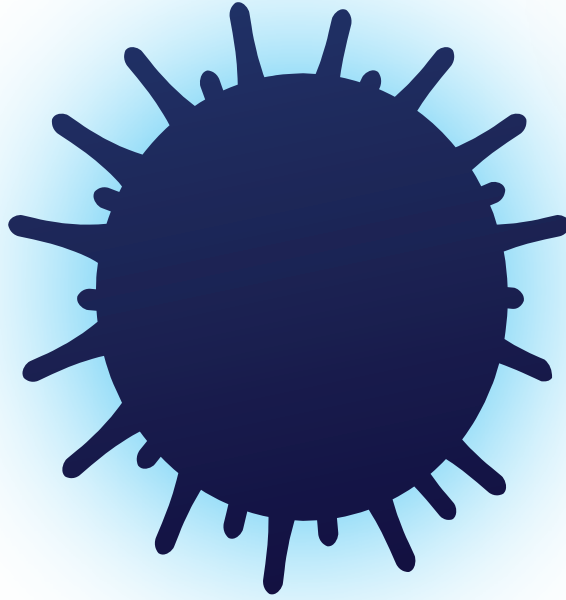


How to Fight COVID-19 Using a Healthy Lifestyle Approach



Authors: Hannah A. Boone, Azra Čustović, Sarah Hotić, Dado Latinović, Adna Sijerčić



The foundation of our society has proven fragile. Fatalities are constantly increasing. Everyday luxuries are rapidly diminishing. The health care systems are overloaded. People have been left jobless. With all that is going on, you can't help but feel scared amongst the chaos that has become our norm. However, at times like these, panic is our worst enemy. For the first time in a long time, the entire world stands together in their anxieties, fears, and most importantly, hope. COVID-19 is in no way a harmless disease, but you are not powerless against it. There are things you can do to minimize your chance of getting it and, although there is no cure as of yet, there are ways that you can help your immune system prevent and combat this infection. With all the misinformation circulating, we hope to inform you on everything you need to know about this virus, and what you can do to keep yourself safe, as well as to bring you a sense of peace during these troubling times.

Commonly asked questions about Coronavirus



What is the virus really?

The current coronavirus pandemic is caused by a virus designated as SARS-COV-2, a member of the *Coronaviridae* family, which initiates the disease known as COVID-19 (Jin et al., 2020).

How does it infect?

It infects cells through a spike-like structure, which attaches to the plasma membrane of human cells (Clerkin et al., 2020).

How long does it take for people to feel sick?

The virus can have an incubation period of up to two weeks, meaning people can have the virus in their system for 14 days before they even start showing symptoms (Jin et al., 2020). However, there are many instances of asymptomatic or weakly symptomatic cases (Tian et al., 2020).

What part of the body does SARS-COV-2 virus affect?

It primarily attacks the respiratory system, which can result in viral pneumonia in the most severe cases (Zheng et al., 2020), and can be complicated by the acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), sepsis and septic shock, multiorgan failure, including acute kidney injury and cardiac injury (Yang et al., 2020).

What are the symptoms?

Most common symptoms are fever, pain, cough, shortness of breath, and digestive symptoms (Lai et al., 2020). The most severe symptom is pneumonia (Jin et al., 2020).

How big of a deal is it?

Registered COVID-19 cases currently number over 1.8 million. There have been over 100,000 deaths at the drafting of this booklet (World-o-meter, 2020). While statistical testing cannot paint the full picture until this pandemic passes, this crisis is very real, and some people can have very critical cases that can prove fatal.



But how severe are symptoms normally?


Despite a higher death rate, over 80% of COVID-19 cases are classified as “mild,” which means that many cases could be treated at home rather than a hospital, so more critical patients can get necessary care (Lai et al., 2020; CDC, 2020).

Is there a cure or vaccine for coronavirus?

