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## Mother Earth's Medicine Cabinet: The Many Powers of Honeysuckle



Growing up, there were a few different honeysuckle bushes around the neighborhood. They were like a kid magnet – we would all gather around them and wonder how a flower tasted so sweet, picking the little blossoms and sipping their sweetness. I had no idea at that age that these nectar-filled blossoms were actually *good* for me or that they held any sort of medicinal properties. Mother Nature's Medicine Cabinet is full of surprises and they are all really amazing.

There are two different varieties of honeysuckle that are used for medicine and for extracting the essential oils from. The European Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), also known as Woodbine, and the Japanese (*Lonicera japonica*) are the prized producers.

**\*WARNING\*** *Always be sure you are using the correct genus and species because there are varieties that are toxic and poisonous. The leaves are the only parts used to extract the essential oils but the flowers and bark also have their uses.*

There are several medicinal uses and health benefits provided by the honeysuckle. Today, I'm going to share with you five of them. Not only is Honeysuckle Essential Oil used for physical health, but it can also be used for mental and emotional health through aromatherapy.

## 5 Medicinal Uses Of Honeysuckle

1. **Laxative:** The flowers and essential oils of the honeysuckle help stimulate the bowels. Honeysuckle can relieve constipation and help eliminate waste from the body. A couple of drops of the essential oil or a few teaspoons of the flowers in some hot tea will help ease any troubles fairly quickly.
2. **Expectorant:** Use the essential oil in a steam treatment or a hot bath to relieve congestion. The oils produced in the leaves help thin mucous, allowing our body to have an easier time coughing it up. This can help remove phlegm and mucous from different areas of the respiratory tract, including the lungs, bronchial tubes, bronchi, and the trachea. Use it for cough and colds, the flu, and even asthma.
3. **Diuretic:** Diuretics increase the flow of urine, helping our bodies flush out our kidneys. This increase allows for the release of toxins and any excess water, fats, and salts. Our kidneys play a vital role in our full body function. Keeping our kidneys clean keeps our body happy.
4. **Diaphoretic:** Diaphoretics are used mainly to reduce fever by causing the body to perspire, thus allowing it to cool down. The sweating also helps the skin eliminate any waste or toxins. Diaphoretics also play a role in cleansing our kidneys.
5. **Emetic:** Emetics are used to cause nausea and vomiting. I know it sounds like the opposite of healing but emetics are used in cases of poisoning or drug overdoses, when applicable. There are some drugs, poisons, and toxins that **SHOULD NOT** be passed back through the stomach system.

If those 5 things aren't enough to catch your interest just wait.... there's more. Honeysuckle contains a healthy dose of natural antibiotics, as well as Salicylic Acid, which is a key ingredient in aspirin. The antibiotics produced by the plant are great for treating infections brought on by Staph and Strep bacteria, which can be a pretty nasty colony of trouble for the body.

Honeysuckle is a medicine I call a *powerhouse* because it seems to have an unlimited amount of healing power.

Honeysuckle is also packed with astringent and, anti-inflammatory properties, making this essential oil great for treating boils, acne, cuts, wounds, rashes, skin inflammation, and sores. You can even add a couple of drops to your regular mouthwash for added astringents and fresh breath.

## Honeysuckle Infusion

You can make a super-simple infusion by mixing 1 part honeysuckle flowers to 100 parts boiling water. I like to add enough honey to thicken it into a cough syrup. This infusion is great for an average cough and cold but it's also incredible for treating asthma. The honey adds an

immense amount of its own healing properties.

For all of my DIY fans out there, honeysuckle essential oil is awesome for making your own candles, skin cream, body oil, massage oils, soap, shampoo, conditioner, and an added boost to household cleaners. The sweet fragrance lasts a long time, so it is awesome for candles of any size. I also like to make a nice honeysuckle vanilla bean fragrance. Join us next week for another walk through Mother Earth's Medicine Cabinet! Happy Healing, friends!

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