

Elderberry

Botanical Name: *Sambucus nigra*

Family: Adoxaceae

Energetics: Cooling, moistening

Taste: Tart, slightly sweet

Actions: Antiviral, immune stimulant, diaphoretic, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory

Overview

Elderberry is a well-known herb for supporting the immune system and managing colds and flu. Its berries and flowers are used to boost immunity, reduce inflammation, and provide antioxidant benefits.

Uses

Internal Uses

- Immune support and antiviral activity
- Cold and flu symptom relief
- Diaphoretic for mild fevers
- Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory support

External Uses

- Poultices for mild skin inflammation
- Infused oils for soothing minor skin irritations

Medication Interactions

- May interact with immunosuppressants
- May affect blood sugar; caution if on diabetes medications
- No major known drug interactions for short-term use

Contraindications

- Raw berries, bark, leaves are toxic if not cooked/processed
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding: moderate use considered safe
- Children: safe in culinary or properly prepared forms

Caution & Safety

- Cook or process berries before consumption
- Avoid large amounts of raw plant parts
- Monitor for mild digestive upset

Herbal Pairings

Blends Well With

- Elder Flower (immune synergy)
- Ginger (warming, immune support)
- Cinnamon (antiviral synergy)
- Honey (soothing and antimicrobial)

Avoid Combining With

- Immunosuppressive medications without practitioner guidance

Possible Side Effects

- Mild digestive upset if consumed raw or in excess
- Rare allergic reactions

Forms & Dosage

Syrup / Decoction

- 1–2 tsp dried berries per cup water
- Simmer 10–15 minutes
- 1–2 cups daily or 1–2 tbsp syrup 2–3 times daily

Tincture (1:5)

- 2–4 mL, 1–2 times daily

Capsules / Powder

- 500–1,000 mg, 1–2 times daily

External Use

- Infused oils or poultices applied 1–2 times daily



Elderberry is a gentle and effective immune-supporting herb with antiviral, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties, suitable for winter wellness routines.

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