

# 10 Ayurvedic Herbs to Incorporate Into Your Daily Life - Right Now!

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In the ancient science of Ayurveda, herbs are viewed as the spiritual essence - the Kundalini - of plants. Plants and herbs carry in their cells the wisdom of cosmic intelligence, and the healing vibrations of nature. Since ancient times, humans and plants have had a very spiritual connection - plants capture solar energy and convert it into nutrients that humans can digest. Plants do this by transforming sunlight into chlorophyll, which can then be assimilated by the human body.

Ayurveda has the oldest, most developed herbal system in the world - it has been in continuous use for at least 5,000 years. The ancient Vedic seers in India compiled and classified the medicinal and healing properties of hundreds of herbs into an herbal healing system that can be accessed and utilized by anyone in our contemporary lives.

Each and every herb in Ayurvedic herbology has a multitude of benefits - for the mind, body, and spirit. Herbs can be used internally or externally (through the skin) - or even used as aromatherapy. From weight loss to beautiful skin to overall vitality, herbs can transform your health in so many ways! Here are some highlights of some of the Top 10 herbs in Ayurveda and easy ways to incorporate them into your routine.

**1. Ajwain - WEIGHT LOSS** Ajwain is a strong digestive and nerve stimulant. It functions as a weight loss herb by drawing out deep-seated toxins from the body. Ajwain also heals painful joints - it is an excellent herb to address Vata issues. Ajwain can be taken as a tea to assist with weight loss: simply boil 1 tsp of ajwain seeds in 16 ounces of water.

**2. Ashwagandha - VITALITY** One of the best anti-aging herbs, Ashwagandha enhances vitality. This herb is crucial for people suffering from too much stress, or who are overworked. Take 1/2 teaspoon cooked in milk (sweeten with 1 tsp of raw honey). Note that Ayurvedic herbs are fat soluble, and are able to go deeper into the tissues and cells when taken with a healthy fat (such as ghee, butter, or raw whole milk).

3. **Brahmi - BRAIN TONIC** Brahmi is the #1 tonic for the brain and nervous system. Its leaves even look like the brain! Brahmi also balances the left and right hemispheres of the brain, and decalcifies the pineal gland. It is tridoshic, but is especially beneficial for balancing high Pitta conditions. Brahmi removes toxins and blockages from the nervous system. It helps with depression, enhances intelligence and improves memory and concentration. Brahmi enhances the overall cellular wisdom in the body. It also happens to be great for hair growth! Take Brahmi every morning to rejuvenate the body-mind. Ways to take it: boil in water (as a tea), boil it in milk, or make Brahmi ghee. It can also be used as a medicated oil for the hair, and the nutrients will seep into the brain cells via the crown chakra.

4. **Cardamom - TRANQUILIZER** Cardamom is a natural tranquilizer, bringing clarity and joy to the heart and mind. It neutralizes the acidity of coffee and caffeine - it also neutralizes the mucus-forming properties in milk. Cardamom removes excess Kapha from stomach and lungs. Add the pods or powder to coffee as you are brewing it, or boil cardamom in warm milk before bed.

5. **Cumin - ASSIMILATION** Cumin enhances the digestive system and metabolism. It helps the body with nutrient absorption. Cumin can be especially useful for new moms after giving birth, as it cleanses the reproductive organs and improves milk secretion. Use cumin while cooking to assist in the assimilation of micronutrients.

6. **Licorice - REJUVENATOR** Licorice is a rejuvenating herb that is commonly used in both the East and West. It rejuvenates all systems of the body and reduces acidity. It calms the mind and nurtures the spirit. Add licorice root to hot tea as a sweetener, in the place of honey or sugar. Or, boil powdered licorice root in a milk decoction.

7. **Manjistha - PURIFYING** Manjistha is probably the best blood purifying herb in Ayurvedic medicine. It is anti-inflammatory and clears acne. Manjistha cleans the blood and liver, lowering pitta disorders in the skin, and clearing acne. It cools and detoxifies the blood, and cleanses and regulates liver and kidney functions. Take this herb in capsule form (2 capsules in the morning,

and 2 capsules at night) if you are suffering from any Pitta skin disorders. Or, take it with warm milk before bed.

**8. Neem - DETOX** Neem is one of the most powerful blood purifiers and detoxifiers in Ayurvedic herbology. Best for skin diseases, wound healing, and skin damage (especially from sun, neem is useful for all Pitta disorders (such as skin and eyes). It works wonders for eczema and psoriasis skin flare-ups. It is also useful for joint and muscle pain. Use neem on the skin in a medicated oil.

**9. Shatavari - FEMALE VITALITY** Shatavari is the #1 Ayurvedic rejuvenative for women (as Ashwagandha is for men). Shatavari even translates to "she who possesses a thousand husbands!" It nourishes and cleanses the blood and the female reproductive organs. Shatavari is readily available in pill and powder form, or it can be taken in ghee or cooked in milk, which is the preferred form (all Ayurvedic herbs are best assimilated into the body's cells when taken with a fat).

**10. Turmeric - THE SPICE OF LIFE** Turmeric purifies the blood and the channels of the body. It improves the skin's complexion, bringing circulation and nutrition to the skin. Turmeric is anti-inflammatory and is a perfect remedy to treat acne-prone skin. Turmeric balances all the doshas, but it balances Pitta the most because of its blood-cleansing and liver-cleansing properties. Try to incorporate turmeric into your daily life in literally any way you can. Ideally use 1 tsp per day in some form: whether in capsule form, on the skin, or in the diet. Throw some in as you are sautéing veggies in coconut oil to throw over quinoa. Boil some turmeric in goat milk with honey before bed. If you consume turmeric on a regular basis, you will notice your health improve in a multitude of areas.