



# Healthy Families Homebirth

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## Herbs during Pregnancy

Herbs are foods that we have evolved eating, cooking with, and preserving food with over the centuries. We have also used herbs as medicine; many modern day medicines have found the medicinal properties from an herb. For example, modern day aspirin originally was made from white willow bark. The key ingredient, salicylic acid, is now made synthetically and produced as aspirin.

Herbs can be a great nutritional source during pregnancy. They can also be used as a preventative or used to help control a problem. Herbs should be taken with respect and knowledge. It is recommend only using edible herbs or herbs in tea. Herbal tinctures and capsules should be used only under guidance of an herbal expert. Some herbs should avoided completely during pregnancy. Below is a list of common herbs that are helpful or should be avoided during pregnancy.

\*Even safe herbs should be avoided or use sparingly in the first trimester of pregnancy.

Safe herbs- these herbs can be taken throughout pregnancy, but also remember to keep variety in your herbs. Avoid taking anything every day.

Common name	Latin name	Uses
<b>Alfalfa</b>	Medicago Sativa	High in protein, Vitamins A, D, E, B6, and K; minerals- calcium, iron, magnesium. Drink in tea.
<b>Burdock root; Gobo</b>	Arctium lappa	Liver strengthener; Urinary support; helps balance blood sugar Buy fresh and use in stir fry; or dry as a tea
<b>Chamomile</b>	Anthemis nobilis; Matricaria chamomilla	Aids digestion, helps with nausea; helps with sleep; high in calcium. Drink as tea or use as a bath enhancer. *If you have a history of hay fever, use with caution.
<b>Dandelion Root and Greens</b>	Taraxacum Officinale	Digestive aid, liver and kidney strengthener; can help with nausea. Sauté or eat greens fresh. Root can be used as a tea or replacement for coffee. Combine with Burdock to balance flavor
<b>Ginger Root</b>	Zingiber officinale	Aids with morning, sea, or car sickness and digestive problems. Respiratory support during a cold. Drink as tea or add to cooking
<b>Kelp; Kombu</b>	Laminaria spp.	Great source of iodine and other trace minerals. Add to soups, sauté, or as tea
<b>Lemon Balm</b>	Melissa officinalis	Calms the mind and the body; reduces tension; aids in digestion; helps reduce allergies. Drink as tea or fresh in salads and soups

This is general information. Please speak to your health care provider about your unique health needs.



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<b>Nettle</b>	Urtica Dioica	Rich in calcium and iron; Aids in kidney function; strengthens blood vessels. Eat as a steamed green or drink as tea
<b>Oatstraw</b>	Avena Sativa	Gentle relaxant; good source of calcium and magnesium. Sourced from the young stalk where oatmeal is from. Tea
<b>Peppermint</b>	Mentha piperita	Digestive aid- can help with nausea. Tea or fresh with dessert
<b>Red Raspberry Leaves</b>	Rubus Idaeus	Tones uterine muscles and high in iron. Although this is "the" herb for pregnancy. It is recommend to take breaks from it every so often. Perhaps the tea every other day or 4 days on and 2-3 off.
<b>Rose hips</b>	Rosa Canina	High in vitamin C; Circulatory and Immune system support. Tea
<b>Yellow Dock</b>	Rumex Crispus	Liver support and high in iron; Can help with constipation. Tea

The following herbs should be avoided during pregnancy or only used under the care of a skilled herbalist:

<b>Common name</b>	<b>Latin name</b>	<b>Uses</b>
<b>Aloe</b>	Aloe vera	Stimulates the bowels which could trigger the vagus nerve to start contractions
<b>Angelica</b>	Angelica archangelica, A. sylvestris	Promotes blood flow to the uterus; Causes uterine contractions; can help expel the placenta; Balances menstrual flow
<b>Black Cohosh</b>	Cimicifuga racemosa	Uterine stimulant, yet also can be a uterine relaxant
<b>Blue Cohosh</b>	Caulophyllum thalictroides	Uterine stimulant; Promotes menstruation.
<b>Cascara sagrada</b>	Rhamnus purshiana	Stimulates the bowels which could trigger the vagus nerve to start contractions
<b>Motherwort</b>	Leonurus cardiaca	Promotes menstruation; stimulates childbirth
<b>Senna</b>	Cassia senna	Stimulates the bowels which could trigger the vagus nerve to start contractions
<b>Yarrow</b>	Achillea millefolium	Uterine stimulant; Often used with Shepherd's purse to stop hemorrhage after childbirth.
<b>Sage</b>		Decreases milk flow. *Be aware of this if breastfeeding during Thanksgiving and Winter Holidays.
<b>Parsley</b>		High in nutrients, but can decrease milk flow if eaten to much

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