No. There is no proven cure or vaccine, but researchers are working around the clock to try to find solutions. There are treatment options that are being explored by doctors, such as hydroxychloroquine and plasma therapy (Gautret et al., 2020; Law, 2020).

If I have coronavirus, are there things I can do to get better?

Yes. Many people are being told to stay home and not go to the hospital if their symptoms are not severe. However, it is very important to reach out to a medical professional if you need to treat yourself at home and seek further guidance (CDC, 2020). This booklet provides some ideas of what you can do to help your body heal, but it is NOT sufficient to treat your symptoms without guidance from a licensed medical professional.



What are doctors recommending?

Doctors are currently advising those with a coronavirus infection to avoid ibuprofen unless specifically prescribed, as ibuprofen is known to worsen the course of infection (Favalli et al., 2020; Day, 2020). Aside from that, some doctors are recommending an increase of vitamin C and D, as well as to eat a healthy diet, exercise often, keep to a good sleep schedule, and reduce stress (Hyman, 2020).

What else can I do to get better?

Many coronavirus symptoms can potentially be managed with gentler herbal remedies, as well as rest, diet, and reducing stress (Masé et al., 2020).

What is the best way to protect myself from COVID-19?

One word: prevention (CDC, 2020). Implement measures to prevent the disease and strengthen your immune system BEFORE you get sick.

“Prevention is better than cure.”

-- Motto of the National Health Society, circa. 1871



PREVENTION AGAINST CORONAVIRUS

Prevention (CDC, 2020; WHO, 2020) Important Basic Practices:



Cover your face if possible.



Wash your hands often.



Cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze.



Cleaning and disinfect frequently



Practice social distancing.

Other Important Practices:



Keep your environment fresh. Open windows if you are not in a very congested area. Get outside if possible (Hyman, 2020).



Support the immune system. The best thing you can do to prevent coronavirus is support your immune system. You can do this through lifestyle management and stress reduction (Join, 2020). You can also take immune-supporting herbs, such as reishi mushroom, moringa, or citrus fruits like oranges (Chevallier, 2016; Kaur et al., 2017; Coelho et al., 2013).



Consider others. Think about the lives of people with weaker immune systems or those who need to protect others, such as parents and children, elderly, or healthcare workers. Before doing anything that could infect them, remember that being sick is something that is the scariest thing for every child, parent, and elderly person. Avoid any practices that can put those you care about in danger. No matter how healthy you may be, their immune system may not be strong enough to fight this virus. Do not take risks with the lives of others.

Reishi Immune Support Pastilles



Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup reishi mushroom powder (can be subbed moringa, cordyceps, ginger, holy basil, or other adaptogenic or immunostimulatory herb)
- 1 Tbsp of honey
- 1 Tbsp of dried orange peel, ginger, or curcumin (optional) or

Place reishi or other herb powder in a small bowl. Add honey slowly until a stiff paste forms. Roll into little balls that are about 1 cm in diameter, then coat in orange peel/ginger/curcumin. Allow to air dry for 6-8 hours, then place in the refrigerator to store.



Curcumin

fever/immune support



Moringa

immune support



Reishi

immune support

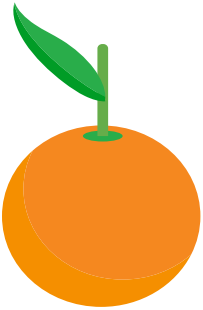


Vitamins & Minerals

Vitamins are essential nutrients that our body needs in order to function, develop, and grow. Each vitamin has a separate task but works together to help the human body work together as a whole.

- When taking vitamins, it is important to know that there are fat-soluble and water-soluble types.
- The water-soluble vitamins are released through the urine if there is too much in the body, whereas, the fat-soluble ones are harder to release because they are easily stored (Medlineplus, 2020)
- This can result in toxicity from overdosing

Whenever taking any supplements, follow the dosing and instructions on the package and consult your medical professional (Mase et al., 2020).



