

Phytotherapy

The use of plants and plant products for medicinal **purposes** is very old. But it wasn't until the early 1970s that the age of clinical phytotherapy truly began. The World Health Organisation published several monographs on the quality, safety and **efficacy** of medicinal plants.

When reading literature on phytotherapy, the term “herbal medicinal products”, **abbreviated** to HMP, is often used to describe such products. HMPs have been classified as a regular discipline of natural orthodox science-oriented medicine, and have been in use in Germany since at least the 6th century. Phytotherapy is

seen as a so-called allopathic discipline, as the effects that are expected from HMPs are directed against the causes and symptoms of a disease.

PTA: Guten Tag.

Female customer: Oh dear! I'm very sorry, but my German is very **limited!**

That's not a problem, I speak English!

Thank goodness! Do you have oil of cloves?

Sorry, that's a new one on me! Do you know the taxonomic name, by any chance?

Yes, I have it here. It's *Syzygium aromaticum*.

Now I have it! That's Nelkenöl in German! Do you mind me asking what you need it for?

Not at all! I need it for **toothache**. My **Granny swore by** it for any problems in the oral area and she died at age 97 with all her own teeth!

Amazing! I'll just check the inventory to see if we have it. Yes, here it is. Oh, sorry we don't have it in stock, but I can order it for you. If I do, it'll be here by 4 o'clock this afternoon. Or would you like it delivered to your address?

Does it cost extra to deliver it?

No, we do not charge for the delivery.

Now that is a great service, but I only live around the corner from here, so

I can pick it up later. Could you order a 50ml **dropper bottle** for me, please?

Of course. Do you need anything else?

Do you have **witch-hazel** lotion? I use it as a refreshing facial water. As it doesn't contain alcohol, it doesn't dry out the skin, and is **astringent** all the same.

Now that we have in stock. We sell it as a dilute herbal decoction.

How dilute is it?

We have this cleansing and toning lotion, for sensitive skin. Let's see, it has a concentration of just one per cent.

That's good, I'll take that. Do you have **horse chestnut** extract, you know for “heavy legs”?

Would you like it as a cream or in tablet-form?

The cream please, I often get heavy legs in the summer.

Here are your purchases, and your pick-up slip. If you drop by at around 4:30 pm the oil of cloves should be here. See you later!

Thank you, see you later. ■

*Catherine Croghan,
Lecturer in English and native speaker*

VOCABULARY

Phytotherapy	Phytotherapie, Therapie mit Heilpflanzen
purposes	Zwecke
efficacy	Wirksamkeit
herbal	pflanzlich
abbreviated	abgekürzt
limited	begrenzt
by any chance	zufälligerweise
toothache	Zahnweh, Zahnschmerzen
Granny	Oma
swore by	war (davon) überzeugt
inventory	Vorrat, Lagerbestand
in stock	vorrätig
delivered	geliefert
dropper bottle	Tropfflasche
witch-hazel	virginische Zaubernuss, Hamamelis virginiana
astringent	adstringierend
dilute	verdünnt
herbal decoction	Kräutersud
cleansing	reinigend
horse chestnut	Roskastanie, Aesculus hippocastanum
purchase	Einkauf
pick-up slip	Abholschein