

## Rehydration by KI5LNM

It was suggested to me to speak on this topic. It is quite apropos to our weather and especially this summer. But just in case you think that hot weather and keeping hydrated is something new, for several centuries they have known this to be an issue. They had wonderful drinks to bring you through hard work and hot weather, thankfully today many are rediscovering these drinks and how healthy and good they are for us. For this talk, I will have a short discussion on two old fashion drinks that go back at least to the 17th century as well as more modern methods.

By the 18th century there were two types of drinks that are very refreshing and can help you with the depletion of minerals and salts from your body, These are the forerunners of our modern energy drinks, sports drinks, and sodas, and are so much better for us. One is a Shrub and the other is a Switchel. Albeit, they are quite similar.

A Shrub is an vinegar based drink which traditionally was a way of preserving fruit. After the two are together for a bit fermenting, the vinegar is poured off and one more step gives you a thick syrup that when mixed with just water or sparkling mineral water is a most refreshing cooling drink. I have a recipe for a Cherry Balsamic Shrub that takes about ten or eleven days to make, but oh, it is a delight to drink for no reason at all and wonderful if needed. You have to plan ahead to make it for a special occasion, but just having it around over a few days will improve yourself just with the pleasure of sipping a fizzy drink that benefits your body.

Switchels are closely related to Shrubs. They will also have apple cider vinegar, water, berries, etc. but also often call for ginger. These drinks do not take quite as long to create as the proper Shrub version. My favorite recipe for Switchel is a Mixed Berry Switchel. Now I have only made it with all blueberries. as I love them. I made a batch of this a couple of summers ago when we had to have outdoor work done on our water line. In the afternoon I took glasses of this Switchel out to the two workers, and they thanked me. When they were done and ready to leave, they both asked for the recipe and commented on how they were about done in by the heat and were having a time continuing. After they drank the Switchel, they were ready to attack the rest of it work and get it done. They each requested the recipe, and I made sure they went home with it. This Switchel takes from 8 hours to overnight, although I have cheated and drank it sooner. So a quicker drink than a Shrub to make.

When looking at recipes both of these may look like they have a lot of sweetener when you are making them. Remember that as they ferment the sugars are being eaten and feed the ferment. You may be amazed at how not so sweet they taste in the end.

I will add that you will find many references to Haymaker's Punch, Ginger Water, and other names for essentially the same drink. These also go back to how one made it through working outside during the summer especially in the 19th and early 20th century. These drinks have many variations and can have molasses, ginger, varying spices, herbs, and of course apple cider vinegar.

Another related drink to these is Kombucha which is quite popular today. I have not tried making it at home yet as anything that I have to keep alive, I usually kill in the fermented drink arena, and you do need to keep a scoby going. I do like Kombucha so may give it a try one day. This drink you can flavor with teas and there are a variety of flavorings you can buy. Where I buy my teas they sell several for adding to Kombucha. One is Root Beer flavored and sounds very tempting to give this drink a try to make myself.

Now I will discuss something even simpler yet. Just a homemade electrolyte drink is quick and easy. I guarantee the ingredients are in your house probably. You will find multiple recipes for these and after

copying a few, I realized that they all pretty much have the same ingredients but in different proportions. With that knowledge then, I don't really use a recipe unless it's a wicked hot day with a lot of work going on and then we want a whole half gallon made up. These basically take salt, baking soda, water, lemon juice, and some honey. For just a glass, I throw in a bit of each, mix it up, and drink. (I do freeze lemon juice in small cubes which is easy for this drink) I have found having done this often, that I don't mind and kind of like the taste of baking soda water. Weird yes, but that does help with this quick pick me up. The honey does help if you think it is too weird to drink water with salt and baking soda in it. Good honey has multiple health benefits so always good to add to a healthy drink.

Now I want to switch from homemade hydration drinks to what is easier for us to use on the go.

For our Go Bags, I bought the individual packets of Re-Lyte Electrolytes from Redmond Real Salt. If you are unfamiliar with Redmond Real Salt, it is a company that mines sea salt in Utah. It comes from underground, is not contaminated with pollutants, is unrefined and is full of trace minerals our bodies need. Many of the regular table salt companies take out the trace minerals so the salt looks pretty and snow white. This snow white salt isn't that good for you. "Dirty" looking salt is more than good for you. You can buy Re-Lyte in single serve packets or in tubs. They also have created versions for different purposes. And some of them you can buy in capsules. I will admit these are not cheap, but they are clean and fit about anyone's preferences or needs.

Now another one you may be interested in is one that Jason recommended to Mark. Mark was climbing a tower this summer, and on the first day, he thought he was hydrated but soon discovered not well enough. So he talked to Jason about what he does working outside, and so Mark bought some Liquid I.V. Hydration Multiplier. It worked well for Mark and his second trip up that tower went much better for him physically. So here is a rehydration one can buy locally that comes in single serve packets to add to water. Quick and easy to use.

The bottom line here is that we need to keep hydrated in this weather or when stressed. It is a good idea to have some form in your Go Bag so that during an event, you have something to turn to that is good for you and replenishes your body. Remember that Gatorade and its equivalent drinks should be your very last resort. Try and stay away from them, as there are better and cheaper ways to help out your body.

One last bit of advice on this topic. If you know beforehand that you will be out and sweating, be sure and hydrate well the day before and get ahead of the game. Be topped off before you go out and start depleting your bodies supplies.

## Cherry Balsamic Shrub

Crush in sterilized quart jar:  
2 Cups sweet cherries  
Pour over and submerge cherries:  
1 Cup balsamic vinegar  
1 Cup white wine vinegar  
Mix in:  
1 tsp vanilla extract

Cover with a plastic lid or wax paper between lid and shake.

Place in cool, dark place for one week.  
Shake daily.

After seven days. Strain the vinegar off and combine with:

2 Cups turbinado sugar  
(Buy the best sugar you can afford.  
Try not to use cheap highly processed sugar)

Place in refrigerator and shake daily till the sugar is all dissolved.

I generally shake it up every time I open the fridge door.

I like to mix in small amounts in sparkling mineral water and enjoy.

*(I tried to just link to where I found this recipe but it didn't come up)*

## Mixed Berry Switchel

Add to ½ gallon mason jar in order listed:  
⅓ Cup apple cider vinegar  
⅓ Cup honey  
1 Cup mixed berries of choice  
1 to 2 inches fresh ginger (I often use powdered ginger)  
1 lemon, juiced  
water to fill jar

Stir till honey is dissolved.  
Cover in fridge at least 8 hours or overnight.  
Serve, may add a bit of honey if wanted sweeter  
Stores in fridge up to two days.

*(from Lindsey Dietz, All the Nourishing Things)*

## Homemade Electrolyte Drink

Dissolve:  
½ tsp salt  
¼ tsp baking soda  
7 Cups water

Add:  
½ Cup lemon juice  
1 Tbs lime juice  
¼ Cup honey

Will store a week in fridge.

*(from Katie Kimball, Kitchen Stewardship)*