

# Pine Needle Tea

Pine needle tea was used by Native Americans to prevent and treat illness. It is high in Vitamin C and makes a refreshing tea. Eastern white pine is a good tree to use for this, as it is common and easy to identify. Look for 5 needles in a cluster, like this:



## **Ingredients:**

- About a handful of needles from a white pine tree (look for the fresh, young, and brighter green needles at the end of the branches)
- 3 cups water
- If desired, lemon juice or sweetener

## **Directions:**

Bring water to a boil. While waiting for the water to boil, rinse the pine needles and cut or chop off the brown end where it attached to the tree.

Chop or cut the needles into smaller lengths. Discard any brown needles or bits.

When the water is boiling, turn off and remove from heat. Add the pine needles, cover and steep for at least 5 minutes, or longer.

Alternatively, you can add 2 Tablespoons of the chopped needles to a mug, and add boiling water, cover and steep as before.

Before serving, you can strain the needles out or use a fork to get them out, or even just let them sink to the bottom of the mug. The tea will look clear.

**Cautions:** Some pines are toxic and should not be used. Pines such as Ponderosa pine, Lodgepole pine, Norfolk Island Pine, and Yews should not be used. Always be sure you can positively identify a wild food source. Pregnant and nursing women should avoid pine needle tea, to be safe. Also do not use a Christmas tree for tea as it may have been sprayed.

Resources: [throughthetrees.org](http://throughthetrees.org) and [wildedible.com](http://wildedible.com)



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