

HERBS FOR ARTHRITIS

Arthritis is a common and persistent illness that stems from inflammation of the joints, and is categorized as an autoimmune disease.

As people grow older, they might experience some ill effects stemming from the use of their joints through a lifetime. Fortunately, the world we live in provides a few answers to our ailments in the form of plant life with live giving medicinal properties.



ALOE VERA

A member of the Lily family, Aloe Vera is a succulent plant that contains a lot of liquid within its leaves. A mature Aloe Vera plant can grow to have 12 or more leaves and can provide relief for a long time.

HOW IT WORKS

Aloe Vera is a tropical plant that carries high doses of antioxidants and vitamins like manganese, iron, zinc, calcium, as well as B1, B2, B3, B6, vitamins C and E. Aloe Vera plants contain a naturally occurring chemical found in joints called glucosamine. The gel that is squeezed out from the plant's leaves is comprised of 99% water and 1% polysaccharides and glycoproteins.

HOW TO USE IT

Drinking Aloe Vera juice 2 - 3 times a day can decrease inflammation, reduce stiffness, and alleviate pain. The gel that is squeezed out of the leaves can be rubbed onto painful joints for arthritis relief. Cut the leaf away from the main plant using scissors, and then peel off the outer layer to reveal the gel inside. You can use your hands to squeeze the gel out of the leaf. Be aware that some people can have a reaction to the gel on their skin and may develop a rash or redness.



FRANKINCENSE

Frankincense oil is derived from the gum resin that is found within the bark of India's Boswellia trees. It has been used for centuries for its anti-inflammatory properties.

HOW IT WORKS

Frankincense contains a chemical agent that arrests the production of leukotoxin, which is a chemical produced to cause an inflammatory response in damaged or injured tissues.

HOW TO USE IT

The extracts made from Frankincense can be used in a few different ways. Using therapeutic grade Frankincense essential oil, it can be applied topically by rubbing it directly onto the afflicted area in a circular motion until it's worked into the skin. Since it can cause skin irritation try using only a little at first. Frankincense can also be chewed, mixed into water or juice, or added into tea.



OREGANO

Oregano is a small bushy plant from the mint family that is often used in culinary dishes.

HOW IT WORKS

Oregano oil can reduce inflammation thanks to its carvacrol content which can induce HSP (heat shock proteins) through the T cells. Carvacrol can also provide relief from pain as it can deeply penetrate the skin to get to the synovial fluid in the joints.

HOW TO USE IT

Oil of Oregano can be used both externally and internally. For external use, dilute 1 drop of concentrated oregano oil with 5 drops of virgin olive oil or coconut oil. Gently rub the mixture to the affected joints as necessary. Remember to do a small test area first to make sure it won't cause a reaction. For internal use, mix 2 drops of concentrated oregano oil in 1 glass of water or juice. Do not take for more than 6 weeks at a time.



TURMERIC

Turmeric is a staple of traditional Chinese and Indian (Ayurvedic) medicine. Its main chemical component is curcumin. A potent anti-inflammatory, curcumin blocks inflammatory cytokines and enzymes.

HOW IT WORKS

Studies have revealed that one of the chemicals responsible for the inflammation response in joints called cytokine was successfully blocked by the naturally occurring chemical in turmeric called curcumin.

HOW TO USE IT

One of the most effective ways to use turmeric, is to ingest it. Be sure to choose curcumin extract and take 500 mg capsules twice a day. Curcumin makes up only a small percentage of turmeric and can be hard to absorb. Be sure to check the standardized amount of curcumin when looking for a supplement, and choose brands that use phospholipids, antioxidants, or nanoparticles for better absorption. Just be aware that taking turmeric in high doses will cause stomach upset and can act as a blood thinner.

*Avoid turmeric/curcumin if you take blood thinners, are about to have surgery, are pregnant, or have gallbladder disease.



ROSEMARY

Rosemary is a native Mediterranean fragrant evergreen herb, from the mint family, Lamiaceae, and has been used for thousands of years.

HOW IT WORKS

The anti-inflammatory potential of rosemary is found through its phytochemical compound called rosmarinic acid, which can stop white blood cells from accumulating in the joints. Another benefit of rosemary is its analgesic property through the presence of salicylic acid, which is the chemical composition of commercial Aspirin. Studies show only small doses are required to achieve blockage of inflammation.

