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Oxymel: Home-made immune boost

In the Northern hemisphere of the Earth, autumn is slowly making its appearance. With the days getting shorter and the cooler temperatures, sometimes your nose itches or your throat gets scratchy. Then it is certainly a good idea to give the immune system a helping hand. The ingredients for a strengthening immune potion, which can be mixed in no time, can be found in every household.

The immune-boosting drink referred to here is called OXYMEL, or sour honey. “Oxy” means “sour” in Greek (“oxos” correspondingly means “vinegar”), “meli” is honey. This already names the main ingredients of the beverage, the effects of which we want to examine in more detail in the following.



VINEGAR is something people have been able to make for a long time. In the Bible, cider and vinegar are mentioned several times. Vinegar was used by the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Israelites, Greeks, Romans and Germanic tribes to preserve meat, fish and vegetables, to prepare sour dishes, as a thirst-quenching drink and as a medicine. In ancient times, vinegar was

used for its healing properties for external wound disinfection, against insect and snakebites, or as a poultice for bruises and haematomas. Vinegar water was drunk to aid digestion, for internal cleansing and as an antipyretic.

Vinegar can be obtained from fruit, vegetables, grains and from alcoholic beverages such as wine, beer or met. It is an acidic natural product and is produced by biological

fermentation processes (acetic acid bacteria). Vinegar stimulates the digestive organs, has a cooling, astringent and antipyretic effect. Used externally, vinegar has an antibacterial, antiseptic (disinfecting) and antifungal effect and can therefore help with swelling, inflammation, edema, wounds and sunburn.

In more recent times, the American physician Dr. De Forest Clinton Jarvis (1881-1945) is considered the actual apple cider vinegar pioneer. In his book “Folk medicine” he wrote: “Sensible insight and knowledge of the laws of nature enable us to maintain and continually renovate the body’s edifice in such a way that we can live well in it for as long as possible. Its resilience depends on the choice of food we eat, the liquids we drink and the air we breathe. The minerals we consume through food and drink play a crucial role. They help keep our bodies functioning, in other words, they make our lives worth living”.

For preventative health care Dr Jarvis recommended a simple basic recipe with the ingredients water, apple cider vinegar and honey for daily use, a “Blitz Oxymel”, so to speak:

“Blitz-Oxymel” for daily health care:

In a glass of water stir in well 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar and 1-2 teaspoons of honey. Drink in small sips approx. ½ hour before breakfast.

Apple cider vinegar contains minerals and trace elements, acetic, propionic, lactic and citric acids, a number of enzymes and amino acids, dietary fibres such as potash and apple pectin. Apple cider vinegar thus provides our body with vital minerals, trace elements and vitamins, prevents the spread of putrefactive bacteria in the intestine, strengthens the immune system, stimulates the metabolism and has a purifying effect, stimulates wound healing, generally improves the state of health and delays the ageing process.

When purchasing vinegar, however, there are a few points that should be kept in mind. Buy only natural, unfiltered vinegar (if possible organic quality), which is free of colourants and preservatives and contains no antioxidants or thickeners. The vinegar should be made from a regional natural product, without added sugar and produced under 40° Celsius.

The second important active ingredient of Oxymel, the HONEY, is also one of the oldest known medical products. Honey contains over 180 different ingredients, including more

than 20 types of sugar, amino acids, enzymes, polyphenols, flavones, essential oils, tannins and vitamins B1, B6 and C. Pharmacologically, honey has warming, soothing, anti-irritant, expectorant, antiseptic, antibacterial, antioxidant, mineralizing, anti-inflammatory, sedative and digestive properties.

When buying honey, you should seek regional, organic and as little processed (below 40° Celsius) honey varieties as possible.



“Let thy food be your medicine and your medicine be thy food,” wrote the Greek physician Hippocrates of Kos. So the two food products vinegar and honey, both of which have healing properties in themselves, can be used to make a well-tolerated natural medicine for children and adults, which can be used to gently treat many diseases and ailments, such as immune deficiency, fever, cough, indigestion, diarrhea, liver and gall bladder problems, heart weakness or age-related ailments. They are also suitable for the treatment of inflammations and wounds, as well as for detoxification.

The honey-vinegar drink Oxymel has been known in naturopathy for centuries and has been mentioned in writing since Pythagoras (570-510 BC) and Hippocrates of Kos (460-370 BC). Numerous preparations and recipes can also be found in the books of monastic medicine up to the records of Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179 AD).

