

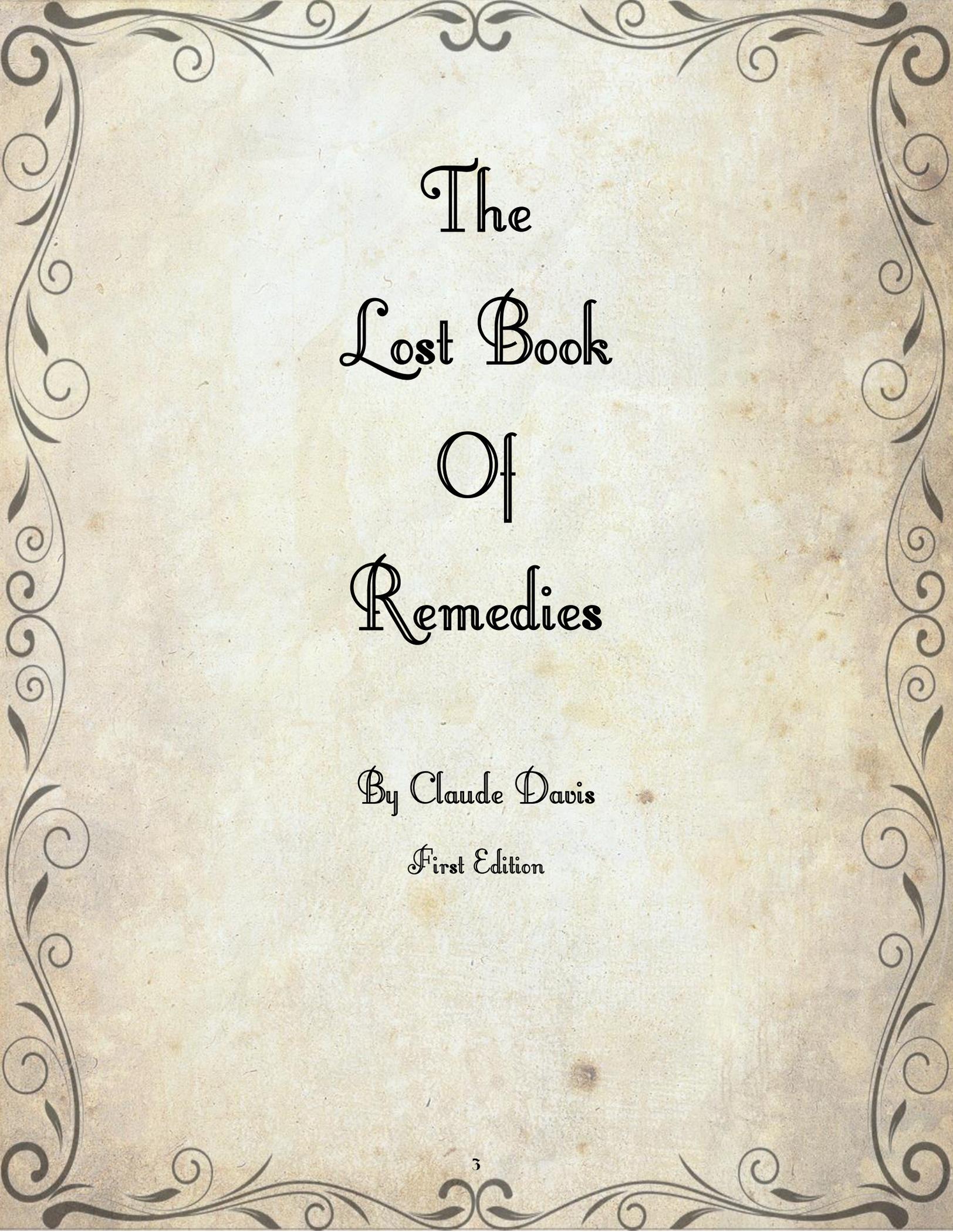
*The  
Lost Book  
Of  
Remedies*



*by  
Claude Davis*

The Lost Book Of Remedies





The  
Lost Book  
Of  
Remedies

By Claude Davis

First Edition

The Lost Book Of Remedies



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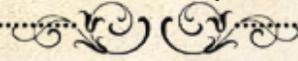
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## Introduction

This book is dedicated to my grandfather, also known as “Doctor Davis”, an extraordinary man and healer the likes of whom you would have a hard time finding in this day in age. He taught me everything I know about plants and medicine and much of what I know about life. His love of nature, plants, and healing began at an early age and was solidified during his service as a medic in WWII. After the war, he traveled for a while and took every chance possible to learn from natural healers and traditional doctors. He kept a personal diary of his studies, and this book is derived from his extensive notes on medicinal plants and their many uses.

He eventually settled down and raised a family, but he never gave up his love of learning. He traveled the United States off and on throughout his life, meeting with other healers and always expanding his knowledge of plant remedies.

Grandfather and I would often talk about medicine, and I sometimes took short trips with him when my help might be needed. I often went out alone into the woods, fields or a nearby marsh to gather his plants as well. In this way, I came to know of his great love for his craft and the people that he treated.

We were dependent on his earnings as a healer, but his primary motive for practicing medicine was always the great love he had for all his patients. I once saw him work for two days to deliver a child and return the mother to full health, then refuse to take payment knowing that the growing family would need every penny. He believed that healing was a spiritual calling and that he could not heal if his motives were financial. He healed because it was his calling, never worrying about payment or price and his patients would thank him in whatever way they could.

My grandfather acknowledged his spiritual calling in everything he did, and this included the preparation of his medicines.

His journey as a healer was a lifelong experience, beginning in childhood and continuing until his death in 2007 at the ripe old age of 85. While he never had any formal training as a doctor he was an avid reader, inhaling medical texts and every book on traditional remedies that he could find. He taught himself about diseases and the biochemistry of what happened in the body so that he could offer better care and treatments to all his patients.

As he aged, his eyesight became poor and would not allow him to read easily. I was astonished when I came into a room one day to find him wearing a headset that held a magnifying glass so that he could read about the latest remedies.

He taught me a great deal about the plants and herbs that inhabit this great country, but I do not use his magnificent knowledge as often as I should. That is part of the reason that I have decided to put together this book and make it available to the public. It is a labor of love in his memory and a way to pass on his knowledge and preserve it for future generations.

In our modern world, herbal remedies have mostly been forgotten. We are seeing a movement back to natural healing and a renewed interest in medicinal plants, but I fear that many remedies have been lost already. My grandfather’s book, the very book you now hold in your hands, is one of the last and most complete repositories of our forefathers healing knowledge left. I hope you will take good care of it so that it may too offer you healing in times of need. It was my grandfather’s dream that this book will one day see the light of day and then end up in every household in America. That it would help his fellow citizens break free from toxic drugs and that the knowledge he spent a lifetime to gather would endure.

Sadly, he passed away before he could see that dream become a reality but, in his name, I want to thank you for your invaluable help in making that happen today.

Many of the herbs you’ll find in The Lost Book of Remedies have similar properties, so how will you know which ones to use? Unfortunately, it is often impossible to say “this one is best” since herbs and even medicines act differently on different people. My advice is to start with the plants that grow near you or start planting the ones you’ll need most for your medical condition. My grandfather often said that our environment provided all the cures we needed and that the cure is always hiding nearby.

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



Doctor Davis believed that all diseases were caused by one of three things:

- Invasion by bacteria, virus, fungus, or another organism in the environment and usually enabled by an ineffective immune system. He used herbs with antibiotic, antiviral, and antifungal properties for treating these diseases and strengthened the immune system whenever possible.
- Toxins in the body, either from the environment or from ingesting the wrong foods. Unfortunately, the toxins in the modern environment have increased to the point that almost all of us need to detoxify regularly. Toxins can cause disease and hormonal imbalances that manifest as illness.
- Lack of something that the body needs, caused by a nutritional lack or improper absorption by the body. These diseases benefit from eating a wide variety of foods, plants, and herbs. The entire diet should be examined since an excess of one food could also cause problems. For example, eating too much salt can cause a multitude of problems in the body.

In many cases, his treatments would address all three areas of disease causation, seeking to detoxify the body, strengthen the immune system and nourish the body, and treat any infections at the same time. Some herbs did all three, while other times he would prescribe herbs in combination to address each of these areas. If a patient had a kidney disease, he would choose herbs that detoxify the kidneys, nourish the body, and treat kidney infections. Even in diseases like cancer, he believed that secondary infections set in as the immune system is weakened, were a major cause for a bad prognosis.

Even when treating a broken bone, my grandfather would be thinking of how to strengthen the body and make sure that it healed properly. He tried to treat the underlying causes of disease whenever possible, rather than the symptoms. And he always looked at the patient as a whole. He was never content to treat a common cold without looking at all the other problems that the patient had. He felt that his job was not done until the patient was as healthy as possible.

I hope that this book will become a reference for you and serve as a starting place in your healthy journal. I encourage everyone to seek medical help when needed and avoid self-diagnosis. This book is a general reference to herbal treatments as my grandfather practiced them, but it is not intended to replace your doctor or modern medical treatment.

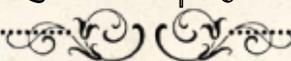
To your best health for many years to come,

Claude Davis - Author and Nephew of the late "Doc Davis"

The Lost Book Of Remedies

Backyard

Weeds



## Boneset, *Eupatorium perfoliatum*

I was first introduced to this herb in WWII. We used Boneset Tincture to treat dengue fever, a painful mosquito-borne disease that results in high fevers and terrible muscle and bone pain. The herb is said to be named boneset because of its use to treat dengue fever, also known as break-bone fever. It is my first choice for treating fevers and is an excellent choice for chest colds and flu.

The herb is a perennial native to North America. It is a member of the sunflower family.



*Boneset, I, SB Johnny, CC by SA 3.0*

### Plant Identification

Boneset has erect, hairy stems that grow 2 to 4 feet high and branch at the top. The leaves are large, opposite, and united at the base. They are lance-shaped and 4 to 8 inches long with the lower ones being the largest. Each leaf tapers to a sharp point and has finely toothed edges, and prominent veins. The blades are rough on the top and downy, resinous, and dotted on the underside.

The leaves of boneset are easily distinguished. They are either perforated by the stem or connate; two opposite leaves joined at the base.

The flower-heads of Boneset are terminal and numerous, large and slightly convex, with 10 to 20 white florets, having bristly hairs arranged in a single row. The fragrance of Common Boneset is slightly aromatic, while the taste is astringent and strongly bitter. This plant shows considerable variety in its hairiness, size, form of leaves and inflorescence. Its flowering period is from July to September.

This plant is native to the Eastern United States and Canada, widespread from Nova Scotia to Florida, west as far as Texas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, and Manitoba. This plant prefers moist or wet conditions, rich soil, and full to partial sun. Boneset is found in a variety of wetland habitats across eastern North America from Quebec south to Florida and west to Texas and Manitoba.



*Boneset flowers and leaves, Jomegat, CC by SA 3.0*

### Harvesting instructions

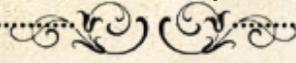
I harvest the leaves and flowering stems of Boneset in the summer before the buds open and dry them for later use. Seeds of Boneset ripen about a month after flowering and are collected when the heads are dry, split, and the fluffy seed begins to float away. If seeds are collected earlier, dry the seed heads for 1 - 2 weeks in open paper bags.

### Medicinal Use

The major medicinal properties of Boneset include Antispasmodic; Cholagogue; Diaphoretic; Emetic; Febrifuge; Homeopathy; Laxative; Purgative; Stimulant; Vasodilator.

### Colds, Flu, Bronchitis, Congestion and Excess Mucus

Boneset is an excellent choice for the treatment of the common cold, flu, and respiratory infections. It discourages the production of mucus, loosens phlegm and helps eliminate it from the body, fights off both viral and bacterial infections, and encourages sweating which helps reduce the associated fever. Patients given boneset early in the disease process have



milder symptoms and get well faster. On average, boneset helps patients heal two days sooner than patients who treat only the symptoms. I treat these diseases with one ounce of Boneset Infusion, taken three times daily.

### Denque Fever, AKA Break Bone Fever

Dengue fever thrives in tropical environments, and while it is not yet a problem here in the United States, it is probably only a matter of time before we are fighting it here. Boneset is the herb of choice for fighting dengue. It reduces the fevers and fights the underlying causes of the disease. It also gives the patient some relief from the “bone-breaking” pain. I used it successfully to treat dengue fever during WWII, giving one ounce of Boneset Infusion, three times daily.

### Malaria

My Native American friends use boneset to treat malaria. The sweating it promotes helps relieve the fevers associated with malaria and lessens the severity of the disease.

### Yellow Fever, and Typhoid

Boneset is helpful in the treatment of yellow fever and typhoid, although not as effective as in the treatment of dengue and malaria. Its main advantage here is its ability to reduce the accompanying fevers.

### Cautions

Do not use boneset for pregnant or nursing mothers, or for young children.

### Boneset Infusion

\*Take Boneset Infusion hot to relieve fevers and treat colds, flu, and similar diseases. Use it cold as a tonic. Take 1 ounce, three times daily.

Ingredients: 1-ounce dried boneset leaf, 1-quart boiling water, 1-quart jar with a tight-fitting lid.

Instructions: Put the dried boneset leaves into the jar and pour the boiling water over it to fill the jar. Tightly cap the jar and shake it gently to distribute the herb. Let the infusion steep for 4 hours. Strain through a coffee filter or a fine sieve. Warm it before drinking. It is very bitter, but warming it helps.

### Chamomile, *Matricaria Chamomilla*

I first began harvesting chamomile as a young boy. It was Aiyana’s favorite remedy, and she taught me early how to harvest the blossoms and leaves. When the flowers were blooming, we would pick only the most perfect blooms each day, coming back every afternoon to find the flowers at their peak. I became less exacting as I got older, but I still remember Aiyana carefully studying every flower to pick it at its peak.

Chamomile is an ancient remedy still in use today. Its longevity testifies to its usefulness and effectiveness. I think of it as a calming plant, and it does have sedative properties.

### Plant Identification

The plant has daisy-like flowers with a hollow, cone-shaped receptacle, and tiny yellow disk flowers covering the cone. The cone is surrounded by more



German chamomile, Alvesgaspar - Own work, CC by SA 3.0

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



than ten (probably 10 to 20) white, down-curving ray flowers, giving it the ultimate appearance of a miniature daisy.

You can distinguish the plant from similar flowers by the pattern in which the flowers grow, each flower on an independent stem. The most common way of identifying the Chamomile is by plucking a small amount of the blossom and crushing it in between your fingers. Chamomile has a faintly fruity scent.

I find chamomile plants easily along the east coast states. It thrives in open, sunny locations like roadsides, pastures, cornfields, and in well-drained soil. It will not tolerate excessive heat or dry conditions.

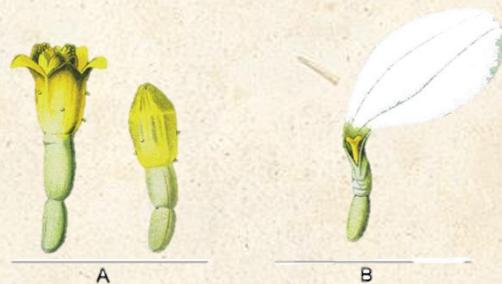
*Matricaria chamomilla* is German chamomile. English chamomile is similar and has similar medicinal uses. The two plants can be distinguished by their leaves.

German chamomile leaves appear to be very thin and hairy while those of the English Chamomile are larger and thicker. The leaves of the German chamomile are also bipinnate; each blade can be divided again into smaller leaf sections. German chamomile stems are somewhat feathery while English Chamomile is hairless.

Depending on the growing conditions chamomile can grow to between 2 feet and 3 ½ feet tall.

### Harvesting Chamomile

Harvesting of the Chamomile should be done as soon as the flower petals are full, and they lay flat around the center of the flower. Each bloom must be picked at its peak for the best flavor and benefit. I prefer to pick chamomile in the early afternoon, after the dew has evaporated and before the real heat of the day. Select flowers that are fully open and pinch or clip the flower head off at the top of the stalk. Dry the leaves and flowers for future use.



### Edible Uses

I collect both flowers and leaves for medicinal use, but the flowers make the best tea. The flowers have a milled apple flavor, while the leaves have a delicate grassy flavor. I also make a delicate liqueur with dried chamomile flowers and vodka.



*Flower Structure, Franz Eugen Köhler, Public Domain*

### Medicinal Use

Most often, I prescribe chamomile tea as a treatment. I have had a few patients who preferred taking the remedy as a tincture or as a dried herb. To give chamomile as a dried herb, I divide 2 to 3 grams of dried chamomile into 3 to 4 capsules for the divided daily dose.

### Digestive Issues

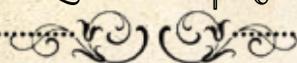
Chamomile relaxes the muscles, including the digestive muscles. This makes it a good treatment for abdominal pain, indigestion, gastritis and bloating. I have also used it with success for patients with Crohn's disease and irritable bowel syndrome. I recommend chamomile tea for digestive issues: 1 cup, 3 to 4 times daily.

### Colic

Chamomile is safe for use with babies and is my preferred treatment for colic. I recommend adding a cup of tea to the babies bath at night to soothe colic and help the baby sleep.

### Muscle Aches

The antispasmodic action of chamomile relaxes muscle tension. It soothes aching muscles and body aches.



## Insomnia

Chamomile is soothing and contains sedatives. One cup of chamomile tea, taken at bedtime or during the night, helps patients sleep. If more help is needed, use the tincture.

## Eyewash, Conjunctivitis, and Pinkeye

For eye problems, I recommend an eyewash made by dissolving 5 to 10 drops of Chamomile tincture in some boiled and cooled water. This mixture relieves eye strain and treats infections.

## Asthma, Bronchitis, Whooping Cough, and Congestion

I prefer a steam treatment for congestion and other respiratory conditions. Add two teaspoons of chamomile flower petals to a pot of boiling water. Inhale the steam until the phlegm is released or the condition is improved. Alternately, add 2 to 3 drops of Chamomile essential oil to a vaporizer and use in the room overnight.

## Allergies and Eczema

For allergic conditions, including itchy skin and eczema, I prefer to use Chamomile Essential Oil remedies. The steam distillation process alters the chemical properties of the remedy, giving it anti-allergenic properties. Use the diluted essential oil directly on the skin or inhale it.

## Warnings

While it is uncommon, I have had patients with an allergic reaction to chamomile. Patients with allergies to the Asteraceae family, including ragweed and chrysanthemums, should not take chamomile.

## Recipes

### Chamomile Tea

Ingredients: 1 to 2 teaspoons of dried chamomile flowers or leaves and 1 cup boiling water.

Pour 1 cup of boiling water over the chamomile flowers or leaves. Let the herb steep for 5 to 10 minutes. Strain, if desired, and enjoy.

### Chamomile Tincture

Ingredients: 1 pint loosely packed dried chamomile blossoms, vodka or brandy, or 80 proof or higher.

Place the blossoms in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the herbs to cover them completely. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the herb completely covered. Soak the blossoms for 4 to 6 weeks. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid. Discard the herbs. Place the alcohol extraction in a cool place, undisturbed overnight. Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining herb residue. Store the tincture in a tightly capped glass bottle in a cool, dark place. Use 4 to 6 ml per dose, three times daily, between meals.

### Chamomile Liqueur

Ingredients: 1 pint of 80 proof vodka, 1 cup chamomile flowers, 2 tablespoons honey or to taste and zest of one lemon.

Combine all ingredients in a tightly covered jar and allow the mixture to steep for two to four weeks. Strain.

### Chamomile Essential Oil

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer



1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of your chamomile essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place the herbs into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and your distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. Dilute the oil to at least 10% Chamomile oil and 90% carrier oil before use.

### Horseradish, *Armoracia rusticana*

I have to admit that my favorite use for horseradish is as a relish on my roast beef sandwich, But I have become something of a bore on the subject of its medicinal value. Most people are unaware of its use as a medicine, and I end up telling this tale every time I use this tasty condiment.

I was called unprepared into the home of a man who was suffering severely with bronchial congestion and having trouble breathing. I did not have my herbs with me and began to go through my mind how to treat him when his wife opened the refrigerator and offered me a drink. Sitting on the shelf was a nearly full jar of horseradish. As you might guess, I smeared it on his chest and had him eat a heaping spoonful immediately. He thought I was a bit crazy, but before I left, he was breathing easily again.

So many of the foods we eat every day have medicinal value when used correctly, but most people have no clue.

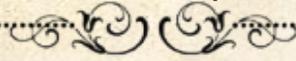
#### Plant Identification

I'm not sure whether horseradish is native to the US, but it certainly is widely spread. I find it in the wild throughout the country.

Horseradish is a perennial plant that belongs to Brassicaceae Family and genus *Armoracia*. This plant is a root vegetable that is used as a spice or condiment. It is native to the Southeastern Europe and Western Asia. It is also known as Red Cole. Horseradish is a perennial plant growing up to 2 1/2 to 2 3/4 feet at a fast rate. Its flowering season is from May to June. It is a self-fertile plant.



Horseradish plant, Pethan, CC by SA 3.0



The roots are thick and fleshy and are medium brown and are smooth to corky on outside. Roots are pure white on the inside and have a spicy flavor. The flowers of this plant are hermaphrodite (both male and female organs) and are pollinated by beetles, flies, bees and self-pollination.

It prefers arable lands and waste grounds. I often find it by streams and in other slightly damp soil.



*Horseradish root, Anna reg, CC by SA 3.0*

### Harvesting Instructions

Harvesting starts in November once tops are frozen back and can be continued through the winter when soils are not frozen. Before digging, the dried tops are mowed or cut to the ground if still green. Roots can be harvested best using a single-row potato digger.

Freshly dug roots release valuable volatile oils and begin to lose potency. To avoid this, store them in a box of moist sand in a cool place. Keep the soil moist. Grate it fresh, as needed. Once grated, use it immediately.

### Edible Use

The root, leaves, and seeds are all edible, but the root is most often used.

### Medicinal Use:

The roots of this plant are antiseptic, asperient, digestive, diuretic, stimulant, rubefacient and expectorant. It has a number of uses in treatment of health issues. It is a very pungent stimulant herb that controls bacterial infections, and it can be used both internally and externally. This plant is known to be a very powerful stimulant, whether used internally as a spur for digestive system or as a rubefacient, externally.

### Colds, Flu, Fevers, and Respiratory Infections

My Horseradish infusion is of great value in the treatment of respiratory problems, colds, flu, and fevers. It is an expectorant, anti-bacterial, and weak diuretic, acting to reduce mucus, rid the body of excess mucus and fluids, and treat the underlying infection.

### Urinary Tract Infections

The diuretic and anti-bacterial properties work well against urinary tract infections. Horseradish flushes the bacteria and toxins out of the body.

### Arthritis, Rheumatism, Pleurisy, Chilblains

For arthritis, rheumatism, chilblains, and pleurisy, I apply a poultice made from freshly grated horseradish roots or rub the chest with Horseradish Massage Oil, when available. The herb brings blood to the skin surface and increases blood circulation in the affected area. It warms the skin, decreases inflammation, and promotes healing.

### Infected Wounds

The anti-microbial agents found in horseradish are beneficial in treating infected wounds. It acts as an antibiotic against bacteria and pathogenic fungi. I prefer to use Horseradish Vinegar for infected wounds.



## Warnings

This plant should not be used internally by the people who have stomach ulcers or thyroid problems. Caution should be used when applying horseradish to the skin. It can cause skin irritation and blistering.

## Horseradish Vinegar

You'll need freshly grated horseradish, apple cider vinegar and water. Place finely grated horseradish in a clear glass jar and cover it with apple cider vinegar. Place the jar in a sunny location for ten days. Strain the horseradish and store it in a cool place for later use. When ready to use the vinegar, dilute it with an equal amount of filtered or distilled water. Use horseradish vinegar externally on the skin or scalp.

## Horseradish Massage Oil

To make the oil get freshly grated horseradish and cold-pressed olive oil or other suitable carrier oil. Cover the grated horseradish in oil. Cap the jar and allow the horseradish to steep in the oil for a few days. Strain out the horseradish. Use the oil as a massage oil for muscle aches and soreness.

## Horseradish Infusion

Ingredients: 1 tablespoon freshly grated horseradish, 1 tablespoon grated ginger, 1 quart of boiling water and lime or lemon juice to taste. Add the ginger and horseradish roots to a container of boiling water. Cover the container and simmer gently for about 1 hour. Remove from heat, cool to drinking temperature and add lemon or lime juice to taste. Drink 1 cup of tea three to four times a day, as needed. Drink warm or cold.

## Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)

I recognize Black-eyed Susan as a member of the sunflower family, and I've been lucky enough to find it throughout eastern and central North America. In some places it is called brown-eyed Susan, brown betty, coneflower, hairy coneflower, gloriosa daisy, poor-land daisy, yellow daisy, yellow ox-eye daisy, or golden Jerusalem. I rely on this herb as a treatment for bacterial infections and skin irritations and I appreciate that I can find it easily in most areas.

## Plant Identification

The plant is much like other daisies but differentiated by its attributes. It is usually an annual; but sometimes a perennial, growing 1 to 3 feet tall and 12 to 18 inches wide. The leaves are alternate, 4 to 7 inches long, and covered by coarse hair. The stems are branching, growing from a single taproot. There is no rhizome and reproduction is by seed only.

Daisy-like composite flower heads appear in late summer and early fall. Flowers are 4 inches in diameter, with yellow ray florets circling a brown or black dome-shaped cone of disc florets.

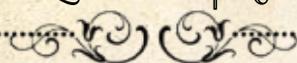
The plant prefers full sun and moist to moderately-dry soil.

## Medicinal Uses

Black-eyed Susan is a traditional Native American medicinal herb used for colds, flu, infection, swelling, and snake bite. I've used the roots, and sometimes the leaves to boost immunity and fight colds, flu, and infections.



*JoJan at English., Public Domain,*



## Black-Eyed Susan for Colds and Flu

I use a root infusion of black-eyed Susan to treat colds and the flu. Drink Black-eyed Susan Infusion daily until all symptoms are gone.

## Black-Eyed Susan for Parasites

The Chippewa people have long used Black-eyed Susan Root Tea to treat worms in children, and I found the remedy to be quite effective. I prescribe between one to four tablespoons of the tea or infusion daily for two weeks, with the amount depending on the size of the child.

## Black-Eyed Susan Poultice for Snake Bites

The Chippewa also used a poultice of black-eyed Susan to treat snake bites, but fortunately, I've had no need to use it. I was told to moisten chopped leaves or ground root and place over the affected area. Wrap with a cloth and keep it on the wound until the swelling is reduced. I am told you can also wash snakebites with Black-eyed Susan Root Infusion, but I suspect the poultice to be a stronger remedy if an adequate supply of root is available.

## Black-Eyed Susan for Skin Irritations

I have found black-eyed Susan root infusion to be very soothing on irritated skin including sores, cuts, scrapes, and swelling. I use the warm root infusion to wash the irritated skin.

## Black-Eyed Susan Treats Earaches

When I can get fresh roots, I use the sap or juice as drops to treat earaches. One or two drops in the affected ear treats the infection and relieves pain. Place the drops in the ear morning and night until the infection is completely cleared up.



*The Elvish Farmer, Public Domain*

## Stimulates the Immune System

Like Echinacea, black-eyed Susan has immune-stimulant activity. I find that the root extract of black-eyed Susan is more effective than Echinacea in boosting the immune system and treating colds, flu, and other minor illness.

## Black-eyed Susan to Treat Tuberculosis

In my study of herbal compounds, I learned that black-eyed Susan contains compounds which act against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the bacteria that causes tuberculosis. I have used it with good results when the patient took the tea regularly, as prescribed. I recommend 1 cup of Black-eyed Susan Tea every morning and night.

## Harvesting Instructions

To harvest the taproot, I wait until the plant has produced seeds, then dig the plant up by the root. Black-eyed Susan has one central taproot with hairs, but no other rhizomes. Dig deeply to get the entire root. I use it fresh in season and also dry some root for future use. I like to keep a supply of dried root available for year-round use.

## Warnings

Black-eyed Susan plants are toxic to cats and are reported to be poisonous to cattle, sheep, and pigs.



The seeds are poisonous.

### Black-Eyed Susan Root Infusion or Tea

Steep 5 teaspoons of crushed dried root in the boiling water for a few minutes.

Strain the infusion to remove the hairy fibers.

### Marshmallow, *Althaea officinalis*

The common marshmallow plant is grown commercially for medicinal use, but it can be found in many places in the US growing wild. In my childhood, Aiyana would make marshmallow candies with the roots, and I absolutely loved it. They had more flavor than today's supermarket version which is pure sugar.

The plant grows in cool, moist places such as the grassy banks of lakes and streams and on the edges of marshes. I have seen it in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, North Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, Michigan, Arkansas, and Wisconsin and it probably grows in other states as well.

It is a green perennial with large white flowers that bloom from July to September. The plants grow to be from 4 to 6 feet tall and form clumps about 2 1/2 feet in diameter. The leaves vary in shape. Some are spearhead-shaped while others have three or five lobes or may be toothed. They are covered in a fine, velvety fuzz on both sides.

The plant has many branchless stems covered in soft white hairs. The stems have saw-toothed projections. The flowers are somewhat trumpet-shaped, about 2 to 3 inches across and roughly 3 inches deep. The flowers produce seedpods that ripen in August to October, popping open to release small, flat black seeds.



Marshmallow leaf, photo by Nadiatalent, CC by SA 4.0



Marshmallow flower and leaves, photo by Jeffdelonge, CC by SA 3.0

### Edible Use

The leaves, flowers, roots, and seeds are all edible. The roots contain a mucilage which is sweet in flavor. They are sliced and boiled for 20 minutes, then removed from the liquid. The remaining liquid is boiled again with sugar to taste and whipped to make old-fashioned marshmallow candies.

### Medicinal Use

The roots, leaves, and flowers are used for medicinal treatments. They are especially valuable for treating problems with the mucous membranes. Dosage: Drink three to five cups of tea daily, either hot or cold. Alternatively, consume up to 5 or 6 grams of powdered marshmallow leaves and root daily. When using the Marshmallow Tincture, take 5 to 15 ml of tincture, three times a day.

### Gastritis, Acid Indigestion, Peptic Ulcers, and Digestive Problems

I use the root of the marshmallow plant to treat stomach problems caused by excess stomach acid. It is effective in neutralizing the acid and relieving the symptoms that it causes. For digestive problems, I



recommend the use of 5 to 15 ml of Marshmallow Tincture, three times a day. The root also has a moderate laxative effect which makes it useful in treating intestinal problems such as colitis, ileitis, irritable bowel syndrome, and diverticulitis.

### Dry Coughs, Bronchitis, Bronchial Asthma, Congestion, and Pleurisy

Because marshmallow is so good at treating the membranes, it makes a good antidote for respiratory problems. It relieves the swelling and irritation of the mucous membrane and calms the respiratory system. It is not an expectorant. I recommend the tincture or tea for respiratory problems.

