrointestinal symptoms occur, try taking them during or directly after a meal.

WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE

Call the office if you develop a new symptom you think may be related to the herbs, if symptoms feel concerning, or if you are unsure whether to continue taking your formula.