Vitamin C- A water-soluble vitamin. Significantly benefits in treatment of sepsis and septic shock, a life-threatening condition, which is caused by inflammation by pathogenic organisms. Other ways Vitamin C aids the body is as a prooxidant for immune cells, antioxidant for lung epithelial cells, and immunosuppressive effects (Erol, 2020).

- **Foods that contain Vitamin C-** Oranges, kiwi, kale, and broccoli (Hill, 2018)

Zn

Zinc- An essential micronutrient used in DNA synthesis and cell proliferation (Fuhrman, 2020; NIH, 2020). It is also involved in the regulation of innate and adaptive immune responses, cell signaling, and production of immune cells (Wessels, Maywald, and Rink, 2017).

- **Foods that contain Zinc-** Red meat and shellfish (West, 2018)

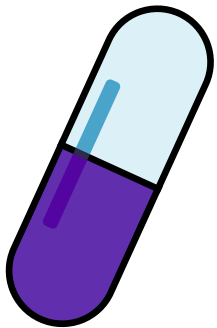


Vitamin D- A fat-soluble vitamin. This vitamin is very important in sustaining the body while trying to fight off a viral infection

- Most people are already vitamin D deficient, especially those with weaker immune systems and who live in colder climates
- An easy and natural way to obtain this vitamin is through direct sunlight, but make sure not to be exposed for too long due to side effects of being under UV light for prolonged periods and to still use sunblock when going outdoors

Vitamin D helps the primary lung epithelial cells by regulating genes with important innate immune functions (Gal-Tanamy et al., 2011; Hansdottir et al., 2008).

- **Foods that contain Vitamin D-** Fish (salmon, cod oil), mushrooms, and egg yolks (Jones, 2019)



Magnesium - A very vital mineral for our immune system. Magnesium is an important mineral electrolyte that helps our body strengthen our immune system's natural killer cells and lymphocytes. It also is a key source of energy for our cells called adenosine triphosphate (ATP) without this energy, our cells cannot function properly. Magnesium helps the haemoglobin in our blood which is responsible for delivering oxygen from our lungs to the entire human body, which assists in a COVID-19 infection since the virus attacks the respiratory system (Sanderson et al., 2020).

- **Foods rich in magnesium-** Dark chocolate, black beans, avocados, and whole grains (Spritzler, 2018)

Lifestyle:

Reduce stress - Stress negatively alters the immune system responses within the body (Salleh, 2008). Whether you are trying to prevent coronavirus or treat it, reducing stress is critical to your well-being. Stepping away from the media and TV is also very important in letting your mind de-stress from the world a bit. Try limiting yourself to about an hour in the morning and at night to just catch up and see if there are any important changes.

Sleep - Sleep, a huge influence on the immune system, gives the body an opportunity to heal and rest, especially in critical illnesses (Kamdar, Needham, and Collop, 2012). Furthermore, sleep was considered extremely important by doctors in the recovery of their patients during the Spanish Flu Pandemic (Abascal and Yarnell, 2006).

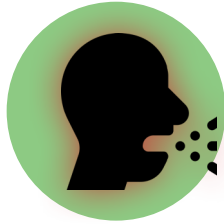
How to improve your sleep:

- Keep the room cool, quiet, and dark (Join and Calendar, 2020).
- Meditate and clear your mind during the day so you can have a better night (Hyman, 2020).
- Set an alarm to remind you it is time to wind down will help as well (Join and Calendar, 2020).
- Finding an app on your mobile device or tablet that helps assist with sleep, such as, soothing sounds or tracking your sleep to realize how your body reacts during the night and why.

Exercise - Exercising helps raise the levels of white blood cells and antibodies that fight off infections (Join and Calendar., 2020). Exercise is especially important after a critical illness to improve muscle mass, strength, and resiliency (Heyland et al., 2016). Exercise can also help with the prevention of blood clots, which have been a symptom for some people who contracted COVID-19 (El Sayed, 1996; Clerkin et al., 2020).