### Teething Pain

Young children can be given a piece of peeled fresh roots to chew on. The chewing stick relieves teething pain and has a mildly sweet taste. Watch closely and replace it before it gets so chewed that it could become a choking hazard.

### Skin Irritations, Inflammations, and Swellings

For skin irritations, I use an ointment or cream prepared from marshmallow root and slippery elm, or I make a poultice from the ground dried root of marshmallow. I simply add a little water to make a paste from the powdered root and water, then apply it to the irritation. Both are equally effective, but the ointment seems to be easier for patients and there is no need to worry about it falling off.

### Skin Ulcers, Injuries, and for Removing Foreign Objects

My Marshmallow Root and Slippery Elm Ointment is highly effective in healing skin injuries of all kinds. It also helps in the extraction and healing of foreign objects below the skin such as splinters, and particles imbedded in scrapes and cuts.

### Urinary Tract Infections and Cystitis

Urinary tract infections and cystitis respond well to a decoction of Marshmallow root. It soothes irritated tissues and relaxes them, which helps with the pain and allows the decoction to work on the infection.

### Recipes

#### Marshmallow Leaf Tea

Use this tea for respiratory diseases. Take 1 teaspoon dried marshmallow leaves and 1 cup water. Bring 1 cup of water to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool to drinking temperature and drink warm or store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

#### Marshmallow Root Decoction

You'll need 25 grams marshmallow root, 1 quart of water. Grind the marshmallow root or chop it fine. Bring the water and marshmallow root to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer. Simmer over low heat until the liquid is reduced by one quarter.

Dosage: Take 2 to 3 tablespoons as needed up to three times daily.

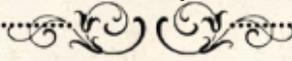
#### Marshmallow Root Tincture

You'll need 1 cup finely chopped marshmallow root and 1 pint 100 proof vodka or rum.



*Marshmallow roots, by Victor M. Vicente Selvas, CCO*

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



Place the finely chopped root in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid. Pour 100 proof or vodka or rum over the hulls to cover them completely. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the roots completely covered. Soak the roots for 4 to 6 weeks. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid. Discard the root pieces. Store the tincture in a cool place.

### Marshmallow Root and Slippery Elm Ointment

Ingredients: 100 g finely ground marshmallow root, 50 g lanolin, 50 g beeswax, 300 g soft paraffin wax, 100 g finely ground slippery elm bark.

Heat the marshmallow root, lanolin, beeswax, and paraffin together in a double boiler or in a slow oven (Use the lowest setting.) When cool enough to handle, but not yet set, stir in the slippery elm bark and pour it into a suitable container.

\*You can also make this ointment without the slippery elm bark, however, the bark acts as a supplemental medicine and as a preservative to help the ointment keep longer.

### Marshmallow Root Cream

\*Use this cream for skin rashes, ulcers, and wounds.

Ingredients: 2 quarts of fresh marshmallow leaves and flowers, 1 cup olive oil, 2 ounces beeswax and 1/3 cup powdered slippery elm bark, optional, but recommended as a medicine and preservative. Gather 2 quarts of fresh marshmallow leaves and flowers and mash them to release juices and bruise the tissue. Spread the mashed leaves, flowers, and the juices in a small roasting pan and add 1 cup of olive oil and 2 ounces of beeswax. Mix thoroughly, mashing the leaves.

Cover the pan and place the mixture in a slow oven at 150 degrees Fahrenheit, stirring every 10 to 15 minutes. Continue cooking until the herbs are crispy and break apart when touched. Strain out the herbs and pour the liquid into a wide mouth jar or other suitable container. Continue to stir the mixture every few minutes until it is cool, but not solidified.

Add 1/3 cup of powdered slippery elm bark and mix thoroughly. Let the mixture firm up. If the mixture is too stiff, you can warm it again and add more oil. For a loose ointment, heat and add more beeswax. Store tightly covered in a cool, dry place.

### Aloe Vera

I discovered Aloe Vera much later in my life when I had returned from the war. But once I did, I never looked back because besides being edible it is incredibly effective for so many afflictions.

It's not native to the US, but it's been naturalized in many states. I find it readily in the southern and western states where the weather is warm and I've counseled my patients to grow some in pots around their house.

When I was foraging it in the wild here's what I looked for to make sure I was getting the right plant and not a lookalike.

Aloe vera plants are composed of the leaves growing to 2 to 3 feet tall or more. The plant is stemless or has very short stems. The leaves grow in clumps.

Aloe vera leaves are thick, fleshy, and filled with gelatinous sap. The leaves are green to grey-green and may have white flecks on the leaf surfaces. The leaf margins are serrated with small white teeth.



Photo by Erin Silversmith, GNU FDL 1.2



Flowers appear in the summer on a tall spike growing from the center of the plant. Flowers range in color from white and yellow to orange and red.



### Edible Parts

I have eaten aloe vera leaves raw and cooked. The outer green skin can also be eaten, but I find it bitter and tough. Removing the skin with a sharp knife leaves the meat and gel inside the plant; both are edible.

Aloe is good poached or otherwise gently cooked. Fully cooked, it loses its slimy texture. Some people enjoy raw aloe as juice or by putting a chunk in their water.

### Medicinal Uses

I use aloe vera gel, the gelatinous substance inside the leaf, as a relief for sunburn, wounds, and other minor skin irritations. However, it also has internal uses.

### How to Use Aloe Vera

By Sumita Roy Dutta - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0

For external use, I split the leaf long ways with a knife and scrape the gel from the leaf interior. I most often use it as a soothing salve directly on the skin. For internal use, I recommend 1 to 3 ounces of the gel added to juice, since the gel can be unpleasant and bitter when taken alone.

### Aloe Vera for Heartburn Relief and Irritable Bowel Syndrome

I recommend consuming 1 to 3 ounces of aloe vera gel with each meal to reduce the severity of gastroesophageal reflux disease and the associated heartburn. I find it also helps the cramping, abdominal pain, flatulence, and bloating caused by irritable bowels. The juice is soothing on the digestive tract. However, there are some safety concerns, so I recommend aloe only as needed.

### As a Treatment for Bleeding or Swollen Gums

Aloe vera extract makes a safe and effective mouthwash that reduces swelling, soothes, and provides relief from bleeding or swollen gums. I recommend adding the gel to the final rinse water and swishing it around, holding it in the mouth for a minute, then spitting it out.

### Lowering Blood Sugar in Diabetics

Ingesting just two tablespoons of aloe vera juice or pulp extract daily helps lower blood sugar levels in patients with type 2 diabetes.

### Aloe Vera is a Natural Laxative

Aloe vera gel relieves constipation but should be used sparingly. A dose of 40 to 170 milligrams of dried juice is sufficient.

### Skin Care

Aloe gel is soothing on the skin and an excellent remedy for sunburn, skin abrasions, infections and other mild skin irritations. It also keeps skin clear and hydrated. I recommend it as a moisturizer and pain reliever.



*Cabbage, By Taken byfir0002, GFDL 1.2*

## Cabbage, *Brassica oleracea*

The common cabbage is familiar to gardeners across the country, but many don't realize how valuable it is as a medicinal plant. The plant is a biennial or perennial, forming a round head that can reach up to 8 feet when fully mature. Most cabbages are harvested long before they reach such a size.

The leaves are gray with a thick stem. Yellow flowers with four petals appear in the spring. The leaves form a head during the late summer of the first year. Cabbage can also be reddish-purple, green, or white. All varieties have the health-giving benefits.

### Edible Use

The cabbage is a common vegetable, especially in the winter because it keeps well in the root cellar. It is eaten raw and cooked.

### Medicinal Use

**Treating Wounds, Leg Ulcers, Painful Joints, Arthritis, Skin Cancers**

I have used cabbage wounds successfully for cleaning wounds and preventing infections. They are also useful to reduce swelling in painful joints and treat skin tumors. I chop the leaves and crush them to release the health-giving juices and heat them through in a small amount of water. I then apply the leaves as a poultice over the affected area. The cabbage detoxifies the skin and underlying tissue, prevents bacterial growth, and reduces inflammation.

### Intestinal Problems

Cabbage is useful for treating intestinal problems because of its sulfurous compounds, but I have found the fermented cabbage in the form of sauerkraut is even more effective for treating intestinal problems of all kinds. Patients are advised to eat sauerkraut daily and drink a little of the juice. My Cabbage Decoction can also be used.

### Diabetes

I have found that consuming sauerkraut juice, mixed with a little lemon juice helps patients control their diabetes and stabilize their blood sugars. The sauerkraut juice stimulates the digestion and pancreas.

### Constipation

Cabbage, cabbage juice, and sauerkraut juice all have laxative properties. For best results, I recommend that patients drink a juice glass of sauerkraut juice mixed with equal parts tomato juice.



*Flowers appear in the second year. Photo by Griensteidl, CC by SA 3.0*



This combination is powerful and loaded with healthy vitamins, minerals, and enzymes.

### Treating Cancer

For treating cancer, especially cancers of the stomach, intestines, pancreas, and prostate, I recommend drinking cabbage juice or sauerkraut juice twice daily. Finely chopped cabbage should also be eaten as tolerated. Both cabbage juice and sauerkraut juice have many different beneficial compounds that fight the cancer and help heal the body. I prefer to alternate between cabbage juice and sauerkraut juice whenever possible so that the benefits of both are realized.

### Mastitis, Painful Breasts in Nursing Mothers

For painfully engorged breasts and mastitis, I recommend a poultice made from cabbage leaves. I remove the large central vein from a cabbage leaf and crush or pound the leaf. I want the leaf to remain whole as much as possible, but I want it badly bruised so that the healing sulfur compounds are formed, and the juice is forming. Apply the bruised leaf to the breast or line the bra cup with the leaf. Repeat as needed until the problem is resolved. For mastitis, repeat for several days until the infection is cleared.

### Recipes

#### Cabbage Decoction

Ingredients: 1 cup cabbage leaves, shredded and 2 cups water

Bring the water and cabbage to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 1 hour. Strain the decoction, discarding the cabbage. Drink 4 ounces at a time, as often as needed.

#### Sauerkraut

Equipment: Large glass jar or crock, I prefer using a fermentation crock, but a glass jar will work, a fermentation weight or a plate that fits in the container, a large bowl or tub for mixing, a plate or tray.

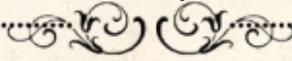
Ingredients for 1 gallon of Sauerkraut: 1 large head of cabbage, shredded fine, a few large leaves from the outside of the cabbage, 3 tablespoons pickling salt and 1 tablespoon caraway seeds, optional.

Shred the cabbage finely and add 2 tablespoons of salt. Let the cabbage stand for about 10 minutes to draw out juices. Knead the cabbage for 10 minutes or more to bruise it and release more juices. Add the remaining salt and the caraway seeds. Pack the cabbage into a large glass jar or crock and add the juices. Cover the top of the shredded cabbage with the whole cabbage leaves. Add a weight to the top of the cabbage to keep it beneath the liquid. Fermenting crocks use fermenting weights, but a clean plate or another dish can be used. Cover the container with its lid. Place the container in a cool spot on a tray or plate to catch any spills. Leave the cabbage overnight and check it the next day to make sure that all the cabbage is submerged in liquid and skim off any scum that forms. Continue checking the sauerkraut every other day for four weeks. Transfer the sauerkraut to the refrigerator and use within six months. Sauerkraut can be canned for longer storage. However I believe this destroys some of the beneficial enzymes as well as the live culture. I recommend that my patients use the sauerkraut with live culture.

### Chickweed, *Stellaria media*

*Stellaria Media* (chickweed) is an annual plant from the family Caryophyllaceae and genus *Stellaria*. The herb is naturalized to many parts of North America. This herb is sometimes referred to as common chickweed to distinguish it from other plants with the same name. The herb *Stellaria media* is also referred to as winterweed, maruns, chickenwort, and craches. It is commonly grown as feed for chickens.

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



I think most people these days have become more concerned about having a nice grass lawn and have forgotten about the value of a diverse habitat. Unfortunately, chickweed is one of those plants that is often indiscriminantly yanked up as a weed. I used to find it everywhere, but now I have to spend a bit of time looking for this useful little herb.

### Plant identification

Common chickweed can grow from heights of 2 to 20 inches. It grows in a unique, intertwined manner covering large areas. It has small white star-shaped flowers. The chickweeds leaves are oval with cup-like tips and are smooth with slightly feathered edges.

The flowers of this herb are small, white and star-shaped. They are produced at the tip of the stem. The sepals are green in color.

### Edible Use

The leaves, stem, and flowers are edible. The leaves are used by adding them to sandwiches and raw to salads. These leaves can also be added to stews and soups as well. The flowers and stems can be used cooked as a vegetable or in soups.



*Common Chickweed, Kaldari, CCO*

### Harvesting Instructions

Harvesting of this herb is done early in the morning or late in the evening. Use scissors or clippers to cut the top six branches. Harvest as many branches as you can then clean them thoroughly. Use them fresh or dry them for future use.

### Medicinal Uses

#### Rheumatism

I make a traditional tea or tincture from this herb as a remedy for rheumatism. Take one cup of tea, twice daily or up to 20 ml of the tincture. It relieves the inflammation and pain of rheumatism. I also recommend adding a strong tea to a warm bath and soaking to relieve rheumatism pains, especially on the knees and feet.



#### Roseola and Other Rashes

Children and adults suffering from roseola are plagued by an itchy rash. I recommend a poultice of moistened crushed chickweed leaves applied to the rash for relief of pain and itching. Adding a strong tea to the bathwater also helps.

#### Nerve Pain

Chickweed applied as a poultice has carminative properties that help relieve the pain and tingling caused by surface nerves misfiring.

#### Constipation and Digestive Problems

I recommend chickweed tea or small doses of the decoction to treat constipation. Be careful not to overdo it with the decoction; it has a strong purgative action. Chickweed also has analgesic properties that act on the digestive system to relieve pain, but it does not treat the underlying causes. Digestive problems are helped by taking small doses over time.



### Skin Irritations, Dermatitis, Eczema, Urticaria, Shingles, and Varicose Veins

An ointment or poultice made from chickweed works well for skin irritations, especially on itches and rashes. It relieves the irritation very well and soothes the itch. It is also useful for varicose veins, urticaria, dermatitis, and eczema. For widely spread rashes or when large areas are affected, I tell my patients to add the decoction to their bathwater and take a soak.

### Detoxification, Blood Purification, Tetanus, Boils, Herpes, and Venereal Diseases

Chickweed is an excellent detoxification agent and blood purifier. It is useful to draw poisons out of the body in cases of blood poisoning, tetanus, or from poisons entering the blood stream through a wound. For these purposes make a poultice from equal parts chickweed, ginger root and honey. Blend the mixture to a smooth paste and apply it directly to the wound and the surrounding area. Cover the poultice and replace it every six hours.

I also give the patient chickweed powder or tea to treat the problem from the inside out. This same protocol works for the treatment of boils, herpes sores, and other venereal diseases. Give both internal and external remedies for best results.

### Warnings

Some patients are allergic to chickweed. The herb is considered safe, but it should not be used by nursing women or pregnant women without the approval from a healthcare professional.

### Recipes

#### Chickweed Decoction

Use fresh chickweed whenever possible to make this herbal decoction. It is an excellent internal cleanser and makes a good wash and external agent. You need 1 cup freshly picked chickweed leaves and 1 pint of water.

Bring the water to a boil and add the chickweed leaves. Reduce the heat to low and simmer the leaves for 15 minutes. Cool the decoction and use it internally or externally. The internal dose is 1 to 2 ounces.

#### Chickweed Tea

Make a traditional tea using 1 teaspoon of the dried herb or 1 tablespoon of fresh chopped chickweed. Pour 1 cup of boiling water over the leaves and cover it while it steps for 10 to 15 minutes. Consume the entire cup for medicinal purposes.

### Couch Grass, *Agropyron repens*

Couch grass, also known as dog grass, quack grass, and witchgrass, is usually considered a weed and a nuisance grass in the United States but is often used for livestock fodder in other places. It grows rapidly to a height of approximately 32 inches.

The crawling tubular root is elongated while the leaves are slender. Each short stem produces five to seven leaves and possibly a flower spike at the terminal. Each flower spike is composed of oval-shaped spikelets less than an inch long. The flowers appear in late June through August. The seed heads look like a stalk of grain.

The roots are elongated, thin, tubular and whitish in color with yellow ends. Couch grass grows aggressively and is capable of





crowding out agricultural crops and is often found on cultivated land. It like loose soils and will die out as the soil becomes compacted. I find it most often in sandy soils on the banks of beaches

### Edible Use

The grain has food value as fodder for animals, and I am told that the root is sometimes eaten when food is scarce. I've never tried it. The roots can also be ground and roasted to make a coffee substitute.

### Medical Use

The rhizomes of couch grass are used to make a tincture, infusion, and a decoction. I use these three preparations as medicine to treat various conditions.

### Urinary Tract Problems, Kidney Stones, Cystitis, Gallbladder Diseases

Couch grass is effective at treating urinary tract problems including inflammations, infections, and slow and painful urination caused by muscle spasms of the bladder and urethra. It soothes the mucous membranes and relieves the pain. It is a diuretic that increases the production of urine. It also works to dissolve kidney stones and gravel and treat cystitis and diseases of the gallbladder. I use couch grass in combination with yarrow or bearberry to treat urinary tract infections.

### Swollen Prostate

The herb is also effective for treatment of swollen prostate glands. I prescribe either the decoction or the tincture and often combine it with the use of saw palmetto.

### Gout

I use couch grass decoction for treating gout. I prescribe 1 teaspoon of Couch Grass Decoction, diluted in a little water, taken three times a day.

### Rheumatoid Arthritis

The diuretic properties, anti-inflammatory properties, and analgesic properties of couch grass make it effective in treating rheumatoid arthritis. I find that the infusion or decoction is best for treating rheumatoid arthritis.

### Jaundice

The anti-inflammatory properties and diuretic properties, combined with the benefits to the urinary tract and gallbladder, make couch grass a good choice for treating jaundice. It helps the body eliminate toxins and allows it to heal. I prescribe the tincture or decoction for treating jaundice at the standard dosages listed in the recipes below.

### Recipes

#### Couch Grass Infusion

You need 1-ounce couch grass root, chopped and 2 cups boiling water. Add the chopped couch grass root to the boiling water and turn off the heat. Allow the infusion to steep for 1 hour. Drink four to six ounces, twice a day. Store the remaining infusion in the refrigerator for up to three days.

#### Couch Grass Decoction

Ingredients: 4 ounces couch grass roots, chopped and 1-quart water.

Bring the water and the roots to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer. Simmer the roots, uncovered, until the liquid is reduced by half, leaving approximately 2 cups of liquid. Store in the refrigerator for 3 days or freeze for longer periods.

Dosage: Give 1 teaspoon, diluted in water, three times daily.

### Couch Grass Tincture

You require 1 1/2 cups couch grass roots, chopped and 1 pint 100 proof vodka. First chop the roots and place them in a pint jar with a tight-fitting lid. Pour the vodka over the roots to fill the jar. Cap the jar tightly and shake. Label the jar with the contents and date it. Place the jar in a warm, sunny window and allow the tincture to steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking daily. Strain the roots out with a fine sieve or coffee filter. Store the tincture in a cool, dark place for up to 5 years. Dosage: Take 1/2 to 1 teaspoon of tincture, three times daily.

### Dill, *Anethum graveolens*

Dill is a familiar aromatic herb cultivated in herb gardens across the country. The plant grows to 30 inches tall with a slender, hollow, and erect stem and feathery leaves. Leaves are finely divided and delicate in appearance, 4 to 8 inches long. They are similar to fennel in appearance.

Numerous tiny yellow or white flowers appear on umbrellas that are 3/4 to 3 1/2 inches in diameter as soon as the weather turns hot. The seeds are small, up to 1/5 of an inch long with a ridged surface.

### Collection and harvesting

I harvest leaves throughout the summer until the flowers appear in late summer. Gather leaves in the late morning after the dew has dried and use them fresh, freeze them, or dry them for later use.

I collect the seed heads once the flowers are fully open, if needed, or I allow them to completely ripen for seed collection. The brown seeds are collected and dried for storage.

### Edible Use

Dill is widely enjoyed as an herb, especially with fish and in pickles. The leaves, seeds, and stems are edible.

### Medicinal Use

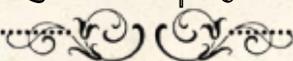
#### Colic

Colicky babies respond well to a dill infusion. The dill soothes the stomach and calms the baby. This is one of my most popular colic remedies because it is easily attained, effective, and known to be safe for the child.

### Digestive Issues, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Menstrual Cramps, and Muscle Spasms

Dill Leaf Infusion relieves cramping and muscle spasms including those in the digestive tract. It relieves the symptoms of painful spasms without treating the underlying cause. I use it to give immediate relief to patients while we look for the causes of the problem. My Dill Seed Infusion or Dill Tincture may also be used.





## Stimulates Milk Flow

I recommend Dill Infusion for nursing mothers to increase the milk flow. It has a beneficial calming effect on both mother and child.

## Halitosis

Temporary bad breath is easily solved by chewing on dill leaves or seeds; but the problem can be completely alleviated by chewing the seeds daily. Over the long term the seeds attack the causes of the problem and give a permanent solution.

## Flatulence

For abdominal flatulence, I recommend Dill Seed Infusion taken before each meal.



*Dill Plant, Public Domain*



*Dill, Tepeyac - Own work, CC by SA 3.0*

## Caution

Consumption of dill can cause sensitivity to the sun in some people. Patients sometimes have a rash appear after exposure to sunlight.

## Recipes

### Dill Leaf Infusion

Ingredients: 1 Tablespoon chopped dill leaves and 1 cup boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the dill leaves and cover the cup. Let it steep until cool enough to drink, then strain out the leaves.

### Dill Seed Infusion

You need 1 to 2 tablespoons dill seeds and 1 cup water. Bring the seeds and water to a boil, turn off the heat and cover the pot. Allow the infusion to steep for 15 minutes. Cool and strain out the seeds. Take one cup before each meal for digestive issues.

### Dill Tincture

Ingredients: fresh Dill leaves, 1/4 cup dill seeds, crushed and 100 proof vodka or other drinking alcohol.

Mix the dill leaves and seeds together. Add the fresh dill leaves and seeds to the jar. Pour 100 proof vodka over the leaves and seeds and fill the jar, making sure all the leaves are covered.

Cap the jar tightly and place it in a cool, but sunny location such as a windowsill. Let the tincture marinate for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking the jar daily. Add more alcohol, if needed to keep the jar full. Pour the alcohol through a fine mesh sieve or a coffee filter to remove all the leaves and seeds. Store the tincture in a cool, dark cupboard for up to 7 years. Dosage: 1/2 to 1 teaspoon, three times daily.

## Fennel, *Foeniculum vulgare*

Fennel is a commonly used vegetable in the carrot family. It has a licorice flavor and is highly aromatic. It has escaped cultivation and is widely found across the United States. I grow it in my garden, but I am also able to find it along roadsides, riverbanks, and pasture lands.

Fennel is a flowering perennial herb with yellow flowers. It looks a lot like dill, except for the bulb. The leaves are feathery, very similar to dill only finer. The stems are erect, smooth and green and grow to a height of eight feet. The leaves are finely dissected with threadlike segments.

Most, but not all varieties form a stem-bulb which sits on the ground or is lifted by a segment of stem. Leaf branches fan out from the stem, forming the bulb. Flowers appear on umbrels, 2 to 6 inches in diameter. The umbrels are terminal and compound, with each section containing 20 to 50 tiny yellow flowers. The fruit is a small seed, approximately 1/5 to 1/3 inch long with grooves along its length.



*Fennel, Alvesgaspar, CC by SA 3.0*

### Harvesting Fennel

Harvest fennel seeds in the fall when they are fully mature. Dry them and store in an air-tight container in a cool, dark place.

### Edible Use

The stems, leaves, and seeds are edible. I prefer to roast the bulbs and use the seeds for seasoning.

### Medicinal Use

The seeds and root are used to prepare remedies, but eating the plant is also healthy.

### Digestive Problems

An infusion made from the seeds is effective in the treatment of digestive problems. I prescribe it after meals for the treatment of indigestion, heartburn, and flatulence or several times daily for the treatment of other digestive complaints. It is also effective for the treatment of constipation and stomach pain. In addition to using the infusion, I encourage patients with digestive problems to add fennel seeds to their cooking.

### Nursing Mothers and Colic

For the treatment of colic, I have the mother drink Fennel Infusion. It not only relieves the colic, but it also increases the milk flow. The beneficial ingredients are passed on and relieve colic in the baby. Non-nursing babies can take a spoonful of the infusion to relieve the symptoms.

### Sore Throats, Laryngitis, Gum Problems

I also use Fennel Infusion as a treatment for sore throats. I have patients begin gargling with the Infusion to treat the infection and pain. This treatment is also effective for sore gums.



*Fennel, Koehler's Medicinal-plants, Public Domain*

contains estrogen-like chemicals that work to restore the hormonal balance.

## Detoxifying, Diuretic

Fennel is a strong diuretic and detoxifier. It cleans toxins from the body and flushes them out through the urinary tract. Drink Fennel Seed Tea up to three times daily to detoxify the body and remove excess fluids.

## Eyesight, Eyewash, Conjunctivitis, Eye Inflammations

To strengthen eyesight, eat fennel with your meals. For inflammations and eye infections, use Fennel Seed Tea as an eyewash. It treats conjunctivitis, infections and reduces inflammations of the eye.

## Caution

A few rare patients have had problems with photo-dermatitis while taking fennel seed.

Fennel has hormonal effects and should not be consumed by pregnant women.

## Recipes

### Fennel Infusion

You need 1 teaspoon fennel seeds, crushed and 1 cup boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the fennel seeds and allow the

## Urinary Tract Problems, Kidney Stones

For urinary tract infections, kidney stones, and other urinary tract problems, I use a decoction of the fennel root.

## Skin Inflammations, Hidradenitis Suppurativa

One patient that I prescribed with Fennel for kidney stones also suffered from stage III Hidradenitis Suppurativa. I had never been able to help her with the disease beyond treating the secondary symptoms.

When she began eating fennel in her daily diet, her hidradenitis suppurativa also improved. She experienced a lessening of symptoms of existing lesions and no new lesions. Although some of her pre-existing lesions remain, she still reports improvement. She ate fennel daily and took the Fennel Root Decoction initially, then continued with eating fennel daily.

## Menstrual Problems

Fennel has the ability to regulate the menstrual cycle and the hormones affecting it. I prescribe Fennel Seed Tea for a variety of menstrual problems including cramping, pain and fluid retention and other menstrual symptoms. Fennel





infusion to steep, covered, for 10 to 15 minutes. Drink 3 cups daily. Take after meals for digestive issues.

### Fennel Root Decoction

To make the decoction get 2 ounces chopped fennel root, fresh and 1 quart water. Bring the fennel root and water to a boil and turn the heat down to a simmer. Simmer the decoction for 1 hour. Turn off the heat and strain out the root. Store the decoction in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.



### Garlic, *Allium sativum*

Garlic has strong medicinal value, and it tastes great. Most people would benefit greatly by eating more garlic, no matter how good or bad their health. I use garlic for nearly everything.

Most of the garlic that I use now is cultivated. It is found in nearly every herb garden and kitchen garden across the country and is easily found at supermarkets. Don't fall for prepared garlic, however. Chop it fresh and make your own garlic products for maximum health.

### Plant Identification

The garlic plant grows to about 2 feet tall. It is a bulbous herb with four to twelve long, flat, sword-shaped leaves growing from an underground stem. The bulbs are rounded and contain approximately 15 smaller cloves. Each clove and the bulb is covered by a thin white or pinkish papery coat. Flowers appear in a cluster at the top of a flower stalk that is about 10 inches long. Flower stalks grow from a common point on each plant. The flowers are green-white or pinkish with six sepals and petals, each about 3 mm long. The flowers do not usually accomplish fertilization, and most propagation is by bulbs. However, bulbils which resemble tiny cloves, often appear among the flowers. Seeds are rarely produced.

### Edible Use

The bulbs are the only part of the garlic eaten and are usually used for seasoning or as a condiment.

### Medicinal Use

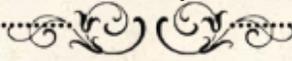
For internal use, I usually recommend that my patients simply eat more garlic in their foods. For best results, garlic should be chopped fine and allowed to rest for 10 minutes or so before cooking. Chopping, and allowing time for the sulfurous compounds to develop in the garlic, will make it more potent.

Some patients and their family members complain of a strong garlic smell in the sweat when consuming garlic. This is a natural response and indicates that the body is using the beneficial components. To alleviate this complaint, eat fresh parsley with the garlic.

### Taking Garlic as Medicine

In general, I allow patients to use garlic in any way that best suits them. Patients who don't like the strong flavor can put it into capsules, but I recommend that patients use garlic fresh and chopped fine or crushed to release the beneficial sulfurous compounds. It can be cooked into food or consumed raw. Patients can also take my tincture. For patients who like garlic, I recommend chewing one whole raw clove at each meal. Patients can also drink garlic juice daily.





### Treating Viral, Bacterial, and Parasitic Infections

Components of garlic are a potent antibiotic, antifungal, and anti-parasitic substances that treat these infections as well as penicillin and other antibiotics. I use garlic to treat infections of all kinds, including colds, flu, sore throats, bronchitis, stomach flu, and intestinal worms.

### Thrush, Yeast, and Fungal Infections

I use garlic preparations topically to treat thrush infections and other types of yeast or fungal infections. Spread a paste of garlic on the affected area several times a day. I also recommend eating garlic regularly to clear the infection internally.

### Digestive Problems

Garlic improves the digestion and is useful to relieve excessive gas, bloating, and other digestive upsets. Take garlic in food with every meal.

### Lowers Blood Sugars in Diabetics

Garlic helps lower blood sugar in diabetic patients by improving the function of the pancreas and increasing the secretion of insulin. This helps the body regulate blood sugar levels and alleviates the problems associated with high blood sugar. To be effective, garlic needs to be eaten at every meal in significant quantities. Adding a couple of cloves of pickled garlic to the meal will usually be enough to get the full benefits.

### Bronchitis, Whooping Cough, Congestion of All Causes

Garlic has a strong decongestant effect and expectorant action. It is useful for maladies where phlegm or mucous is a problem. I use it to treat respiratory problems that involve mucous. Garlic also reduces fevers and kills off the underlying infection. It is also useful for bronchial asthma where the breathing passages have swollen making breathing difficult.

### Elevated Blood Cholesterol Levels, Blood Pressure

I've seen garlic effectively lower blood cholesterol levels in my patients when consumed regularly. And it usually had the added benefits of also lowering their blood pressures and clear plaque from their arteries. Many have escaped a deadly heart attack that way. Their whole-body blood flow improved as well.

