



Dietary and Medical Guidelines

Ayahuasca

The program begins when you enter the preparation phase of this program. These preparation guidelines are integral to the process and are designed to ensure that participants are safe to participate in psychedelic retreats and are physically, mentally, and emotionally ready. Please do your best to honor these guidelines and reach out to your individual or group coach if you have any questions or concerns.

Summary of Dietary and Medication Requirements

Dietary Guidelines

In general, we encourage you to eat whole foods, limiting processed foods and foods high in salt, sugar, oils, and animal fats.

It is highly encouraged to avoid the following for at least 3 weeks prior to your retreat:

- Other plant medicines and recreational drugs (including cannabis)
- Alcohol
- Pork & red meat
- Limiting processed foods
- Limiting salt and foods high in salt
- Limiting foods high in sugar
- Limiting foods high in oils & animal fats
- Limiting News Media and Social Media
- Spicy foods
- Blue cheese
- Peanuts, soy, and fava beans

It is highly encouraged to avoid the following for at least 2 week prior to your retreat:

- Caffeine (weaned by 1 week)
- Energy Drinks (e.g. Red Bull, Monster, Rockstar, Nos, Xyience, Bang, Amp)
- Refined sugars
- Pickled, fermented, and smoked foods
- Overly ripe foods
- Dairy
- Adrenaline-inducing activities (i.e. sky-diving, extreme sports, endurance activities, getting a tattoo, horror films, etc. – routine workouts OK.)
- Sexual & sensual activity with self or others
- Limit nicotine (vaping, patches, cigarettes, or pouch/ dipping)

The general principle here is that your base energy level or adrenaline levels should not be peaking and dropping. Think of it as trying to remain on an "even keel" before your retreat. This will help you maintain this type of energy while you are here as well.



Importance of Diet in Preparing for Ayahuasca

Experience with ayahuasca teaches the importance of a clean diet, both before and after the session. Indigenous use of ayahuasca is always accompanied by some kind of diet and, though the restrictions vary, some fundamental guidelines are shared, including avoiding recreational drugs, alcohol, and sexual activity for a period preceding and following the medicine, and avoiding salt, pork, spicy foods or extremely cold food/drinks. Following the basics will enhance the results of the ritual for most seekers and allow the medicine space to work most effectively. Focusing on deprivation is not the purpose of a diet; its purpose is to create an environment in your body that gives the medicine the best chance of permeating and illuminating areas that need healing.

Practicing these disciplines shows respect for the medicine, respect for the process, and is believed to lead to more insight and less difficulty in the sessions.

Safety Guidelines

In general, we recommend stopping most medications and supplements in advance of your retreat. However, we recognize that this may not be possible for all medications. Please discuss with your Safety Screener any and all medications you are taking, particularly if you are taking any medications that would pose a health risk to discontinue.

Your HHP Safety Screener will help you determine which medications pose a safety risk to your retreat experience. Some medications are contraindicated with ayahuasca, and interaction with pharmaceutical drugs and medications (including some over-the-counter drugs and certain herbs) can be potentially life-threatening.

Please note, HHP Safety Screeners are advisors to HHP on safety risk, and do not give formal medical advice to participants. In particular, **the following drugs and medications can be dangerous with ayahuasca** and should be discontinued in accordance with your Safety Screener recommendations and under supervision of your medical provider.

- Other MAOIs
- SSRI's (any selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor)
- Antihypertensives (high blood pressure medicine)
- Appetite suppressants (diet pills)
- Medicine for bronchitis; antihistamines, medicines for colds, sinus problems, hay fever, or allergies (Actifed DM, Benadryl, Benylin, Chlor-Trimeton, Compoz, Bromarest-DM or -DX, Dimetane-DX cough syrup, Dristan Cold & Flu, Phenergan with extromethorphan, Robitussin-DM, Vicks Formula 44-D, several Tylenol cold, cough, and flu preparations, and many others.
- Any drug containing dextromethorphan/ DXM or with DM, DX or Tuss in its name.
- CNS (central nervous system) depressants (Xanax, Ativan, etc)
- Vasodilators
- Antipsychotics
- Barbiturates
- Cocaine
- Amphetamines (meth-, dex-, amphetamine), ephedrine, MDMA (Ecstasy), MDA, MDEA, PMA
- Opiates (heroin, morphine, codeine, and especially opium)



- Dextromethorphan (DXM)
- Mescaline (any phenethylamine) – less dangerous but not recommended
- Kratom – less dangerous but not recommended
- Kava – less dangerous but not recommended
- Herbal supplements St. John's Wort & 5-HTP

At Heroic Hearts Project we hold a high standard for every aspect of the healing process. We believe all those who feel the call of the medicine, regardless of where they choose to partake, should understand the potential risks involved as well as the current knowledge, traditions, and recommendations, both spiritual and medical, in preparing for such an experience.

Mental Health Safety Considerations Regarding Ayahuasca

The main purpose of screening is to ensure the safety of all participants in a ceremony. Ayahuasca is not recommended for people with mental health disorders. Sometimes, when these individuals take it, it potentiates a reaction that can last beyond the ceremony and requires further intervention. For these reasons, screening for mental health disorders is important, as well as honesty about any medical conditions or diagnosis.