Diet - Eating a well balanced, healthy diet and staying away from processed junk food is very important to maintain overall health, as well as to support immune functions. Eat as much fresh produce as possible, but if it is not in season or hard to find then the next best thing is fermented or frozen. These items are normally picked at the peak of the season and then frozen or fermented straight away (De Ancos et al., 2006). Also, make sure to eat sufficient protein (Hyman, 2016).

What to do if you think you have COVID-19



If you feel you may have COVID-19, first and foremost, do not panic. Get tested if possible. If not, evaluate the symptoms.

Common symptoms (Lai et al., 2020):

- Fever
- Pain
- Headache
- Myalgia
- Sore throat
- Conjunctivitis

Respiratory symptoms:

- Dry cough
- Shortness of breath

Digestive symptoms:

- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite

Many of the symptoms associated with COVID-19 can be treated using common home remedies, but a medical professional should always be consulted.

Licorice
respiratory system

Sage
respiratory system



Thyme
respiratory system

Ginger
fever/digestive symptoms

Garlic
fever/immune support

Cinnamon
respiratory system/immune support

Honey
respiratory system/immune support

Marshmallow Root
respiratory system

Orange
immune support/vitamin source

Making homemade herbal treatments:

Some of the ingredients people have in their houses can be used to treat COVID-19 symptoms. Other herbs and food items can be ordered online, or bought at grocery stores or pharmacies (please practice good hygiene and social distancing whenever leaving your house!)



They can then be taken medicinally in several different forms, such as:

Teas - 2 types (Gladstar, 2012)

- **Infusion** - used for leaves (ex.: nettle), flowers (ex.: chamomile), and roots with higher water content (ex.: ginger). Boil water and steep the herbs/tea for 7-10 minutes.
- **Decoction** - used for roots and tougher herbs (ex.: licorice, marshmallow). Boil water, add desired herb, reduce heat and allow to simmer for 30 minutes to an hour.

Extract/tincture - herbal constituents extracted using alcohol. Are commonly sold at supermarkets, herbal stores, and pharmacies (Chevallier, 2016).

Powders - finely-ground herbs that can be added to dishes, teas, or made into small pills such as capsules or pastilles (see recipe for Reishi Pastilles)

Honey infusion/Syrup - herbs added to honey and heated slowly to extract active constituents. Used for sore throats and coughs (Gladstar, 2012).



TREATMENTS FOR FEVER

When treating a fever, it is often best not to immediately take fever-suppressing medication, especially ibuprofen, as this can worsen coronavirus symptoms (Ray and Schulman, 2015; Favalli et al., 2020).

Many of the herbs that can be used to soothe fevers also relieve pain (Pareek et al., 2011; Chevallier, 2016). Pain from a coronavirus infection can present in several different forms, but mainly occur in the head and chest. Sore throats and muscle aching (myalgia) have been reported as well in some patients (Wu and McGoogan, 2020; Lai et al., 2020).

Anti-inflammatory & Induces Sweating

- Cayenne (*Capsicum annuum*)
- Garlic (*Allium sativum*)
- Horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*)
- Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)
- Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*)

Anti-inflammatory & Reduces Pain

- Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*)
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
- Chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*)
- Holy basil (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*)
- Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)
- Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)
- Clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*)

How to Use Them?

- **Cayenne**- in the forms of capsules, fresh or in the form of a powder (every remedy use with caution).
- **Garlic**- fresh, capsule.
- **Horseradish**- Capsules, fresh.
- **Ginger**- Powder, capsules (1/2 tsp), extract.
- **Cinnamon**- Tea (infusion), powder - 1tsp (cinnamon can sting a bit, so use in caution).
- **Feverfew**- Tea (infusion), capsules.
- **Yarrow**- Tea (infusion), capsules.
- **Chamomile**- Tea (infusion).
- **Holy basil**- Tea (infusion), capsules.
- **Turmeric/curcumin**- powder, capsules (1/2 tsp), extract, tea.
- **Nettle**- Tea (infusion), in food.
- **Clove**- Powder (1/8 tsp), extract, capsules.

