

Teas

You will want to drink plenty of clean water and any of these special teas every day and for as long as you feel you need them. **Avoid ginger if you are experiencing excessive bleeding.

NETTLE & FENNEL TEA

Nettles energize the body with a satisfyingly textured, creamy taste, and support the liver, helping to detoxify any impurities.

Fennel is another classic childbearing herb; it has estrogenic properties that can help hormone balance, boost lactation, and ease digestive upset in baby or mom. For all those reasons, this blend is a first forty days staple.

Serves 6

1 cup (27 g) dried nettle leaves

¼ cup (about 25 g) dried fennel seeds

Bring 6 cups (1.4 L) water to a boil in a medium pot. Add the nettle leaves and fennel seeds, lower heat, and simmer for 30 minutes to an hour, covered.

Strain and drink warm or store in the fridge for up to 3 days.

RED DATE & GOJI TEA

This is a quintessential warming tea and has a beautiful crimson-color.

Serves 4-6

2 cups (about 160 g) red dates

½ cup (55 g) goji berries

Your choice of sweetener, such as honey,

maple syrup, coconut sugar (granules or syrup), or stevia to taste (optional)

Bring 6 cups (1.4 L) water to a boil in a medium pot. Halve the red dates and add them to the boiling water. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 1 hour, covered. In the last 20 minutes, add the goji berries and your desired sweetener (not necessary if sweet enough for you). (Strain and sip throughout the day, or store in the fridge for up to 1 week.

NETTLE INFUSION

Improves milk flow and quality, and is rich in iron and protein. This one gives a tingle of energy that feels almost euphoric.

1 cup (22 g) dried nettle leaves
2 lemon slices (add when you are about to drink

RASPBERRY LEAF INFUSION

Improves uterus strength, enhances milk flow and quality.

1 cup (15 g) dried raspberry leaves
2 cinnamon sticks

RED CLOVER INFUSION

This herb is a lactation enhancer and blood nourisher; also a classic liver-support tonic, which is great for hormonal balance.

1 cup (14 g) dried red clover blossoms
1 lemon slice (add when you are about to drink)

GOAT'S RUE INFUSION

This is a lactation enhancer.

1 cup (40 g) dried goat's rue
1/4 cup (70 g) fennel seeds

BLESSED THISTLE INFUSION

A lactation enhancer that provides emotional support and alleviates depression. Fenugreek is a classic lactation-boosting spice.

1 cup (28 g) dried blessed thistle
1/4 cup (36 g) fenugreek seeds

MOTHERWORT-INFUSION

Ideal for cramping after birth or any traumatic feelings from the birth experience. Also, relieves uterus pain and lifts depression. **Use this herb lightly if there is heavy bleeding. Do not use while pregnant.**

1 cup (28 g) dried motherwort

GINGER, TURMERIC & HONEY TEA

TURMERIC IS A WONDER FOOD. It's a rhizome (root) with superb anti-inflammatory and antibacterial effects that pairs beautifully with honey and ginger. This tea is a tonic for the whole body after the efforts of childbirth. Add some heated coconut milk for a thicker, creamier drink.

Serves 4

1-inch (2.5-cm) knob of fresh ginger, peeled and grated (about 3 tablespoons)
1-inch (2.5-cm) knob of fresh turmeric, peeled and grated (about 3 tablespoons)
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1/4 cup (60 ml) honey, or to taste

Bring 5 cups (1.2 L) water to a boil in a medium pot. Turn off heat, add the ginger, turmeric, and vinegar. Let it steep, covered, for 10 minutes. When you are ready to drink, stir in the honey. Leftovers keep in the fridge for up to 1 week. Powdered turmeric can be used instead, if fresh is not available. .

OATS, GINGER & CINNAMON TEA

This beverage is circulation-boosting, warming, and rich with the lactation-supporting benefits of oats.

Serves 4

1 cup (90 g) rolled oats

1/2 cup (40 g) steel-cut oats

1 1/2-inch (4-cm) knob of fresh ginger, peeled and halved

3 cinnamon sticks or 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon, plus more ground cinnamon for sprinkling

Pinch of sea salt

1 to 2 tablespoons honey, or to taste

Bring 7 cups (1.7 L) water to a boil in a medium pot. Add the oats, ginger, cinnamon sticks, and salt to the boiling water. Reduce heat to low and let it simmer, three-quarters covered, for 30 minutes. Check to make sure the water level remains the same, adding more water if needed. Keep an eye on the pot, as it is very easy for this tea to boil over.

When the water has turned a milky white color and the mixture has a smooth consistency, strain it, saving the oats for another use (congee or cookies come to mind!). Pour the tea into a glass jar or directly into your mug, then stir in the honey. Sprinkle the top with a touch of ground cinnamon and drink warm. Store in the fridge for up to 3 days. Reheat by adding a little boiling water, stir, and enjoy!

HIBISCUS FLOWER, GINGER & CINNAMON TEA

THIS fragrant, warming tea has a wonderfully feminine feel. It is delicious served hot or at room temperature.

Serves 4

4 cinnamon sticks

1 cup 3 (5 g) hibiscus blossoms

1-inch (2.5-cm) knob of fresh ginger, peeled

4 to 5 tablespoons (60 to 75 ml) honey or organic agave nectar (optional)

Bring 4 cups (960 ml) water to a boil in a small pot, along with the cinnamon sticks.

Reduce heat to low, add the hibiscus blossoms, and simmer for 30 minutes, covered.

Turn off heat, grate the fresh ginger into the pot, and let it all steep for 20 minutes. Strain and sweeten as desired and sip throughout the day.

CUMIN & FENUGREEK TEA

This tea is known to aid lactation and calm the digestion. It can be sipped before nursing.

Serves 4

2 cup (145 g) cumin seeds or 1/4cup (25 g) ground cumin

1/2cup (145 g) fenugreek seeds

1 tablespoon honey or coconut sugar, or to taste (optional)

Bring 4 cups (960 ml) water to a boil in a small pot. Turn of heat, add the cumin and fenugreek, and let steep, covered, for 2 to 4 hours. Strain and sweeten as desired and sip throughout the day. TIP: Go easy on the sweetener: This tea is a digestive aid and its bitter taste really gets the digestive juices flowing.

GOAT'S RUE & OATSTRAW TEA

A lactation boosting tea that may involve some specialty herb purchasing online, goat's rue improves milk flow and quality and oatstraw is superb for calming the mood. The taste is quite grassy and earthy.

Serves 4

1/2cup (20 g) goat's rue

1/2cup (10 g) oatstraw

1 tablespoon honey or coconut sugar, or to taste (optional)

Bring 4 cups (960 ml) water to boil in a small pot. Turn of heat, add the goat's rue and oatstraw and let steep, covered, for 2 to 4 hours. Strain and sweeten as desired and sip throughout the day.

SLEEP NECTAR

This soothing and settling warm drink is what I prescribe when a mother has trouble relaxing into rest. Warm milk of your choice, plus honey, chamomile, and lavender will help to calm the nerves and tell the body it's time to sleep.

Serves 2

2 cups (480 ml) milk of choice

2 tablespoons chamomile blossoms

2 tablespoons lavender (optional)

1 tablespoon honey

In a small pot, bring the milk to a gentle boil. Add the blossoms and lavender, if using, to the pot (or directly to mugs with the hot milk), cover, and steep for 4 to 5 minutes, stir in the honey.

Resources:

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The First Forty Days, by Heng Ou