

Herbal cough drops are not only easy to make, they can be healthier since you choose the ingredients. You might already use herbal teas as an antidote for sore throats; it's only natural to take the next step and turn that tea blend into lozenges that soothe and offer medicinal properties. Pick your herbs by therapeutic action: Slippery elm bark (*Ulmus rubra*) is a good herb that acts as the mucilage in the recipe. This also helps, just as licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) does in relieving the pain of the inflamed throat. Flavor counts too - peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) is a good choice!



Seven Simple Steps to Make Herbal Cough Drops:

1. Make a strong tea mixture (double the usual measurements) using the herb(s) of your choice.
2. Add sugar to the tea and heat over med-high. Add 1 cup of sweetener for each cup of liquids. (Pure cane sugar, agave nectar blend, brown sugar, or local honey also can be used).
3. Bring to a boil and DO NOT STIR AGAIN.
4. Wipe away any crystals from the side of your pan with a damp brush or cloth.
5. Once the mixture reaches 300 degrees fahrenheit (150 degrees celsius), remove from heat.
6. The lozenges will take on the color of the herbs. Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) added gives a beautiful purple color.
7. Slowly pour into molds. Candy molds can be used, or you can make your own molds. To make your own molds, simply place a ½ to 1-inch layer of corn starch or powdered sugar into a pan. Smooth this powder out, and then make small impressions into it with your thumb or with a small jar. These impressions form the molds. Once the mixture is poured into these cool, simply mix the drops into the powder and sift these out. The drops will last for more than two months in a sealed container.

Some great herbs (and their uses) for lozenges are:

- Camphor: relieves congestion
- Echinacea (*Echinacea angustifolia*): best before full onset of cold, anti-bacterial, blood cleanser
- Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*): relieves congestion
- Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*): expectorant
- Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*): pain relieving, antiseptic and antioxidant
- Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*): antiseptic and immune stimulant
- Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*): pain reliever, stimulates digestion
- Juniper (*Juniperus communis*): relieves congestion
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*): anti-viral, chest and throat soother
- Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*): expectorant, decongestant and mild pain reliever
- Sage (*Salvia officinalis*): good for sore throats
- Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*): expectorant
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*): reduces fevers and inflammation

ACHS Instructor Jerry Cronin, BS, DC