

# Herb Categories and Properties

Below are the categories under which herbs fall. In order to understand how you might use herbs it is important to know what they might DO to you, in you or for you. It is important to know WHY you are choosing an herb.

## ADAPTOGEN

These herbs have immune system enhancers which help the body adjust to change, regulate stress and restore natural immune resistance. Herbs which are used for this purpose include echinacea, garlic, gingo biloba, ginseng, goldenseal, pau d'arco and suma

## ALTERNATIVE

Alternatives are considered useful in altering body chemistry gradually. Herbs with alterative properties stimulate gradual changes in metabolism and tissue function in acute and chronic conditions and increase overall health, energy, vigor and strength. Alternatives are similar to tonics, which help both the overall systems as well as aiding particular organs, tissues and cells. alterative herbs, include aloe vera, black cohosh, blue cohosh, blue vervain, capsicum, cascara sagrada, chamomile, damiana, dandelion, echnicacea, elecampane, fenugreek, garlic, gentian, ginger, gingo biloba, goldenseal, hawthorn, horsetail, milk thistle, red clover, red raspberry, schizandra, suma, yarro and yellow dock root.

## ANALGESIC

analgesic herbs are used to relieve pain without loss of consciousness. Some of the herbs commonly used as analgesics include feverfew, lobelia, mullein, pau d'acro, skullcap, willow bark and wood betony.

## ANESTHETIC

Anesthetics are used for their ability to cause physical insensitivity. Examples of herbs with this property are caraway, kava and tea tree.

## ANODYNE

Herbs with this property have the ability to soothe and reduce the intensity of pain. Herbs with this ability include anise, chamomile, cloves, juniper, pleurisy root and rosemary.

## ANORECTIC

Anorectic herbs help to reduce appetite. herbs with this asset include chickweed, ephedra, fellel, garcinia and guarana.

## ANTACID

An antacid is used to neutralize acids in the stomach and intestinal tract. Herbs used for this include aloe vera, marshmallow, dandelion, fennel, ginger, kelp, Iceland moss, and slippery elm.

Note: The fruit Papaya and the vegetable Lettuce both have antacid properties as well.

## ANTHELMINTIC

Herbs with anthelmintic agents either expel or destroy worms in the body. Other similar terms to describe such agents include vermifuge, mermicide and taeniicide. Herbs with these fighting abilities include black cohosh, blue walnut, gentian, goldenseal, mandrake, prickly ash, pumpkin seed and senna.

## ANTI-ASTHMATIC

Anti-asthmatics are used to help relieve the symptoms associated with asthma. Some of the anti-asthmatic herbs are elecampane, ephedra, gotu kola, lobelia, prickly ash, wild cherry and yerba santa.

## ANTIBACTERIAL

Antibacterial herbs are those that fight and destroy bacteria and include alfalfa, basil, chamomile, cinnamon, clove, eucalyptus, parsley, peppermint, rhubarb, tumeric, uva ursi and yucca.

## ANTIBIOTIC

Herbs that work as natural antibiotics help the body's immune system destroy growths of micro-organisms. Some herbs commonly used as natural antibiotics include buchu, chaparral, echinacea, garlic, goldenseal, myrrh, red clover and yellow dock.

## ANTICATARRHAL

These are herbs which help dissolve and eliminate, as well prevent the formation of mucus and inflammation of the mucus membrane. Herbs that are considered to be anticatarrhal include comfrey, elecampane, ephedra, funugreek, licorice, lobelia, marshmallow, mullein and wild cherry.

## ANTICOAGULANT

Anticoagulant herbs help the body prevent clotting of the blood. Herbs with this constituent include garlic, turmeric and yellow melilot.

## ANTIEMETIC

Antiemetics prevent vomiting, and herbs with this ability include clove, Iceland moss, raspberry and spearmint.

## ANTIFUNGAL

Antifungal agents act against and destroy various fungi. Herbs in this category include alfalfa, cinnamon, cloves, garlic, kava kava, kombucha, parsley, St. John's wort, skullcap, thyme and turmeric.

