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## How to Cook a Chinese Herbal Formula

### The Kind of Container

The best container is ceramic although glass is acceptable. It is important that your teapot have a lid. Materials to avoid include cast iron or metals such as aluminum. Chinese herbs can interact with these metals causing chemical reactions that can alter the therapeutic qualities of your herbs, or worse yet, have an unhealthy effect. Stainless steel is better than the other metals. Teflon coatings are not as good as ceramic coatings.

### Water

Any drinking water is acceptable. The purity and cleanliness of the water you chose is a personal choice.

### Cooking

#### Soak

Place the herbs into the water. The water should cover the herbs by about an inch and a half. Let them sit for 15-30 minutes without turning on the heat beneath the teapot. Herbs used topically will require more water.

#### Cook

Each time you cook the herbs, begin by bringing the herbs to a boil. Simmer them according to the timing selected below. And repeat according to the directions below.

- 15 minutes
- 20 minutes
- 30 minutes
- 45 minutes
- 1 hour

Strain the herbs through a fine tea strainer or coffee filter and set the tea aside. You should have 1-2 cups of tea.

- Repeat the cooking process with the herbs in the strainer. Mix the tea from both batches before drinking.

### Drinking

Many of the teas are unpleasant in taste. If the taste is unbearable try diluting the solution with water. Over time the taste can become more acceptable.

### Dosage

Each bag of herbs will produce two days worth of tea. Drink a cup of tea in the morning and a cup in the evening. Generally, as a rule, it is best to take your herb tea 30-60 minutes before eating, on an empty stomach. This provides the best absorption of the ingredients. If the herbs cause a little stomach discomfort, drink the herb tea 30-60 minutes after eating.