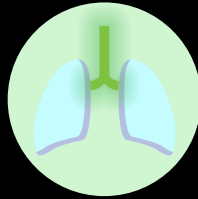
References: (Chevallier, 2016; Pareek et al., 2011; Chandler, Hooper, and Harvey, 1982; Charles, 2012).

Dragon Nectar for Cough, Sore Throat, and Fever Relief

Mode of Action:



Induces Sweating



Induces
Inflammation



Relieves cough &
pain

Ingredients

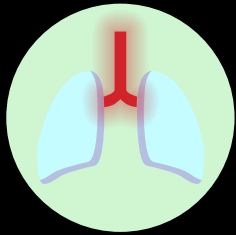
- 1 cup honey
- 1/4 cup coconut or olive oil (optional: helps soothe sore throat), or more honey
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper, horseradish (USE CAUTION) or other spicy pepper
- 1 tsp chopped fresh ginger or 1/2 tsp dried
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
- 2 whole cloves or 1/2 tsp dried
- 1 tsp fresh, minced garlic
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried sage



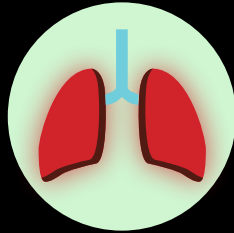
Place honey, oil, and lemon juice or vinegar in a small saucepan and heat until it simmers gently. Add the herbs and allow to simmer for 10 minutes. Strain (optional, but goes down easier this way) and store in a jar or bottle. Will keep at normal temperature for up to 2 months.



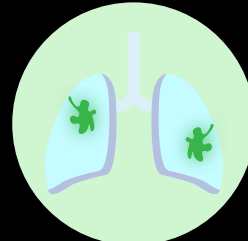
Treating Respiratory Symptoms



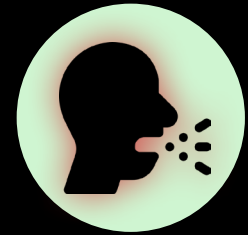
**Soothes Inflamed
Airways**



Shorness of Breath



Loosens Mucus



Dry Cough

Most respiratory symptoms associated with COVID-19 are not severe, however; those who are more at risk tend to develop pneumonia, a very serious health condition for which patients should seek medical attention (Zhang et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, respiratory symptoms associated with coronavirus can be treated naturally, using traditional Chinese medicine or herbal and home remedies (Jin et al., 2020). For serious symptoms like pneumonia, herbs can be used in the early stages of infection to attempt to prevent pneumonia from occurring, or during the later stages of infection to prevent it from progressing (Tafazoli, 2017; Abascal and Yarnell, 2006; Santana et al., 2016).

Employing strategies to prevent pneumonia could improve the overall course of infection, but this is not definitively proven as of yet (Masé et al., 2020; Santana et al., 2016).

Herbs for Treating Respiratory Symptoms:



During the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918, doctors reported herbs they used successfully to manage pneumonia symptoms, as well as fever and other respiratory symptoms, especially during early stages of the infection (Abascal and Yarnell, 2006). Some of the popular herbs that were and are still used to aid the immune system are elderberries (Sidor & Gramza-Michałowska, 2015) and echinacea leaves and flowers (Percival, 2000; Block & Mead, 2003; Jurkstiene et al., 2004). These are used due to their high content of compounds, as well as their mineral and vitamin contents (Chevallier, 2016).

Another significant spice that should be mentioned are cloves, which are now commonly used as an everyday spice and are attainable at most grocery stores. They are rich in Eugenol which is known to have antiviral and antibacterial properties (Devi et al., 2010; Cortés-Rojas et al., 2014; Pramod et al., 2010; Benencia et al., 2000).

