

# Traditional Medicine

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CONSEIL CRÉ DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX DE LA BAIE JAMES  
CREE BOARD OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES OF JAMES BAY



## ᐃᑦᑦᑦᑦ iiyaashiht BALSAM FIR

The **Balsam Fir** has many practical and medicinal uses.

While the boughs are commonly used as flooring for our teepees, they can also be boiled to purify indoor air.

Needles and resin can be prepared in different ways. As a paste, they treat cuts, burns and snow blindness. As a tea, they help induce sleep, as well as relieve cold symptoms including cough, sore throat and chest or sinus congestion.

## How to prepare balsam fir medicine

- 1 Collect balsam fir branches following traditional protocols.
- 2 Break branches into smaller pieces and place in a large pot with 17 cups (4 litres) of water.
- 3 Bring the balsam to a boil, and keep boiling for about 20 minutes or until you smell the aroma throughout your home.
- 4 Take big calming breaths, breathing in the steam. You may also place in a bowl to directly breathe in the steam.
- 5 Once boiled, remove pot from heat and let liquid cool.
- 6 Strain cooled liquid into a clean container.

Once strained, it is ready to be warmed up to drink as tea, adding honey, maple syrup or other sweetener if you like. It is best to drink it warm. You may continue this procedure as long as you wish.

### Recommended amount:

**Maximum 2-3 cups/day**

#### Precautions when using Traditional Medicine

As with any medicine, exercise caution. Follow instructions for preparation and use, and do not exceed recommended intake.

Pregnant or breastfeeding women should not drink this or any other traditional medicine unless under the direct advice and guidance of a traditional healer.



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For more information on this medicine or to connect with a traditional healer/herbalist, contact the Nishiiyu Department:

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