

HERBAL PREPARATION SHELF LIFE

5 FACTORS THAT AFFECT HERBAL PREPARATION SHELF-LIFE & POTENCY

1
TIME

2
STORAGE

3
MANUFACTURING

4
SOLVENTS

5
USAGE

HERBAL PREPARATIONS SHELF LIFE

MIXED SOLVENT PREPARATIONS



Syrups:
1-2 months
(low sugar);
1 year
(high sugar)

Oxymels:
6 - 12 months

Elixirs:
1-2 years



Creams and Lotions:
1-2 weeks

VINEGAR-BASED PREPARATIONS



Vinegar Tinctures:
6 months

OIL-BASED PREPARATIONS



Infused Oils:
6 months to 3 years



Salves:
6 months to 3 years

SUGAR BASED PREPARATIONS



Infused Oils:
6 months to 3 years



Salves:
6 months to 3 years

ALCOHOL-BASED PREPARATIONS



Tinctures:
1-2 years
(3-5 years w/
high-proof alcohol)

Liniments:
3-5 years

DRY OR POWDERED PREPARATIONS



Dry Herbs:
1-2 years

Powdered Herbs:
6-12 months

Capsules:
1 year

Pastilles:
6 months

WATER-BASED PREPARATIONS



**Teas, Infusions,
and Steeped
Compresses
& Fomentations:**
24 hours

Poultices:
24 hours

**Decoctions and
Decocted
Compresses,
Fomentations:**
48 hours

Hydrosols:
1-2 years



USING YOUR SENSES TO TELL WHEN AN HERBAL PREPARATION HAS GONE BAD



SIGHT

Does it look different from when you first made it? Has the color changed? Do you see cloudy matter floating in the liquid? Is there mold growing on the surface?



TASTE

Does it taste strange? Perhaps a little sour, fizzy, or alcoholic when it was once sweet or savory?



SMELL

Does it smell different? Most freshly made herbal preparations will have an herby scent, smelling similar to the herb itself, or a scent reflecting the solvent used (tinctures smelling like alcohol, oxymels smelling like vinegar).



TOUCH

Does it feel different? Is it gooey or slimy feeling? Has it gone from smooth to grainy?