



Boost Your Immune System - May

By Sarah Hillyer

This week would have seen the first of my herbal workshops at the Centre. It is certainly an interesting time for us all. Mother Nature seems happy enough and there are herbs in abundance. I love my teaching as many of you know, so here is a 'taste' of what I would have talked about in this beautiful spring weather.

Spring is the time to cleanse the body but also re-energise us. All the herbs mentioned here are easy to find and are full of nutritious minerals and vitamins. They are also very safe as teas for all ages.

Nettles

In early spring these little beauties can look red as they are full of iron. If you want an iron tonic, soak some nettle tops in spring water overnight. The water will turn quite dark. Strain and drink.

By May the nettles are growing fast. This is the time to harvest them for a urinary tea. Take care only to have one tea a day as they are a powerful diuretic. I use them to reduce water retention and bring down BP.

Ground Ivy

This little creeping plant is full of essential oils. It is flowering now. When you rub and smell the leaves you will note thyme, eucalyptus and other essential oils. It makes a lovely refreshing tea and has helped my sinuses cope with early hay fever.

Hawthorn Flowers

This beautiful tree is now in full bloom everywhere. There are over a 100 different species and they blossom at slightly different times, so if you miss one week because of rain, you should be lucky the next. The flowers make a delicious tea which will calm the heart and help to reduce anxiety. Just what we need at this time!

Hawthorn is a powerful but very safe heart herb. It will help to regulate your heart beat and strengthen the heart muscle.

So do go out foraging and make some fresh herbal teas. Try combining a couple of herbs together. A handful of fresh herb in a pint boiling water is a good guide.

Guidance

Never consume wild food unless you are 100% sure of its identification.
For more foraging guidelines please see British Local Food below.

About Sarah

Sarah Hillyer is a herbalist working in Sussex and Hampshire. Sarah has a degree in Phytotherapy (herbal medicine) and a Diploma in Nutrition.

Sarah teaches Herbal Workshops and Natural Wellbeing at The Sustainability Centre.

Links

<https://www.sustainability-centre.org/medicinal-herb-workshops.html>

www.southdownsherbalist.co.uk

<https://britishlocalfood.com/foraging-etiquette/>