### Corns, Warts, and Acne

For corns, warts, and acne, I advise patients to rub a paste made from fresh mashed garlic on the affected spot. Garlic actually softens and soothes the skin and kills the viral or bacterial infection causing the problem.

### Recipes

#### Garlic Infusion

Chop or grind garlic cloves and allow them to rest for 10 to 15 minutes before continuing. Place the garlic into a pot and cover with water. Heat the water gently to a simmer, then turn off the heat. Allow the garlic and water to steep overnight. Use 2 to 4 ml of this infusion, 3 times a day with meals.

Keep the Infusion in the refrigerator for up to three days or in the freezer for up to a month.

#### Garlic Tincture

Chop 1 cup of garlic cloves fine and allow to rest for 10 to 15 minutes. Place the garlic cloves in a pint jar with a tight-fitting lid. Cover the chopped garlic with apple cider vinegar, preferably with the mother (live vinegar). Allow the jar to steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking it several times a week. Take 1 tablespoon of garlic tincture with each meal.

#### Anti-Inflammatory Vinegar

\*Also great for preventing colds and flu.



Ingredients: 1 large red onion, chopped fine, 3 heads garlic, chopped fine, ½ cup fresh ginger root, grated, ½ cup fresh turmeric root, grated, ¼ cup fresh horseradish root, grated, ¼ cup fresh thyme, chopped, 2 fresh cayenne peppers, more or less to taste, ½ gallon Raw, unpasteurized apple cider vinegar

Put all the ingredients in a half-gallon jar with a tight-fitting lid. Fill the jar with unpasteurized apple cider vinegar. All herbs should be completely covered by a couple of inches. Seal the jar tightly and place it in a warm place like a sunny window. Steep the herbs and vinegar for four weeks, shaking the jar daily. Strain out the herbs or leave in and consume with the vinegar. Consume a tablespoon daily during cold and flu season or throughout the year to relieve inflammation.

### Greater Burdock, *Arctium lappa*

*Arctium lappa* belongs to Asteraceae family and genus *Arctium*. It is also commonly known as greater burdock, edible burdock, lappa, beggar's buttons, thorny burr, or happy major. It is a Eurasian species of plants in the sunflower family and is cultivated in gardens for its root which is used as a vegetable. This plant has become an invasive weed in many places in North America. It's a giant weed with so much medicinal potential.

#### Plant Identification

Greater burdock is a biennial plant. It is rather tall, reaching as much as 3 m (10 ft). Its stems are branched, rough and usually sparsely hairy. Its flowering time is from July to September. The fleshy tap-root of this plant can grow up to 3 ¼ feet deep.

Greater Burdock forms a 1.4-1.6 inches wide, single flower-like flat cluster of small flowers surrounded by a rosette of bracts. This cluster of flowers has disk florets, either red or rarely white and tubular with 5 Stamens. Leaves of greater burdock are generally alternate and stalked. They are blade triangular-broadly oval and usually cordate based, with toothed margins. They have a white-grey-cottony underside.

The fruit is flattish, gently curved and is grey-brown in color. It has dark-spotted achene with short yellow hooked hairs on tip. Greater burdock is found almost everywhere, especially in areas with disturbed soils that are usually rich in nitrogen. Its preferred habitat is yards and roadsides, around old dwelling areas, trash collection areas, and mills.



*Burdock flowers, Pethan, GNUFL 1.2*

#### Collection and harvesting

The root must be harvested before it withers at the end of the first year. The best time is after it seeds until late autumn when the roots become very fibrous. Immature flower stalks are harvested in late spring before the flowers appear. Care must be taken when harvesting the seeds. They have tiny, hooked hairs that can latch onto the mucus membranes if inhaled.

#### Edible Status

The leaves, stems, seeds, and roots are edible. Young roots are good raw in salads, but they become too fibrous as they mature and need to be cooked before eating. The leaves and stalks are also good either raw or cooked. I prefer to remove the outer rind before cooking or eating. The sprouted seeds are also eaten.



## Medicinal Use

Greater Burdock is antibacterial, antifungal, carminative, diuretic, hypoglycemic, stomachic, and a blood purifier. It is a powerful detoxifier. The dried root is most often used for medicine, but the leaves and fruit can also be used.

## Detoxing

I've often used this great herb to eliminate a condition caused by an overload of toxins in my patients, such as sore throat and other infections, boils, rashes and other skin problems. Its root is particularly good at helping to eliminate heavy metals and other resilient toxins from the body.

## Cancer Treatment

Greater burdock is known to kill cancer cells. It flushes away toxins from the body, increases blood circulation to normal cells, protects the organs, and improves the health of the whole body. I have used it to treat breast cancers, colon cancer, and even the deadly pancreatic cancer with good results. I feel confident that it would be effective against other cancers as well.

In treating cancer, I have found the greatest success when herbs are used in combination to kill the cancer cells and support the body. I use greater burdock in combination with sheep sorrel and slippery elm to kill the cancer and detox the body during treatment. I also counsel the patient on eating a highly nutritious diet with a high concentration of vegetables and fruits and limited meats and fats.

Dosage: Mix 1/4 cup of Anti-Cancer Decoction with 1/4 cup of distilled water. Drink 3 times a day: 2 hours before breakfast, 2 hours after lunch and before bedtime on an empty stomach. Wait at least 2 hours after taking the decoction before eating again. The patient should also eat a nutritious diet with high concentration of fruits and vegetables.

## Anemia

Greater burdock has a high concentration of iron which is bioavailable. My patients with iron deficiency anemia are able to increase their iron levels rapidly by taking daily supplements of greater burdock powder or eating greater burdock as a vegetable. One to two grams of the powdered root, taken three times daily is enough to build the iron levels in the blood.

## Skin Diseases

Greater burdock is a very soothing herb for the skin. It has mucilaginous properties that enhance its ability to cure skin diseases such as herpes, eczema, acne, impetigo, ringworm, boils, insect bites, burns, and bruises.

I tell my patients to use greater burdock tea as a wash and to take it internally to clear the body of the toxins that are causing the skin problems.

For bruises, burns, and sores, I recommend crushing the seed and using it as a poultice on the affected skin.

## Diabetes

Greater burdock root helps improve digestion and lower blood sugar in diabetics.



*Burdock leaf in hand, Nwbeeson, CC by SA 4.0*



For this use the fresh root is best, but 1 to 2 grams of dried powdered root can also be taken 3 times daily. In my practice, the consumption of fresh burdock root is associated with a decrease of diabetic complications such as diabetic retinopathy.

### **Strengthens the Immune System and Protects the Organs**

This herb strengthens the immune system and the lymphatic system which helps rid the body of toxins and ward off diseases. It also cleans the blood. I recommend Greater Burdock Tea to strengthen the immune system.

It is also beneficial to the spleen and helps it remove dangerous pathogens from the body and cleans and protects the spleen. It improves blood quality, liver health, blood circulation, and fights inflammation.

### **Stimulates the Kidneys, Relieves Fluid Retention**

Greater burdock stimulates the kidneys, helping get rid of excess fluids in the body. This reduces swellings, increases urine output, and flushes waste and toxins from the body. I prescribe Greater Burdock Tea three times daily as a natural diuretic.

### **Osteoarthritis and Degenerative Joint Disease**

The anti-inflammatory properties of greater burdock are powerful enough to reduce the inflammation of osteoarthritis. My patients show remarkable improvement when they consume three cups of Greater Burdock Root Tea daily. Improvement is slow and steady, taking about two months to achieve maximum benefits.

### **Sore Throats and Tonsillitis**

For acute tonsillitis and other sore throats, I recommend Greater Burdock Tea, taken three times daily. It relieves the pain and inflammation, relieves the cough, and speeds healing. The greater burdock also acts as an antibacterial to kill the harmful bacteria and cure the infection.

### **Recipes**

#### **Anti-Cancer Decoction**

To make 1 gallon you need 1 ounce greater burdock root, powdered, 3/4 ounces sheep sorrel, powdered, 1/4 ounces slippery elm bark, powdered and 1 gallon distilled water.

Equipment: 8 pint canning jars and lids, sterile, Large pot, capable of holding 1 gallon or more, with a tight-fitting lid and boiling water canner.

Bring the greater burdock, sheep sorrel, and slippery elm bark to a boil in 1 gallon of distilled water, tightly covered. Boil the herbs, tightly covered, for 10 minutes, then turn off the heat and stir the mixture. Cover tightly and let the decoction steep for 12 hours, stirring again after 6 hours. After 12 hours, bring it back to a boil and pour it through a fine mesh strainer or a coffee filter. Pour the decoction into pint jars while still hot, leaving 1/2 inch headroom. Cap the jars. Process the jars in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes. The decoction will keep for 1 year in sealed jars. Store in the refrigerator after opening.

Dosage: Mix 1/4 cup of the decoction with 1/4 cup of distilled water. Drink 3 times a day: 2 hours before breakfast, 2 hours after lunch and before bedtime on an empty stomach. Wait at least 2 hours after taking the decoction before eating again.

#### **Greater Burdock Tea**

To make the Burdock tea you need 2 Tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh burdock root and 3 cups water. Bring the burdock root and the water to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the tea steep for another 20 minutes. Serve hot. Drink one cup, three times daily, or sip throughout the day for detoxing.



### Lavender, *Lavandula angustifolia*

*Lavandula angustifolia*, common lavender, belongs to Family Lamiaceae and genus *Lavandula*. It is also known as garden lavender, common lavender, narrow-leaved lavender, true lavender or English lavender.

#### Plant Identification

The common lavender variety grows 1 to 3 feet high in gardens, occasionally somewhat taller and with a short, but irregular, crooked and much-branched stem that is covered with a yellowish-grey bark, which comes off in flakes. It has numerous, erect, straight, broom-like, slender, bluntly-quadrangular branches, finely pubescent, with fine hairs.



The leaves of Lavender are opposite, sessile, entire, linear and blunt. When young, they are white with dense stellate hairs on both surfaces and their margins strongly revolute. When full grown, they are 1 1/2 inch long, green with scattered hairs above and the margins only slightly revolute.

The flowers of Lavender are produced in terminating, blunt spikes from young shoots on long stems. The spikes are composed of whorls of flowers, each composed of from 6 to 10 flowers, and the lower whorls are more distant from one another. The flowers of Lavender are themselves very shortly stalked, 3 to 5 together in the axils of rhomboidal, and brown, thin, dry bracts.

The calyx of Lavender is tubular and ribbed, with 13 veins, purple-grey in color, 5-toothed (one tooth is longer than the others) and hairy. The shining oil glands amongst the hairs are visible through a lens. Most of the oil yielded by the flowers is contained in the glands on the calyx. The two-lipped corolla is a beautiful bluish-violet color.

It mostly lives and prefers dry grassy slopes amongst rocks, in exposed, usually parched, hot rocky situations often on calcareous soils. While not native to the United States, it is now grown in most states and spreads wild in many warm, dry areas.

#### Harvesting instructions:

I usually go out looking for Lavender when the weather is dry and there is no wind. The morning and evening of a fine day are particularly favorable to the flower gathering because many of the oils are dissipated during the heat of the day. Lavender stems are cut at the base of the plant with a pair of scissors or pruning shears.

#### Edible Use

Several parts of lavender are edible including the leaves, flowering tips, and petals. They can be used as a condiment in salads, soups, and stews. They have an aromatic flavor that comes through nicely in tea made from fresh or dried leaves. The fresh flowers are added to ice-creams, jams, and vinegars as a flavoring. Oil from the flowers is also used as a food flavoring.

#### Medicinal Use:

Medicinal properties of this plant include Anti-anxiety, Anti-halitosis, Antiseptic, Antispasmodic, Appetizer, Aromatherapy, Aromatic, and Carminative, Cholagogue, Diuretic, Nervine; Sedative, Stimulant, Stomachic, Tonic.



## Aromatherapy

Lavender is an important relaxing herb, having a soothing and relaxing effect upon the nervous system. In most cases, all that is required is to breathe in the aroma from the oil. The aromatherapy is all that is needed to relax the body, relieve stress, calm the nervous system, and ease headaches. The same effects can be achieved by adding whole fresh or dried flowers to the bathwater or placing the flowers under the pillowcase at bedtime.

## Aches and Pains

Its relaxing effects extend to the muscular system as well. A massage with lavender oil can calm throbbing muscles, relieve rheumatism pain, ease and help heal sprains and strains, and relieve backaches and lumbago pain. The oil also contains analgesic compounds that help ease the pain from muscle related stress and injuries.

## Kills Lice and Their Nits

The essential oil of lavender nourishes the hair, gives it a nice shine, and makes it smell wonderful. However, it also helps keep the hair free from lice.

Use the essential oil, diluted with a carrier oil such as coconut oil or olive oil, to coat the scalp and hair completely. Give it an hour to soak in and do its magic. Then wash away the oil and use your nit comb. From this point forward, add a drop or two of lavender oil to your shampoo or rinse water to keep lice away.

## Respiratory Problems

Lavender essential oil is an excellent treatment for respiratory problems like colds, flu, sore throats, coughs, sinus congestion, asthma, laryngitis, bronchitis, whooping cough, and tonsillitis. Apply it topically to the skin on the chest, neck, and under the nose where it will be easily breathed; or add it to a vaporizer or a pot of steaming water. The nicely scented steam opens the air passages and loosens phlegm while it kills the germs that cause the infection.

## Urinary Tract Infections, Cystitis and Retained Fluids

The diuretic effects of lavender help it to flush the body from excess fluids and toxins and relieve swellings that may be present. As the fluid is removed, the oil also exerts an antibiotic influence which kills any underlying infection, and it removes toxins which may also be causing problems. For these purposes, I recommend lavender tea, taken 2 or 3 times a day.

## Lowering Blood Pressure

Removing excess fluids help lower the blood pressure and reduce swellings of all kinds, and the relaxing effects of the lavender help get rid of stresses that may be contributing to the problem. For blood pressure control, I recommend two to three cups of lavender tea daily or 5 ml of tincture.





## Recipes

### Lavender Tea

You'll need one teaspoon of dried lavender or 1 tablespoon of fresh lavender flowers or leaves and 1 cup of boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the lavender and cover it to keep it warm. Let the tea steep for 10 to 15 minutes to absorb the medicinal qualities. Strain it, and drink warm several times daily.

### Lavender Tincture

Ingredients: 1 ½ cups of chopped lavender flowers, stems, and leaves, 1 pint 100 proof vodka or brandy. Place the lavender in a glass jar and cover with vodka. Seal the jar tightly and place it in a cool dark place to brew. Allow the tincture to steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking the jar daily. Strain the tincture through a coffee filter. Store it in a cool, dark place for up to 3 years.

### Lavender Oil Distillation

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer. You'll need lavender flowers, stems, and leaves chopped fine or ground, water to cover the herbs.

If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.

Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.

Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or a tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.

Place the chopped flowers, stems, and leaves into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to cover the herbs and fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.

Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicate oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and the distillation is finished. Transfer the distilled oil to a dark glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.

In its action, Lavender Essential Oil is much gentler than most other essential oils and can be safely applied directly to the skin as an antiseptic to help heal wounds and burns.

### Leeks, *Allium porrum*

Leeks belong to the onion family, also known as the Alliaceae family. It is eaten as a vegetable and is quite tasty roasted or in soups. The flavor is mild compared to most members of the onion family.

### Plant Identification

The leek grows from a compressed stem with leaves wrapped in overlapping layers and fanning out at the top. Commercial leeks are white at the base, caused by cultivation methods of piling soil at the base of the stem. Wild leeks will not exhibit this blanching.



Shallow, fibrous roots grow from the stem plate, and the plant grows upward reaching approximately 3 feet. If left in the ground, it produces a large umbrel of flowers in the second year. The flowers produce small black, irregular seeds. The flower appears from July to August and has both male and female parts. I've often found this plant in sunny locations even as temperatures plummeted as it is tolerant to frost.

### Edible Use

The leek is used extensively around the world as a vegetable and as a flavoring. It contains health-giving vitamins, antioxidants, and minerals and is low in calories and high in fiber.

### Medicinal Use

#### Heart Disease, High Blood Pressure, Lowers Cholesterol

Leeks are beneficial to the heart and circulatory system in a number of ways. They contain enzymes that help reduce the harmful cholesterol in the body while increasing the beneficial HDL cholesterol. They also relax the blood vessels, arteries, and veins, reducing the blood pressure and they reduce the formation of clots and help break down existing clots. In these ways, they reduce the chances of developing coronary heart disease, peripheral vascular diseases, and strokes. Consuming leeks on a regular basis conveys these beneficial properties.

### Stabilize Blood Sugar Levels

Leeks help the body maintain a steady blood sugar level by helping the body metabolize the sugars. Leeks also contain nutrients that also benefit blood sugar levels. I advise diabetic and pre-diabetic patients to eat leeks regularly as part of their healthy diet.

### Anti-Bacterial, Anti-Viral, and Anti-Fungal Properties

Eating leeks regularly and often during infections helps your body fight these infections and eliminate them from the body. Leeks have anti-microbial properties similar to those of garlic and onions that help the body fight internal and external infections. I recommend that patients eat an extra portion of leeks with meals when fighting infections. For external infections, chop the leeks finely and use them as a poultice on infected tissue.

### Prevents Cancer

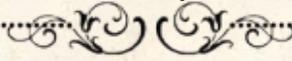
Plants in the Alliaceae family have multiple cancer-fighting properties, and leeks are included. Eating leeks on a regular basis reduces the chances of prostate and colon cancers. Patients who eat a lot of leeks also have fewer ovarian cancers.

### Eat Leeks During Pregnancy

Leeks contain high levels of folate which is beneficial for the developing fetus and prevents several different birth defects of the brain and spinal cord.



Leek Flower Heads, Photo by Derek Ramsey (Ram-Man) - Own work, CC by SA 2.5



## Anemia

Leeks are also high in iron and therefore beneficial for treating iron deficiency anemia. They also contain significant levels of vitamin C which helps the iron absorption in the body.

## Gout, Arthritis, Urinary Tract Inflammation

Arthritis, gout, and urinary tract problems benefit from the anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties of leeks to treat these diseases. High doses of leeks are best, so I recommend eating several servings daily or drinking the juice of the vegetable.

## Regular Bowel Movements

The high concentrations of both soluble and insoluble dietary fiber in leeks helps the function of the intestinal tract. They facilitate digestion and reduce bloating and associated pain.

## Whole Body Cleanse

Drinking leek juice regularly helps cleanse the body of toxins and waste products.

## Warnings

Leeks contain oxalates which may crystalize in the body to cause kidney stones and gravel in the gallbladder.

## Lemon Thyme, *Thymus citriodorus*

Lemon thyme is also called citrus thyme, but the lemon name fits it well. It is easy to recognize lemon thyme by its aroma and flavor which are both very much like lemon. I love the smell of lemon thyme and often use freshly cut stems as an air freshener. However, even better than the smell is the relaxing benefits and medicinal value of the herb.

## Plant Identification

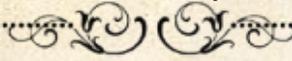
Lemon thyme is an evergreen perennial that grows as a mat on the ground. It grows to a height of 4 inches and spreads to over a foot away. Its appearance and growth habit is close to that of English thyme.

The leaves are shiny-green with a pale-yellow border around the margins. Some plants have more lemon-yellow leaves or green leaves with pale yellow splotches.

The plant produces flowers in mid to late summer. Flowers may vary from pink to lavender and attract butterflies and bees.



*Lemon Thyme, Forest & Kim Starr, CC by SA 3.0*



## Edible Use

Lemon thyme is used widely in cooking to flavor chicken, fish, and vegetable dishes and to make a relaxing tea.

## Immune Function

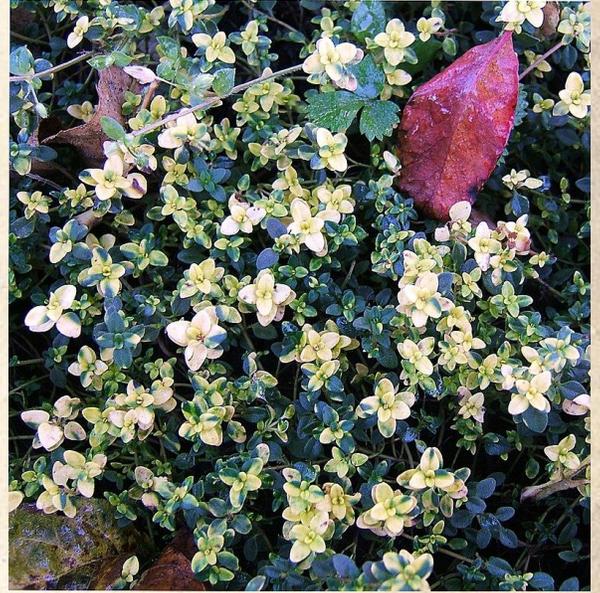
Lemon Thyme Tea is a relaxing drink that is effective in the treatment of infections and boosting the immune system. It makes a good tonic for regular use.

## Viral, Bacterial, and Fungal Infections

The anti-microbial properties of lemon thyme make it effective in the fight against most bacterial, fungal, and viral diseases. I prefer to recommend Lemon Thyme Tea for internal use in fighting infections.

## Respiratory Problems, Asthma, and Releasing Congestion

Lemon thyme contains many different beneficial compounds for general health and for respiratory health. It is anti-microbial and decongestant. It opens the airways to help asthmatics breathe better and to allow phlegm and other mucous to be released from the body.



*Lemon Thyme, Wildfeuer, CC by SA 2.5*



*Lemon Thyme flowers, Kor!An (Андрей Корзун), CC by SA 3.0*

## Aromatherapy for Asthma

Asthma patients find relief by placing a small pillow filled with dried lemon thyme under their regular pillow. Sleeping on this pillow releases the oils that open the airways and induce better sleep.

## Lemon Thyme Tea

You'll need 1/2 teaspoon of dried lemon thyme or 1 teaspoon of fresh lemon thyme leaves, 1 cup boiling water and honey, optional. Pour the boiling water over the lemon thyme leaves and allow the tea to steep for 5 to 10 minutes. Strain the tea and drink warm. Add honey as desired for sweetening. Drink two to three cups daily.

## Cautions

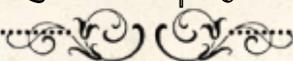
patients.

Do not give lemon thyme tea during pregnancy or while nursing.

## Lemon Verbena, *Alloysia triphylla*

Oh, how I love lemon verbena. I love to crush a stalk in my hand and breath in the fragrance and flavor. It immediately lifts my mood and soothes away the stresses of the day. The herb is highly aromatic with an herbaceous lemony scent.

Lemon thyme causes allergic reactions in highly allergic



## Plant Identification

Lemon verbena is readily identified by its scent and the plant growth. It grows to a height of 6 to 15 feet in good soil. It has thin, pointed leaves that are about 3 to 4 inches in length. The leaves are shiny and coarse to the touch.

The flowers are light purple and grouped on the stems. They appear throughout the summer.



## Harvesting

I look for plants that grow in full sun and are highly aromatic. These shrubs have higher amounts of the beneficial oils.

## Edible Use

Lemon verbena leaves are useful as a flavoring or as an addition to salads. It has a mild lemon flavor.

## Medicinal Use

I use lemon verbena both internally in the form of an herbal tea and externally as a poultice, oil, or wash.



## Bronchial Congestion

I recommend a tea made from lemon verbena to treat bronchial and nasal congestion. It loosens phlegm, acts as an expectorant, and calms the system. Both are effective for relieving congestion. Do not use lemon verbena tea before driving or operating heavy machinery, it has a mild sedative effect.

## Staph Infections of the Skin

Staph infections can become serious quickly if left untreated. Fortunately, lemon verbena works quite well for staph infections of the skin when treated quickly. It prevents the infection from spreading and kills of the existing bacteria. For this purpose, I use Lemon Verbena Tincture made with 100 proof alcohol, applied to the skin. When the extraction is not available, a poultice of freshly crushed lemon verbena is applied.

## Rheumatism, Arthritis, Bursitis, and Joint Pain

My patients with joint pain have been able to find significant relief from taking lemon verbena tea. It takes time for the effects to build, but over a period of two to three month of taking the tea twice daily, patients report that joint pain is gradually reduced and significant improvement is gained.

## Digestive Issues

I prescribe Lemon Verbena Tea for digestive problems because of its soothing effect on the digestive system. It relieves indigestion and calms the stomach and intestinal spasms to relieve cramping and bloating. I recommend drinking a cup of tea after meals.



## Calms Anxiety

I can feel the calming effects of lemon verbena just walking through a field of it or crushing a few leaves.

However, for serious anxiety issues, I recommend the Lemon Verbena Tea. It soothes the nervous system, relieves stress, and lifts the mood.

## Harvesting Lemon Verbena

Lemon verbena likes rich soil and plenty of sunlight. I collect the leaves throughout the year, but I prefer to pick as many as possible before the herb blooms. Extra leaves are dried for future use and are equally beneficial in dried form.

## Recipes

### Lemon Verbena Tea

1/4 cup lemon verbena, fresh and crushed  
2 cups boiling water.

Pour the boiling water over the herb and allow it to steep for 5 to 8 minutes. Strain and Drink 1 cup.

### Lemon Verbena Tea with Mint

You'll need 1/4 cup fresh lemon verbena leaves or 1 tablespoon dried lemon verbena, 1 strip of lemon zest, 1 teaspoon dried mint leaves or 1 tablespoon fresh, and water. Pour boiling water over the herbs and lemon zest. Allow the herbs to infuse for 5 to 8 minutes. Strain and serve warm. You can add lemon juice and sugar if desired, but I enjoy the fresh flavor alone.

### Lemon Verbena Tincture

Take fresh Lemon Verbena flowers, chopped, 100 proof vodka or other drinking alcohol and a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Add the lemon verbena to the jar, packing it about three quarters full. Pour 100 proof vodka over the leaves and fill the jar, making sure all the leaves are covered. Cap the jar tightly and place it in a cool, dark place, such as a cupboard. Let the tincture steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking the jar daily. Add more alcohol, if needed to keep the jar full. Pour the alcohol through a fine mesh sieve or a coffee filter to remove all the herb. Store the tincture in a cool, dark cupboard for up to 7 years.

## Meadow Rue, *Thalictrum occidentale*

Meadow Rue, *Thalictrum occidentale*, is an herbaceous perennial flowering plants species. The herb is from the family buttercup, Ranunculaceae. Despite its name meadow rue, the species thalictrum is unrelated to the rue family Rutaceae.

Meadow rue is native to the western US, growing from Alaska and western Canada to California, Wyoming, and Colorado. It grows in moist and shady habitats such as meadows and forest understory.

## Plant Identification

Meadow rue is an herbaceous perennial flowering plant that grows to about 3 feet tall.



Meadow Rue, By Walter Siegmund, CC by SA 3.0



The leaves of this herb are green in color, bipinnately compound and are also alternate. Leaves are divided into segments, often with three lobes, and grow on long petioles. The inflorescence upright or bent panicle of flowers, with male and female flowers growing on separate plants. The male flower is greenish white or purple, grows no petals, but instead has numerous dangling purple stamens. The female flower grows a cluster of up to 14 immature fruits with purple styles.

### Edible Use

The only edible parts of meadow rue are the roots and young leaves. These roots have a bitter flavor and are rarely eaten. Instead they are used as remedies to treat different ailments. Young leaves of meadow rue can be cooked and consumed as spinach.

### Harvesting Meadow Rue

Meadow rue can be harvested year-round. I uproot the plant then pluck off the young leaves and the roots. I wash the roots and the leaves and then dry them in a well-shaded place away from direct sunlight.

### Medicinal Uses

#### Urinary Problems

I use a root decoction of meadow rue for the treatment of urinary problems. It removes obstructions in the urinary tract and helps with bladder function. I give 1 to 2 tablespoons of the decoction, morning and night.

#### Reducing Fevers

I use a decoction from the roots or an infusion of the leaves to suppress fevers. I give 1 to 2 tablespoons of Meadow Rue Decoction, morning and night.

#### Cleans and Purifies the Body

Meadow rue is a general tonic that purifies the blood and cleanses the body. I recommend taking the decoction daily for a week, then reevaluating the general health of the patient. I give 1 to 2 tablespoons of the decoction, morning and night.

#### Sores, Skin Infections, Piles

I recommend a poultice of meadow rue for healing sores and skin infections. I crush and mash the root and leaves with a small amount of water for moisture. Then I apply the macerated herb to the area and cover it snugly with a clean cloth to hold it in position.

#### Kill Lice and Other Vermin

I use the freshly made and warm Meadow Rue Decoction to wash the hair and other body areas infected with lice, crabs, or other vermin. Leave it on the skin for 30 minutes, then rinse it well. I find meadow rue to be an excellent remedy that totally eradicates the problem. You still have to follow up with a nit comb after killing lice,



*Female Flowers, photo by nordique, CC by SA 2.0*



## Other Uses

I've been told by other healers that Meadow Rue was used to treat asthma, epilepsy, measles, cholera, and other eye problems, but in my practice I have not tried it for any of those conditions.

## Meadow Rue Decoction

You'll need 1-ounce meadow rue roots and 1-pint water. Crush or chop fine 1 ounce of meadow rue roots. Boil the root for 15 minutes or more to release the medicinal qualities into the water. Cool the decoction and strain it to remove the root fibers.

## Mormon Tea, *Ephedra nevadensis*

*Ephedra nevadensis* belongs to Ephedraceae Family and genus *Ephedra*. It is also known as Mormon Tea and Nevada jointfir. This herb is said to have gotten its name, Mormon tea because it is used as a form of a caffeine-free beverage by the Mormons. It is native to dry areas of western North America.

## Plant Identification

This plant is a dioecious, xerophytic shrub with jointed or fluted stems and scale-like leaves. Leaf scales of Mormon tea are in twos, 3/4 inch to 2 1/2 inches long, with sheathing to about the middle, and obtuse to acute at the apex. The inflorescence of this plant is cone-like, and the staminate flowers have united filaments. The ovulate spikes of Mormon tea are distinctly stalked, and the seeds are usually paired.

This plant occurs naturally on flats and slopes in all the creosote bush deserts at mostly 1,000 to 4,000 ft elevation and also sometimes it is found in the desert grasslands that are up to 5,000 ft in elevation. It grows in California in the eastern Mojave and Colorado deserts, southwestern Utah, southern Nevada in Clark and Lincoln counties, Arizona in the Grand Canyon area and in the Mojave Desert.

The plant also grows in other regions like Arizona and Colorado deserts, New Mexico along the Gila and Pecos river drainage, Trans Pecos Texas, the Edwards Plateau, and at scattered locations on the Rio Grande Plain, Baja California to Coahuila and Central Mexico. The Characteristic species of this plant are creosote bush, white bursage, Joshua tree, black-brush, catclaw, burro-bush, big galleta, Indian rice grass, black grama, bush muhly, and desert needle-grass.

It naturally occurs in the south western regions of the United States and adjoining areas of Mexico.

