

Using Herbs Safely

Herbs can offer powerful support for health and wellbeing, but they affect everyone differently. When trying a new herb, always start with a **small dose** and gradually increase it. This gives you time to observe how your body responds. If anything feels off, whether physically or emotionally - **stop taking it**. Your personal experience is one of the most valuable tools in assessing how a herb is working for you.

If you are taking **prescribed medication**, it's essential to speak with your **doctor** or a **qualified herbalist** before starting any herbal remedies. Some herbs can interact with medications by increasing or decreasing how they are absorbed or processed in the body. This is especially important before **surgery**, as some herbs may affect bleeding, wound healing, or your response to anesthesia.

Make sure you know whether a herb is safe for **short-term** or **long-term** use. Some herbs can be harmful if taken continuously or in large amounts over time. Always consult a **trusted herbal resource** to understand the appropriate duration and dosage.

Be aware of potential **allergies or sensitivities**. For example, people with allergies to the **daisy family** (Asteraceae) may react to certain herbs like chamomile or echinacea. Even if you don't have known allergies, you may still have a **sensitive constitution** and respond more strongly to herbal preparations. Your sensitivity can also change depending on your current **health, stress levels, or life circumstances**.

During **pregnancy**, herbs should be used with caution. Many plants have not been tested for safety in pregnancy, and some may pose risks. Always consult a **reliable source or practitioner**, and when in doubt, avoid herbs with **emmenagogue actions** (those that stimulate menstruation) unless specifically advised.

If you are **chestfeeding**, keep in mind that herbs can be passed through your milk supply. Some herbs may support milk production, while others may reduce it, or may simply be too strong for an infant's system. As always, check a **reliable source** or speak with a knowledgeable practitioner before using herbs during this time.

Safety precaution

Do not eat infused oils unless you've been trained to do so safely. When fresh herbs are used, harmful bacteria (like **botulism**) can grow in the oxygen-free environment of the oil, and this can be **dangerous if ingested**.

External use is safe – infused oils are great for the skin.
Just make sure you're not allergic to any of the herbs or carrier oils.

- Always do a **patch test** before using on sensitive areas.

Legal Disclaimer

This course is for information only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always identify plants accurately before use. Use this content at your own risk. Consult a qualified herbalist or doctor for serious or long-term health issues. Do not self-diagnose or self-prescribe without professional guidance. If you take prescribed medicine, are pregnant, chestfeeding, or awaiting surgery, seek medical advice before using herbal remedies.