How do we use them?

TEA INFUSION: Mullein, Oregano, Sage, Thyme

TEA DECOCTION: Licorice, Marshmallow Root

FRESH: Horseradish

CAPSULES: Horseradish, Oregano, Echinacea, Elderberry, Garlic

EXTRACT: Oregano, Sage, Licorice

TINCTURE: Marshmallow Root, Thyme

SYRUP: Echinacea, Elderberry, Garlic

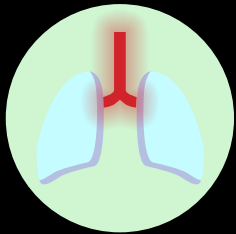


HERB	COUGH	SHORTNESS OF BREATH	PNEUMONIA
Eucalyptus (<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>)	✓	✓	✓
Horseradish (<i>Armoracia rusticana</i>)	✓	✓	
Mullein (<i>Verbascum densiflorum</i>)	✓	✓	✓
Oregano (<i>Origanum vulgare</i>)	✓		✓
Sage (<i>Salvia officinalis</i>)	✓	✓	✓
Echinacea (<i>Echinacea angustifolia</i>)	✓		
Eldberry (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>)	✓		
Garlic (<i>Allium sativum</i>)	✓	✓	✓
Licorice (<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>)	✓	✓	✓
Marshmallow Root (<i>Althaea officinalis</i>)	✓	✓	
Thyme (<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>)	✓	✓	✓

References: (Chevallier, 2016; Mase et al., 2020; Pareek et al., 2011; Al Snafi, 2013).

Velvet Tea (Decoction from Marshmallow root and Licorice):

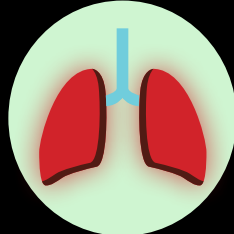
Modes of Action:



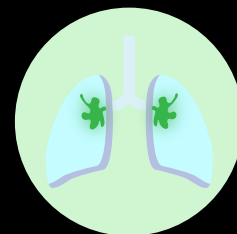
Soothes Inflamed Airways



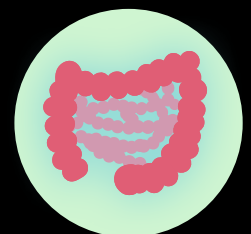
Dry Cough



Shortness of Breath



Loosens Mucus



Supports Digestive System

Ingredients

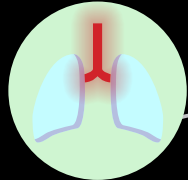
- 4 cups of water
- 2 tablespoons licorice root
- 1 tablespoon marshmallow root
- Honey to taste



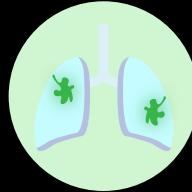
Bring water to boil in a small pot of water. Once boiling, add the herbs, then reduce the heat until the mixture is gently simmering. Cover and leave for 1 hour. Cool to desired temperature and add honey if desired. Will keep if refrigerated for 5-7 days.

Eucalyptus and Sage Infusion (Inhalation only):

Mode of Action:



Soothes Inflammes
Airways



Loosens Mucus



Decreases Anxiety

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons dried sage leaf
- 3-5 drops eucalyptus essential oil
- Hot water
- Bowl
- Warm towel



Bring water to a boil, then place in a large bowl, filling up to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the bowl. Add the herbs and oil, which can be subbed with the following: mint, lavender, rosemary. Allow to cool and steep for 7-10 minutes, then lean over the bowl and drape the warm towel in a way to completely cover your head and keep the steam contained. Breathe deeply for 1 minute before resting. Repeat as necessary to provide relief from shortness of breath or cough. Only for breathing, do not drink.



