

Corn Silk

By Kami McBride

I love corn season, it usually means more time with friends, BBQ's and warm summer nights... Hey, when you shuck your corn to eat at the next BBQ, save the corn silk!

You can make a tea with the fresh corn silk or mince it into small pieces and add it fresh to your salad. Fresh corn silk is a food that contains easy to assimilate nutrients. If you try to eat it in long strings it will just be irritating, use it as a topping for just about any salad type dish, just make sure you cut it into tiny pieces.

If you go through as much corn as we do, there is no way to eat or drink all the silk, so you can dry it and save it for later use. Pull the silk from the cob and separate it from the husk. Make sure to also save the silk that is at the top of the husk on the outside of the corn. Run your finger through the silk a little to loosen it from being in one big clump. Place the corn silk on a flat basket and set it out on the counter to dry. Depending on the weather this will take several days. Once all the water is gone from the silk and it feels slightly crispy you can store it in a jar or baggie. Corn silk lasts this way for about one year.

Dried corn silk makes a very nice tasting tea. Corn silk is traditionally used as an anti-inflammatory tea for the urinary tract. Two cups of tea a day for several weeks helps with cystitis, urethritis and prostatitis. You don't have to be inflamed to enjoy a cup of tea though. It is a nutritive herb containing many beneficial minerals and it is demulcent. Demulcent herbs sooth tissue lining in the body. It is a safe herbal tea for people of all ages, children and elderly. It is tonic to the prostate and urinary tract.

Corn silk soothes and relaxes the lining of the urinary tract and bladder, relieving irritation and improving urine flow and elimination. This is a great remedy for people with incontinence and any type of urinary discomfort. If you are prone to urinary tract infections, corn silk is the herb for you. If you feel like you are becoming susceptible to a urinary tract infection, drink three cups of corn silk tea a day for several days.

Corn silk has a mildly sweet flavor and makes a good tasting, nutritive and cooling summer tea for anybody. So next time you make corn on the cob make some corn silk tea to drink after dinner.

Corn Silk Tea

2 cups water

2 tablespoons fresh or dried corn silk

Put water and silk into a pot and bring to a boil with the lid on the pot. As soon as it comes to a boil, turn the heat down to lowest setting and simmer for ten minutes. Turn off the heat and let the silk continue to steep for another half hour. Strain the silk and warm your tea or drink at room temperature

Corn Silk Summer Sun Tea

4 cups water

4 tablespoons chopped fresh corn silk

Put herbs and water in half gallon Mason jar out in the sun for half a day. Bring it in the house, strain the herbs out. Add honey and lemon or lime to taste. Serve chilled or at room temperature

Kami McBride has taught herbal medicine since 1988. Through her classes and personal wellness consultations she helps people understand how whole foods and herbal medicine are an important aspect of everyone's preventive health care plan. Kami has helped thousands of people learn to use herbs in their daily lives in ways that are healthy, safe and fun and she teaches classes in herbal medicine and women's health at her school and herb gardens in Vacaville, California. She can be reached at 707-446-1290 or www.livingawareness.com