## Harvesting Instructions

I harvest the seeds of this plant by hand from native stands. Its stems can be harvested at any time of the year, and I usually dry them for later use. On good years abundant collections of ephedra seeds can be obtained by flailing the fruiting branches over an open tray. Stems can be harvested at any time of year.



*Mormon Tea Devil's Garden, Arches National Park, Utah, USA, brewbooks (CC BY-SA 2.0)*



## Edible Status

Both the fruit and seeds are edible. The fruit is sweet with a mild flavor, while the seed has a bitter taste and can be used cooked. It is sometimes roasted and ground to make bread. However, this plant is famous for its tea. I've managed to make a delicious tea by steeping the green or dried twigs in boiling water until the tea turns an amber or pink color.

## Medicinal Use

Mormon tea foliage is considered toxic but is sometimes used for medicinal purposes. It is a blood purifier, diuretic, febrifuge, poultice, and tonic. For medicinal use, I prefer to use the stems. Tender stems can be eaten raw, while older stems are best prepared as an infusion.

## Urogenital Complaints

I use the stems for urogenital complaints including kidney problems, gonorrhea, and syphilis. I prescribe the Mormon Tea Infusion for these problems with great results. For treatment of syphilis, it is necessary to catch the disease in the early stages, as I have not had good results once the disease has progressed. For venereal diseases, I prescribe 50 to 100 ml of Mormon Tea Infusion, 3 times daily.

## Asthma and Respiratory Problems

I find Mormon tea and other members of the ephedra family valuable in the treatment of asthma and other complaints of the respiratory system. It does not cure asthma, but it opens the airways and relieves the symptoms of the attack. I also use it for allergies and hay fever. I recommend 2 tablespoons of Mormon Tea Infusion or 1 cup of Mormon Tea, 3 times daily, for these problems.

## Heart Stimulant (Caution)

Members of the ephedra family are known to contain ephedrine which stimulates the heart and central nervous system. However, *Ephedra nevadensis* has little to none of the stimulant effects of ephedrine. However, drug potency varies from plant to plant, so I am careful with it and do not use it on patients with known arrhythmias or other problems where ephedrine is contraindicated.

## Sores, Skin Infections

A poultice made from the powdered stems can be applied to sores for effective treatment. I change the poultice three times daily for four to six days or until the sores are healed.

## Warning

Pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers should never use Mormon Tea

## Recipes

### Mormon Tea Infusion

Break the stems into small pieces and wash them well. Add them to water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer the twigs for 8 to 12 minutes. Once cooled, strain the liquid. Use two tablespoons per dose, three times a day.



Ripe Female cones with seeds. Photo by Le.Loup.Gris, CC by SA 3.0

## Mormon Tea

To make Mormon Tea, follow the instructions for Mormon Tea Infusion, then dilute the infusion with water until it is the strength you like. I dilute it to the color of tea. You can sweeten it with honey or sugar, if desired.

## Mormon Tea Powder

Powder the branches and twigs of the Mormon Tea Shrub. Moisten the powder to make a paste and use to make a poultice for sores and burns.

## Milk Thistle (*Silybum marianum*)

In addition to its medical uses, I enjoy milk thistle leaves as a vegetable in the spring, and I like the raw flowers in my summer salads. Milk thistle is known by many names, including cardus marianus, blessed milk thistle, blessed thistle, Marian thistle, Mary thistle, Saint Mary's thistle, variegated thistle, Mediterranean milk thistle, and Scotch thistle. I find it mainly in California, but it is reported to grow worldwide. I noticed that it prefers a warm climate.

### Plant Identification

Milk thistle is an annual or biennial plant member of the Aster Family (Asteraceae or Compositae). It grows to be from 1 foot to 6 1/2 feet tall with a base of up to five feet or more.

The shiny green leaves are oblong or lance-like and can be either lobed or pinnate. They are hairless with spiny edges and white veins. The stem is grooved and hollow in larger plants.

Reddish-purple flowers appear from June to August. They are 1 1/2 to 5 inches across.

### Edible Parts

I enjoy milk thistle roots raw, boiled, par-boiled, or roasted.

I enjoy the young shoots, harvested in the spring boiled like spinach. Some people peel the stems and soak overnight, then stew them. I rarely eat them this way, since the stems tend to be too bitter for my taste. I find it necessary to trim the leaves and stems to remove the spines before cooking or eating.

I eat the spiny bracts on the flower-head like a globe artichoke. I usually boil or steam them until tender.

Milk Thistle is high in potassium nitrate and is not suitable for cattle or sheep.

### Medicinal Uses

I recommend consuming the leaves and seeds of the plant for most patients. The seeds can be eaten raw, while the leaves are best used as a tincture, extract, or tea. I sometimes grind the milk thistle herbs and seeds into a powder and put it into capsules for patients who find the flavor disagreeable or need an easy way to take it.



*Silybum marianum*, Dr. Otto Wilhelm Thome, public domain



## Milk Thistle Supports and Detoxifies the Liver

I get good results from milk thistles ability to decrease or even reverse liver damage caused by disease, environmental pollutions, and drug or alcohol abuse.

Milk thistle dramatically improves liver regeneration in hepatitis, cirrhosis, and other liver diseases. I use it for cirrhosis, fatty liver syndrome, jaundice, hepatitis, and liver poisoning caused by chemicals, drugs, or alcohol abuse.



Photo by Fir0002/Flagstaffotos, GNU FDL 1.2,  
<http://www.gnu.org/licenses/old-licenses/fdl-1.2.html>

## Helps Lower High Cholesterol

Milk thistle is a powerful anti-inflammatory with heart-healthy benefits, including lowering high cholesterol by cleaning the blood, decreasing inflammation, and preventing oxidative stress damage within the arteries. Recent use by many patients shows that milk thistle is effective in lowering total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and triglyceride levels in patients with diabetes and I also prescribe it for patients with heart disease.

## Prevent or Control Diabetes

Milk thistle helps control the blood sugar and decreases blood sugar levels in insulin-resistant patients. For best results, I recommend regular milk thistle use. When patients are diligent and don't give up too soon, I notice that blood sugar levels improve over time. The improved blood sugar control is due to the improved health of the liver and its function in releasing insulin and other hormones into the bloodstream.

## Milk Thistle Helps Prevent Gallstones and Kidney Stones

Milk thistle supports the endocrine and gastrointestinal systems and helps clean the blood. It works closely with the liver and other digestive organs to purify the body and reduce the risk of gallstones and kidney stones.

## Antidote for the Ingestion of Poisonous Mushrooms

Milk thistles ability to protect the liver is so strong that it is even able to treat patients poisoned by Amanita mushrooms which destroy the liver. In fact, it is the only treatment option for these patients. I always counsel patients to be careful when harvesting and eating mushrooms, but when I believe mushrooms are the problem, I start the patient on regular doses of milk thistle immediately.

## Milk Thistle's Estrogen-Like Effects

Milk thistle has some estrogen-like effects that stimulate menstruation and increases the flow of milk in breast-feeding mothers. I have read reports that it is now beint to be used as a treatment for prostate cancer in men, but have not verified this yet in my patients.

## Milk Thistle Tea for Acne

Milk thistle is high in anti-oxidants, anti-inflammatories, and flavonoids that reduce the inflammation of acne. I recommend one to two cups of milk thistle tea daily for acne and other skin inflammations and irritations such as rosacea and hives.

## Harvesting Instructions

I always wear protective clothing and heavy gloves when harvesting milk thistle.



One time, I forgot to wear protective clothing, and I doubt that I will ever make that mistake again. The skin irritation lasted longer and was more irritating than I expected. I cut off young flower heads with scissors and young leaves from the stalk.

I harvest milk thistle seeds by cutting off the seed-heads and placing them in a paper bag in a cool dry spot. After the seeds dry, I remove them from the seed head, one at a time, and brush away the debris. The cleaned seeds store best in a container with a tight lid.

### Warnings

Pregnant women should not use milk thistle. Women with estrogen-related conditions such as endometriosis, fibroids, and cancers of the ovaries, breast, or uterus should not use milk thistle. Do not use milk thistle if you are allergic to the Asteraceae Compositae plant family. It can cause a severe allergic reaction that could be life-threatening.

### Recipes

#### Milk Thistle Tea

Crush or grind 1 teaspoon of milk thistle seeds. Add one cup of boiling water and allow the tea to steep until lukewarm.

#### Milk Thistle Extract

Take 3/4 cup milk thistle seeds, 1 cup vodka or other alcohol, 100 proof or better.

Grind, crush or blend 3/4 cups of milk thistle seeds. Place the crushed seeds into a sterile pint-sized jar with a tight-fitting lid. Pour 1 cup of vodka over the seed, more if needed to cover the seeds. Stir well to mix the ingredients. Cap the jar tightly and place it in a cool, dark place for three to five weeks, shaking the jar daily. Add more alcohol, if needed, to keep the seeds covered with liquid. Strain the mixture and reserve the liquid. Discard the seed. Store your extract tightly covered in a cool, dark place.

To Use Milk Thistle Extract: This is a highly concentrated extract. Use three drops of Milk Thistle Extract up to three times daily. If this dosage is well tolerated, you can gradually increase the dose.

Diseases: Liver diseases of all types, Acne, Adrenal disorders, Inflammatory Bowel Syndrome, High Cholesterol, Food Allergies, Candida

### Mullein, *Verbascum thapsus*

Mullein, *Verbascum Thapsus*, belongs to Scrophulariaceae family and genus *Verbascum*. It also most commonly known as great mullein or common mullein. Its other names include Aaron's rod, Flannel Plant, Hag Taper, Mullein, Torches, and Velvet Plant.

Mullein is a widely distributed plant in North America and is exceedingly abundant as a naturalized weed in the eastern States. I find it on hedge-banks, by roadsides, and on waste ground, especially on gravel, sand or chalky soil. This plant grows in a vast range of habitats but prefers well-lit and disturbed soils making it one of the first plants to arrive when the ground receives enough light.

Mullein is widely used for herbal remedies, with well-established emollient and astringent properties. This plant has also been used to make dyes and torches.





## Plant Identification

Mullein is a soft (almost velvet-like) biennial plant. When in its second year, Mullein is an erect stem that can grow very tall. It can reach nearly 7 feet of height. It has soft leaves, and yellow colored flowers at the top of the plant giving it a very unique appearance.

The central stem of the mullein terminates in a dense spike of pale yellow flowers. These flowers generally measure anywhere from two inches to two feet long. Each flower of Mullein is about 3/4 inch across and consists of five pale petals, 5 hairy-green sepals, five stamens, and one pistil. The 3 upper stamens are covered with white or yellow hairs, while the 2 lower stamens are almost hairless.

In its first year, mullein leaves form a basal rosette, with large, velvety-like, long-oval, gray-green leaves that can grow up to 20 inches long. In the 2nd year, the basal leaves precede a stout, erect flower stalk. On flowering plants, the leaves are alternately arranged up the stem.

This plant produces small, ovoid capsules of approximately 1/4 inch each that split open by into two halves. Each capsule contains large numbers of minute, brown seeds that are less than 1 mm (0.04 in) in size, marked with longitudinal ridges.



*First Year Growth, Forest & Kim Starr, CC by 3.0*

## Harvesting instructions

The leaves of Mullein are best harvested in the summer of the second year as the plant is growing its stalk. I prefer to bundle the leaves and hang them upside down to dry. The buds and flowers are harvested when they are in bloom, usually between July and September. I use them fresh or I dry them for later use.

## Edible Status

The leaves and flowers are edible, although enjoying a cup of tea made from these parts is generally preferable. I sometimes use leaves and flowers fresh in a salad.



*Mullein Flowers, Forest & Kim Starr, CC by 3.0*

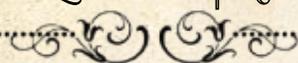
## Medicinal Use

The leaves and the flowers of Mullein are anodyne, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic, astringent, demulcent, diuretic, emollient, expectorant and vulnerary. This plant combines well with other expectorants such as coltsfoot and thyme and combined with the anti-inflammatory benefits of St. John's Wort.

## Bronchitis, Emphysema, Tracheitis, Asthma, and Tuberculosis

Mullein is a commonly used herbal remedy. I value it for its efficacy in the treatment of chest complaints such as bronchitis, tuberculosis, and asthma. It reduces the formation of mucus and stimulates the expulsion of phlegm. It is a specific treatment for tracheitis and bronchitis. I prescribe the infusion, taken three times daily, for the treatment of a wide range of chest complaints.

For emphysema, I prefer to prescribe mullein infusion with some coltsfoot. The mixture of herbs acts well as an expectorant for emphysema patients and helps them breathe easier. It also relieves the coughing spasms and wheezing.



I have the patient sip on the tea throughout the day, drinking up to three cups daily. Patients improve with long term use.

### Skin Wounds, Ulcers, Tumors, and Piles

Externally, I use a poultice prepared from mullein leaves to heal wounds, ulcers, tumours and piles. I mash the leaves, apply them directly to the skin, and cover them with a clean cloth. My Muellin Infused Oil also works well on piles.

### Earaches

An infusion prepared from its flowers in olive oil is used as earache drops. The flowers are strongly bactericidal. Warm a few drops of mullein oil over a lighter for 45 seconds or until it is lukewarm. Then drop it into the ear canal with a dropper and plug the ear with a cotton plug. I prefer to treat both ears, even if only one is affected, since the sinuses are connected. Do not use mullein for punctured eardrums.

### Hemorrhoids, Sunburn, and Inflammatory Skin Conditions

Mullein is anti-inflammatory, which helps it to calm inflammatory skin conditions, especially those of the mucus membranes. For this purpose, I prefer to use a few drops of Mullein Infused Oil applied directly to the affected area. The oil also is anti-bacterial which helps prevent infection and speed healing. I sometimes use St. John's Wort with mullein to make the oil.

### Warts

Powdered mullein roots rubbed onto warts helps to kill the virus to the roots and remove the wart. I rub it in several times a day until the wart is completely resolved and the skin is healed. The juice of the plant can also be used.

### Cramps, Muscle Spasms

For cramping and muscle spasms, the patient can get fast relief with one cup of Mullein Infusion, taken as needed or up to three times daily. For muscle spasms, Mullein Infused Oil can also be rubbed into the affected muscle.

### Gastrointestinal Issues

Mullein Infusion made from the roots is very good for getting rid of intestinal worms and healing other gastrointestinal issues. I prescribe one cup of Mullein Infusion, three times daily.

### Warnings

Do not use mullein if you are pregnant or breast feeding. In some patients, it can cause skin irritations, stomach pain, breathing difficulties. These are allergic reactions, discontinue use if these symptoms occur.

### Recipes

#### Mullein Infusion

Ingredients: 1/2 teaspoon mullein root, powdered and 1 cup water. Bring the water and powdered mullein root to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer. Simmer for 10 minutes. Drink three times daily.

#### Mullein Infused Oil

Take 2 cups sweet almond oil or olive oil and 1 1/2 cups of mullein flowers, fresh or dried. Place 1 1/2 cups of mullein flowers into a pint jar with a tight fitting lid. Pour the oil over the flowers and allow them to infuse for 8 to 10 days. Filter the oil and store it in a dark bottle in a cool, dry place. Use for earaches, hemorrhoids, piles, and common skin conditions.



\*St. John's Wort can also be added.

## Plantain, *Plantago Major*

*Plantago major* is a small perennial, similar to a dandelion weed, not the banana like fruit found in the grocery store. It is often found growing wild in gardens, lawns, backyards, and along the roadsides across the US. The leaves give away their identity. They have a ruffled texture as if strung on veins of elastic. They are also slightly bowl-shaped.

The leaves are oval or almost round and have a chunky footstalk. The leaves grow in a rosette at the base of the plant. Each leaf is 2 to 8 inches long and only slightly longer. It has a smooth margin and five to nine veins.

The greenish-white flowers have purple stamens grow on densely packed stems to a height of 7 to 20 inches. The flowers are tiny and mostly eclipsed by the greenish-brown sepals and bracts. The flowering stalks rise high above the foliage. The plants produce many tiny, bitter-tasting seeds.

### Edible Use

The leaves and seeds are edible. I enjoy the leaves in a salad if gathered while they are still very young and tender.

As they age they become tough and fibrous, but they can be cooked in soups and stews. The seeds are sometimes ground into a flour extender or substitute, but they are so tiny that it takes a lot of time and energy to gather enough to make it worthwhile.

### Medicinal Use

The plantain herb has many medicinal qualities. It is anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antioxidant, immune modulating and a weak whole-body antibiotic.

### Healing Wounds, Sores, Insect Bites

A poultice made from crushed plantain leaves is a good choice to promote healing in minor wounds, sores and insect bites. It will ward off infection and reduce inflammation. If the wound is infected, I would combine plantain with an herb with more antibiotic action such as juniper, or goldenseal.

To make a poultice, crush or bruise fresh plantain leaves and apply them directly to the affected skin. Cover the leaves with a gauze wrapping to hold it in place. Change the poultice two to three times daily.

A piece of cotton soaked in Plantain Tincture is also effective.

### Snake Bite

For snakebite, I use plantain both internally and externally. I apply a poultice of fresh plantain leaves directly to the bite to draw out the venom and have the patient take 2 tablespoons of freshly pressed plantain juice or 1 teaspoon of Plantain Tincture. The tincture can also be used as a poultice if fresh leaves are not readily available. For snake bite, much depends on the kind of snake and the quick administration of remedies.



*Plantain leaf and flower stalk, By Rasbak - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0*



### Cystitis, Diarrhea, Respiratory Tract Infections

The juice of common plantain is beneficial for calming inflammation of the mucous membranes, including the membranes of the respiratory tract, digestive tract, and urinary tract. I recommend that patients take 2 teaspoons of freshly pressed plantain juice, three times daily. For heavy mucus and allergies, I recommend using Plantain Tincture.

### Toothache

I have patients place bruised plantain leaves on sore teeth to relieve swelling, infection, and pain. Hold in place as needed, until the pain is gone. Dried leaves can also be used.



### Sore Throats, Swelling of the Gums

Add a tablespoon of pressed plantain juice to a half cup of water and use this as a gargle at the first sign of a sore throat. It is also good at reducing the inflammation in gum tissue.

### Constipation

Plantain seeds are excellent at relieving constipation because of the fiber and mucilage released in the infusion. I recommend drinking 1 cup of Plantain Seed Infusion at bedtime to relieve constipation. Be sure to consume the liquid and seeds.

### Plantain for Autoimmune Diseases

For autoimmune conditions and other chronic diseases, I have patients drink Plantain Tea twice daily. The benefits build up over time and patients must drink daily to see the full benefits.

### Recipes

#### Plantain Seed Infusion

Take 1 teaspoon plantain seeds and 1 cup boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the seeds and allow it to steep while it cools. Drink the mucilage tea and the seeds.

#### Plantain Tincture

You'll need fresh plantain leaves, 100 proof vodka or other drinking alcohol and jar with a tight-fitting lid.

Fill the jar with fresh plantain leaves that have been sliced into thin ribbons or chopped into small pieces. Pour 100 proof vodka over the leaves and fill the jar, making sure all the leaves are covered. Cap the jar tightly and place it in a cool, but sunny location such as a windowsill. Let the tincture marinate for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking the jar daily. Add more alcohol, if needed to keep the jar full. Pour the alcohol through a fine mesh sieve or a coffee filter to remove all of the herbs. Store the tincture in a cool, dark cupboard for up to 7 years. Dosage: 1/2 to 1 teaspoon

#### Plantain Tea

Place 1 teaspoon dried plantain leaves or 1 tablespoon of fresh plantain leaves into a cup of boiling water. Let steep for 10 minutes. Strain out leaves and drink.



### Pot Marigold, *Calendula officinalis*

Pot marigold is a short-lived, perennial herbaceous plants in the daisy family and is often grown as an annual. They are commonly used as ornamentals and sometimes for medicinal preparations. The plant is not originally native to the US, but it is widely cultivated in flower gardens across the country and has escaped cultivation into meadows and roadsides.

The pot marigold grows to be approximately 30 inches tall with branched sprawling or erect stems. The leaves are oblong and lance-like, approximately 2 to 7 inches long and hairy on both sides. The margins can be smooth, wavy, or even weakly toothed.

The flowers are yellow or orange with a 2- to 3-inch flowerhead, two rows of hairy bracts and a single or double ring of ray florets around the central disc florets. Flowers appear year-round when the weather is suitable.

The fruit is a thorny archene.

#### Edible Use

Pot marigold flowers are edible. They are used in salads and as a garnish in some dishes. The leaves are also edible, but bitter and unpalatable.



*Calendula*, Betty Cai, CC by SA 4.0

#### Medicinal Use

##### Skin Diseases, Cuts, and Irritations

Pot marigold leaves and flowers are soothing to the skin, and I use them to treat all kinds of skin problems from acne to sunburn and rashes. The leaves make a healing poultice for minor cuts, scratches, and skin irritations. Place the bruised leaves directly on the skin. The leaves soothe inflamed skin and help it heal.

I use the flowers to make a healing salve for skin irritations. The leaves and flowers have anti-bacterial and anti-fungal effects. To treat fungus infections and bacterial skin infections, including ringworm, athlete's foot, thrush, diaper rash, and cradle cap, I use Calendula Extract applied to the effective area several times daily.

##### Stomach and Intestinal Diseases

I use calendula combined with comfrey root for all kinds of stomach and intestinal problems including duodenal ulcers, intestinal colitis, and gastroenteritis. I prescribe a decoction made from equal parts calendula and comfrey root.

#### Immune System and Lymphatic System

Calendula stimulates the functioning of the immune system and the lymphatic system. Additionally, the astringent and antiseptic properties help the body fight off infections and viruses. Calendula also reduces congestion and swelling in the lymph glands.



## Liver, Gallbladder, and Whole-Body Detoxification

Calendula helps remove toxins from the body and helps cleanse the liver and gallbladder. It is a good treatment for diseases affecting these organs. The detoxification properties also have a positive effect on the skin and help clear up chronic skin problems such as eczema and acne caused by the bodies efforts to rid itself of toxins. For detoxification, I prescribe Calendula Extract.

### Recipes

#### Soothing Calendula Salve

Ingredients: 1/2 cup olive oil, 1/3 cup solid coconut oil, 3 tablespoons dried calendula flowers, 1 1/2 tablespoons dried chamomile flowers, 3 ounces beeswax.

In a small pan, melt the olive oil and the coconut oil together. Add the flower petals and allow the mixture to steep for one hour. Strain out the flower petals, if desired, or you can leave them in. Return the pan to the heat and add the beeswax, stirring. Remove the pan from the heat as soon as the wax is melted. Allow the salve to cool completely before use. Apply gently to irritated or inflamed skin.

#### Calendula Extract

Take 1-pint calendula flowers, loosely packed and 1-pint 80 proof vodka or other drinking alcohol of 80 proof or higher.

Place the flowers in a pint jar with a tight fitting lid. Fill the jar with alcohol so that the flowers are completely covered. Allow the extract to steep in a cool, dark place for 4 to 6 weeks. Shake daily. Strain out the flowers and store the extract tightly covered in a cool, dark place. Use within 3 years.

#### Calendula and Comfrey Root Decoction

You'll need 1 tablespoon calendula flowers, 1 tablespoon comfrey root, crushed and chopped fine or ground and 1-quart water. Bring the water and herbs to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes. Cover the decoction and allow it to steep for 45 minutes. Strain out the herbs. Store the decoction in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or up to one month in the freezer. Take 1 cup of the decoction, twice daily, for stomach and intestinal distress.

#### Skin Healing Oil or Salve

This salve is an all-purpose salve for healing skin irritations, minor burns, sunburn, cuts, wounds, insect bites, eczema, diaper rash, ringworm, and athlete's foot. This combination of herbs is soothing and anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, analgesic, and promotes rapid wound healing and tissue growth.

This combination also helps minimize scarring, so it is a good choice for facial wounds and other wounds in exposed areas.

Olive oil, almond oil, and other carrier oils can be used for this salve, but I prefer coconut oil. On a cool day or under refrigeration coconut oil is solid. I store it in the refrigerator and use it as a cooling salve for irritations and sunburn.

#### Skin Healing Oil

You'll need 1 cup coconut oil, olive oil or other carrier oil, 1/4 cup calendula flowers, dried, 1/4 cup St. John's Wort, dried 1/8 cup chamomile, dried and 20 drops lavender essential oil.

1. Fill a clean quart jar with the herbs and add the carrier oil. Cover the jar tightly and shake to combine. The jar will not be full, but the herbs will swell over time.
2. Shake the jar daily and add oil if needed to keep the herbs covered.
3. Infuse the oil in a warm, sunny spot such as a windowsill for two to four weeks.
4. Strain the oil through a fine mesh strainer to remove the herbs.
5. Add the lavender essential oil and shake to combine.

The oil can be used as is or it can be made into a salve. If you use coconut oil and refrigerate the oil, it will have a salve texture without adding the beeswax.

### Skin Healing Salve

Ingredients: 1 cup prepared skin healing oil (recipe above) and 1-ounce beeswax, shaved or grated

1. In the top of a double boiler, heat the prepared oil and beeswax slowly until the wax melts. Remove from the heat.
2. Pour the salve into small tins or glass jars. Label and date the jars.
3. Store the salve in a cool, dark place. I prefer to refrigerate it for long term use.

### Prickly Pear Cactus, *Opuntia Ficus-indica*

The prickly pear cactus is another plant that I value highly. I take the juice of the tuna (fruit) of the plant and find it to be highly anti-inflammatory and healing. I use it as often as possible for my own arthritis and find that it works well and reduces inflammation of all kinds in my body. I had used it often with patients, but I was truly amazed when I began using it myself. With daily use over the course of two to three months, many old inflammations and injuries that I took for granted began to clear up. I now keep a supply of the dried fruit with me when I travel, but I find that the fresh juice is best. As a further benefit, the fruit is highly nutritious.

### Plant Identification

The prickly pear cactus grows to be up to 16 feet tall with flat, rounded leaf pads that branch off. The flower and, later, the fruit grow directly on the leaf pad. The entire cactus, including the fruit are covered with two different kinds of spines. There are large, fixed spines that are easily seen and small, hair-like spines that are more difficult to see and easily detached. It is these smaller glochids that will attack you if you are not careful.

The flower are large, solitary, and bisexual. A perianth consists of spirally arranged tepals and a hypanthium with numerous inferior ovaries. It has numerous stamen arranged in whorled clusters.

The fruit is a berry covering numerous hard seeds. Prickly pear cactus are found in semi-arid and desert-like conditions and have been cultivated in containers in many places. Prickly pear cactus grow in bushy clusters.



### Harvesting Prickly Pear

Harvesting prickly pear must be done carefully. I dress in thick long sleeves, long pants, boots, and gloves. I do not want to come into contact with the small, hairy spines. I use tongs to pick the ripe fruit and place them carefully into a bucket for processing. If I want leaf pads, I pick them in the same way.

Once back home, I hold each fruit or leaf pad over a flame and burn the spines off completely, charring the skin. When they cool, I peel off the skin. Other people use sand paper to sand off the spines, but I want to make sure that I get every spine and the charred appearance gives me that assurance.

### Edible Use

Both the leaf pads and the fruit are edible. Peel them carefully before use. (See Harvesting above.) I drink the juice of the tunas and use the pads in stir-fries, salads, and soups.



## Medicinal Use

The anti-inflammatory effects of the prickly pear fruit are exceptional, comparable to any other herb I have used. I am sure these properties are the root of its healing power. For maximum benefits, I recommend drinking at least 2 ounces of juice every day. There are no health risks with long term use.

## Diabetes

The prickly pear cactus is beneficial to the pancreas which is vital to the production of insulin. By restoring health to the pancreas, the blood sugar is balanced as much as possible.

## Arthritis and Joint Pain

The inflammation caused by arthritis and the joint pain caused by inflammation is greatly benefitted by a regular consumption of 2 ounces of prickly pear juice every day. Relief takes time (one to two months) and increases with use until the maximum benefits are achieved.



*Prickly pear, Cactus.man, Public Domain*

## Heart Healthy Benefits

The anti-inflammatory benefits assist in the reduction of plaques in the arteries and veins, reducing the chances of heart disease. Prickly pear juice also reduces cholesterol and enhances blood circulation to all parts of the body. I prefer to start patients on prickly pear juice as soon as there is any hint of heart problems.

## Fatigue and Muscle Soreness

The high vitamin and other nutrient levels combined with the health inducing properties of prickly pear make it an excellent choice for the treatment of fatigue and muscle soreness caused by over use or injury.

## All Inflammatory Diseases

The juice is indicated for all inflammatory diseases including skin diseases like psoriasis, eczema, and hives. I now prescribe it for all types of diseases when I suspect the problem is inflammatory.



## *Pulsatilla, Anemone pulsatilla*

This pretty little flower is also known as anemone, Easter flower, Wild Crocus, Windflower, and Prairie Smoke. It is a perennial that grows to about 18 inches tall. The leaves are feathery, delicately divided, and covered with silky hairs. They are silver-gray in color. Each plant produces a single light purple or white flower with yellow stamens. The stamens produce downy seeds.

Growing up, I had a small patch of pulsatilla growing in my yard. They were always the first flower to arrive in the spring, sometimes pushing through snow to make an appearance. To me, it was confirmation that warmer days were ahead. It usually makes its appearance around Easter. The root structure is a vertical

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rhizome. The roots dig 3 feet or more into the ground. When the fruit head matures, the hair-like threads blow in the wind, giving the impression of smoke in the wind.

### Medicinal Use

I use pulsatilla as either an infusion or a tincture. Pulsatilla must be used carefully and in small doses. In large amounts, it can be harmful or deadly. Avoid touching the fresh plant and only use dried flower heads in medicinal preparations.

### Skin Problems

For skin diseases, I prefer to use a mixture of pulsatilla and echinacea. Echinacea is an antibiotic and antiviral, and it stimulates the immune system. It is helpful to relieve skin infections and it works well with pulsatilla to relieve skin problems related to inflammation and infection. I recommend using Pulsatilla and Echinacea Tea as a skin wash over the affected areas and internally to resolve the underlying problems.

### Menstrual Problems

Pulsatilla is very effective for menstrual pain, premenstrual tension, dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, and menstrual cramping. I prescribe 1/2 to 1 teaspoon of Pulsatilla Tincture for menstrual problems. It also relieves symptoms of menopause such as headaches, hot flashes, and moodiness.

### Childbirth and Postpartum Depression

Pulsatilla stimulates the uterus and makes childbirth easier. It also has analgesic properties which help with labor pain. It is also given after childbirth to relieve symptoms of depression. Either the tea or the tincture can be used.

### Headaches and Sleep Problems

Pulsatilla relaxes the nervous system and treats headaches and insomnia in this way. It calms the body and spirit allowing patients to sleep soundly when taken in small doses. Take 1 cup of Pulsatilla Tea at bedtime or use 1/2 teaspoon of Pulsatilla Tincture.

### Mental Disorders

Because of its actions on the nerves, pulsatilla is useful for treating nervous conditions including: hyperactivity, senile dementia, panic, depression, and schizophrenia. Use either the tea or tincture.

