

## **Plants, our natural allies**

A number of months ago, I stood in an herbal shop in Barcelona, Spain. The store was founded in 1823 and the walls simply vibrated with history. I stood there breathing in deeply--the scent of the fresh and dried herbs was hypnotic and invigorating. It was a reminder of why I became interested in natural medicine.

If you enter a typical health products store in the United States you will find row after row of plastic bottles. Inside these bottles and containers are all sorts of vitamins, and minerals, and dried up, ground up herbs. I use these products at times because they are convenient. But, lately, I've wanted to get back to the basics of natural medicine and begin to use herbs that are closer to nature and less packaged.

Plants that have medicinal, or culinary, uses can be called herbs. Here are a few thoughts on some of my favorite herbs and how they can positively affect your health.

Rosemary – It's not just for chicken dishes. Rosemary has long been used in medicine to invigorate the mind. If you have a big test, or a project, or need to remember a lot of names then rosemary is the "gal" for you. The leaves can be used fresh or dried as a tea, or sprinkled onto foods.

Sage – is amazingly good for warding off disease. If you have family or an office that is full of the cold/flu bug you might consider placing a sage plant in your area. Pinch off a leaf now and then, rub it and smell the essential oils, which are anti-viral, anti-bacterial and good for your soul.

Lavender – a beautiful addition to any garden and a remarkably good friend on airplane rides. I never fly without my bottle of Lavender essential oil. The recycled air aboard a plane can become full of viral components. Inhaling lavender oil several times during a flight is relaxing and helps break down viral components that your sinuses come in contact with. Also, a dried lavender sachet under your pillow can bring on a relaxed state for improved sleep.

Ginger – can be useful for defeating seasickness or the nausea of pregnancy. Helps clear sinuses during colds/flu.

Making herbal tea: Take one to two teaspoons of the herb, pour 1-2 cups of boiling water over it, cover the container with a lid for 10 –15 minutes, strain the tea and enjoy it.

Great places to learn more about herbal medicines are the Austin Herb Society at [www.austinherbsociety.org](http://www.austinherbsociety.org) and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org). If you would like to discuss how a return to natural medicines could improve your health, drop me a line: [DrJ@GallowayNaturalHealth.com](mailto:DrJ@GallowayNaturalHealth.com)

***Dr. Jeanne Galloway, ND is a naturopathic medical-school trained physician with a practice in Austin, Texas. Natural medicine has many tools to help you with chronic disease. Find out more at: [www.GallowayNaturalHealth.com](http://www.GallowayNaturalHealth.com)***