

Herbal Steam Inhalation - In Class Activity

Participants will:

- Learn safe steam preparation techniques
- Blend their own herbal steam mix (rosemary, thyme, mullein, grindelia, osha root)
- Receive guidance on frequency, contraindications, and seasonal use

Materials:

- Heat-safe bowl (or pot) + stable surface
- Kettle or pot for boiling water
- Towel (large enough to tent over head and bowl)
- Timer (phone works)
- Tissues
- Optional: eye mask or clean washcloth (for sensitive eyes)

In Class Steam Blend Ingredients & Ratios (base blend):

- 2 parts mullein (soothing base)
- 1 part thyme (antimicrobial + opening)
- 1 part rosemary (warming + aromatic)
- 1 part grindelia (resinous expectorant/bronchial support)
- ½ part osha root (strong, warming, “kick”)

(“Parts” can be teaspoons, tablespoons, or grams—whatever keeps the ratio consistent.)

Contraindications + Safety Notes

Do NOT steam if:

- You have a fever and feel overheated
- You're prone to fainting/dizziness with heat
- You have significant asthma/reactive airway disease and steam triggers symptoms
- You have an infant or very young child (steam burns happen fast)

Use caution / modify if:

- Pregnancy: keep steam mild; avoid intense essential-oil-heavy aromatics
- Very sensitive skin/eyes: increase distance, vent towel, shorten session
- Acute wheezing: stop immediately and move to fresh air

Important safety basics:

- Never steam with your face too close to the water
- Keep bowl on a table, not your lap

- Keep eyes closed if irritated (volatile aromatics can sting)
- If it burns, it's too hot—back away and vent the towel

Step-by-Step: Steam Inhalation Technique

1) Set your container and posture

- Place your bowl on a steady table (not your lap).
- Sit comfortably with shoulders relaxed.
- Keep water, towel, and tissues within reach.

2) Add herbs to the bowl

- Add **1-2 tablespoons** of your steam blend to the bowl.
 - For first-time users or sensitive folks: start with **1 tablespoon**.

3) Add hot water (not actively boiling in your face)

- Bring water to a boil, then let it cool **1-2 minutes** before pouring.
- Carefully pour hot water into the bowl (enough to cover herbs and create steam).

4) Create a “steam tent”

- Drape towel over your head and the bowl to trap steam.
- Keep your face **12-18 inches** from the water at first.

5) Start gently (the “toe dip” approach)

- Close eyes if comfortable (or use a washcloth/eye mask).
- Take 2-3 normal breaths outside the tent, then lean in briefly.
- If it feels too hot or intense: back away, lift a towel corner, and let in cool air.

6) Breathing pattern (upper respiratory focus)

- Inhale **through the nose** for 2-3 breaths (sinus focus).
- Then inhale **through the mouth** for 2-3 breaths (throat/bronchial focus).
- Keep breaths slow and easy—no “power breathing.”

7) Duration

- Total steam time: **5-10 minutes**
 - Beginners: **3-5 minutes**
 - Experienced: up to **10 minutes**
- Stop early if you feel dizzy, overheated, or uncomfortable.

8) Finish + seal the effect

- Step out of the steam tent slowly.
- Blow your nose gently or spit out loosened mucus.

- Drink warm water or tea to support hydration.
- Rest 5 minutes—this helps the nervous system integrate the shift.

9) Aftercare (important for winter!)

- Avoid stepping into cold air immediately after steaming.
- Keep head/neck warm (hat or scarf) if you're leaving the building.