## ANTIGALACTAGOGUE

Herbs with this property work opposite to herbs with galactagogue properties. Sage and black walnut are examples of herbs in this category.

## ANTIHYDROTIC

Antihydrodics reduce levels of perspiration. Herbs with this ability include astragalus and sage.

## ANTI-INFLAMMATORY

Herbs with this ability reduce inflammation in the body without acting directly on the cause of the inflammation. Herbs in this category include birth, chicory, cranberry, elder flowers, eucalyptus, fennel, feverfew, ginger, licorice, marshmallow, papaya, passion flower, peppermint, pine tree bark, queen of the meadow, rhubarb, rosemary, safflower, turmeric, wild yam and witch hazel.

## ANTILITHIC

Antilithic herbs work to prevent the formation of stones in the gall bladder and kidney, as well as aiding the expulsion of those already formed. Antilithics are similar to lithotriptics. Some herbs used for this purpose are buchu leaves, hydrangea and uva ursi leaves.

## ANTIMICROBIAL

Antimicrobials helps the body destroy microbes by affecting their growth and multiplication, Herbs with this ability include fennel, feverfew, myrrh, pau d'archo, rhubarb, tea tree and uva ursi.

## ANTINEOPLASTIC

Herbs with this quality destroy, inhibit and prevent tumors. Herbs in this category include aloe vera, black walnut, burdock, cat's claw, chickweed, flaxseed, garlic, hops, horsetail, ho-sho-wu, irish moss, mistletoe, pau d'arco, periwinkle, pine tree bark, rhubarb, saffron, St. John's wort, slippery elm and turmeric.

## ANTIOXIDANT

Antioxidant herbs counteract the negative effects of oxidation on body tissues. Included in this category are barley, bilberry, cat's claw, chaparral, gingo biloba, milk thistle, pine tree, rosemary, sage and turmeric

## ANTIPERIODIC

This constituent counteracts the effects of periodic diseases (intermittent) like malaria. Herbs in this category include angelica, blue vervain, boneset, chinchone, eucalyptus, golden seal and willow.

## ANTITUSSIVE

Herbs with antitussive agents are cough suppressants. Herbs in this category include coltsfoot, comfrey, borehound, mullein and wild cherry bark

## ANTIVENOMOUS

Antivenomous agents counteract venom, as from a snake bite. Herbs with this quality include pennyroyal and plantain

## ANTIVIRAL

Antiviral agents act to destroy viruses in the body. Herbs with antiviral qualities include aloe vera, astragalus, barley, boneset, calendula, echinacea, ho-shouwu, licorice, maitake, reishi, pau d'arco, red raspberry and turmeric

## APHRODISIAC

An aphrodisiac is used to help restore normal sexual potency and function and improve sexual desire. Some herbs used as aphrodisiacs include astragalus, damiana, false unicorn, fenugreek, ginseng, kava kava and saw palmetto

## ASTRINGENT

An astringent acts to contract and tighten, similar to styptic. This constricting action can help eliminate secretions and hemorrhaging. Some herbs with astringent actions are amaranth, blackberry root, black walnut, capsicum, elecampane, ephedra, fenugreek, horsetail, hydrangea, mullein, oak bark, queen of the meadow, St. John wort, slippery elm and witch hazel

## BITTER

An agent that acts on the mucous membranes in the mouth to promote appetite and encourage digestion. Herbs in this category include alfalfa, blackberry, blessed thistle, bugleweed, chaparral, chinchona, eyebright, feverfew, gentian, licorice, quassia, watercress, wild cherry and wild lettuce

## BLOOD PURIFIER

Agents that clean and remove impurities from the blood, similar to depurative. Examples of blood purifiers include birch, buckthorn, calendula, centaury, couch grass, dandelion, plantain and watercress

Source: <http://www.infertilityworkshop.com/articles/gettingstarted/glossary.htm>