More Powerful Herbs to Treat Pneumonia

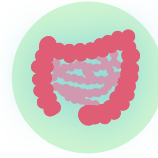
If people with COVID-19 start to develop serious pneumonia symptoms and cannot be admitted to a hospital, here are some more powerful herbs that have been traditionally used for hundreds of years and researched significantly:

- **Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*),**
- **Holy Rope (*Eupatorium cannabinum*),**
- **Pleuistry root* (*Asclepias tuberosa*),**
- **Elecampane (*Inula helenium*),**
- **Chameleon plant* (*Houttuynia cordata*),**
- **Lobelia* (*Lobelia erinus*),**
- **Ephedra* (*Ephedra sinica*).**

Reference: (Abascal and Yarnell, 2006; Chevellier, 2016; Lau et al., 2008; Ibragic and Sofic, 2015; Wang et al., 2018).

Note - None of these herbs should be taken without supervision from a medical or herbal practitioner, especially the herbs marked * which can have serious side effects if not taken at proper doses.

Treating Digestive Symptoms



Supports Digestive
System

COVID-19 infection can cause some digestive symptoms like diarrhea or appetite loss (Lai et al., 2020). Here are some common herbs that help soothe the digestive system, stimulate appetite, and help with respiratory symptoms.

- **Marshmallow (*Althaea officinalis*),**
- **Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*),**
- **Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*),**
- **Ginger (*Zingier officinale*),**
- **Sage (*Salvia officinalis*),**
- **Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*).**

One of the easiest home remedies for stomach problems is to drink simple tea, whether green or black, as tea soothes the mucous membranes in the stomach (Chevallier, 2016).

Gut and Immune-Support Bone Broth

Ingredients:

- 1 kg fresh bones with meat on them (chicken works well and is easiest; beef bones take the longest and should be roasted if possible)
- 2 Tbsp reishi mushroom powder, or a handful of dried whole reishi mushroom
- 2 cups green vegetables (broccoli, green beans, peas, spinach, nettle)
- 2 tsp green herbs (oregano, thyme, sage)
- 1 section fresh ginger, peeled and sliced
- Other herbs and vegetables preferred
- 2 potatoes or 1 sweet potato
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 Tbsp salt
- 4 cloves garlic
- 4 carrots
- 2 onions

Add all ingredients together in a pot of boiling water. Reduce heat and simmer for at least 2 hours (best 4-6 hours for maximum flavour.) If you are using leafy green vegetables, wait to put those in until the very end.






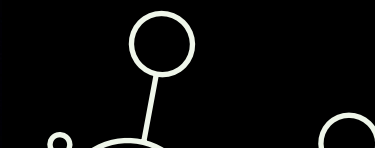
Important Notes:

The information provided here is not meant to diagnose, treat, or cure COVID-19. It is designed to help medical professionals and you become aware of some options you can use to treat, in the event people need to treat themselves at home.

No one who has COVID-19 or thinks they could have one should treat themselves without professional supervision. If you identify any symptoms, contact a doctor, medical practitioner, or natural practitioner before deciding upon a course of action.

If you cannot contact a doctor near you, find a medical practitioner offering telemedicine services that can help you implement solutions to properly quarantine and recover.

Because there is no proven cure for COVID-19 yet, these herbs can be used to treat the symptoms. No evidence exists yet saying any herb or drug can have a direct effect on the virus itself.



Mental Health



Health professionals have repeatedly stated how important mental health is during the COVID-19 pandemic (Parker, 2020). Some ideas to look after your mental health include:

