

## CWSF 2019 - Fredericton, New Brunswick



### Karihothettha Cupples

#### Cedar Tea

**Challenge:** Health

**Category:** Senior

**Region:** Aboriginal Québec Autochtone

**City:** Kanehsatake, QC

**School:** Ratihente High School

**Abstract:** I studied the traditional preparation of cedar tea and analyzed its potential germ killing capacities. Specifically I tested for the presence of vitamin C and tested growth of bacteria in the presence of the tea. This is important towards understanding the scientific reasons for the traditional practice and can improve people's health and wellness.

#### Biography

My whole life, I have been actively learning about my Mohawk (Kaniekeha) culture. I attend our longhouse for ceremonies, sing traditional songs and speak with elders in my community to learn our history and our language. Doing a science project on our ancient practice of drinking cedar tea as medicine was a logical next step, combining my cultural practices with my passion for science. Ideally, I would like to fully analyze the biochemical components of the tea and do testing on its potential health benefits. I think that looking at whether cedar tea could increase people's iron levels (since vitamin C is known to help absorb iron) would be an interesting experiment. Could the vitamin be more easily absorbed than in a pill form? It would also be intriguing to see if our use of the tea for easing cold and flu symptoms could be proven to be effective in a human trial. Furthermore, could this tea work on other ailments? I would tell students that doing a science project that is personally important to them, like mine is to myself, makes it very motivating and satisfying. Especially if it motivates their potential career or lifestyle.

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