

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S
Herbal Legacy Newsletter

Echinacea

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Echinacea (eke-nay-shuh) is an herb that can be used by practically everyone. The quick action effectiveness of this member of the daisy family simply amazes all from the novice to the licensed professional. Simply stated - Echinacea stimulates the immune system. Because of this stimulating effect Echinacea is touted for a myriad of uses.

Principle among these uses is its wonderful effect on colds and flu. One of the active compounds of this plant (which is only indigenous to the United States and bordering Canada), are polysaccharides (large sugar molecules). These water soluble compounds need to be taken orally for full effect, because they may be broken down in the digestive process. An extract, tea or chewing the root will stimulate immune receptor cells located in the mouth. In that the cell structure of these compounds is structurally similar to invading micro-organisms and poisonous compounds, exposure to these immune receptor cells sends an alarm to the immune system and the immune cells respond through increased mobility and increased numbers. There are other immune stimulating compounds found in Echinacea that are fat soluble and would bypass the first stages of digestion thus stimulating immune cells located in the intestinal tract. However, these fat soluble compounds would allow encapsulated Echinacea to also be effective.

Because colds and flus are caused by viruses, antibiotics not only will *not work* but become very contra indicated because they compromise the immune system – which is the only thing that can protect the body.

For best results start taking Echinacea at the first signs of illness. However, if you wait too long, not even Echinacea can help your immune system catch up. At this point you will need the added remedy of garlic – 16 fresh crushed cloves per day.

When others around you are sick start taking a protective dose, which is 1 dropperful 2-3 times a day for 10 days, then go 4 days off for up to 3 cycles. If you start experiencing symptoms take 1-2 dropperfuls every 2 hours for up to 10 days then go back to the protective dose.

Keep taking Echinacea for 48 hours after the symptoms of the cold or flu disappear.

Note: Children should use a glycerine extract like Kid-e-mune (which my two little grandsons just love to take).