

THE USE OF SPRING HERBS IN MOLDOVAN PEOPLE'S DIET

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In the spring, the body's adaptation to different temperatures puts a lot of pressure on the immune system, the flu is still haunting, and allergies are more common. For these reasons, many of us, with the arrival of spring, may suffer from asthenia, avitaminosis, exhaustion, etc. To avoid these conditions, consumers often opt for the administration of supplements such as vitamins, minerals, and others in the form of capsules, pills - results of the pharmaceutical industry, which do not have the highest level of assimilation. Our ancestors did not have access to such products, yet they could be proud of a longer life expectancy and a stronger immune system, and this is due probably to their diet rich in herbs and raw products.

The benefits of spring herbs have been known for centuries. Many of them have an enormous arsenal of biologically active substances, which are meant to prevent and reduce the risk of certain diseases. The traditional Moldovan cuisine is rich of different herbs which have been used as food ingredients in salads, soups, pies or main courses in fresh or dried forms since ancient times. The most consumed spring herbs are the *Allium* species (*Allium vineale*, *Allium ursinum* and *Allium cepa*), *Netles*, *Rumex acetosa* and *Rumex patientia* leaves and others. They are excellent sources of vitamins, minerals and other bioactive substances that will help the body feel full of energy and get rid of toxins accumulated during the winter.

The present work presents an overview of some spring herbs in Moldovan cuisine, including wild garlic, chives, nettle, green onions, *Rumex patientia* and *Rumex acetosa* leaves. Studies on these herbs showed that they have a great biological potential (vitamins, polyphenols, organic acids, minerals) that are benefic for human health.

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