

Barley Water Recipe

Barley-water is used medicinally to treat colds, intestinal problems (both constipation and diarrhea) and liver disorders. It was recorded in Greek medicine two thousand years ago as a galactagogue. Taken for a week or two, it often helps mothers with chronic low milk supply. Make a pot in the morning and drink it throughout the day, warming each cup and sweetening it with a natural sweetener as desired.

Barley-water can be made with whole grain or pearl barley. Barley flakes can also be used, though these have been processed and are possibly less potent than the whole or pearled grain.

Preparation:

- Quick-and-easy: 1/2 cup of flakes or pearled barley can be simmered in 1 quart of water for twenty minutes.
- Long-and-intensive: 1 cup of whole or pearled barley is simmered in 3 quarts of water for up to 2 hours. About half the liquid should cook off. Some recipes call for only 1/2 hour cooking time. However, the longer the barley simmers and the more pinkish (and slimier) the water becomes, the more of the 'cream' will enter the water and the stronger the medicinal effect will be.
- If the barley water becomes too thick to drink comfortably, add in more water.
- When finished, remove from the stove and sieve off the water. The grain is now tasteless and can be thrown out.
- Add 1 tablespoon of fennel powder or steep 2 – 3 teaspoons of fennel seeds for ten minutes in the barley-water before drinking.
- The traditional recipe calls for fennel seed. I personally find that powdered fenugreek seed is tastier than fennel in barley-water.