Cultivating creativity

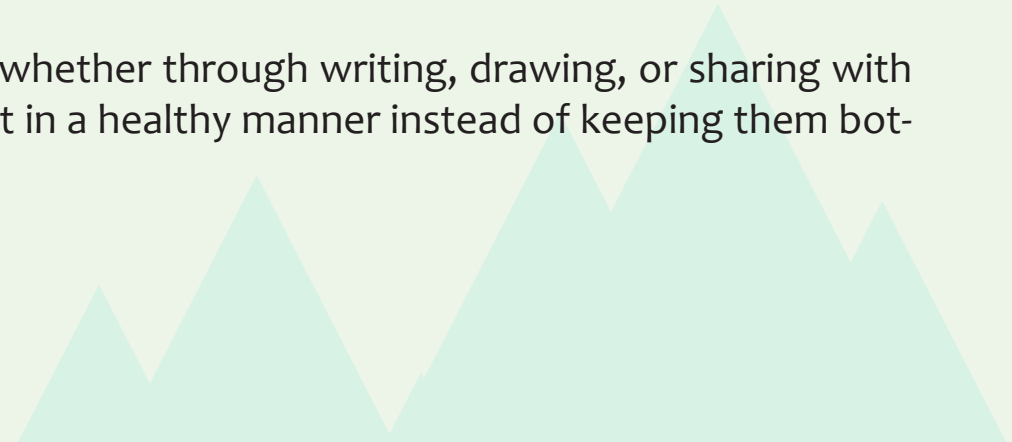
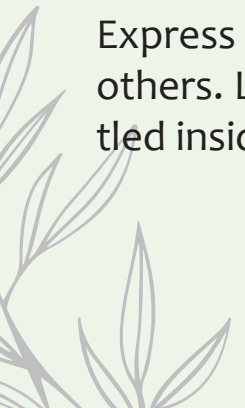
Finding ways to be creative helps overall wellness. Drawing, listening or making music, cooking, reading, gardening, even mundane tasks like showering or cleaning can give you an outlet for creativity (Parker, 2020).

Meditation

Meditating has been shown to improve quality of life in people who become ill, and, additionally, it is a practice you can do while you are sick (Obasi et al., 2013). To meditate, all you really need is a comfortable place and position where you can focus on taking long deep breaths, but there are many platforms for guided meditation. We have included a meditation guide at the end of this booklet for you to have an idea of where to start. There are also many apps on the mobile device and tablets that can be useful in your beginning stages of meditation.

Dealing with emotions

Express how you are feeling whether through writing, drawing, or sharing with others. Let your emotions out in a healthy manner instead of keeping them bottled inside (Parker, 2020).



10 Minute Meditation Session:

1. Go somewhere with minimal distractions.
2. Take time to get comfortable. Whatever that means to you, whether clearing any clutter, playing calming music, lighting a candle, and diffusing some essential oils (see our Sage and Eucalyptus Deep Breathing Infusion recipe.)
3. Sit up straight or lay down and give yourself a minute to just let your heart-rate slow down. Focus on your breathing. Try to draw breath in through your abdomen instead of just your chest. Breathe in, holding your breath to the count of 15, then slowly releasing the breath. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Do this until you feel calmer.
4. Focus your mind on the most calming, beautiful image you can picture. If you prefer to meditate with your eyes open, you can pull up beautiful pictures of nature to look at while you meditate.
5. Now try to just breathe at your normal resting pace, in and out, for about 5 minutes. If you feel your heart rate speed up, your mind wanders, or you feel more anxious, don't worry. This is normal when you first try meditating. Just bring your attention back to your breath and focus again on the image in your mind.
6. Speak affirmations to yourself, whether in your mind or out loud. Tell yourself that:
 - **I am loved. I am caring for myself because I am loved and worthy of love.**
 - **Hope is greater than fear.**
 - **I am not going to stop hoping for the future, no matter what happens in the present.**
 - **I am connected to others. If I feel alone, I can reach out to others.**
7. Take another few deep breaths. Open your eyes if they are closed. Stretch your arms above your head. Then, before you leave, think of three things that you are thankful for. Then take another deep breath, and step back into life. Remember you are loved, you are not alone, you have power over your mind and body, and there is hope. And hope is always stronger than fear.

In conclusion, we wish the best possible health and wholeness for you and those you love. May you continue to make informed decisions about your health, and may you continue to push forward in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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