PRINT & KEEP INSIDE TEA CABINET

Plain-English Kitchen Herbal Safety & Medication Check

Everyday culinary herbs are gentle for most healthy adults in occasional cups, yet "natural" never means interaction-free. Review this table before starting a daily tea routine.

Core Starter Herb	Key Sensitivities, Medication Interactions & Cautions
German Chamomile *Matricaria recutita*	Asteraceae (daisy/ragweed) family—avoid with ragweed or marigold allergies. Check with a pharmacist if taking blood thinners (warfarin), sedatives, or transplant meds (cyclosporine/tacrolimus); pause daily use 1–2 weeks before surgery.
Peppermint Leaf *Mentha × piperita*	Menthol relaxes the lower esophageal valve and can worsen acid reflux (GERD) or heartburn. Use caution with gallstones or bile duct obstruction, and separate from iron supplements (polyphenols can lower non-heme iron absorption).
Dried Ginger Root *Zingiber officinale*	Check with a clinician if taking blood thinners, diabetes/blood-sugar medications, or with gallstones/bleeding disorders. Pause concentrated daily use 1–2 weeks pre-surgery. **Pregnancy:** 1 tsp dried ginger ≈ 2 g—check with your OB before exceeding 1 g/day.
Lemon Balm *Melissa officinalis*	Check with a healthcare provider before regular daily use if taking thyroid hormone medication (e.g., levothyroxine) or prescription sedatives.
Culinary Thyme *Thymus vulgaris*	Normal culinary tea amounts are widely enjoyed; avoid concentrated medicinal doses or internal thyme essential oil—especially in pregnancy. Check with a clinician if taking blood thinners/antiplatelets or before scheduled surgery.
Hibiscus Petals *Hibiscus sabdariffa*	**Avoid during pregnancy.** May interact with blood-pressure medications, diuretics, diabetes medications, or acetaminophen clearance; use caution with low baseline blood pressure. Rinse mouth with plain water after drinking to protect tooth enamel.

5 Non-Negotiable Kitchen Herbal Safety Rules

- **1. Never wild-forage unidentified plants:** Buy only clearly labeled, food-grade culinary dried herbs from reputable suppliers unless trained in person by a qualified botanist.
- **2. Introduce one new herb at a time:** Start with a single half-cup test before mixing 3-herb blends so you recognize any allergy or sensitivity immediately.
- **3. Never ingest essential oils in tea:** Essential oils do not dissolve in water and can irritate internal tissue.
- **4. Respect moisture & infant rules in honey:** Room-temp honey jars require strictly bone-dry herbs and bone-dry spoons; refrigerate fresh-ginger honey ≤40°F for 5 days max; never give honey to infants under 12 months.
- **5. Pause concentrated daily herbs 1–2 weeks before surgery:** Share your regular herbal teas with your doctor or pharmacist alongside prescriptions and supplements.

Personal Pharmacist / Clinician Check-In Notes

Jot down your planned herbs and bring this sheet to your next check-up or pharmacy pickup:

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