### Urinary Tract Disorders

Patients with urinary tract infections, inflammation of the bladder, and other urinary tract disorders can find much relief with pulsatilla. It relieves the inflammation and the underlying infections.

### Eye and Ear Problems

Pulsatilla possesses many properties that are beneficial to the eyes and ears. It is useful in treating cataracts, conjunctivitis, glaucoma, and tics. I also use it to treat earaches, loss of hearing and inflammations of the ear. Use Pulsatilla Tea for eye and ear problems.



*Pulsatilla, Bernard DUPONT, CC by SA 2.0*



## Heart Health

Pulsatilla is beneficial to the heart in numerous ways. It is used to cure thickening of the heart muscle and clear venous congestion. It relieves inflammation in the circulatory system and helps restore normal function. I prefer to use Pulsatilla Tea for heart problems.

## Drug Withdrawal

Pulsatilla is useful to help patients with withdrawal from sedatives, hypnotic drugs, anticonvulsants, and muscle relaxants. Be careful to give only the prescribe dosages of Pulsatilla Infusion or tincture

## Harvesting

Pick pulsatilla flowering stalks when the plant is in full bloom, usually in the early spring near Easter.

## Warning

Pulsatilla should never be used internally for pregnant women.

Given in large doses, pulsatilla can be harmful and may cause coma, seizures, asphyxiation, and death.

Wear gloves when harvesting pulsatilla flower heads. Use only the dried flower heads in herbal preparations. The fresh herb is an irritant.

## Recipes

### Pulsatilla Infusion

1/2 teaspoon of dried pulsatilla flowers, 1 cup boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the herbs and allow it to steep for about 15 minutes. Drink 3 times daily or as needed.

### Pulsatilla Tincture

Dried Pulsatilla flowers, 100 proof vodka or other drinking alcohol and jar with a tight-fitting lid.

1. Add the dried flowers to the jar, filling it about three-quarters full.
2. Pour 100 proof vodka over the flowers and fill the jar, making sure all the flowers are covered.
3. Cap the jar tightly and place it in a cool, dark place, such as a cupboard.
4. Let the tincture steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking the jar daily. Add more alcohol, if needed to keep the jar full.
5. Pour the alcohol through a fine mesh sieve or a coffee filter to remove all the herb.
6. Store the tincture in a cool, dark cupboard for up to 7 years.
7. Dosage: 1/2 to 1 teaspoon, three times daily.

### Pulsatilla and Echinacea Tea

1/2 teaspoon dried pulsatilla flowers, 1 teaspoon dried echinacea root and leaves and 1 cup boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the herbs and allow them to steep for 10 minutes. Strain and drink.

## Red Clover (*Trifolium pretense*)

Red clover is an herbaceous member of the Pea Family (Fabaceae). I often find it growing as a weed on roadsides and fields throughout the US. It is a biennial or short-lived perennial that grows to 18 inches tall.



*By Sanja565658 - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0*

## Plant Identification

The plant grows from a long, deep taproot and slender, hairy, hollow stems. The leaves are alternate, divided into three leaflets, and green with a pale crescent in the outer half of the leaf. Leaflets are 1/2 to 1 1/5 inches long and 1/2-inch wide and fine-toothed with prominent "V" marks. Pink to red flowers appear in rounded heads from May to September.

## Edible Parts

I eat the leaves and young flowering heads both raw and cooked. I use a sweet herbal tea from the flowers medicinally and I have used the ground seed pots and flowers to use as a flour. I also eat the taproot cooked. Some people sprout the seeds and use the sprouts in salads, but I have not tried that yet.

## Medicinal Uses

### How to Use Red Clover

I recommend the use of red clover as supplements, dried herbs, tincture, or as a tea made from the blossoms. For general health purposes, I prescribe several cups of red clover tea a few times a week. For specific medicinal purposes, drink 2 to 3 cups per day for two to ten weeks. Alternatively, take 1 to 2 teaspoons of tincture daily.

### Relieves Symptoms of Menopause

Because of its phytoestrogen isoflavone content, red clover works as a natural alternative to hormone replacement for my female patients. Patients report that it relieves symptoms of menopause, including reducing the frequency of hot flashes and night sweats.

### Osteoporosis

By acting as a natural hormone replacement, red clover may slow bone loss and even boost bone density in pre- and peri-menopausal women.

### Cardiovascular Health

Red clover helps protect against heart disease by increasing HDL (good) cholesterol in pre- and post-menopausal women. It also has blood-thinning properties which improve blood flow and prevents clotting.

### Skin Conditions Including Eczema, Psoriasis, and Other Skin Irritations

I have found that red clover tea, supported with yellow dock and nettles is an excellent remedy for skin irritations that crack and ooze. I also use an external poultice made from chopped red clover flower heads and soaked in a little water applied directly to skin lesions.



*Guttorm Raknes, Own work, CC by SA 4.0*



## Harvesting Instructions

Harvest red clover from fields, away from heavy pollution areas such as roadsides. Unlike most herbs, red clover needs to be harvested in the early morning while there is still some dew present on the flower. I pick the blossoms one to two weeks after blooming and harvest up to three times a year, snapping the blossom head off and leaving the rest of the plant alone.

I use the blossoms fresh or place them on a drying rack in a warm dark, ventilated, and dry place. I turn them frequently until the blossoms are dried through. Store the dried herb in a cool, dry, and dark place.

When harvesting young leaves, I try to get them before the plant flowers. I use them cooked as a green, in soups, and salads. The leaves can also be dried and powdered for use as a flavoring on foods. They tend to be more bitter after the flowers appear.

## Warnings

In general, I consider red clover to be very safe, with few side effects, except for occasional gas. The anticoagulant effect and hormonal effects may be undesirable for some patients.

Due to its hormonal activity, I don't recommend red clover for women with a history of endometriosis, breast cancer, uterine cancer, fibroids, or other estrogen-sensitive conditions.

Red clover contains coumarin derivatives and must be used with caution in individuals taking anticoagulation therapy. Also, I do not prescribe red clover before surgery or childbirth. It can inhibit blood clotting and healing.

## Recipes

### Red Clover Tea (hot)

Red clover blossoms, fresh or dried, few peppermint leaves, as desired to enhance flavor (optional) and 1 cup boiling water  
Steep three fresh red clover blossoms or 2 to 3 teaspoons of dried flower and a few peppermint leaves in 1 cup boiling water. Allow the tea to steep while cooling for 15 minutes. Drink warm or allow to cool for external use. Drink up to three times daily for maximum benefits.

### Red Clover Tea (Cold)

Add one-half cup of red clover blossoms to a quart of water and allow it to steep in the refrigerator for 24 hours.

### Red Clover Tincture

You'll need fresh or dried red clover blossoms and vodka or brandy, or 80 proof or higher.

1. Chop the fresh flowers or grind dry herbs.
2. Place the red clover blossoms in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the herbs to cover them completely.
4. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days.
5. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the red clover completely covered.
6. Soak the herbs for 4 to 6 weeks.
7. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid.
8. Discard the herbs. Place the alcohol extraction in a cool place, undisturbed overnight.
9. Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining herb residue.
10. Store the tincture in a tightly capped glass bottle in a cool, dark place.
11. Use 1 to 2 teaspoons of tincture daily divided into 2 to 3 doses.



### Sheep Sorrel, *Rumex acetosella*

Sheep sorrel is one of the most useful medicinal herbs and, yet most of us pull them out or spray them to rid the yard or field of it. Well, I pull the plants for medicinal use and dry them, putting only the roots in the compost heap.

Sheep's sorrel is also known as red sorrel, sour weed, and field sorrel. It is a member of the buckwheat family, Polygonaceae. The plant grows as a common perennial weed in most areas. It has small green leaves shaped like arrowheads and deeply ridged, upright red stems that are branched at the top. The plant achieves a height of 18 inches at most. The plant grows from an aggressively spreading rhizome.

The plant blooms from March to November and are either all male or all female. Yellowish-green male flowers or maroon colored female flowers grow on a tall, upright stem. The maroon female flowers develop into red achenes. I usually find sheep's sorrel in grasslands with acidic, sandy soils. It is one of the first weeds to appear when an area has been disturbed.

#### Edible Use

Sheep's sorrel is edible as a salad green or as a garnish. The flavor is tart and lemony. It can be used as a curdling agent during the cheese-making process.

Livestock will eat the plant, but it is not very nutritious and can cause problems if too much is consumed because of its high concentration of oxalates.

#### Medicinal Use

I use sheep sorrel as a juice, tea, and powder or capsules. For powder or capsule use, I prescribe 1 gram of powdered root twice daily.

#### Detoxification

Sheep's sorrel is useful for detoxifying. It has a diuretic effect and flushes the body when ample water is consumed. It also has laxative effects. For detoxification, I recommend freshly juice made from the sheep sorrel leaves or I sometimes use Sheep Sorrel Tea. The tea and powder are less effective than the fresh juice.

#### Gastro-Intestinal Problems, Kidney, and Urinary Tract Diseases

Because of its ability to flush the system and remove toxins, it is particularly useful for chronic gastro-intestinal problems, kidney problems, and urinary tract diseases.

#### Cysts, Swellings, and Skin Cancers

For tumors, swellings, cysts, and cancers close to the skin surface, relief can be found by making a poultice from the macerated leaves of sheep sorrel. Apply the poultice directly over the affected area several times daily until the problem is resolved.



Henripekka Kallio, CC by SA 3.0, Female flowers Sheep Sorrel,



## Intestinal Parasites and Worms

I use the tea as a vermifuge to kill and flush worms and intestinal parasites out of the system. One cup of tea, taken twice daily for two weeks does the job.

## Colds, Flu, and Sinusitis

Sheep sorrel is an excellent treatment for reducing the inflammation and pain that accompanies colds, flu, and sinusitis. The tannins help reduce the production of mucus and the anti-microbial effects help kill bacterial infections. My patients recommend eating or taking sheep sorrel as soon as the illness begins to reduce the severity of the disease. They tell me that the sheep sorrel makes a big difference in the outcome.

## Warnings

Because of its high oxalate content, people with kidney stones, arthritis, rheumatism or hyperacidity should not use sheep sorrel.

## Sheep Sorrel Tea

You'll need 1 teaspoon dried sheep sorrel leaves and 1 cup water. Bring the water to a boil and pour over the dried sheep sorrel leaves. Cover and let the tea steep for 5 to 10 minutes. Drink warm.

## St. John's Wort, *Hypericum perforatum*

St. John's Wort is recognized as an invasive weed in most parts of the United States. It gets its name from its uncanny ability to bloom on June 24, the birthday of St. John the Baptist. I choose to commemorate the day by harvesting the leaves and flowers on that day.

## Plant Identification

St. John's Wort is a herbaceous perennial with creeping rhizomes. The stems are erect growing to 40 inches tall. The stems branch in the upper section and produce narrow, yellow-green leaves that are less than 1 inch long. The leaves have tiny oil glands in the leaves that appear like windows when the plant is held to the light.

Bright yellow flowers, measuring 1 inch across, appear in broad cymes on the upper branches from late spring to mid-summer. The flowers have five petals with pointed sepals. The sepals have noticeable black dots. The stamens are grouped into three bundles. The seed pods produce a reddish or purple liquid when crushed.

The plant is widespread in the US now, and I can usually find it in the spring and summer, growing in pastures, on the river banks, and along the railroad tracks. It likes dry soil and sunny locations.



*St Johns Wort Leaves, Dataportal, Public Domain*



## Medicinal Use

### Nerve Stimulant

St Johns Wort is a nerve stimulant useful for treating depression, restlessness, anxiety, and insomnia without adverse effects. It should not be taken by patients with bipolar disorder since it seems to increase the risk of mania. I prescribe the tincture taken daily for 2 months or more or the tea may be used three times daily.

### Menopause and Menstrual Cramping

St Johns Wort reduces the symptoms of hormonal imbalances in menopause including depression and fatigue. It helps balance the hormones and stimulates the organs, increasing the tone of the uterus. It is also beneficial for relieving cramping, bloating, and the symptoms of PMS. I recommend drinking a cup of tea three times daily before and during the menstrual bleeding and when menopausal symptoms are troublesome.

### Reduces the Physical Symptoms of Opiate Withdrawal

I have used St John's Wort to alleviate the symptoms of mild opiate withdrawal. It calms the nervous system and alleviates the physical symptoms of withdrawal from opiate-based drugs. For drug withdrawal I recommend internal use of St John's Wort Tincture.

### Cuts, Bruises, Burns, and Other Injuries

Extracted St John's Oil is an excellent antiseptic and anti-viral and contains tannins that facilitate healing. I apply it topically to heal burns, injuries, wounds, and infections.

I use extracted oil that has been diluted 1 part oil to 9 parts olive oil or other carrier oil as a salve.

### Neuralgia

Nerve pain and neuralgia benefit from topically applied oil. I use it for sharp and convulsive trigeminal neuralgia and sciatica and shingles. I usually recommend tea to calm the nerves and the oil applied over the affected areas. Take 1 cup of tea one to two times daily or take the St John's Wort tincture three to four times daily.

### Muscle Pains

For back pain, muscle pain, and general body aches, I recommend the use of the Oil of St John's wort. It is useful taken internally and when massaged into the muscles.

### Peptic Ulcers, Gastric Problems

St John's Wort attacks ulcers and gastric problems by calming the digestive organs and by attacking the bacteria and viruses that cause the problems. It is effective against infective digestive problems such as gastroenteritis, dysentery, and diarrhea. I use the diluted oil in divided doses, three times daily.

### Hemorrhoids

The oil of St John's Wort is almost a miracle cure for hemorrhoids. It effectively reduces the inflammation, relieves the pain, and speeds the healing process. Use my recipe for St John's Wort Extracted Oil and apply topical to the affected area.



### Lowers Blood Pressure

The healing properties of St John's wort help lower the blood pressure and restore the flexibility of capillaries. Take 1 cup of tea one to two times daily, preferably in the morning and late afternoon or use St John's Wort tincture 3 to 4 times daily.

### Removes Fluids and Toxins from the Body

The diuretic properties of St John's wort help to remove the fluids from the body and flush away toxins through urination. Take 1 cup of tea one to two times daily, preferably in the morning and afternoon.

### Bedwetting in Childhood

Children with bedwetting problems can be helped by giving 5 to 10 drops of St John's wort tincture in the late afternoon. Flushing the excess fluids out of the system before beds help prevent the buildup of fluids in the bladder during the night and helps the child to learn better bladder control.



### Arthritis, Rheumatism, and Gout

Painful joints are relieved by taking two to three cups of the tea daily or use St John's Wort tincture. It reduces inflammation and pain, relieving the symptoms of these joint diseases. For best results, I recommend daily consumption of St John's wort. The benefits increase over time as the inflamed joints heal.

### Chest Colds, Congestion, and Respiratory Disease

In addition to its anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial benefits of St John's wort, it is also an effective expectorant that helps clear chest congestion and phlegm. It speeds healing of infections and common coughs and colds. I have also used it against influenza and tuberculosis. Either the tea or the oil can be used for respiratory problems.

### Recipes

#### St John's Wort Tincture

Ingredients: St John's wort flowers and leaves, 80 proof grain alcohol or vodka, a clean jar with a tight-fitting lid

1. Loosely pack the flowers and leaves into the jar, filling it to the top.
2. Add the alcohol to the jar, covering the flowers and leaves. Cap the jar tightly and leave it to steep in a cool, dark place.
3. Add more alcohol as needed to replace evaporation. Shake the jar daily and allow it to steep for 4 to 6 weeks.
4. Strain the herbs out. Cap the jar and keep it in a cool, dark cupboard.
5. Take the tincture for a prolonged period as needed to cure chronic conditions. Adults, use 20 to 30 drops, 3 to 5 times daily. For children, use 5 to 10 drops.

#### St John's Wort Tea

1 teaspoon of dried St John's Wort and 1 cup of boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the herbs and steep for 10 minutes. Strain out the herbs and add honey, sugar or lemon as desired. The tea is bitter, and I find that the addition of honey and lemon reduces the objectional bitterness. Take 1 cup of tea one to two times daily.



### St John's Wort Extracted Oil

Two ounces of St John's wort flowers and 2 cups olive oil

1. Mix the herbs and olive oil and place them over very low heat. Steep the oil and herbs for 2 to 3 hours, keeping the oil at a low simmer.
2. Strain the oil and remove the herbs.
3. Store your infused oil in a cool, dark cupboard.

\*St John's wort oil works well on its own, however, it can be even more healing when mixed with other herbs. For healing burns, relieving muscle or joint inflammations, and nerve pains, add lavender oil or yarrow oil. The oil will keep longer if you add 5 percent lavender oil to the mixture.

### Skin Healing Oil or Salve

This salve is an all-purpose salve for healing skin irritations, minor burns, sunburn, cuts, wounds, insect bites, eczema, diaper rash, ringworm, and athlete's foot. This combination of herbs is soothing and anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, analgesic, and promotes rapid wound healing and tissue growth.

This combination also helps minimize scarring, so it is a good choice for facial wounds and other wounds in exposed areas.

Olive oil, almond oil, and other carrier oils can be used for this salve, but I prefer coconut oil. On a cool day or under refrigeration coconut oil is solid. I store it in the refrigerator and use it as a cooling salve for irritations and sunburn.

### Skin Healing Oil

Ingredients: 1 cup coconut oil, olive oil or other carrier oil, ¼ cup calendula flowers, dried, ¼ cup St. John's Wort, dried 1/8 cup chamomile, dried, 20 drops lavender essential oil

6. Fill a clean quart jar with the herbs and add the carrier oil. Cover the jar tightly and shake to combine. The jar will not be full, but the herbs will swell over time.
7. Shake the jar daily and add oil if needed to keep the herbs covered.
8. Infuse the oil in a warm, sunny spot such as a windowsill for two to four weeks.
9. Strain the oil through a fine mesh strainer to remove the herbs.
10. Add the lavender essential oil and shake to combine.

The oil can be used as is or it can be made into a salve. If you use coconut oil and refrigerate the oil, it will have a salve texture without adding the beeswax.

### Skin Healing Salve

Ingredients: 1 cup prepared skin healing oil (recipe above) and 1-ounce beeswax, shaved or grated

4. In the top of a double boiler, heat the prepared oil and beeswax slowly until the wax melts. Remove from the heat.
5. Pour the salve into small tins or glass jars. Label and date the jars.
6. Store the salve in a cool, dark place. I prefer to refrigerate it for long-term use.

### Stinging Nettle, *Urtica dioica*

I had an accidental encounter with stinging nettle, and I will never forget it. The plant is well named. Learn to recognize it and avoid it unless you need it. Stinging nettle is a perennial, growing between 3 to 7 feet tall. It is dioecious and herbaceous, dying back in the winter. It grows from bright yellow, widely spreading rhizomes and stolons.

The leaves are opposite, mostly oval or occasionally heart-shaped. The soft, green leaves are 1 to 6 inches long and are arranged oppositely on an erect stem. The leaves have a serrated margin and cordate base. Both the leaves and stems are very hairy with non-stinging hairs and many stinging hairs.



Nettle Tincture, three times daily.

Numerous flowers appear June to September in dense axillary inflorescences. They are greenish or brownish, growing in branched clusters. Male and female flowers grow on separate plants or branches.

Stinging nettle is widely distributed in the United States, especially in the Pacific Northwest and where the average annual rainfall is high. I find it in waste places with moist soils and near abandoned buildings.

## Edible Use

The leaves are edible. Stinging nettles have a flavor similar to spinach and cucumber when cooked. I gather them with gloved hands and soak them in water to remove the stinging chemicals before cooking and eating. Only eat stinging nettle leaves before the flowers appear. Beyond that time, they can cause internal irritation, especially of the urinary tract.

Dried nettle leaves and flowers make a nice herbal tea.

## Medicinal Use

Nettle can be taken as capsules of 300 mg of powdered dried leaves, allowing 2 to 3 capsules daily. For tincture, take 2 to 4 ml of Herbal

## Stimulate Blood Flow

Stinging nettle stimulates the circulatory system and blood flow. To stimulate blood flow and improve circulation, I recommend taking Nettle Infusion or Tea. For general circulatory problems, I recommend a combination of nettle and plantain.

## Arthritis, Rheumatism, Gout Pain and Inflammation

Stinging nettle treats rheumatism, gout, and other inflammatory conditions. It suppresses inflammation, flushes toxins from the body and helps reduce the pain of these conditions. For these conditions I recommend Nettle Infusion internally, twice a day. A compress made by soaking a cotton pad in nettle tincture and placing it over the painful joint is also helpful.

## Eczema and Skin Inflammations

Both the tincture and infusion of stinging nettle are useful for treating eczema and other skin inflammations.

## Burns, Insect Bites, and Wounds

I use a double strong Nettle Infusion as a wash to treat burned skin, sunburns, insect bites, wounds, and other skin irritations. Make the Nettle Infusion recipe using 2 tablespoons of dried or fresh nettle leaves. Use the cooled liquid to wash and treat these conditions, allowing it to dry on the skin.



Stinging nettle, Frank Vincentz - Own work, CC by SA 3.0



## Menstrual Problems

Women with heavy uterine bleeding and other menstrual problems benefit from two doses of Nettle Tincture daily.

## Sprains, Cramps, Tendinitis, Sciatica

Muscle cramping and injuries and nerve pains benefit from the application of a compress made by soaking a cotton pad in Nettle Tincture and applying it over the affected area. Fasten it in place for best results.

## Hemorrhoids

Infused Nettle Oil, applied directly to the hemorrhoids help shrink the inflamed tissue and reduce the pain.

## Anemia, Cardiac Insufficiency, Swellings, Enlarged Spleen and as a Whole Body Tonic

For serious conditions such as these, I use fresh nettle juice prepared by soaking and blending the whole fresh plant. Take two ounces of this juice, 3 times daily.

## Nosebleeds

To stop the bleeding, have patients inhale the powdered leaf as a snuff.

## Recipes

### Nettle Infusion

1 Tablespoon dried nettle leaves, crushed and 1 cup boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the nettle leaves and allow it to steep for 8 to 10 minutes. Strain and drink twice daily.

### Healthy Heart Herbal Tea

2 fresh nettle leaves, 1 fresh plantain leaf, 1 cup water, 3 fresh mint leaves for flavor

1. Bring the herbs and water to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer. Simmer for 3 minutes.
2. Allow the herbs to steep for 10 minutes while the tea cools. Drink it hot before breakfast and lunch.

### Nettle Tincture

Stinging nettle leaves, fresh or crushed and dried (fresh is best)  
100 proof vodka or other drinking alcohol of same strength.

Glass jar with a tight-fitting lid

1. Fill the jar with fresh nettle leaves that have been sliced into thin pieces and crushed.
2. Pour 100 proof vodka over the leaves and fill the jar, making sure all the leaves are covered.
3. Cap the jar tightly and place it in a cool, but sunny location such as a windowsill.



4. Let the tincture marinate for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking the jar daily. Add more alcohol, if needed to keep the jar full.
5. Pour the alcohol through a fine mesh sieve or a coffee filter to *Stinging Nettle, Public Domain* remove all of the herbs.
6. Store the tincture in a cool, dark cupboard for up to 7 years.
7. Dosage: 1/2 to 1 teaspoon, twice daily.

### Infused Nettle Oil

2 ounces shredded or ground nettle leaves, 1 cup olive oil, double boiler, water and coffee filter

1. Bring the water to boil in the bottom of a double boiler, then turn down the heat and let the water simmer.
2. Add the olive oil and nettle leaves into the top of the double boiler and place it on the simmering base. The bottom of the oil pot should rest just above the simmering water so that it gets gentle heat.
3. Heat the oil gently for one hour.
4. Remove the oil from the heat and let it cool. Strain it through a coffee filter. If you used powdered root, you could leave it in the oil, if desired.

### Sweet Marjoram, *Origanum majorana*

Sweet marjoram, also called pot marjoram, is a tender perennial herb with a piney-citrus flavor. It is related to oregano and has some similar uses and a milder flavor. The plant is widely cultivated in herb gardens and can be found growing wild where it has escaped cultivation. I usually grow it in my garden for easy access.

#### Plant Identification

Sweet marjoram has It has smooth narrow leaves, arranged opposite and approximately 1/5 to 3/5 inches long that are oval in shape with a slight point. The margin is smooth and the base is tapered. The leaf has numerous hairs that give it a smooth, velvety texture. The grey-green leaves are aromatic and flavorful.

It grows to a height of 10 to 24 inches on several thin boughs. The stems are square and purple. The plant produces delicate white or pink blossoms on spikes at the end of the branches during late summer and early fall.

#### Edible Use

The leaves, flowers, and stems are all edible.

#### Medicinal Use

The herb has many medicinal uses and can be taken in food, or the distilled oil can be used.

#### Digestive and Respiratory Tonic

Sweet marjoram is an effective tonic for the digestive and respiratory tracts. It is an excellent treatment for problems related to these areas.



*Sweet Marjoram, public domain*



## Menstrual Aid

The herb is capable of inducing menstruation and should never be used in significant amounts by pregnant women. Used in medicinal quantities, it calms the uterus and relieves pain and cramping. It balances the hormones and relieves the symptoms of menopause and pre-menstrual syndrome. It helps bring on menstruation when delayed.

## Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome

I have treated patients with PCOS and the related fertility problems with sweet marjoram, achieving success. By balancing the hormones, it is able to relieve the symptoms of this disease and nearly half of the women who had been infertile were able to conceive.

## Promotes Breast Milk Production

Nursing mother report an increase in breast milk production when eating marjoram daily.

## Diabetes

I recommend that patients with type II diabetes add sweet marjoram and rosemary to their daily diet. The combination of sweet marjoram and rosemary improve the use of insulin in the body and improves blood sugar management.

## Muscle Spasms, Tension Headaches, and Over-Used Muscles

Marjoram essential oil has a calming effect on the muscles and tension headaches. Some patients say that simply breathing in the oil is enough to relieve a tension headache. Two or three drops added to a vaporizer or bath water is enough. It is also very effective for relieving muscle spasms and pain when diluted and used as a massage oil. My instructions for distilling marjoram essential oil and making massage oil is found below.



Marjoram in flower, H. Zell, CC by SA 3.0



Marjoram Flowers, SKSiddhartthan, CC by SA 4.0

## Lowers Blood Pressure

Sweet marjoram oil is also valuable for lowering blood pressure. Patients are amazed at the lower numbers after relaxing and breathing in the scent of marjoram essential oil. The relaxation of the body and release of stress helps lower the blood pressure naturally.

## How to Use Marjoram Medicinally

As little as one tablespoon of dried marjoram, sprinkled on food, taken in capsules or used as a tea is enough to derive health benefits. For fresh herbs, take a quarter cup of chopped marjoram on your salads or other foods. Both the fresh and dried herb are beneficial.



## Recipes

### Marjoram Oil Distillation

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

Fresh sweet Marjoram leaves chopped fine or ground, water to cover the herbs

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or a tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place the chopped sweet Marjoram leaves into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to cover the herbs and fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and the distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the distilled oil to a dark glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. Dilute Sweet Marjoram Essential Oil in a ratio of 1 part essential oil to 9 parts carrier oil before use.

\* Sweet Marjoram Essential Oil is light yellow in color. It turns darker as it ages.

### Sweet Marjoram Massage Oil

1/2 teaspoon Sweet Marjoram Essential Oil (undiluted), 1/2 cup olive oil, almond oil, or other suitable carrier oil  
2-3 drops of other oils as desired for scent \*

Mix the oils together and use as a massage oil overtired and aching muscles.

\* Lavender, Rosemary, Mint, and Chamomile are all nice and add additional benefits.

### Thorn Apple, *Datura stramonium*

Thorn Apple is a member of the nightshade family and is as dangerous as other family members when care is not used. Like other family members, it can be highly beneficial for medicinal purposes when used carefully in very small doses, and it can be deadly when used improperly. I have a long-term love-hate relationship with these plants. Because of my childhood experience with near death, I always hesitate a little when using them, but I have also seen patients get much-needed relief using the herbs. I reserve internal use of these plants for tough cases where the risk is warranted.

#### Plant Identification

Thorn apple is also known as jimsonweed, moon flower, and devil's snare.



Thorn Apple, Skäpperöd, CC by SA 3.0

The annual bushes are foul-smelling, freely branching and erect, approximately two to five feet tall. The plant grows from a long, thick, and fibrous root.

Stems are stout, leafy, smooth, and pale yellow-green. They form many forks and branches, with a leaf and flower at each fork.



*Franz Eugen Köhler, Köhler's Medizinal-Pflanzen, Public Domain*

Leaves are 3 to 8 inches long, soft, irregularly undulated and toothed. The surface is smooth, with a darker green upper surface and a light green underside.

White, creamy, or violet flowers appear throughout the summer and are trumpet-shaped. They are approximately 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches long on short stems growing from the branch forks or the leaf axils. The calyx is swollen at the base, long and tubular and surrounded with five sharp teeth. The corolla is only partially open and has prominent ribs. The flowers open at night with a pleasant scent.

Seeds are egg-shaped capsules, approximately 1 to 3 inches in diameter and either bald or covered with spines. When mature, it splits into four chambers, each containing many small black seeds.

I find the plant growing wild across the warmer parts of the United States. It is often found in farm yards, along roadsides, and on wastelands.

### Medicinal Use

I mostly use the Thorn Apple Salve for external use and have discontinued using the herb as a smoke or extract because of its toxic effects.

### Asthma

Thorn apple leaves have long been smoked in cigarette or pipe form, mixed with tobacco, for the treatment of asthma. I do not recommend this method since over-consumption causes hallucinations and could have other toxic effects.

### Burns, Wounds, Boils, and Skin Inflammations

A salve made with thorn apple reduces inflammations in burns and other traumatic skin wounds and inflammations.

The seeds have mild pain-relieving properties and narcotic properties. In the past, I have made an extract from the seeds to use as a pain reliever and as a muscle relaxant.

### Whooping Cough and Other Coughs

The narcotic and anti-spasmodic properties of thorn apple seeds are potent and useful in severe cases of whooping cough and muscle spasms. I use the Thorn Apple Seed Extract for this purpose.

### Muscle Spasms and Parkinson's Disease

The tremors of Parkinson's disease and other muscle spasms respond to the anti-spasmodic properties of the extract. Start with the minimum dose and increase it only if necessary.

### Editor's Note: Toxicity



The plant contains dangerous levels of toxins and has a significant risk of overdose when used without medical supervision. Toxicity can also vary from plant to plant and with the maturity of the plant, so a safe dose one year might be toxic the next year as the plant matures. Use Thorn apple only under the supervision of a highly skilled medical professional.

### Recipes

#### Thorn Apple Seed Extract

1/4 teaspoon thorn apple seeds, 1/4 cup 80 proof alcohol

Mix the alcohol and seeds together in a small bottle and cover tightly. Allow the mixture to steep for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain out the seeds and store the extract in a cool, dark place for up to 3 years. Keep out of reach of children and mark it clearly as a poison.

