

## Herbal Teas – A Natural Immunity Booster

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### Abstract

Herbal teas are typically blends of several ingredients, with polyphenols serving as a prominent dietary source with a variety of health benefits. Herbal tea, unlike most other types of tea, does not contain caffeine. Besides the flavour, it is commonly consumed for its therapeutic and energising properties. Herbal teas help to cure stomach and digestive problems, as well as provide cleansing properties to the body and strengthen the immune system. It is important to note that different herbs may have different medicinal properties, allowing us to create our own herbal infusions based on how we want the cup of tea to benefit us. They are used in modern societies to reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia, and cancer. However, moderate consumption (2-3 cups/day) of selected herbal teas such as citrus peel, lemon balm, ginger, orange peel, and rosehip is recommended by Health Canada during pregnancy and breastfeeding. During the COVID-19 pandemic situation, herbal tea composition known as khada [made by addition of honey, lemon, and a small quantity of spices (turmeric, black pepper)] was recommended for daily consumption by the Indian Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy.

### Introduction

Herbal tea is made by the infusions or blends of various plant parts like flowers, leaves, roots, bark and are not the true teas which are derived from the tea plant *Camellia sinensis*. Herbal teas are the natural immunity boosters and some of them have various health benefits. Some of the most common herbal teas being consumed are chamomile tea, ginger tea, peppermint tea, lemon grass tea, rosemary tea, oregano tea, hibiscus tea, butterfly pea flower tea, rose hip tea and cinnamon tea.

Herbal teas, unlike most other types of tea, do not contain caffeine. They are simple to consume and taste great. Most herbal teas are made up of one main herbal ingredient or a combination of herbal ingredients that are intended to achieve a specific goal, such as relaxation, rejuvenation, or relief from a specific condition, among other things. [chandini Ravikumar *et al.*,2014].



Herbal beverages, also known as teas, are increasingly becoming popular among health-conscious consumers. They have entered an emerging niche market alongside other popular beverages made from plant materials, such as tea, coffee, and cocoa. Furthermore, a rapidly growing segment of the population consumes herbal beverages for slimming, weight loss, and a variety of other cosmetic purposes. (Anoma Chandrasekara and Fereidoon Shahidi, 2018).

Depending on the preference they can be served hot or cold. They are calorie free and an alternative to water, besides addition of sugar or honey for taste makes up the calories.

### **Advantages**

Herbal teas are popular for their therapeutic and energising properties, as well as their ability to induce relaxation. Herbal teas helps to treat stomach and digestive problems, as well as provide cleansing properties to the body and strengthen the immune system. It is important to note that different herbs may have different medicinal properties, allowing us to create our own herbal infusions based on how we want the cup of tea to benefit us[chandini Ravikumar *et al.*,2014].

From centuries, herbal teas have been consumed as a social drink. Furthermore, they are used as alternative herbal medicines to treat a variety of ailments. They are used in modern societies to reduce the risk of non communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia, and cancer (Anoma Chandrasekara and Fereidoon Shahidi, 2018).

Herbal beverages, when consumed as part of a well-balanced diet, have been shown to improve antioxidant status and reduce oxidative stress in humans. Furthermore, unlike coffee and tea, many commonly consumed herbal beverages do not contain detectable caffeine levels.

Herbal beverages are classified as natural health products(NHPs) by Health Canada. However, moderate consumption (2-3 cups/day) of selected herbal teas such as citrus peel, lemon balm, ginger, orange peel, and rosehip is recommended by Health Canada during pregnancy and breast feeding(AnomaChandrasekara and Fereidoon Shahidi, 2018).

Rich in antioxidants, minerals and vitamins the herbal teas not only boost the immunity but also helps in relaxation, recovery and refreshing the mind during stress. The antioxidants from the herbal teas neutralize the free radicals produced in the body thus helping in anti aging process.

Some general benefits of herbal tea include:

- Boosts the immune system.
- Detoxification of the body to keep clean and healthy.
- Fights against respiratory and pulmonary diseases.
- Aids digestion and improves metabolism.
- Reduce blood pressure, and inflammation.
- Helps in weight loss and relieve stress.
- Anti ageing properties, improve skin quality.
- Aids in digestion and reduce gastrointestinal problems.

Daily consumption of herbal teas with the addition of honey, lemon, and small quantity of spices (turmeric, black pepper) was recommended by the Indian ministry of Ayurveda, yoga, naturopathy,unani, sidda and homeopathy during the corona pandemic situation which is known as khada.



- ✓ Chamomile tea: known for its calming and soothing effects ,reduce cold, reduce muscle spasms,reduces stress, aids in sleep which treats insomnia and contains chamazulene, which has anti inflammatory, analgesic, and antispasmodic properties. Besides chamomile tea reduces acne, treats sunburn and has anti ageing properties.
- ✓ one study on the relationship between herbal tea and cancer, showed that the regular consumption of chamomile tea (*Matricaria chamomilla* L.) over a number of years was associated with a reduced risk of thyroid cancer amongst healthy populations in Greece[chandini Ravikumar *et al.*,2014].
- ✓ peppermint tea: helps in fighting bad breath, reduces nasal congestion, aids in digestion, fights bacterial infections, relieving headache and migraine.
- ✓ Ginger tea: besides the taste ginger tea improves digestion, slow down ageing, hydrates and nourishes the skin, fights skin cancer by repairing DNA, and acts as anti inflammatory agent.
- ✓ Ginger tea is good for nausea of any kind, from morning sickness to motion sickness and anything in between.
- ✓ Tulasi tea – also called as Indian basil is rich in vitamin C, it also has anti bacterial, anti fungal, anti viral properties. Besides regulates blood sugar levels, maintain dental and oral health, reduce stress, reduce arthritis.
- ✓ Lemongrass tea – its rich in antioxidants, used to treat cold, cough, fever, detoxifies body controls diabetes, lowers blood cholesterol levels, boosts immunity.
- ✓ Cinnamon tea – it has antioxidant properties that kills the internal infection, it helps to slow down the risk chronic diseases, helps in weight loss.
- ✓ Rosemary tea: people enjoy rosemary tea for its flavor, aroma besides health like lowers blood cholesterol, improves memory, antimicrobial and anti inflammatory properties.
- ✓ Hibiscus tea- it is a deep red tea which is high in minerals and vitamin C, it also contains polyphenols which helps to lower cholesterol, prevent cancer and fight bacteria such as *E.coli*.
- ✓ Rose hip tea – fruits of rose are called as hips, these are rich in vitamin C, the other benefits of rose hip tea includes the ability to reduce inflammation, helps fight skin aging.



- ✓ Butterfly pea flower tea: it is blue to violet or purple, helps to boost brain health, lowers blood pressure, improves skin and hair health, inhibits cancer cell growth, reduce swelling.
- ✓ **Conclusion:**

It can be concluded that the consumption of herbal teas – the acts as the natural immunity boosters, by providing both physical and mental health benefits. Hence the consumption is recommended.

### References

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