

Herbal Housekeeping

Even the most experienced herbalist may benefit from a refresher on good herbal practice. Here are some of the fundamentals of effective herbal dispensing that we often get questions about.

SHAKE THE BOTTLE WELL BEFORE USE

And we mean really shake it! This applies both to dispensing and to your patients when they take their herbal formula.

Inadequately shaking the bottle means the active constituents of the herbs may not be consistently dispersed throughout the liquid, therefore uniform dispensing and proper dosing will not occur.

Sedimentation may also happen in the bottle over time as tannins precipitate other phytochemicals out of the solution. This is normal for many of liquid herbal medicines.

If you have herbal liquid extracts that are not used frequently, give them a good shake periodically to help prevent precipitation.

STORAGE OF HERBAL MEDICINES

Herbal medicines should be stored away from direct sunlight and below 30°C. Sunlight and heat may compromise the shelf life of the product and deteriorate active constituents.

DOSE APPROPRIATELY

Every Phytomed liquid extract has a recommended dosage range on the side. This is based on historical evidence of use combined with learnings from modern research. Formulating within this range is suggested to achieve the best possible clinical outcomes.

IMPROVED FLAVOUR = IMPROVED COMPLIANCE

Compliance is key to getting successful results. As we all know, taste can be a significant obstacle when prescribing herbal medicine.

To help combat this we suggest including 5-10% of Licorice, Aniseed, Cinnamon or Phytomed Flavouring Mix (extracts of Licorice, Fennel and Orange) in your formulas.

HERBAL COMBINATIONS THAT DON'T MIX

Some herbal constituents do not blend well with others and will precipitate out. Therefore they are best dispensed separately.

Prime examples of incompatible combinations include tannins with alkaloids and high alcohol resinous herbs with low alcohol extracts.

Common examples include:

Tannins: Mānuka, Witchhazel, Rhodiola

Alkaloids: Coptis, Golden Seal, Barberry

Resins & High Alcohol Extracts:

Calendula

Myrrh

Ginger

Low Alcohol Extracts:

Marshmallow

Ribwort

Comfrey

Hoheria

Dandelion whole plant