

Humming Catfish Usnea Salve Recipe

Usnea isn't moss — it's a lichen, a partnership between a fungus and an alga that's been used for centuries as a natural antibiotic. You'll find it hanging from trees in some of the cleanest air on earth. In this salve, we're slow-infusing it in a mix of lard and olive oil for a gentle, potent healing base that works wonders on cuts, scrapes, and skin irritations.

Ingredients

- 1 part dried and chopped usnea
- 1 part rendered lard
- 1 part olive oil
- Beeswax – use 1 part beeswax for every 5 parts infused oil

Instructions

1. Clean and dry. Brush off debris and let the usnea dry completely before use — moisture can spoil your infusion.
2. Chop it up. Cut the dried usnea into small pieces to increase surface area for better extraction.
3. Mix your base. Combine 1 part usnea, 1 part lard, and 1 part olive oil in a heat-safe jar or double boiler.
4. Keep it slow and low. Warm gently over indirect heat for about 12 hours total. The water in your double boiler should never boil or simmer.
5. Cool and reheat. After 6 hours, let the oil cool completely (overnight is fine), then rewarm it for the remaining 6 hours. This cooling period helps draw out more of the lichen's beneficial compounds.
6. Strain. Pour through fine cloth or a coffee filter to remove the plant material.
7. Add beeswax. Weigh your infused oil and add beeswax at a 1:5 ratio — for example, 40 g beeswax per 200 g oil.
8. Melt, stir, and pour. Combine gently over low heat, stir well, and pour into tins or jars to cool.
9. Store it right. Keep sealed in a cool, dark place. Your salve should last many months if stored properly.

Tip

A little goes a long way. Apply to minor cuts, scrapes, or skin irritations for natural protection and healing.