Dosing: It is impossible to accurately recommend a dosage since the strength of seeds from each individual plant varies. Start with 1 drop and increase the dosage only as needed to get the desired effects. Watch carefully for symptoms of toxicity. Use only under medical supervision.

#### Thorn Apple Oil or Salve

\*For external use only

1/4 teaspoon thorn apple seeds, 1/2 cup coconut oil or olive oil, coconut oil is preferred if you want a solid salve

1. Place the coconut oil and thorn apple seeds together in a small jar. Place the jar and its contents into a pot of barely simmering water. Keep the water level so that the jar stands upright and does not float.
2. Maintain a very low simmer for 1 hour.
3. Turn off the heat and allow the oil to cool.
4. Strain the seeds out of the oil and discard them. Use the cooled oil as a rub or salve on painful joints.



### Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*

*Thymus vulgaris* is the same evergreen herb that we use for cooking. It is a member of the Mint family, Lamiaceae. The fragrant plant grows in hot, sunny locations and I like to take a small live plant with me for medicinal and culinary use when I travel. I use it as a herb for its intense flavor and as an herbal tea.

#### Plant Identification

Thyme is a perennial shrub with square stems growing from a thin woody base. It grows to approximately 6 to 12 inches tall. The leaves are small, light-green, and slightly curved.

Small lilac or white flowers appear in the summer.

### Medicinal Uses

History teaches us that the Romans used thyme to purify their rooms and to flavor cheese and liqueurs. It has been placed under pillows to aid sleep and prevent nightmares.

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



I am aware of beneficial components in the oil of thyme. It is an antiseptic anti-viral, anti-rheumatic, anti-parasitic, and anti-fungal. I always use the oil diluted to at least part Oil of Thyme to nine parts carrier oil.

I prefer to use fresh thyme whenever possible. However, I also dry thyme sprigs for future use.



### Sore Throat, Coughs, and Bronchitis

The anti-bacterial components of thyme are valuable in combatting bronchitis and coughs. I infuse the whole herb in water and use it as a tisane for gargling and as a weak thyme tea.

### Mouthwash, Treatment of Dental Caries and Gum Disease

Weak thyme tea or Thyme Tisane is valuable mouthwashes for the antiseptic properties, to prevent dental caries, and treat gingivitis.

### Thyme Tincture for Acne

I recommend Thyme Tincture for treating acne. Dab a drop of thyme tincture onto blemishes once or twice daily. Thyme tincture dries up acne and kills the bacteria that cause them.

### Thyme Boosts the Immune System

The many vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants in thyme give the immune system a boost. Also, thyme encourages white blood cell formation and increases the bodies resistance to bacteria and viruses. Thyme based formulas, Tisanes, Thyme Tea, and Thyme essential oil are all good formulas for boosting the immune system.

### Thyme for Digestive Upsets

I find that thyme is effective against digestive problems caused by bacteria and viruses, including stomach flus and diarrhea. I also prescribe it for intestinal problems, including worms. I recommend Thyme Tea or Tisane for digestive upsets.

### Thyme for Seizures

Thyme has anti-spasmodic properties and prevents and treats epileptic seizures in some patients. Oil of Thyme or Thyme Tincture are the best products to use for this purpose.

### Thyme for Lice, Scabies, and Crabs

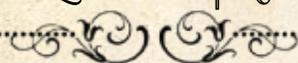
The anti-parasitic properties of thyme oil make it a good treatment for lice, scabies, and crabs. Add a few drops of Oil of Thyme to olive oil or coconut oil and coat the affected area. Cover the coated areas and leave on for 1 hour, then wash away. Follow up with nit removal and repeat as needed.

### Thyme Poultice for Skin Inflammations

I use a Thyme Leaf Poultice for skin inflammations, and sores. I mash the leaves into a paste, place it on the skin over the affected areas and cover it with a clean cloth.

### Thyme Oil for Warts

Mix one drop of Oil of Thyme with a tablespoon of olive oil or coconut oil, or mix it full strength into a pre-made salve. Place on warts daily until the wart is gone.



## Harvesting Thyme

I harvest thyme leaves often during the summer. Frequent trimming keeps the bushes from becoming woody and increases my yield. I use fresh leaves whenever possible and freeze or dry leaves for future use.

## Warnings

Thyme is safe for use in adults and children. The essential oil is very strong and sometimes causes skin irritations if used full strength. I always dilute the essential oil at least 1:10 before use. (1 part essential oil, 10 parts carrier oil.)

## Recipes

### Thyme Tea or Tisane

1 teaspoon fresh or dried thyme leaves, 1 cup boiling water

Steep the thyme leaves in the water for 10 to 15 minutes. Sweeten with honey, if desired. Take only one cup daily, divided into 2 doses. Drink warm or cold.

### Thyme Tincture

Thyme leaves and stems, 80 proof Vodka or other alcohol

1. Chop or crush fresh thyme leaves and their stems to release the oils.
2. Place the herbs in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid, tightly packing them.
3. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the herbs to cover them completely.
4. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days.
5. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the thyme covered.
6. Soak the herbs for 4 to 6 weeks.
7. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid.
8. Discard the thyme.
9. Store the tincture in a tightly capped glass bottle in a cool, dark place.

Use 10 to 20 drops of Thyme Tincture mixed into water or juice twice daily.

### Oil of Thyme Distillation

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

Thyme leaves and stems, water to cover the herbs

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of thyme essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place the herbs into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.

6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor your still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water and your distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. Dilute the oil to at least 10% Oil of Thyme and 90% carrier oil before use. Oil of thyme is very powerful; you need as little as one drop of the diluted oil for an effective dose.



*Tobacco Root, Edible valerian, Public Domain*

### Tobacco Root, Valerian Root, *Valeriana edulis*

*Valeriana Edulis* also called tobacco root or valerian root, is a plant species in the family Caprifoliaceae. It is a perennial flowering plant endemic to central and western North America. Despite the name tobacco root, the herb is not related to the tobacco plant.

Tobacco root can grow from heights of 3 feet to 6 1/2 feet tall depending on the location and the soil conditions. It has a straight hollow stem which is topped by an umbrella-like head.

The leaves of the tobacco root have a pinnate blade which has 6 to 11 pairs of terminal leaflets. These leaflets have prickly margins.

The flowers of tobacco root are in branched batches and less than 1/10 inch long. They are tiny white to pink blossoms. These flowers have a slightly unequal corolla. The collar-like cavity (calyx) is small. The flower has three stamens and also has a distinctive scent.

The fruits of Valerian are egg-shaped and often with spreading hairs or flying hairs. They are approximately 1/10 inch long achene. Its Flowering time is from June to July.

### Edible Use

The seeds, leaves, and roots are edible. It has been reported to me that the root is poisonous raw, but when slowly baked, it produces an edible vegetable that has a peculiar taste and odor. Some people enjoy the flavor; I do not. The seeds are also edible when lightly roasted.

### Harvesting Instructions

During harvesting, the flowering tops must be cut off as they appear. This enables the better development of the rhizome. In the first year, many of the young plants do not flower but produce a luxuriant crop of leaves, and yield a rhizome of good quality in the autumn season. All the tops are cut off in September, or early October with a scythe and the rhizomes are harvested, the clinging character of the soil does not allow them to be left in the ground longer.



Dig deeply to get entire root system. Then slice the roots into small sections and dry for future use.

## Medicinal Uses

### Anxiety and Panic Attacks

Tobacco root has a calming effect that is beneficial to patients with panic and anxiety disorders. I brew Tobacco Root Decoction from the leaves or roots to treat these types of attacks.

### Depression and Obsessive-Compulsive Behavior

Tobacco root improves symptoms of depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder by improving the brains activity and calming the spirit in small doses. In larger doses, It can have the opposite effect, so I recommend small doses of Tobacco Root Decoction for these problems.

### Epilepsy

Tobacco root has a relaxing effect on the muscles of the body. If a patient is in an acute attack, I give Tobacco Root Decoction. For regular use to prevent attacks, I recommend between 100 mg to 1 gram of dried and powdered tobacco root. I start with a low dose, depending on the patient's size and the severity of the disease and increase it gradually until I find a level that works for the patient.

### Menstrual Cramps

For painful menstrual cramps, I use my Tobacco Root Decoction or patients can take powdered tobacco root. Because of its analgesic properties and its ability to relax the smooth muscles, this herb makes a good treatment for pain and cramping during menstruation.

### Treating Insomnia

I have used tobacco root extensively as a sleep aid with beneficial results. Patients report that they get to sleep faster and can sleep longer without waking.

They also report that they awaken refreshed without residual drowsiness. I recommend that patients take the Tobacco Root Decoction at bedtime.

### Lowers Blood Pressure and Pulse Rate

Tobacco root relaxes the blood vessels to naturally reduce blood pressure and the pulse rate. I recommend the use of dried tobacco root at doses of 100 mg to 500 mg nightly for this use. I start patients at 100 mg daily and increase it if needed.

### Caution

In ordinary doses, tobacco root exerts a quieting and soothing influence upon the brain and nervous system. However, large doses, too often repeated, it tends to produce pain in the head, heaviness, and stupor.



*Tobacco Root, By JW Stockert,, Public Domain*



## Recipes

### Tobacco Root Decoction

2 ounces dried tobacco root, 1-pint water

1. Chop the tobacco root pieces small or grind the roots.
2. Boil the root for 15 minutes or more to release the medicinal qualities into the water.
3. Cool the decoction and strain it to remove the root fibers.
4. Store the decoction for up to 3 days in the refrigerator.

Take 2 ounces of decoction at bedtime for insomnia, or take smaller doses during the day for other treatments.

### White Mustard, *Sinapis alba*

White mustard, *Sinapis alba* belongs to Brassicaceae family and genus *Sinapis*. It is mostly grown for its seeds or as fodder crop and is now widespread across the US. White mustard seeds are yellow in color and are also called yellow mustard. Brown and black mustards are different but also have medicinal uses.

### Plant Identification

White mustard is an annual herb, growing from 1 to 2 feet tall. It flowers from July to September.

The white mustard flower has a yellow corolla, just over 1/2 inch in diameter with four petals that are 1/4 to 1/2 inch long. Four spreading sepals, six stamens (4 long and two short). The inflorescence forms an elongated raceme when fruiting.

The leaves are alternate and stalked, with a coarsely hairy leaflet. Its stems are branched and also coarsely hairy. Each leaf is irregularly pinnately lobed, with irregular sawtooth edges. The terminal leaflets are large and clearly lobed. The fruit of White mustard has many-pale yellow seeds. They are tiny, about 2 mm in diameter, spherical, and pitted.



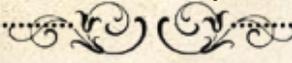
*White Mustard, Franz Eugen Köhler, Public Domain*

### Edible Use

The seeds, leaves and extracted oil are edible. I like to eat the young leaves in salads, and I sometimes cook the older leaves as a vegetable or potherb. The seeds make a spicy condiment or flavoring when finely ground.

### Medicinal Use

White mustard is antibacterial and antifungal, carminative, cathartic, diaphoretic, digestive, diuretic, emetic, expectorant, rubefacient, stimulant, and vesicant. It is used internally and externally.



## Pneumonia, Bronchitis, Respiratory Diseases

The seeds of white mustard, powdered and made into a poultice, are good for treating respiratory diseases. They act as an irritant to loosen phlegm and help expel mucus from the body. The poultice is applied to the chest and left in place until the skin reddens, then promptly removed. The mustard is an irritant and can cause blistering if left in place too long.

## Poison Ingestion

Ground mustard seed, taken by mouth in quantity, can cause vomiting. I use this property to bring up poisons and other undesirable substances which have been swallowed.

## Preventing Infection

To prevent infection in a wound, or anywhere in the body, white mustard is a good ally. It has abundant sulfur compounds which help prevent infection and fight any invading infection. I use it in combination with garlic. For best effects, I prefer fresh mustard seeds, ground into a paste. When using dried mustard seeds, soak them in water before grinding to release the maximum sulfur benefits.



*SuperJew, own work, White Mustard near Abu Ghosh. CC 3.0*

## Prevents Cancer

My experience and studies have taught me that mustard seeds contain beneficial substances that reduce the risk of cancer and the reoccurrence of cancer. Patients who eat white mustard seeds daily are able to prevent cancers from growing or returning. My experience does not indicate that mustard can cure cancer, but I prescribe it to prevent the spread or the return of cancers. One tablespoon of crushed or ground white mustard seed daily is enough to provide these powerful benefits.

## Rheumatism

White mustard applied to the skin is an irritant. The skin irritation brings an increased blood supply to the area. The skin and joints are warmed, and pain is reduced. You must be careful to wash the mustard away once the skin reddens to prevent blisters and other damage to the skin. To treat rheumatism and other joint pain, I mix ground white mustard seeds with enough vinegar to make a paste. Apply to the skin over the affected area.

White mustard seed powder (1 tablespoon) added to the bath water is also beneficial for rheumatic pain.

## Sore Throats

Mustard Seed Tea made from the leaves of the white mustard plant has a beneficial effect on sore throats. The increased blood circulation and sulfur content help the throat to heal. I recommend gargling Mustard Seed Tea several times daily, beginning at the first sign of throat irritation. Its action is similar to that of a cayenne gargle.

## Chilblains

Chilblains benefit from the warming power of white mustard. I mix one-part white mustard seed powder and four parts ground flax seeds together to make a paste. I use this mixture as a poultice to get rid of chilblains.



## Recipes

### Mustard Seed Tea

1 teaspoon crushed mustard seeds, 1 cup boiling water

Pour boiling water over the mustard seeds and let steep covered for 2 to 4 minutes.

### Yellow Mustard Poultice

1 tablespoon ground white mustard seeds, 1/2 cup flour, 1 egg white, 8 ounces of hot water

Mix the mustard and flour together, then add the egg white and water to form a loose paste. Apply immediately to the body over the affected area.

## Wild Lettuce (*Lactuca Canadensis*)

This slightly bitter lettuce is one of my favorite salad ingredients in the early spring. Later in the spring and early summer, I enjoy the leaves cooked like spinach. Boiling removes some of the bitterness, which I find too strong in the fresh leaves as the summer wears on. I find this member of the daisy family (Asteraceae or Compositae) throughout the US.

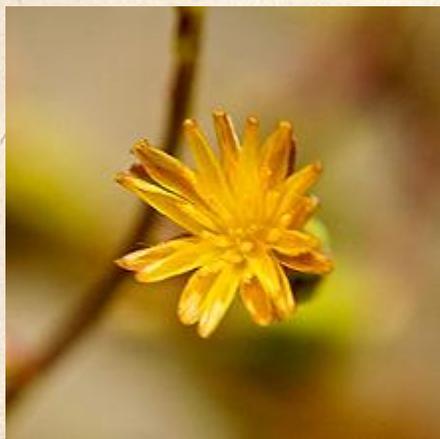


Photo by George F Mayfield, CC by SA 2.0

### Plant Identification

This biennial plant grows to be 3 to 8 feet tall, usually on a single stem and has a milky sap that is distributed through the root, leaves, and stems. The central stem is light-green to reddish-green, occasionally with purple streaks. Alternating leaves are light to dark green, possibly with purple edges or a yellowish color. The lance-shaped leaves are up to 10 inches long and 3 inches across.

Leaves are usually, but not always, lobed and similar to a dandelion's. The largest leaves have deep pinnate lobes, while smaller leaves may have no lobes or shallow pinnate lobes.

Wild lettuce blooms in the late summer to early fall. Wild lettuce flowers are small and similar to dandelions with yellow or slightly reddish-orange petals. Flower heads are about 1/3 inch across with 12 to 25 rays. The flowers have no floral scent.

After 3 to 4 weeks, the flowers are replaced with dark brown, dry fruits with white hairs. The taproot is thick and grows deep.

### Medicinal Uses

The white latex sap that runs through the plant my main component for medicinal treatments. Older plants have higher concentrations of sap, especially when the plant is blooming.

### White Lettuce Sap for Warts

I apply the white sap from white lettuce plant to the skin as a treatment for external warts. Cover the wart with sap once or twice a day until the wart is gone.

### Wild Lettuce is a Valuable Remedy for Insomnia

The sedative properties of wild lettuce come from the milky sap that runs through the stems and leaves. I find that it calms restlessness and anxiety and induces sleep. For best results, I recommend drinking Wild Lettuce Infusion or using Wild Lettuce Tincture at bedtime.



## Pain Relief

Wild lettuce has also been called opium lettuce because of its weak opium-like effects. Used in small doses, it has a sedative and pain-relieving effect without causing the stomach upset and high of a true opium.

I use wild lettuce tincture as a general painkiller and for muscular pain, take 2 to 4 ml up to 3 times daily, as needed. Alternatively, use Wild Lettuce Infusion if the tincture is not available.

## Harvesting Instructions

I collect the leaves and stems in the summer when the plant is blooming for maximum medicinal properties. Use the herb fresh, or dry it for later use. Older plants are best and I try to leave behind enough of the plant so that it will recover.

## Recipes

### Wild Lettuce Infusion

Add 1/3 to 1/2 ounce of dried wild lettuce leaves to a cup of boiling water. Allow the infusion to steep for 10 to 15 minutes. Drink twice daily for maximum benefits.

### Wild Lettuce Tincture

Vodka, brandy, rum or whiskey, 80 proof or good quality apple cider vinegar, fresh or dried wild lettuce leaves

1. Fill a clean, sterile, glass jar with chopped fresh leaves or use 2 ounces of dried wild lettuce per cup of alcohol or vinegar.
2. Cover the herbs with vodka or other drinkable alcohol or vinegar.
3. Stir the herbs to remove air bubbles.
4. Move the container to a cool, dark place and allow the tincture to steep for 2 to 4 weeks, shaking daily.
5. Strain out the herbs and discard. Store in a cool, dark place for up to 5 years.
6. Use 2 to 4 ml of tincture three times daily, as needed.



1 Photo:<http://extension.umass.edu/landscape/weeds/lactuca-canadensis>

## Woolly Lamb's Ear, *Stachys byzantine*

I first encountered woolly lamb's ear during WWII. We used it as a field dressing for wounds on the battlefield. It works exceptionally well to stop bleeding until we could get the patients to a hospital. When I returned home, I found the plant in gardens and landscaping across the US. I suspect that it easily escapes cultivation because I often find it growing wild in fields everywhere. It is also known as woolly wound wort.

## Plant Identification

The perennial plant has soft, fuzzy leaves that are densely covered with silver-white or gray hairs with the texture of fur. They have a curved shape and are 2 to 4 inches long with a rounded point. The undersides are more silver-white in color than the tops.



*Wolly Lamb's Ear, Jean-Pol GRANDMONT, CC by SA 3.0*

Flowering stems grow erect, often with 4-angled branches, growing to 16 to 32 inches tall. The flowering spikes are 4 to 9 inches long with many flowers crowded together of the spike-like stem. Small leaves appear on the flowering stems. The flowers are sessile with a tubular-campanulate calyx that is slightly curved and about 1/2 inch long. The corollas have veins that are tinted purple and have silky hairs.

The plant has a pleasant scent, mildly like pineapple.

### Edible Use

The leaves are edible and best when young and tender. I like them fresh in salads or gently steamed as a green vegetable.

### Other Use

Wolly Lamb's Ear is soft and very absorbent, which makes it a good substitute for toilet paper in the wild. The highly absorbant properties of the leaves make it useful as an absorbent feminine hygiene product.

### Medicinal Use

Lamb's Ear is an alternative, antibacterial, antiseptic, anti pyretic, antispasmodic, and astringent. It is also a diuretic, carminative, febrifuge, stomachic, styptic, tonic, hypotensive, vermifuge and vulnerary.

### Wound Dressing

The soft, fuzzy leaves of lamb's ear make an excellent dressing for wounds of all kinds. They are antibacterial, antiseptic, and anti-inflammatory. The leaves absorb blood and encourage clotting. I place several whole leaves on the wound and cover it with a soft cloth or gauze. It can stay in place until it is time to change the dressing.

### Wound Wash, Eye Wash, Pinkeye, and Sties

I make a medicinal tea to use as an eyewash and for washing wounds. When cool, the tea makes an excellent antibacterial wash for wounds of all kinds. When using it as an eyewash or to treat pinkeye, I prefer to make the tea with distilled water and bring it to a full boil. Then strain it twice to make sure no fine particles remain.

### Diarrhea, Fevers, Internal Bleeding

Wolly lamb's ear also works for internal bleeding and for diarrhea and reducing fevers. For these purposes, I recommend drinking the Wolly Lamb's Ear Tea (recipe found below.)

### Sore Mouth, Sore Throat

The same tea, used as a gargle is effective for treating a sore throat or mouth. Swish the tea around in the mouth or gargle with it several times a day. It relieves the pain and the antibiotic properties help cure the underlying infection.



*By Chhe at English Wikipedia - Own work, Public Domain*



## Liver and Heart Tonic

The healthful benefits of Wolly Lamb's Ear make it a good general tonic, especially for the liver and heart. Patients can take the tea daily or consume the leaves as an herb or vegetable.

## Insect Bites and hemorrhoids

The anti-inflammatory benefits of lamb's ear make it effective in dealing with painful bee stings and bites from other insects. It also has some analgesic properties which also help.

## Recipes

### Wolly Lamb's Ear Tea

Fresh leaves of Lamb's ear, water

Bruise the fresh leaves by pounding then add them to a pot of simmering water. Simmer the leaves for a few minutes and cool. Strain the liquid through a fine sieve or coffee filter to remove all leave particle. Drink or use as a wash.

## Dock Weed, *Rumex Crispus*

Dock weed, Rumex, is a group of over 200 different varieties. I am referring specifically to *Rumex crispus* and its medicinal use here. Dock weed is a biennial herb that grows as a native weed across the United States and Canada. The plant is also called yellow dock, curly dock, or curled dock.

Flower stalks grow from the basal rosette, with smooth, leathery, or fleshy leaves growing in a large cluster at the apex. Leaves are wavy or curly on the edges and have a coarse texture. These leaves are up to 2-feet long and only 3 1/2-inches wide, making them long, but narrow. Small veins curve out toward the edge of the leaf and then turn back towards the central vein. Leaves further up the plant may vary in size and appearance. On older leaves the central vein is sometimes tinged with red.



The flower stalk is approximately 3 feet in height with flowers and seeds produced in clusters. The tiny green flowers grow in dense heads on the flower stalk during the second year.

The seeds are brown, shiny, and covered by a papery sheath that appears as heart shaped wings. The seeds are light enough to float, which helps them spread. Each seed is three-sided. The root is a long yellow, forking taproot that is responsible for regenerating the plant each year.

### Edible Use

Curly dock is a relative of rhubarb in the buckwheat family. They have a lemony flavor and leaves are used as a cooked vegetable. Leaves contain varying amounts of oxalic acid and tannin.

The roots can be pounded into a flour. Peel the root, mash it, and strain it to remove fibers. Then dry the root and pound it into a flour.

### Medicinal Use

Curly dock is a powerful purifying and cleansing herb. All parts of the plant can be used, but the roots have the strongest healing properties.

1Curly Dock Weed, By Olivier Pichard [CC BY-SA 3.0]



## Constipation and Diarrhea

Curly dock is a gentle and safe laxative for the treatment of mild constipation. It can also cause or relieve diarrhea, depending on the dosage and other factors such as harvest time and soil conditions.

## Skin Problems

Curly dock weed is useful to treat a wide variety of skin problems due to its cleansing properties. Taken internally, it is a tonic. Dried or mashed root can be used as a poultice, salve, or powder applied to sores, wounds, or other skin problems.

## Liver and Gall Bladder Tonic

Curly dock root is a bitter tonic for the gall bladder and liver. It increases bile production, which helps the body detox.

## Detoxifying

Curly dock is helpful for any condition that can benefit from purifying and cleansing the body from toxins. It is often combined with Greater Burdock to create a stronger detoxifying effect.



*Curly Dock Weed, John Tann, [CC BY-SA 2.0]*

## Harvesting Dock Weed

Harvest the root early in the spring or in the autumn and dry it for later use. Dig up the entire plant and root if possible and wash the root lightly. Leaves are harvested from spring to fall as needed. Look for leaves that are fresh and curled. Avoid leaves that are brown or full of bug holes. Also avoid areas that are near highways or that have been sprayed with pesticides.

## Recipes:

### Curly Dock Tincture

You need fresh curly dock root, grated, 100-proof vodka or other drinking alcohol and a glass jar with tight-fitting lid. Place the grated root in a clean glass jar. Fill the jar, covering the root completely, with 100-proof alcohol. Allow the tincture to steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking gently every day. Strain out the root pieces and place the tincture in a clean jar. Store in a cool, dark place for up to 7 years.

## Purslane, *Portulaca Oleracea*

Purslane is another of those backyard weeds that is under appreciated. While it is usually considered a weed, I like to plant it as a groundcover, vegetable, and medicine. I love to eat it as a salad ingredient. It has a salty, sour flavor that adds variety to the taste and texture of any salad.

*Portulaca Oleracea*, also known as common purslane, pigweed, little hogweed, verdolaga, red root, or parsley is an annual succulent that sprawl along the ground. The plant grows to 12 to 16 inches tall. Purslane stems are smooth and reddish or pink.



*1Purslane by JeffSKleinman, CC SA 4.0*



The leaves are thick, deep green succulent leaves that grow in groups at the stem joints and ends. Leaves can be alternate or opposite. Small yellow flowers, growing in clusters of two or three, appear in late summer and open for a few hours on sunny mornings. Each flower has five parts and are up to 1/4 inch wide.

Seeds form in tiny pods which open when the seeds are mature. The plant has a deep taproot and fibrous secondary roots which help it survive poor soils and periods of drought. Purslane is usually considered a weed in the US. It grows throughout the US and prefers a sunny spot with dry soils.

### Edible Use

Purslane has a sour, salty flavor and can be a little bitter when leaves are mature. I am very sensitive to bitter flavors, but most people will probably never taste it.

Purslane leaves, stems, and flowers are edible, raw, cooked, and pickled. When cooked like spinach, it can be a bit slimy. To avoid the slimy texture, chop the cooked tips and use bread crumbs to relieve the moisture. Cooked purslane does not shrink as much as most greens, so a small patch can provide vegetables for the entire family. The leaves can also be pickled to provide purslane during the winter months.

### Medicinal Use

#### Uterine Bleeding

I have found that purslane seeds are effective in relieving uterine bleeding. Patients taking purslane seeds for uterine bleeding report that the volume of bleeding is reduced and the duration also. For abnormal uterine bleeding, I prescribe 5 grams of powdered purslane seeds every 4 hours for 3 days or as needed.

#### Asthma and Bronchial Complaints

Patients that eat purslane in vegetable portions (100 grams fresh purslane) or take purslane extract show improvement in pulmonary function overall.

It helps with shortness of breath and opens bronchial tubes to increase oxygen reaching the lungs. For asthma attacks, I prescribe one to three droppers of in water, as needed. For other bronchial conditions, I use my Purslane & Mullein Mix (recipe below).

Respiratory - therapeutic effects of Purslane for respiratory diseases are indicated in ancient Iranian medical books. The bronchodilatory effect of the extract of *Portulaca oleracea* in the airway of asthmatic patients was examined. The results of the present study showed that Purslane has a relatively potent but transient bronchodilatory effect on asthmatic airways.

Dosage: Use the tinctured plant in doses of one to three dropper squeezes (the dropper will not fill up) in a small amount of water when needed. Mixes well with Mullein tincture for bronchial conditions by using 2 parts tinctured Purslane to 1-part tinctured Mullein.

#### Diabetes

Purslane seeds or their extracts are effective in improving serum insulin levels and reduce triglycerides with long-term, daily use. Patients report lower blood sugar readings and better management. I prescribe 5 grams of powdered purslane seeds daily for diabetes control.



*2Purslane Flower, by Amada44, CC SA 2.0*



## Warnings and Contradictions

I have found no problems with purslane use. It is safe to eat in large portions without any side effects.

## Fungal Infections

Purslane has antifungal properties against the most common causes of athlete's foot, jock itch, and ringworm. Apply purslane extract to affected areas several times a day, until the infection is gone.

## Lower Cholesterol

Purslane naturally lowers cholesterol due to its high pectin content. Take 1 teaspoon of purslane tincture or 2 teaspoons of fresh purslane juice daily.

## Cancer: Gastric Carcinoma and Colon Adenoma

My experience shows that purslane is active against some cancers, but not all. I recommend that patients work together with their doctor for a complete treatment plan. I prescribe 2 full droppers of Purslane Tincture, twice a day.



*Queen Anne's Lace, Jrosenberry1, CC 4.0*

## Recipes:

### Purslane & Mullein Mixture for Asthma

3 droppers of Purslane tincture, 1 1/2 droppers Mullein tincture, 1/4 cup water

Add the Purslane and Mullein tinctures to the water. When measuring with a dropper, the dropper will not fill up, this is fine. Drink the mixture in part or in full as needed.

### Purslane Tincture

Ingredients: 1/2 cup purslane seeds, 1 quart 100-proof vodka or other drinking alcohol, Jar with a tight-fitting lid.

Place the purslane seeds in a clean jar with a tight-fitting lid. Pour the vodka over the seeds, filling the jar. Cap the jar tightly and place it in a cool, but sunny location. Let the tincture marinate for 4 to 6 weeks.

Shake the jar daily, adding more alcohol, if needed, to keep the jar full. Pour the tincture through a coffee filter into a clean jar, removing all seed particles. Store the tincture in a cool, dark cupboard. It will keep for up to 7 years.

## Queen Anne's Lace, *Daucus Carota*

Queen Anne's lace is a pleasant plant that is often used as an ornamental. It is also known as wild carrot because of the carrot scent and because it is a member of the carrot family.

Over the years foragers and herbalists have created stories to help them identify the plant and tell it apart from the deadly hemlock plant which is similar in appearance. My favorite story is about Queen Anne sewing a piece of lace. She pricked her finger and a single drop of blood fell into the center of the flowers, symbolizing the single red or purple flower in the



center of each umbrel. The presence of this blood colored flower is a positive identification for Queen Anne's Lace and it's healing properties.

Queen Anne's Lace grows to 1 to 2 feet tall. The flower stems are green, hairy, and may have long red stripes. They are thin and have a thin hollow space in the center.

Clusters of flowers, called umbrels, are arranged in a tight pattern of small clusters gathered into a larger umbrella shaped cluster. The umbrells are flat across the top and 3 to 4 inches wide. Blooms may be pink in bud and white when in open bloom. In the center there is a single reddish or purple flower. Seeing this red or purple flower is a definitive marker for Queen Anne's lace, but not all varieties have the flower. When the flowers die, Queen Anne's lace curl into a birds nest shape as they dry.

Leaves on Queen Anne's lace consist of leaflets that are lance-shaped and serrated. Each leaf is 2 to 4 inches in length and slightly hairy on the underside. The plant has a pleasant carrot scent and a single thin tap root that is shaped like a thin carrot.

