



Methods of Applying Herbs

There are two basic methods of using herbs: internal method and external method.

An internal application is anything taken by mouth, swallowed, and then both absorbed and transmitted through the blood or is effective in the gastro-intestinal tract directly. Capsules, tinctures, tablets, pills, teas, (infusions and decoctions), syrups, electuaries, are examples of commonly used internal applications.

External applications are those that are intended to primarily affect the area to which they are applied and are not swallowed.

Poultices, fomentation's, enemas, gargles, salves, liniments, and boluses are examples.

Often, both internal and external applications are employed to produce a speedy resolution of the disorder.

Three Methods of Approach

The three methods of approach to herbal therapy must be understood in the light of these functions.

1. The first approach is elimination.

Elimination of toxins and wastes through the major organs of elimination, which are the skin, lungs, bowels, kidneys and the liver plays a vital role.

2. The second approach is building.

Building up the body by which the tissues are fed and nourished to tone, build or repair organs within a body system.

3. The third approach is maintenance.

Maintaining a homeostasis (balance) where natural functions are not disrupted. This can only be accomplished by recognizing when elimination should cease to be the prime course of action and building should become most important. If this is not done properly, a person could become too weak physically, or pass the point of mentally agreeing to continue with this regimen. Many times an herbal combination can be made up that will both cleanse and build. Yet herbal therapy is not the only course of action usually involved with an individual.

Five Basic Functions of Herbs

Herbs perform certain functions in the body, just as foods containing vitamins and minerals perform certain functions to aid and establish health. The five basic functions herbs perform which are ever to be kept in mind is:

1. They assist in cleansing the system.
2. They assist in building the system.
3. They assist in raising the energy level.
4. They stimulate the immune system.
5. They assist in regulating the body systems, such as the glands and hormones.