Oxymel can be stirred together cold (raw) or cooked, as well as optionally prepared with fruit and plant additives. Especially for children, it can also be used to prepare an “alcohol-free” tincture or cough syrup. As a healthy alternative to household sugar and industrially produced citric acid, Oxymel is also suitable for the quick and easy preservation of jams, herbs, fruits and pickled vegetables. Even cooked, Oxymel is still rich in vital substances. With raw Oxymel, that is, without heating, juices and syrups can be preserved.

Basic recipe Oxymel (cold stirred):

Mix well 300 g organic forest honey with 100 g organic apple cider vinegar and ¼ teaspoon rock salt in a glass or porcelain jar and pour into a glass bottle. Keeps for about 2-3 years if stored in a cool, dark place.

This basic recipe can also be made with other types of honey and vinegar, the ratio of honey to vinegar can also be varied. Effects: immuno-strengthening and anti-inflammatory, antipyretic, detoxifying, regulates digestion, soothes irritation in respiratory diseases.

Application:

In case of fever and for immune strengthening: take 50 g of Oxymel with 10 times the amount of water or tea.

For respiratory diseases: take 1 teaspoon of Oxymel pure, repeat if necessary.

For digestive strengthening: take 3 tablespoon Oxymel in a cup of tea or warm water ½ hour before breakfast.



Vitamin C-Syrup with rose hips or sea buckthorn berries:

Mix 200 g organic blossom honey with 100 g organic apple cider vinegar. Fill 100 g of fresh, finely chopped rosehip peels (without seeds) or sea buckthorn berries into a screw-top glass until well half full, pour over the honey vinegar. The fruit must be well covered with the liquid.

Stir out any air bubbles with a glass or wooden stick. Close the screw jar, allow to infuse for 1-2 weeks, turning the screw jar every day. Strain finished syrup through a fine sieve, pour into smaller glass bottles, store in a dark and cool place (can be kept for about ½ year).

Application:

To strengthen the immune system, take 3 tablespoons of this mixture daily with 1 glass of water.

Tip: If fruits, honey and vinegar are crushed and mixed with a blender, you can enjoy the syrup right away (no need to strain). Put the filled bottle in the refrigerator.

Antibiotic Oxymel (hot – only for adults):

Mix 350 g organic forest honey with 750 g organic vinegar. Add 1 large organic red onion, finely chopped, 1 organic ginger bulb finely grated, 3 large cloves organic garlic finely chopped, ½ organic horseradish root finely grated, 1 organic hot chili finely chopped, 1 organic turmeric root finely chopped, 1 teaspoon mustard seeds, 1 teaspoon cloves and 1 chopped cinnamon stick to a screw jar until well half full, pour over the

honey vinegar, everything must be well covered. Stir out any air bubbles with a glass or wooden stick. Close the screw jar, leave to infuse for at least 2 to a maximum of 4 weeks in a cool and dark place. Turn the screw-glass jar every day, then strain through a fine sieve, squeeze the residue well, pour into smaller glass bottles, store in a dark and cool place (can be kept for about 1 year).

Application:

To strengthen the immune system, take 1 teaspoon of this mixture with 1 glass of water daily. This antibiotic Oxymel can also be added to dishes as a seasoning.

Oxymel recipe according to Hildegard von Bingen:

Mix 100 g blossom honey with 100 g white wine vinegar and 50 g diptam powder (*Dictamnus albus*) and fill into a glass bottle. Leave to infuse for approx. 2-4 weeks, moving the bottle again and again (keeps for approx. 1 year, shake well before use).

Application:

Drink 1 tablespoon of this mixture every 2 days (before breakfast) with a cup of lukewarm water or tea. This Oxymel has heart tonic and antidegenerative properties and can be used to treat age-related ailments, inflammation, detoxification, heart disease and loss of vitality.

Oxymel recipe with cooking method:

Boil 200 ml fresh herbs (wild herbs, thyme, hyssop, rosemary, ...) with 100 ml vinegar for about ½ to 1 hour and let it steep (not hotter than 80° Celsius). Then cool to below 40° Celsius, strain the herbs and squeeze well, stir 400 ml honey into the herbal vinegar, fill into glass bottles and enjoy.

Application: take 1 tablespoon to 1 glass of water daily.

This method can be used to speed up the extraction of the plants, when using fresh plants, roots, barks or resins, in preparations for young children or to achieve better stability in the preparation of syrup.

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