### Edible Use

The thin taproot from Queen Anne's lace is edible, however it quickly becomes very fibrous or woody as the growth progresses. For eating purposes, only young roots are tender enough to eat. The flowers are edible and are good battered and fried. The leaves are edible in small portions.

Caution is necessary when handling or eating the plant because of its close resemblance to poison hemlock. Make sure of your identification before consuming any herb. Queen Anne's Lace has a hairy stem; remember, Queen Anne has hairy legs.

### Medicinal Use

#### Gallstones, Kidney Stones, Chronic Kidney problems, Bladder Problems, and Gout

Queen Anne's lace is used for treating gall bladder problems and kidney problems. It acts to remove excess water from the body and reduce inflammation.

#### Colic, Upset Stomach, and Flatulence

The soothing and diuretic properties of the root make Queen Anne's lace a good choice for treating stomach and intestinal upsets. I use the infusion (recipe below) for this purpose.

#### Skin Problems

For itchy dermatitis, a poultice made from the grated root helps relieve the itchy rash. The seed oil is also good for soothing and lubricating the skin. It is also anti-inflammatory.

#### Recipes:

#### Queen Anne's Lace Infusion

Bring 1 pint of water to a boil and add 1 ounce of grated Queen Anne's lace root. Cover the pot and infuse for 15 minutes. Adults take 4 ounces per dose.



Queen Anne's Lace Flower, CC0 Public Domain



## The Frontier Poultice

When the bandages ran out during the bloody Normandy campaign, it was this exact poultice that my grandfather used. He said that in some cases, it managed to stop gushing wounds from bleeding their victim to death, and it even prevented infections.

My grandfather used only plants that he found on the battlefield, which are also common plants you will come across all over America.

One night when we were having a beer and sharing stories, he told me the recipes came down through the generations all the way from the pioneers themselves. I've always treasured this recipe and have always kept the



*Plantain, NY State IPM Program at Cornell University, CC2.0*

three plants needed to make it on hand in my herbal apothecary.

They are all in this book, so rest assured you'll have no problem identifying them. The first one you'll use is a plant growing in many American back yards and probably yours as well: plantain.

My grandfather knew it had a powerful antibacterial effect. It also contains allantoin, which is a phytochemical (a chemical found in plants) that speeds up wound healing and stimulates the growth of new skin cells.

Next up comes the plant known as "The Cowboy's Toilet Paper": mullein.

This one works in two different ways to enhance the effects of the plantain already in the poultice.



*Mullein, Jamie Richmond, CC2.0*

It is an analgesic and will lessen some of the pain the wound is giving you, and it works as an astringent as well.

That means it will contract your skin and, in doing so, will help close the wound. This plant has the added benefit of being used as, well, toilet paper if you ever run out. It's very soft.

The final plant you need to mix in your frontier poultice is called lamb's ear. As I've told you before, this one is a blood coagulant and stops the bleeding.

To recap:

1. Gather plantain, mullein, and lamb's ear in equal quantities.
2. Grind the leaves down together until you get a paste-like mixture.
3. Apply it to your wound or cut, and let it do its work for about 10-15 minutes.
4. Leave it on for an hour to an hour and a half; then reapply as needed.
5. Keep the paste in place by using any other plant you can find that has big leaves and high flexibility or normal bandages if you still have some around. Burdock leaves are perfect for this if you don't have normal bandages.



*Lamb's Ear, CCO*

Wild Plants in  
Forests  
and Woodlands



## American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)

American ginseng, also known as *Panax ginseng*, has quite a reputation as an aphrodisiac, and my patients tend to believe the reputation is well earned.

It is an herbaceous perennial member of the ivy family, native to eastern North America and I find it cultivated widely in other areas. The aromatic root resembles a small parsnip, forking as it matures and sometimes taking on a human form.

I look for plants growing 6 to 18 inches tall; leaves are palmately divided into 3 to 7 (usually 4 or 5) sharp-toothed, lance-shaped leaflets. The flowers are whitish, and fruits are red berries with two seeds each.

The neck of the rhizome shows scars left by each years stem. Counting the leaf scars gives me the age of the root and its medicinal value. The medicinal compounds, ginsenosides, increase in concentration as the root ages. In general, roots 4 years or older are desirable. I find younger leaves to be ineffective.



Photo by US Government Agencies, Public Domain

### Medicinal Uses

*Panax ginseng* has a deserved reputation as a powerful adaptogen that helps the body recover from the effects of any kind of stress.

I've noticed that American ginseng helps reduce the severity and duration of colds and flu. I believe it works by boosting the immune system.



Photo by John Carl Jacobs, CC by SA 4.0

### How to Use American Ginseng

The mature root and leaves can be chewed, pulverized and put into capsules, extracted in alcohol, or made into a tea.

I prescribe either 100 mg of dried root once or twice daily, 2 to 5 drops of American Ginseng Extract up to 3 times daily, or 1 cup of tea every morning, whichever is easiest for the patient.

### Ginseng Benefits for Diabetes

Ginseng has multiple benefits for diabetic patients, and I recommend it for all diabetics, with the exceptions noted below. I have observed that American ginseng helps regulate blood sugar in my diabetic patients. I am recommending that diabetic patients take 2 to 5 drops of American Ginseng extract before each meal to prevent post-meal spikes in blood sugar levels. I recommend starting with 2 drops and monitoring blood sugar levels. Increase the dosage one drop at a time, as needed, up to 5 drops per meal.



I have learned that American ginseng contains a class of compounds called ginsenosides that possess antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, two factors in the progression of diabetes. American ginseng also promotes the secretion of insulin, necessary for regulation of blood sugar levels.

Ginseng helps lower high blood pressure in diabetic patients. Regular use gives some protection to the heart and retina from diabetes-induced damage.

### Common Cold

American Ginseng helps fight the common cold when taken regularly. My patients who take ginseng daily report fewer colds and less severe symptoms than their neighbors.

### Tonic for Fatigue, Debility, Declining Work Capacity and Concentration

I have used American ginseng to boost energy and stamina in patients and notice that the herb benefits cognitive performance, enhances memory, and reduces fatigue caused by failing health and everyday stresses. As a general tonic, Ginseng has much to offer, especially as the body ages.



Photo by Drginseng, CC by SA 3.0

### American Ginseng for Erectile Dysfunction

Here is where ginseng gets most of its reputation. American ginseng has proven to be an effective treatment for erectile dysfunction when taken on a regular basis. My patients taking the root for at least eight weeks show improvements in their symptoms, but I only see favorable results when the herb is taken daily over the long term.

### Other Uses for American Ginseng

Since Panax ginseng is a tonic and reduces the stress on the body, it is effective for use in many different diseases and conditions. I use it when needed to raise the spirits of a patient and combat depression. It improves their sleep, mood, and outlook on life.

### Harvesting Instructions

The ginseng root is valuable monetarily and medicinally and needs to be treated with respect. I believe it is unethical and sometimes illegal to harvest the roots before the berries ripen and the seeds set, in late summer or early autumn.

When uncovering the neck of the root, I look for four or more leaf scars, one scar for each year of age. Roots less than four years old do not contain enough beneficial properties to be effective. I note the location of younger roots and leave them in the ground or dig them up for relocation to a more convenient spot. The root branches below the ground, so dig carefully, excavating a large area. I use the root fresh and dry some for future use.

### Warnings

Avoid American Ginseng in patients taking warfarin or other blood thinning therapy.

Not recommended for pregnant or breastfeeding women. Ginseng should not be taken if patients have a hormone-related condition such as endometriosis, fibroids, or cancers of the breast, ovaries, uterus, or prostate.

Do not use ginseng for patients with heart disease except under the close supervision of a healthcare professional. Ginseng may decrease the rate and force of heartbeats.



Occasional side effects include headaches, anxiety, upset stomach, and sometimes trouble sleeping. (Although I have used it with good results to promote better sleep.)

### Recipes

#### American Ginseng Tea

A very simple ginseng tea with cooling properties. It keeps the body balanced and improves mental alertness. Patients should avoid taking ginseng tea close to bedtime.

1/2 ounce of American Ginseng root fibers, 3 cups of water, few grains of salt (optional)

1. Bring the water to a boil.
2. Add ginseng and simmer for 5 minutes
3. Season with salt, if desired
4. Strain the tea and allow it to cool.
5. Serve at room temperature or cold.

#### Ginseng and Chrysanthemum Tea

1/2 ounce of American ginseng root fibers, 3/4 ounce of chrysanthemum flowers, 3 cups water, sugar to taste

1. Bring the ginseng root fibers and the water to a boil in a small pot. Reduce the heat and simmer the root for 4 minutes.
2. Add the chrysanthemum flowers and simmer for 1 more minute.
3. Strain the tea.
4. Add sugar to taste.
5. Cool and serve at room temperature or chilled.

#### American Ginseng Extract

8 ounces American ginseng root, pounded into fibers or ground, 1 quart of 60 proof or better alcohol: Vodka, brandy, etc.

1. Place the dried root fibers into a sterile quart jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Pour 1 quart of vodka or other drinkable 60 proof alcohol over the root fibers. Stir to mix.
3. Cover the jar with a tight-fitting lid and place in a cool, dark place for 2 to 8 weeks. Shake daily.
4. Add more alcohol, as needed, to keep the fibers completely covered.
5. Strain out the root fibers and store the vodka extract tightly covered in a cool, dark place.
6. I prescribe 2 to 5 drops of extract 1 to 3 times daily, as needed.

#### Bearberry, *Arctostaphylos uva ursi*, or *Arbutus uva ursi*

Also called bear's-grape, hog cranberry, mountain cranberry, upland cranberry, uva ursi, and red bearberry, this herb is a small evergreen shrub that grows in the northern United States and in higher elevations throughout the Appalachian Mountains. I look for it in dry soils, especially sandy soils and gravel rich soils.

The leaves are small and shiny with a thick, stiff feel. They are arranged alternately on the stems. The underside is lighter in color than the green tops. Leaves are up to an inch long and have rounded tips. The edges of each leaf turn under slightly. The leaves are evergreen, changing from dark green to a reddish-green and then to purple in the fall. The small dark brown buds have three scales.

Bearberry has small, white or pink, urn-shaped flowers that appear in terminal clusters from May to June. They mature into pink to bright red drupes that are fleshy or mealy. The fruit is 1/4 to 1/2 inch in diameter and can remain on the plant until winter. Each fruit contains up to five tiny hard seeds.



The root system is unusual, having a long, fibrous main root that puts out buried or prostate stems that give rise to stems of the herb. The trailing stems will matt into layers with small roots growing into the ground and stems growing up to four to six inches tall when mature, with a reddish, green, or brown bark. Young branches are white to pale green, turning reddish brown with exposure to the sun or brown in shady areas.



*Bearberry Flowers, By Yvonne Zimmermann - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0*

### Harvesting Instructions

Bearberry leaves are best picked in the fall before they change colors. Pick the berries when they are mature, but before the first frost.

### Edible Use

Bearberry fruits are edible, but they are not tasty or well appreciated, so they are rarely eaten or used in cooking.

### Medicinal Use

#### *Kidneys, Nephritis, Kidney Stones, Bladder, Urinary Tract, and Gout*

Bearberry has proven its usefulness to me many times in the treatment of kidney, bladder, and urinary tract problems. It acts as a diuretic, increasing the urine volume, and it has antiseptic properties that reduce bacteria populations in the kidneys, bladder, and urinary tract. It also relieves inflammation in the urinary bladder and helps relieve the pain of kidney stones.

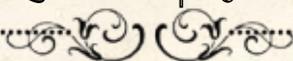


*Bearberry, Jesse Taylor - Own work, CC by SA 3.0*

It also reduces uric acid in the body which benefits the urinary tract and makes it useful in treating gout. For kidneys, kidney stones, bladder, and urinary tract problems, or to treat gout, I prescribe Bearberry Tea daily.

#### *Cystitis, Painful Sex in Women, Urinogenital System*

Cystitis and long-term inflammation of the urethra in women benefits from treatment with Bearberry Leaf and Berry Tea. I find that it is safe and greatly benefits women with these painful problems. The tannins in the berries and leaves have a strong astringent action that reduces inflammation in the urinogenital system. I prescribe Bearberry Leaf and Berry Tea for urinogenital problems. Take one cup of tea, two or three times a day for up to two weeks. See How to Use Bearberry, below and follow the instructions.



## Vaginal Infections

Bearberry is an effective treatment against vaginal infections, including yeast infections, gonorrhea, and syphilis. It has antibacterial and anti-inflammation effects that help heal the infection from the inside and out. I recommend that patients drink Bearberry Leaf and Berry Tea two to three times daily and use the tea as a douche to wash the vagina twice a day. I have had good results in patients who use the bearberry both internally and externally for two weeks.



*Bearberry, Walter Siegmund - Own work, CC by 2.5*

## Post-Partum Use and Uterine Hemorrhage

Drinking either version of Bearberry Tea soon after giving birth helps increase the uterine contractions and prevents hemorrhages. It also prevents post-partum infections and helps incisions heal. I prefer to start my at-risk patients on bearberry tea as soon as possible after birth and continue use for three days. I do not recommend longer use for the benefit of the baby when the mother is breast-feeding.

## Prevents Scurvy

Bearberry berries and leaves are rich in vitamin C, which is necessary to prevent Scurvy. In winter months it can be difficult to find adequate sources of vitamin C, so I recommend that my patients use the teas or eat a few berries to get adequate vitamin C in the diet.

## Relieves Stomach and Intestinal Cramping

Bearberry has muscle relaxant properties that soothes stomach and intestinal cramping caused by hyperperistaltic intestines. It also has an antibacterial effect that is effective against the most common causes of diarrhea and stomach upsets.

## How to Use Bearberry

Bearberry works best for urinary tract problems and urinogenital problems when the urine is alkaline. The antibacterial action is greatly amplified under these conditions. If the urine is acidic, patients should follow a vegetable-based diet, eliminating meat and milk products from the diet until the problem is eliminated. Patients can also benefit from drinking a glass of water mixed with two teaspoons of baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) for up to two weeks.

## Cautions

Bearberry should not be used by patients with high blood pressure or for pregnant or nursing women.

Bearberry can induce nausea in some patients. Soaking the bearberry leaves overnight before use may help.

## Recipes

### Bearberry Tea

Fresh bearberry leaves, brandy and water

1. Soak fresh bearberry leaves in enough brandy to cover them completely for a week or more. Save the infused brandy.

2. Remove enough leaves from the brandy to make 1 tablespoon. Chop the soaked leaves into small pieces. Add 1 tablespoon of chopped leaves to a cup of water and bring to a boil.
3. Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes. Cool and strain.
4. Add a teaspoon of the infused brandy to the cup of tea and drink it lukewarm, as needed.

### Bearberry Leaf and Berry Tea

\*Soaking the leaves and berries before brewing the tea removes some of the tannins and helps reduce digestive discomfort.  
3 Tablespoons of dried leaves and berries, chopped, 1-quart water

1. Soak the dried leaves and berries in cold water overnight or for up to one day. Drain.
2. Bring a quart of water to a boil and add the dried and chopped leaves and berries. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cover tightly.
3. Simmer the tea for about five minutes. Turn off the heat.
4. Allow the tea to steep, tightly covered for 30 minutes. Strain it.
5. Drink one cup, two to three times daily, lukewarm on an empty stomach.



3 Bloodroot flowers, by UpstateNYer, CC by SA 3.0

### Bloodroot, *Sanguinaria Canadensis*

I use bloodroot mainly for the treatment of skin cancers, ulcers, and wounds that won't heal; however, it is known to have many medicinal properties that I may need to explore in more detail. I have always known the herb as bloodroot, but I have also heard it called redroot and red puccoon. The juice is red and quickly dyes the skin; the Algonquin People have been known to take advantage of this property, painting themselves for mating rituals.

I can usually find the herb in the eastern US growing in moist thickets and dry woods and usually on floodplains and streams on slopes and shores. In the early spring, I often see deer enjoying the herb. I can usually get away with watching them for a while as long as I don't try to get too close. I love watching the fawns in early spring when they are still learning about the world.

### Plant Identification

Bloodroot is a stemless, rhizomatous wildflower which blooms in early spring. The herb can grow from heights of 6 to 10 inches tall. The leaves go dormant in mid to late summer.

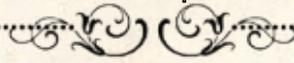
When the bloodroot flower is sprouting, its usually wrapped by one palmate, deeply-scalloped, grayish-green, basal leaf. Bloodroot has a hermaphroditic flower that has 8 to 12 fragile white petals and yellow stamen and two sepals positioned below the leaves which fall off after the flowers open.

During the early female phase of the flower, the stamens are positioned to avoid the stigma, so self-pollination cannot occur. If cross-pollination does not happen, the stamen bend contacting the stigma and self-pollination occurs.

The root is a blood-red rhizome that will branch out and grow new rhizomes.

### Harvesting of Bloodroot

I always wear protective gloves to protect my hands from staining red and also because the medicinal properties can be absorbed through the skin. I wait until the fall when the strength of the plant is returning to the root, and the tops are dying



back. Dig up the root and the surrounding area, removing the rhizomes. Leave a few behind for next year's plants. Dry the root for future use.



*Bloodroot, Public Domain*

### Medicinal Use

Caution is advised. Bloodroot is a toxic plant, and serious problems can arise. Use small doses only as advised by a medical professional.

### Skin Cancers, Ulcers, Moles, Skin Tags, Warts, and Other Skin Conditions

Treating skin problems is what bloodroot does best in my opinion. I make and apply a salve from the bloodroot to the affected area and cover it. Cover it with a bandage and leave it in place for a week or so while it does its work. Usually, only one application is required, but extensive areas, deep lesions, or other tough cases may require repeated application. The bloodroot will kill the cancerous or damaged cells and cover the area with a scab. Leave it alone to heal, and check the area to be sure that all of the cancer is removed. Cancers can return if any cancerous cells remain.

The bloodroot has anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, and anesthetic properties that help the skin to heal while relieving the pain. The salve can also be used to remove skin tags, warts, moles and other unwanted skin lesions. Apply the salve directly to the lesion, keeping it away from the healthy skin.

### Treating Respiratory Problems

Bloodroot is a bronchial muscle relaxant. I use it to treat asthma, whooping cough, influenza and as a treatment for croup. I prescribe a small dose of the dried and powdered bloodroot to be inhaled or made into a decoction.

### Gastrointestinal Problems

I use bloodroot powder along with blue cohosh for the treatment of gastrointestinal bleeding, abdominal cramps, nausea, and vomiting. In large doses, it acts as an emetic, causing the very problems it treats.

### Diphtheria, Tuberculosis, and Respiratory Illnesses

Small doses of my bloodroot decoction is an antibacterial agent useful for the treatment of bacterial diseases such as diphtheria, tuberculosis, bronchitis, asthma, bronchitis, and pneumonia. For respiratory illnesses, it has the added benefit of cleaning out the mucus and congestion and suppressing coughs.

For sore throats, dilute the decoction in a glass of water and use it as a gargle.

### Menstrual Problems

Small doses of Bloodroot Decoction are beneficial for treating menstrual problems including excessive bleeding and cramping.



### Dental Care

Extracts from bloodroot contain a chemical composition that helps fight infections like gingivitis and prevents the formation cavities, tartar, and plaque. Add a drop of bloodroot decoction to your toothpaste for this purpose.

### Warning

Caution is advised. Bloodroot is a toxic plant that can cause tunnel vision, nausea, and death. Do not use bloodroot if you may be pregnant or if you are nursing.

### Bloodroot Salve

Wear gloves while preparing the bloodroot. Take 2 ounces bloodroot rhizome, 1 cup olive oil or coconut oil, 3/4 cup grated beeswax and 3 tablespoons of zinc chloride.

1. Grate or grind 2 ounces of bloodroot and add it to the olive oil in a non-reactive pot. Simmer the mixture over very low heat for about an hour.
2. Melt the beeswax and stir it into the olive oil mixture slowly. Stir until the mixture is completely incorporated. Add 3 tablespoons of zinc chloride and keep stirring.
3. Store the salve in the refrigerator, warming it to room temperature before use.

### Bloodroot Decoction

1 teaspoon of bloodroot rhizome, 1 cup cold water

Add the bloodroot to the cold water and bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 10 minutes. Strain the liquid and store it in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Take small doses, 2 to 4 ml, 3 times daily.

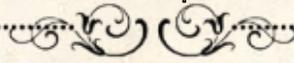
### Black Cohosh, *Actaea racemosa*

In my practice, I find black cohosh to be a valuable herb for the treatment of female problems, but I rarely use it for other uses anymore, except as a supplementary herb in combination with other herbs for the treatment of diabetes, rheumatism, and other diseases. It balances the hormones, which benefits many conditions without curing them.

### Plant Identification

Black cohosh is native to eastern North America. I find the plant readily as far south as Georgia and west to Missouri and Arkansas. It grows wild in small woodland openings. It is a smooth herbaceous perennial with large compound leaves growing from the rhizome. The plant grows up to 2 feet in height with distinctive basal leaves that are 3 feet long, growing in sets of 3 leaflets. The margins are coarsely serrated.





*Black Cohosh Inflorescence, H. Zell, CC by SA 3.0*

Flowers appear from June to September on an 8-foot tall stem, with racemes that can be up to 20 inches long. The flowers occur in tight clusters of a white stigma surrounded by long stamens. The flowers have no petals or sepals. A distinguishing feature is the sweet, putrid smell of the flowers that attracts flies, gnats, and beetles.

The fruit is a dry follicle, 1/4-inch to less than 1/2-inch long, with one carpel and several seeds.

### Medicinal Use

I mainly use black cohosh for menstrual problems and menopause, although it is also useful for digestive problems and as a sedative. I prescribe 40 mg of powdered root, twice a day for most situations, and up to 80 mg, twice a day for severe problems. The best benefits are achieved when black cohosh is taken regularly long-term. Often it takes a month or more before benefits are noticed.

### Menopause and Menstrual Problems

Black Cohosh works to balance the hormones in women, helping to relieve menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, moodiness, night sweats, headaches, heart palpitations, vaginal dryness, and mental fog. I also use it for menstrual problems, painful intercourse, decreased sex drive, Polycystic Ovary Syndrome, and uterine fibroids.

### Osteoporosis

By balancing the hormones, black cohosh reduces the bone loss caused by osteoporosis. I prescribe 80 mg of black cohosh once or twice daily for women who are exhibiting signs of osteoporosis.

### Reducing Anxiety and Aiding Sleep

Black cohosh has a sedative effect that calms the nervous system and reduces anxiety. It promotes restful sleep.

### Digestive Problems

For digestive problems I crush a small piece of black cohosh root and boil it in a small amount of water. Drink the water to relieve stomach pain and intestinal problems. It helps improve digestion and elimination and prevents gastric ulcers. Black cohosh is only moderately effective for other digestive problems.

### Warnings

Do not take black cohosh if you are allergic to aspirin, have liver problems, seizure disorders or have a high risk of blood clots or stroke. Pregnant and breastfeeding women, women with endometriosis, uterine cancer or breast cancer should not take black cohosh.



## Blue Cohosh, *Caulophyllum thalictroides*

One afternoon, I came upon an elderly buffalo, calmly munching on his lunch. He was a magnificent animal, despite his age, and I slowly approached. He let me get quite close, watching me carefully while he ate. I was young and foolish, so I got close, probably about 10 feet away. Suddenly, he bolted, moving faster than I ever imagined he could. I realized later how lucky I was that he decided to bolt instead of charging.

I noticed that he had stripped the ground clean where he was standing, except for one plant. Curious, I took a sample to identify later. It seems that buffalo and other animals do not favor the bitter flavor of blue cohosh. They eat around the plant, leaving it to grow undisturbed. The birds, however, love the berries, so it gets spread far and wide.



*Blue Cohosh, Biosthmors - Own work, CC by SA 4.0*

### Plant Identification

Blue cohosh is also known as squaw root or papoose root for its use during labor. It is a perennial member of the Berberidaceae (barberry) family. A single smooth stalk, 1 to 3 feet tall, grows from the rhizome, containing a single three-lobed leaf and a fruiting stalk. Leaflets are serrated at the tip. The leaves turn a bluish-green hue when mature and produce deep blue fruits.

The plant is found on the floor of hardwood forests in the eastern US. It prefers moist soil, hillsides, and shady locations with rich soil.



*Blue Cohosh, by Carol, CC by SA 3.0*

### Medicinal Use

#### Childbirth

The root has oxytocic properties that promote childbirth. It should not be taken during pregnancy until one to two weeks before the due date. It causes powerful uterine contractions that are regular and productive, encouraging a quick and easy birth. It also has a calming effect which helps the mother relax between contractions and reduces the pain. I recommend mixing 1/3 gram to 1 gram of powdered blue cohosh root with warm water and taking it three times daily during the last week of pregnancy. For most patients 1/2 gram of powdered root, taken 3 times daily is ideal.

#### Menstrual Problems

I also recommend the herb for menstrual problems, including delayed menstruation, cramping, and profuse hemorrhage.

### Harvesting Blue Cohosh

I try to harvest my blue cohosh in the late fall. At this time the plant stores its strength in the root, and they contain more of the medicinal properties. If I need to, I will also harvest the rhizomes in the spring, just as the new growth begins. The roots are dried and stored for future use.



## Precautions

I recommend monitoring patient's blood pressure since blue cohosh can cause elevation of blood pressure. Excessive dosage can also cause nausea, vomiting, and a lack of muscle coordination.

## Bottle Gourd, *Lagenaria siceraria*

Also known as calabash, white-flowered gourd, and long melon, the bottle gourd is often cultivated for its fruit. When harvested young, the fruit is used as a vegetable. When mature, it is dried, and I have seen it used as a bottle and as a pipe.

Bottle gourd is a plant that I believe has many medicinal potentials, but I haven't had the opportunity to explore it completely. It is harder to find in the wild, and I usually have to look for cultivated supplies.

## Plant Identification

This annual vine grows to be 15 feet long or more. The fruit has a smooth light-green skin and white flesh. They grow in a variety of shapes and sizes. The plant grows nation-wide, but I find it mostly in the Eastern United States.



*Bottle Gourd, GNU Free Documentation License*

The plant has long densely packed hairs on the stems. The hairs are tipped with glands that produce a sticky sap. The leaves grow on long stalks and are oval to heart-shaped. Leaves can be unlobed or have 3 to 5 irregular shallow lobes. The flowers are white, growing alone or in pairs. They open at night during the summer and close again in the morning.



## Edible Use

The young gourd is safe to eat in moderate amounts, although mildly bitter. Do not use gourds that are excessively bitter; they may be spoiled or have a buildup of toxins. The fruit can be boiled, steamed, fried and used in soups, curries, and stir-fries.

## Medicinal Use

I use this plant mainly for blood sugar control in diabetics, but I know of healers who use it as a cardio tonic and as a sedative. It is anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, pain relieving, and a tonic for the internal organs.

## Diabetes

Bottle gourd helps to lower blood sugar readings in diabetics when taken regularly. I recommend that patients eat a piece of bottle gourd at each meal for blood sugar control. One or two large bites of the gourd are enough to provide the desired benefit.

## Headaches

A poultice made by crushing the leaves and applying it to the head over the painful area is useful for relieving the pain of headaches.



### Boils, Skin Infections, and Irritations

Bottle gourd has anti-bacterial effects as well as anti-inflammatory effects. I like to use a poultice made from the boiled seeds of the gourd for skin irritations and infections. Cover the poultice with a clean cloth and leave in place as long as possible to reduce swelling and prevent the spread of the infection.

### Memory Loss and Senility

Patients who have begun taking daily doses of bottle gourd for other purposes have reported to me that their memory improves, including patients with Alzheimer's Disease and age-related senility. I need to study this more, but patient reports show that there may be some benefits here.

### Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*

Cardinal flower is one of the most beautiful plants, in my opinion. The brilliant red flowers put on quite a show. I also value it for its medicinal use, although I use it very carefully.

#### Plant Identification

This plant is hard to miss. The flowers are a cardinal red color with five deep lobes. They grow on an erect raceme of approximately 28 inches tall during the summer and fall.

*Lobelia cardinalis* is native to the eastern and southwestern United States. It is a perennial herbaceous plant that I most often find in wet soil, swamps, stream banks, and along rivers. The lanceolate to oval leaves grow 8 inches long and 2 inches wide with a toothed margin.

#### Medicinal Use

##### Bronchitis

Cardinal flower is highly valuable as an expectorant in cases of bronchitis. I prescribe 5 to 30 drops of Lobelia Vinegar Preparation every half hour, as needed. For children, the vinegar can be mixed with an equal amount of syrup. I have seen very quick turnaround and healing in cases of bronchitis when using the preparation.

##### Tetanus

For tetanus, I use Oil of Lobelia in tiny amounts. Follow the dilution instructions in the recipe directions carefully as one drop of oil is sufficient for up a dozen doses. Give one dose every one to two hours.

##### Epilepsy, Diphtheria, Tonsillitis

The anti-inflammatory and narcotic properties give it an advantage in treating convulsive and inflammatory diseases such as these. It relaxes the spasms and allows the body to heal. I prescribe 10 to 20 drops of Lobelia extract or 1/3 to 1 gram of powdered bark for this use.

##### Eye Diseases



*Cardinal Flower, Barnes, Dr. Thomas G., Public Domain*

A weak tea made from 1 teaspoon of root or leaves per cup of boiling water is useful as an eye wash in treating eye diseases.

### Sprains, Bruises, Skin Irritations

As an external application for relieving pain and encouraging healing in sprains, strains, bruises, and other surface irritations, I use the Cardinal Flower tea described above or Lobelia Vinegar Preparation. It relaxes the muscles and speeds healing.

### Warnings

Other plants in the Lobelia genus are toxic, so it is wise to be careful in the use of cardinal flower since it could potentially be toxic in larger doses. Symptoms of toxicity would include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive saliva, weakness, dilation of pupils, convulsions or a coma.

### Lobelia Vinegar Preparation

Use the fast method only in emergencies. The slower maceration is best.

4 ounces Lobelia seed, powdered

1 quart of vinegar

1. Macerate the vinegar and seed powder for seven days, shaking daily
2. Filter mixture through a coffee filter to remove the seed powder.
3. Store in a cool, dry place.

### Fast Method

1. Place the vinegar and seed powder in the top of a double boiler and cover. Bring water to a simmer in the lower pot.
2. Warm the vinegar mixture this way for 1 hour. Cool and strain.

### Oil of Lobelia

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

Cardinal flower root or leaves, chopped fine or ground, water to cover the herbs

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or a tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place the chopped herbs into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to cover the herbs and fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.



7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and the distillation is finished.
9. Measure the oil and dilute it using 1 part of Oil of Lobelia and 10 parts of carrier oil. For example 1 tablespoon of Oil of Lobelia added to 10 tablespoons of olive oil. Mix the oils well.
10. Transfer the diluted oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.

Dosage is 1 drop of diluted oil every hour, as needed.

