

Herbs Use by Baby Boomers

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Herb Use and the Baby Boomers The use of herbs for medicinal or therapeutic properties, scents and/or flavors has been around for hundreds of years if not thousands of years. Today, the aging populations, especially the baby boomers, are a contributing factor in this multi-billion dollar industry. There are over 1500 botanicals sold as dietary supplements. This is evidence that people are not happy with traditional medical care. In the U.S. alone, nutritional supplements are over a \$20 billion dollar business. Over 48% of adults in the U.S. admit to having used at least one alternative supplement. Some of the increase in the use of these supplements relate to an increasing distrust of mainstream medicine. Americans are tired of the hassles, misdiagnosis, cover ups by drug companies on side effects, and the disinterest of their doctors. Also the average person is more knowledgeable in the usage of herbs based on history and research. With the easy access to the internet and information, more and more people are trying alternatives in an attempt to have a healthier lifestyle. Medicinal herbs are sold in a variety of forms including liquids, pills and powders, teas, fresh or dried. The most common use of herbs today are to aid in sleep disturbances, depression, headaches, colds, burns, rashes, diarrhea and menopausal symptoms. Many traditional herbs have been scientifically tested and have proven to have positive effects. This is one of the reasons for the renewed interest in the use of herbs. Herbs are an effective and safe alternative to some dangerous and costly drugs. "Whatever the benefits and risks of its many concoctions and methods, alternative medicine offers them at least the promise of affectionate care, unhurried service, freedom from prescription drug side effects and the potential for feeling not just better but also spiritually charged," the Times reports (Carey, New York Times, 2/3).