



Tinctures: What They Are and How to Use Them

What is a Tincture?

A tincture is a liquid herbal extract taken orally. Most are made using alcohol for maximum potency, but they can also be made with vegetable glycerin or apple cider vinegar for a non-alcohol option.

Tinctures are easy to use and are easy to take making them ideal for both adults and children. When taken under the tongue, they enter the bloodstream quickly for faster results. Some herbs work immediately (like those for sleep, stress, anxiety and relaxation), while other herbs are more nutritive in nature and build benefits over time with consistent use.

Tea vs. Tincture

Herb Lore teas and tinctures use the same herbs—just in different forms.

- Teas are relaxing and enjoyable to drink and count towards your daily water intake.
- Tinctures are quick, portable, and convenient—no brewing needed.

You can also make an instant tea by adding two squeezes of tincture to one cup of warm water.

How to Take a Tincture

- Take 2 squeezes (known as a dropperful although it will NOT fill the entire dropper tube), 2–3 times daily. This is the standard adult dose.
- A “dropperful” is based on how much the rubber bulb will draw up into the glass tube. The glass tubes can vary in length, but the rubber bulb is standard on them all.
- Take tinctures under the tongue for best absorption.
- You may dilute in water or juice and add honey or lemon for taste (no honey for children under 1 year of age!).
- Avoid food or drink for 15 minutes after taking for best results.

Bottle life (based on standard adult use):

- 1 oz. → ~1 week
- 2 oz. → ~2 week
- 4 oz. → ~4 week

Pregnancy, Nursing & Children

Tinctures are safe for pregnant and nursing women, even alcohol-based ones. One dose has about the same alcohol content as a ripe banana.

- Non-alcohol tinctures are available for children, sensitive individuals, or those who prefer them.
- Babies: nursing mothers can take the tincture so it passes to the baby through the breast milk.
- Non-breastfeeding babies can have the appropriate number of drops diluted into their formula.
- **DO NOT** let the baby suck or chew on the glass dropper tube if giving the tincture to the child directly. Not only will it contaminate the tincture but the glass dropper tube could break in their mouth.
- See the **Children's Dosage Guide** on our website for child dosing information for children under age 12 if giving the tincture directly to the child or if diluting it in formula. It is found at www.herblore.com under **Resources - Articles & Information**.
- Also found under Articles & Information is an article on **Herbs to Avoid During Pregnancy and Lactation**. Both are found there alphabetically.

Alcohol vs. Non-Alcohol Versions

- Alcohol-based tinctures extract the most nutrients and have an unlimited shelf life when stored in a cool, dark place. Our products do have an expiration date on the product label however as it is required.
- Glycerin-based tinctures (glycerites) are sweet, contain no alcohol, are child-friendly, and last 2–3 years.
- Apple cider vinegar tinctures offer additional health benefits but last about 1 year when refrigerated. (Herb Lore does not make apple cider vinegar tinctures).

Some herbs (like roots, barks, or seeds) require the strength of alcohol for proper extraction—so certain formulas are available only in the alcohol form.

If you wish to remove the alcohol, add the drops to hot water and let sit for 5–10 minutes before drinking. **DO NOT** make the water so hot that you burn yourself.

Storage Tips

- Store tinctures in a cool, dark cupboard (not above the stove or in a hot car for any length of time).
- Refrigeration is not necessary.
- It is fine to keep tinctures handy in your purse or bag.
- Proper storage maintains potency and prevents contamination.