HOW TO USE IT

Topical use of rosemary over the affected joints can be used alone or in combination with other anti-inflammatory essential oils. Begin with diluting it with 1 tsp of a carrier oil to avoid skin irritation. Then apply 3 to 5 drops directly to the joint, 3 to 4 times per day. To ingest it, drink 1 cup of rosemary tea 2-3 times per day.



EUCALYPTUS

Chinese, Indian Ayurvedic, Greek, and European styles of medicine have incorporated the use of eucalyptus essential oils into the treatment of a range of conditions for many years.

HOW IT WORKS

Eucalyptus trees were first encountered in Australia and now grown throughout the world. This unique tree produces a strong odor that is caused by its primary agent known as Eucalyptol. Using a process, Eucalyptus oil is extracted from *Eucalyptus globulus*. This intense smelling oil is then packaged in a filtered and concentrated form. Researchers looking for a way to reduce inflammation were fascinated to find that Eucalyptol has a powerful anti-inflammatory effect on swollen joints. This oil also has antimicrobial properties to help kill organisms that slow healing.

HOW TO USE IT

Add a few drops of Eucalyptus oil into a warm bath. Create a compress by adding a few drops of Eucalyptus essential oil to cold water, place a clean piece of cloth into the water, wet it completely, and then wring it out. Apply the cold compress to the area you wish to relieve pain. When using it on your skin, you should mix the Eucalyptus with a carrier like coconut oil. The most important thing about using this oil is your level of awareness of how it will affect you. It's always a good idea to get the mixture right before you start slathering it onto whatever body parts that can have sensitive skin.



GINGER

Another herb to try using for arthritis pain is ginger. Plus, it helps with a variety of other ailments at the same time, like nausea.

HOW IT WORKS

Chemicals in ginger interact with vanilloid receptors on nerve endings. Studies have shown that uses of ginger essential oil can block pain during its interaction with the vanilloid receptors. This is important to researchers that are hoping to be able to use extracts from ginger to replace nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. It was discovered that the anti-inflammatory chemicals contained in ginger were able to successfully reduce inflammation in the joints as well as the digestive tract.

HOW TO USE IT

Ginger comes in capsules, tinctures, teas, powders, oils, and foods made from the dried or fresh root of the ginger plant. In order to get the most analgesic and anti-inflammatory agents, the best way to take ginger is via a capsule that has gone through a “super-critical extraction” process as it will have the purest ginger with the greatest effect. You can add a few tablespoons to your diet by grating ginger over a salad or into a stir fry. Or you could grate 1 to 2 teaspoons and simmer it in a pot with hot water for five minutes to make a soothing tea. Be sure to consume 2 cups of tea per day for the best results.



BURDOCK

Burdock root, otherwise called Fox root, is perennial herb with anti-inflammatory properties.

HOW IT WORKS

This well-known root has been associated with anti-inflammatory properties for over 500 years, but it wasn't until recently that science has finally discovered the secrets behind its effectiveness. Tests have shown that burdock root can reduce the appearance of proteins that trigger an inflammatory response in damaged tissues. This means that it could also be effective in alleviating the symptoms associated with inflammation cause by arthritis. As an added side effect, scientists also discovered a phytochemical that specifically kills cancer.

HOW TO USE IT

Burdock root is available in the form of dried root powder, decoction, extract and tincture. Take burdock root twice a day to treat arthritis. In the majority of tests and research studies, it appears that the preferred way to take is by drinking burdock root tea. It is suggested to drink 2 cups of the tea per day, for at least 40 days to see the most noticeable benefits. This means that is will also have a positive effect on inflammation centered in the digestive tract. To make a tea of burdock root, add a teaspoon of the chopped root in 1 1/2 cups of water and boil for 10 minutes. If you want to make enough for one day @ 2 cups per day, use 1 tablespoon to 4 cups of water. It will stay good in the fridge for 2 days.



ARTHRITIS PAIN-REDUCING AROMATHERAPY

- 14 drops eucalyptus essential oil
- 14 drops sweet marjoram essential oil
- 7 drops lavender essential oil
- 7 drops peppermint essential oil
- 7 drops rosemary essential oil
- 2 ounces almond oil
- 1 tablespoon jojoba oil

