

HERBAL PREPARATION SHELF LIFE

5 FACTORS THAT AFFECT HERBAL PREPARATION SHELF-LIFE & POTENCY



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MIXED SOLVENT PREPARATIONS	OIL-BASED PREPARATIONS	ALCOHOL-BASED PREPARATIONS	WATER-BASED PREPARATIONS
 <p>Syrups: 1-2 months (low sugar) 1 year (high sugar)</p> <p>Oxymels: 6 months (fresh herbs) 12 months (dried herbs)</p> <p>Elixirs: 1-2 years</p>  <p>Creams and Lotions: 1-2 weeks</p>	 <p>Infused Oils: 6 months to 3 years</p>  <p>Salves: 6 months to 3 years</p>	 <p>Tinctures: 1-2 years (3-5 years w/ high-proof alcohol)</p> <p>Liniments: 3-5 years</p>	 <p>Teas, Infusions, and Steeped Compresses & Fomentations: 24 hours</p> <p>Poultices: 24 hours</p> <p>Decoctions and Decocted Compresses, Fomentations: 48 hours</p> <p>Hydrosols: 1-2 years</p>
VINEGAR-BASED PREPARATIONS	SUGAR BASED PREPARATIONS	DRY OR POWDERED PREPARATIONS	
 <p>Vinegar Tinctures: 6 months</p>	 <p>Herbal Honeys: 1 year (dried herbs)</p> <p>Electuaries: 6-12 months</p> <p>Lozenges: 6 months</p> <p>Glycerites: 1 year</p>	 <p>Dry Herbs: 1-2 years</p> <p>Powdered Herbs: 6-12 months</p> <p>Capsules: 1 year</p> <p>Pastilles: 6 months</p>	



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?