### Cleavers, *Galium aparine*

Cleavers, *Galium aparine*, is an annual plant that grows in damp, rich soils along river banks and fence lines in the eastern United States and the Pacific coastal states. It is also called catchweed and goosegrass.

A frail prostrate or climbing thorny stem grows from a thin taproot to a height of two to six feet. The plant produces coarse leaves with a variable shape. Leaves may be oblong to lance-like or even linear. The leaves grow in whorls around the stem. The stem, leaves, and fruit are sometimes covered with small, spiny hairs.

Cleavers flowers are small with white or greenish-white color and appear from early summer until fall. The flowers have a pronounced fragrance that reminds me of honey. I usually harvest cleavers in mid-summer and dry it for later use.

### Medicinal Use

Cleaver is alternative, astringent, antiphlogistic, diuretic, diaphoretic, depurative, tonic and febrifuge. It is effective both internally and externally.

### Rejuvenate the Skin, Slow the Signs of Aging

While this is not medicinal, my patients report to me that it works quickly and reliably. Soak a cloth or cotton pad in Cleavers Infusion and apply it to the face or other affected skin. Leave in place for 10 minutes. Repeat this 3 to 5 times daily to tighten skin and smooth out wrinkles.

### Detoxify the Body, Drains the Lymphatic System

Cleavers works very well to remove the toxins from the body and clean the lymphatic system. It is also a diuretic and works to flush these toxins from the body. To detoxify the body, drink 8 ounces of Cleavers Infusion, three times a day.

### Skin Disorders, Acne, Psoriasis, Eczema, Abscesses, and Boils

Cleavers works internally and externally to improve the condition of the skin, detoxify the blood and lymph, and reduce the inflammation associated with these conditions. It is also antibacterial, which helps treat the underlying infections. I recommend patients with skin infections, psoriasis, and other skin disorders drink 8 ounces of Cleavers Infusion, 2 to 3 times daily and apply the infusion as a wash or mask on the area 5 or more times daily. Patients can also take two "00" capsules of dried cleaver leaves if preferred over the infusion.



4 Cleavers flowers and fruit, Alvesgaspar, CC by 3.0



5 Cleavers growing over the tops of other plants, Mike Pennington, CC by SA 2.0

### Urinary Tract Infections, Kidney Stones and Gravel

Cleavers is very effective at treating urinary tract infections and kidney stones. It dissolves stones, clears obstructions, and flushes them out of the body. The antibacterial action is also effective at curing the underlying infection. I prescribe the powdered cleaver leaves (two "00" capsules daily) or the Cleavers Infusion for urinary tract problems.

### Cancer

I have had good results treating tumors, especially those of the breast, skin, and lymphatic system. The herb has an affinity for these areas and works efficiently to clear up any problems. For cancer patients, I prefer to use fresh cleaver juice, 8 ounces, twice a day. When fresh

cleavers are not available patients can take 8 ounces of Cleavers Infusion, three times daily. If the tumor is near the skin surface, I also recommend applying the infusion as a wash or poultice.

### Chickenpox, Measles, and Fevers

Cleavers beneficial actions on the skin are very welcome with chickenpox and the measles. I use it both internally to treat the disease and on the skin to relieve the itching and general discomfort from the rash. Cleavers also helps bring down the accompanying fever. I recommend 2 to 4 ounce of Cleavers Infusion for children, twice daily, and 8 ounces for adults. Also, apply the Cleavers Infusion to the skin as a wash or on a cloth as a mask or poultice.

### Stop Bleeding, Treat Burns, and Sunburns

Freshly picked cleavers leaves are excellent for stopping bleeding in wounds, cuts, or other surface bleeding. Apply the leaves directly to the wound. It reduces inflammation, stops the bleeding, and speeds healing. The leaves can also be made into a poultice for larger wounds.

### Tonsillitis, Glandular Fever, and Prostate Problems

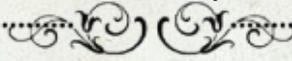
I prescribe 8 ounces of cleavers juice, taken twice daily for glandular problems like tonsillitis, glandular fever, and for prostate problems and prostate cancers. When fresh juice is not available the infusion can be used, although it is not usually as effective for these problems.

### Recipes

#### Cleavers Juice

Fresh cleavers leaves and water

Wash the fresh leaves thoroughly and place them in a blender with a small amount of water. Use only as much water as needed to blend. Blend the leaves into a pulp and strain out the juice with a fine sieve. I recommend that patients make a large batch of juice and freeze the extra. Drink 2 cups daily to treat cancers and tumors.



## Cleavers Infusion

4 Tablespoons of dried cleavers, 1 quart of boiling water

Add the cleavers to the boiling water and turn off the heat. Cover the pot and let it steep for 45 minutes. Cool the infusion and strain it through a fine sieve or coffee filter. Store in the refrigerator and use within 3 days.

## Club Moss, *Lycopodium Clavatum*

This is a strange looking plant, in my opinion, but don't let its looks deceive you, it is powerful medicine and has been used since ancient times. For Colds and respiratory problems only the spores are needed, but for more serious diseases an extract of the whole plant is used.

I find club moss most often in wooded areas, swamps, pastures, fields, moorlands and rarely in lowland areas across the US.

### Plant Identification

Club Moss is a vascular, spore-bearing plant which propagates itself by shedding off spores. These spores grow on two or sometimes three yellow-green barrel-shaped cones that are on small, 6-inch stalks.

The 3- to 4-foot long, ground-hugging stem of this herb is densely clothed and highly branched with small, spirally arranged microphyll leaves. The stem runs along the ground producing roots at frequent intervals. It resembles the seedling of coniferous trees, though there is no relationship between them.

The leaves of club moss are tapered to a fine white feathery point. These yellow-green leaves act as sporophylls that enshroud the sporangia.



*Club Moss, photo by Eric Guinther, CC by SA 3.0*

### Harvesting Club Moss Plants and Spores

Harvesting of the herb club moss should be done when the spore heads are dry, mature and ripened, though the spores can also be harvested while still green. For a ripe plant just cut off the plant and spread them on a sheet to dry until the cones open. Shake them and collect the spore powder.

To collect the spore heads from green cones, cut off the cones and break them open. Place the cones in a paper bag and place them in a cool, dry place to open. When the cones open, shake out the spores and remove the remaining plant material.

### Medicinal Use

#### Respiratory Problems

Treating respiratory disorders; ailments like chronic lung, bronchial disorders, and other respiratory disorders are treated or suppressed using this herb. For best results, I vigorously mix the spore powder with lactose and water until the spores begin to disintegrate.



### Congestion, Colds, and the Flu

Club moss spores act to dry the mucous membranes and relieve congestion. I recommend a scant 1/4 teaspoon of the spores mixed into a glass of water. Take this mixture three times a day until the congestion clears.

### Urinary Tract Disorders

Club moss is a diuretic, increasing the amount of urine and flushing toxins from the body. To treat urinary tract problems, I recommend a decoction made from the whole plant. Use 1 to 2 tablespoons of the decoction 3 to 4 times a day.

Used in treating urinary disorders; traditionally the herb club moss was used as a diuretic. A decoction of the herb was made. This decoction promoted diuresis which induces increased production of urine helping in the treatment of this ailment.

### Skin Conditions

I have successfully used the club moss spores for many different skin conditions, including allergic reactions, sunburns, psoriasis, eczema, fungal infections, chickenpox, contact dermatitis, urticaria and insect bites and stings. I make a light salve containing the spores of club moss. Usually, 2 applications daily are sufficient, but more may be used if the skin is excessively dry or damaged. Some patients prefer to add the club moss spores to their regular body cream, especially for use on the face where the oily salve is unwelcome.

The spores can also be applied lightly as a powder and rubbed into wounds, the folds of skin or anywhere that you prefer not to use the oil. The powder absorbs moisture and helps heal wounds.

### Rheumatoid Arthritis

I have had good results in slowing the progression of rheumatoid arthritis and alleviating some of the symptoms using my decoction made from the entire plant. One patient I treated had a severe case of rheumatoid arthritis. She was only 46 years old, but her joints kept her in constant pain. She had tried everything available with no success. We started using my club moss decoction and she gradually made progress. I doubt she'll ever be completely free of pain, but she is able to participate in daily life to a much larger degree now.

Different patients react differently to medicines and herbs because of the causes of their problem or their own physical makeup. What works for one may not work for another. Sometimes you just need to keep trying different herbs until you find the right one.

### Malaria

After the war, I spent some time in the hot, humid climate of South America. Malaria was rampant, and supplies were low. I discovered that club moss contains quinine and the locals used a decoction of the herb as a stop-gap measure against malaria. I have treated a few cases of malaria over the years and found that my decoction does the job.

### Flatulence

Both constipation and flatulence are treated with the spores of the club moss plant. As little as 1/4 teaspoon is required to ease the symptoms and resolve the problem. Mix the spores in a glass of water and drink it, three times daily as needed.

### Kidney Diseases

I prescribe my Club Moss Decoction made from the whole plant as a treatment of kidney disease and related disorders. It works to eliminate kidney stones and cleanse the system.



## Wound Treatment

Open wounds and sores that refuse to heal are well served by the addition of club moss spores. Apply the spores as a powder and rub it into the affected area.

## Warning

The herb club moss contains small amounts of alkaloids, which are a toxic substance which can cause paralysis to the motor nerves if consumed in large amounts.

## Recipes

### Club Moss Decoction

1 ounce of ground or finely chopped club moss plant, 2 cups of water

Bring the water to a boil and add the club moss plant.

1. Turn the heat down to a slow simmer and simmer the decoction for 15 minutes
2. Allow the decoction to cool and strain out the herb.
3. Keep the decoction in the refrigerator and use within 3 days.
4. Use a maximum of one cup daily, split into 4 or more doses.

### Club Moss Salve

5 ounces of olive oil or other carrier oil, ½ ounce of shaved beeswax, 1 tablespoon of club moss spore powder

1. Heat the olive oil gently over very low heat. Add the club moss spore powder.
2. Keep the oil on very low heat for 15 to 20 minutes while the spores release their medicinal benefits into the oil.
3. Add the shaved beeswax and stir until the salve is thoroughly mixed.
4. Pour the salve into a sanitized jar and cover it tightly.
5. Keep the salve refrigerated.
6. Apply 2 to 3 times daily, as needed.

## Coltsfoot, *Tussilago farfara*

Coltsfoot is a perennial that is rather unusual. The flowers look like dandelion, but they appear early, in April, and die before the leaves appear. The top of the leaf is smooth, while the underside is covered with white downy hairs. Leaves at the top of the plant are green, while those closer to the ground are white or grayish in color. These basal leaves are 2 to 10 inches long and serrated on the edges.

The single flowers are a little over a half inch across and surrounded by involucre bracts. They are bright yellow with ray-florets and tongue-like pistillate flowers in rows.

The small white root spreads underground.





*Coltsfoot Leaves, Bogdan, CC by SA 3.0*

The plant grows to between four and six inches tall. It is usually found in open areas with disturbed soil. I usually find it along ditches, roadsides, and on the forest edge.

The plant contains mucilage and tannins that give it its anti-inflammatory and anti-tussive properties.

The plant is also called coughwort and son-before-the-father.

### Edible Use

The coltsfoot flowers and leaves are edible. They are good in salads (in small amounts only). Young leaves are used in soups or stews and salads. To use the leaves as a vegetable, I wash them after boiling to get rid of the bitterness. Dried or fresh leaves and flowers can be used to make an aromatic tea.

### Medicinal Use

Both the leaves and flowers have medicinal value, although the flowers have the highest concentrations of medicinal compounds. I dry as many flower heads as possible for future use and add dried leaves to my medicine chest. I rarely use the roots, but they have medicinal properties as well.

### Asthma, Whooping Cough, Laryngitis, Coughs, Emphysema, and Bronchial Congestion

The botanical name *Tussilago* means ‘cough dispeller,’ and it does the job well. I use it to relieve congestion and expel mucous from the body. It is especially useful for chronic coughs like emphysema and whooping cough. I prescribe Coltsfoot Decoction, taken throughout the day, as a remedy for chronic coughs of all causes. My recipe for Coltsfoot Decoction is found below.

### Eczema, Ulcers, Sores, Skin Inflammations

The flowers, prepared as a poultice are helpful applied directly onto skin inflammations, sores, ulcers and skin diseases. I have had success with coltsfoot in treating eczema when the poultices are applied daily.

### Warning

Coltsfoot leaves contain small amounts of toxic compounds which are destroyed by cooking. Eat raw leaves sparingly and boil, drain, and rinse leaves when using as a vegetable.

### Recipes

#### Coltsfoot Decoction

1 ounce coltsfoot leaves, 1 quart water

Honey, as desired

1. Combine the coltsfoot leaves and water over medium-high heat and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat and boil the decoction until the water is reduced by half.
3. Cool and strain the decoction to remove the leaves.
4. Sweeten the decoction with honey as desired. It can be bitter, depending on the age of the leaves.
5. Drink 1/4 cup at a time, throughout the day or as needed to provide relief.



## *Echinacea Angustifolia*, Purple Coneflower

I usually call this plant echinacea, although it is commonly called Purple Coneflower or Black Samson Echinacea. It is a pretty, purple sunflower-like flowering plant that has a strong medicinal influence. It is native to North America and belongs to Asteraceae family and genus Echinacea. It is widespread across much of the central United States, with additional populations in nearby regions.

Echinacea grows from the Canadian border to Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana in the south. It grows in open rocky prairies and plains. I can usually find it easily in the Great Plains, east of the Rocky Mountains from Texas to Montana and Saskatchewan, to eastern Oklahoma, western Iowa, and western Minnesota.



*Echinacea angustifolia*, photo By I, Dy-e, CC BY-SA 3.0

### Plant Identification

Purple coneflower is a perennial herb that is nearly 6 inches to 24 inches tall, with a woody taproot. Its taproots are usually branched. This plant has one to several rough-hairy stems that are mostly unbranched.

The leaves are alternate, simple, and narrowly lance-shaped 2 to 24 inches long and 1/2 to 1 1/2 inches wide, with entire margins. They are nearly basal, and the stem leaves are widely spaced and attached alternately to the lower half of the stem. Edges of leaves are toothless and have three distinct veins along its length. Stem and leaves are rough and hairy to touch. Its stems may be purple or green tinged.

Echinacea Flowers look like lavender sunflowers with the heads 1 1/2 to 3 inches wide, at the ends of long stalks. Usually, the flowers bloom from June to July. The Ray flowers are nearly 3/4 to 1 1/2 inches long, spreading or drooping, and light pink to pale purple in color. The disk flowers are 5-lobed, brownish-purple in color, and are situated among stiff bracts with yellow pollen. Its fruits are small, dark, 4-angled achenes.



7 Purple Coneflower in a grassy field, By USFWS Mountain-Prairie - Kirwin Prairie Flowers Uploaded by Magnus Manske, Public Domain

### Harvesting Instructions

Usually, the Seeds of this Echinacea can be harvested during the fall of the second year. The seeds are harvested in autumn when seeds are ripe, before the fall rains set in. First, snip the cone-heads off and put them in buckets. If the seed is still a little green, dry the cone-heads in the sun.

Harvest the roots in the fall when the plant has died back. Dig up the entire plant, watching for branched roots. Scrub the dirt from the root and dry it for later use.



Close up of flower disc, Photo by Bernie, CC by SA 3.0

### Medicinal Use

Aiyana taught me the use of this herb early. It is one of the most important and useful medicinal herbs. It has a modulating effect on the body's natural immune system, encouraging it to operate more efficiently. It raises the body's resistance to bacterial and viral infections by stimulating the immune system. It also has anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving functions.

Most people that I talk to seem to be aware of echinacea as an herb for preventing and healing colds and the flu, but these pretty flowers can do a lot more.

### How to Use Echinacea

When taken long-term, echinacea can affect the digestive system negatively, causing stomach distress. I usually recommend using Echinacea Tea or Echinacea Extract, three times a day, for up to ten days. Additionally, I counsel my patients to take echinacea with food and a large glass of water. Echinacea can also be used in powder form.

### Urinary Tract Infections

The anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory effects of echinacea make it an ideal choice for the treatment of urinary tract infections. I have good results treating UTIs with echinacea extract taken three times daily for a week or until all symptoms are relieved. For difficult cases, I also add goldenseal root.

### Colds and the Flu

I have no evidence that echinacea prevents colds and the flu, but I sure know that it reduces the impact of the common cold and the flu. Patients who begin taking echinacea extract or tea immediately upon feeling sick heal much more quickly than those who do not. In general, patients who take echinacea get well up to 4 days faster than their neighbors. For best results, they should begin taking echinacea as soon as they notice symptoms, taking a double dose three times on the first day and then take three regular doses each day during the illness.

### Allergies and Respiratory Diseases

Echinacea helps to relieve allergies by stimulating and balancing the immune system. It is especially helpful in relieving asthma attacks. While it doesn't cure asthma, it reduces the severity of the attack and helps the patient get over attacks. It is also useful for treating bronchitis. I recommend taking three doses daily during an asthma attack or bronchial distress.

### For Infections, Burns, and Wounds

Echinacea is an antibiotic and antiviral, and it stimulates the immune system. It is helpful to relieve infections of all kinds. In my experience, it kills the bacterial infection and helps speed healing. I have used echinacea for large suppurating wounds with good results. One patient has an infected cut on his leg which he had completely ignored. It should have been cleaned and stitched closed when it happened, but he received no care at the time. I met him several days later when the wound was bulging with infection. I cleaned the wound with Echinacea Extract, covered it with echinacea powder and a bandage. I also gave him a double dose of Echinacea extract by mouth and continued with the extract, cleaning, and powder several times a day as the wound slowly healed. He still has a rough scar, but the infection resolved completely. If we had waited another day, he probably would have lost the leg.



### Snakebite, Insect Bites, and Stings

I have used echinacea extensively to treat spider bites and insect stings. It does a good job of neutralizing the poison and reducing the pain. I have heard from some healers that it is also useful for snakebites, but I have not tried to use it for this purpose. It is strongly anti-inflammatory, so I am sure that it would be helpful, but I cannot vouch for its effectiveness for snakebites.

### Recipes

#### Echinacea Extract

1 pint of vodka or rum, at least 80 proof, 1 cup of loosely packed echinacea leaf and root, chopped fine, 1-pint glass jar with a tight-fitting lid

1. Put the loosely packed echinacea leaf and finely chopped root into the jar. Fill with 80 proof vodka or rum and tightly fasten the lid.
2. Keep the herb covered and shake the jar daily for 1 to 6 months. Add more alcohol when needed to keep the jar full.
3. Strain the herbs out with a coffee filter.
4. Keep the extract covered in a cool, dark place.

Dosage is one dropper-full (5 ml), three times daily for up to 10 days. You can give a double dosage on the first day if needed.

#### Echinacea Tea

One teaspoon Echinacea root and leaves, 1 cup boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the root and leaves and allow it to steep for 10 minutes. Strain, if desired, and drink three cups daily or as needed.

#### Herbal Tincture for Colds and Flu

4 ounces dried echinacea root, 2 ounces fresh lemon balm, 2 ounces fresh horehound, 2 ounces fresh sage, 1 quart of 100 proof vodka or brandy

1. Chop the herbs and combine them in a quart jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Pour the vodka over the herbs to fill the jar.
3. Cap the jar tightly and shake.
4. Label the jar with the contents and date it.
5. Place the jar in a warm, sunny window and allow the tincture to steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking daily.
6. Strain the herbs out with a fine sieve or coffee filter.
7. Store the tincture in a cool, dark place for up to 5 years.

Adults: Take 1/2 teaspoon of tincture, every hour until the symptoms improve. Begin as soon as the first symptoms appear and take as needed until the cold is gone.

Children: Younger children take 2 to 10 drops in juice every hour depending on the child's size and age. Children over 12: take 1/8 teaspoon every hour.

#### False Unicorn Root, *Chamaelirium luteum*

False unicorn root is a similar plant to true unicorn root and has many of the same uses. The two plants are different with different dosages. I take special care to be sure that I know my plant, but if patients are in doubt, they should use the lower dose for safety.



*False Unicorn, Chamaelirium luteum, Public Domain*

False unicorn root, *Chamaelirium luteum* is also known as fairywant, helionas dioica, chamaelirium carolinianum, helionas root, eratrum luteum, blazing star root, devil's bit, and starwort. I find the name varies with location. I can usually find this herb in swampy areas east of the Mississippi River and in the southern states. In recent years, it has become hard to find and is possibly facing extinction. Take only the plants you need and replant it whenever possible.

It is an herbaceous perennial that grows low to the ground with stems 1 to 3 feet long. Stems are smooth and angular and alternate leaves formed into a whorl at the base of the plant. The whorl consists of six leaves, each 3 to 6 inches long.

The flowers are greenish-white, purple or lavender, formed into a dense terminal and appearing from May to June. The flowers are either male or female, with one sex per plant. The flower stalk of the female plant grows to be approximately 4 feet tall.

Fine, wiry pale roots grow from the bulbous rhizome. It prefers moist soil. I often find it along ditches, riverbanks, and other swampy areas.

### Medicinal Use

I prescribe false unicorn root as a tea, tincture, and dried root. Its uses are similar to those of True Unicorn Root, but the dosages are different. Appropriate dosage for False Unicorn is 1 cup of tea, three times daily, or 2 to 4 ml of tincture three times a day, or 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon of dried, powdered root, three times daily.

### The Female Reproductive System

False Unicorn Root is one of the best tonics for the reproductive system and is equally beneficial for women and men. It regulates the female reproductive system and balances the hormones, encouraging normal function and a regular menstrual cycle.

I use it to treat amenorrhea, relieve symptoms of menopause, and treat morning sickness. It improves fertility and low sex drive in women. I prefer to prescribe 3 cups of false unicorn root tea daily for female problems, but dried root and tincture work equally well.

I also use False Unicorn Root when a miscarriage is threatened, although it is usually contraindicated during pregnancy because it can bring on the menstrual period.

### False Unicorn for Men

The hormonal balancing effects extend to men also, and many men report that it is useful in improving the symptoms of erectile dysfunction. For impotence, nocturnal emissions, and erectile dysfunction, I prescribe 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon of dried, powdered root, three times daily.



*False Unicorn, photo by US Fish and Wildlife Service, Public Domain*



## Sexually Transmitted Diseases

False Unicorn is used by the native americans to treat gonorrhea and other STDs. They used False Unicorn Tea as a vaginal douche. Male patients can clean the skin with the tea and take powdered root by mouth.

## Chronic Pelvic Inflammation and Vaginal Infections

I have used false unicorn root combined with echinacea angustifolia to treat chronic pelvic inflammation. I prescribe the dried root, and, taking the hint from the Native Americans, I use False Unicorn Tea as a douche to treat vaginal infections with good results.

## Sore Throats

Many patients report success treating a sore throat with the tea of False Unicorn. I recommend gargling with the tea hourly when a sore throat is present, and most patients say that they don't really need it that often. The gargle relieves their pain almost immediately, and the relief lasts for a few hours. Young patients can sip the tea, but no more than 3 cups should be taken daily.

## Harvesting False Unicorn Root

I dig up the roots in the fall as the plant is dying back and after the seeds have been released. This is important because the plant is being over-harvested and is facing extinction.

Clean and dry the root for future use. Keep the drying temperature low (70 degrees F) with good air flow for the first day, then raise the temperature to 100 F until completely dry. Store it in a cool, dry place for up to three years. Grind the root when ready to use.

## Warnings

Take only the recommended dosages; an excess can cause vomiting and nausea. Avoid taking it during pregnancy.

False Unicorn Root is a cardiac toxin in large doses.

## Recipes

### False Unicorn Root Tea

1 to 2 teaspoons of shredded root, 1 cup water

Put the root in the water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer gently for 10 to 15 minutes. Drink the tea three times daily, or more in cases of threatened miscarriage.

### False Unicorn Root Tincture

1/4 to 1/2 cup dried false unicorn root

Vodka or brandy, or 80 proof or higher

1-pint glass jar with lid

1. Grind the dried herbs.
2. Place the root in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the herbs to completely cover them and fill the jar.
4. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days.
5. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the jar full.
6. Soak the dried root for 4 to 6 weeks.
7. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid.

8. Discard the root. Place the alcohol extraction in a cool place, undisturbed overnight.
9. Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining herb residue.
10. Store the tincture in a tightly capped glass bottle in a cool, dark place.
11. Use 2 to 4 ml of tincture three times daily.

### Golden Root, *Rhodiola rosea*

Golden root, *Rhodiola rosea*, can sometimes be difficult to find. It likes sea cliffs in Northeastern America and high elevations. It is a perennial flowering plant that is sometimes planted as a groundcover.

The plant grows from 4 to 15 inches tall, with several stems growing from thick rootstock. It is sometimes called roseroot because of its rose-like scent. The stems are erect with juicy leaves and a waxy coating that helps the plant conserve water.

The leaves are alternate and stalkless. The lowest leaves are scale-like, and stem leaves are ovate with a sharp tip and saw-like teeth. They are flat and smooth, with a slightly blue tint.

The plant flowers from July to August, forming greenish yellow to yellow flowers with four sepals and four petals. The staminate flowers are taller than the pistillate flowers. The staminate flowers have eight stamens while pistillate flowers have four-leaved gynoecium and short stamens. The flowers are massed together into a semi-spherical flower head. Fruits are four united follicles with many seeds.

Golden root likes cold weather, and I most often find it on the sunny river and stream banks, in snow beds, and rocky shelves.



*Golden Root Plant, Dolina Tomanowa, CC by SA 2.5*



*Golden Root, new growth, By Amazonia Exotics U.K - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0*

or fermented like sauerkraut.

### Medicinal Use

Golden root is a powerful adaptogen, an antidepressant, and stomachic. It is good for lifting the mood, increasing mental concentration, and as a treatment for tuberculosis. It regulates the body's reaction to stress and normalizes the hormones.

### Harvesting instructions

I like to harvest golden root in the fall, after the first frost when the plant is dying back. I look for older plants with large roots, as older roots have more medicinal value. I dig them out with a small trowel. I wash them well and slice them into thin slices to dehydrate. I dry them inside, in a warm, but dark spot. The roots will turn a light brown; this is ok. I store them wrapped in a paper bag for up to three years.

### Edible Use

The leaves, stems, and roots are edible. Young leaves and shoots are good eaten raw or cooked like a vegetable. They are slightly bitter, which only increases as the plant ages. The stems can be steamed like asparagus. The roots are good raw, cooked,



Golden root's effects are often best at lower doses, so it is important to start with lower doses and increase it only if needed. If too much is taken, the herb often acts with the opposite of the desired effect. I usually start patients on one capsule, size "0", daily and increase it only as necessary until maximum benefits are achieved.

### **Increases Physical Endurance and Sexual Potency**

I have seen athletes take golden root to enhance their physical strength and endurance. It increases energy levels and decreases the effects of strenuous exercise on the body. This allows the athlete to push harder without feeling the physical stress.

It also promotes sexual health, libido, and stamina. It is said to increase fertility.

### **Reduces Fatigue**

Fatigue can be caused by a number of factors, everything from anemia to generally poor health or even stress. The adaptogen properties of golden root helps increase energy and reduce fatigue in almost all of these cases. I prescribe a low dose, one "0" capsule of ground root powder daily.

### **Promotes Healthy Thyroid Function**

Golden root promotes healthy immune system function and regulates many of the hormones that allow the body to function normally, including the thyroid. It promotes healthy function of the thyroid and helps to balance the hormones. This is part of the reason that it increases energy, but it also does far more to help the thyroid function properly.

### **Boosts Memory and Brain Function**

Golden root increases the mental capacity of the brain and helps develop mental clarity. It improves memory retention, boosts the mood, reduces fatigue, and calms anxiety. This calm and improved function help the patient relax and improves memory retention.

### **Relieves Anxiety, Depression**

For patients suffering from anxiety and depression, golden root can be a lifesaver. It calms anxiety, helps the patient think clearly and lifts the mood. It is not suitable for use with patients who have manic episodes, but for others it is often considered a cure. One small dose daily, a "0" capsule of powdered golden root, is often enough to completely resolve the anxiety and depression and create a feeling of contentment. [Editor's Note: Do not take golden root with prescription anti-depressants or SSRIs, they can interact.]

### **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

Golden root regulates the brain hormones that cause anxiety, flashbacks, and other symptoms of PTSD. I recommend one to two size "0" capsules daily, morning and afternoon as a starting place. Increase the dosage only as needed.

### **Treatment of Tuberculosis**

I use a combination of golden root and astragalus root as a treatment for tuberculosis. I have patients eat the raw flowers from the golden root plant and take astragalus root powder daily.



## Goldenseal, *Hydrastis Canadensis*

Goldenseal often seems like a cure-all, there is so much that it can do. I think of it as an anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and immune booster, but there is really so much more to this plant.

Whenever I have a difficult patient that is in generally poor health, goldenseal is one of the first herbs I reach for. I want to boost his health and immune function so that I can cure whatever else ails him.

*Hydrastis Canadensis* is the Botanical name of the Goldenseal also known as Orangeroot or Yellow Puccoon. Goldenseal is a small perennial herb belonging to the

Buttercup family, *Ranunculaceae*, though its leaves and fruit somewhat resemble those of the Raspberry and the *Rubus* genus.

### Plant Identification:

The goldenseal has a thick knotty, yellowish-brown rhizome that is approximately 5 centimeters long and 1 centimeter thick with a lot of rootlets. It grows to a height of about 6 to 12 inches. This herb has a strong odor and bitter taste. It produces a fruit similar to the raspberry in appearance, but the fruit is not edible.

The plant is easily distinguished from other *Ranunculaceae* family members during the flowering period as it has only 2 simple leaves on the stem (cauline leaves) and solitary white flowers, that have no petals.

The Flowers have numerous white protruded stamens and are 8 to 18 cm wide. The 3 sepals fall as the flower opens.

Its basal leaf is usually solitary and quickly becomes deciduous; the two cauline leaves alternate near the summit. They are toothed, 5-lobed and with ridged veins, 1 to 4 inches when the flower opens, but expand to 10 to 12 inches.

Goldenseal grows freely across the eastern US. Flowering occurs from approximately late April through early May. During the ripening period, its fruits first appear green and then ripen into a bright red aggregate of achenes. These are visible from mid to late season, usually June to early August depending on the weather.



*Various parts of Goldenseal, Public Domain*

Goldenseal is commonly an inhabitant of rich, shady, mesic southern forests, usually under a canopy of beech-sugar maple or oak-sugar maple in red color. Its most frequent occurrence is in the moist areas near water, along forested streams, and also in southern floodplain forests, often in clay loam, moist sandy loam, or even organic (muck) soils.



## Harvesting

I harvest my goldenseal in the fall after the plant has died back. I look for older plants with large rhizomes. Take care when digging roots to keep the rhizomes intact. I try to leave as many of the fibrous roots behind as possible to establish the plants.

## Medicinal Use

I give patients goldenseal root powder in doses from 250 mg to 1 gram, three times a day. Some patients need more. I sometimes use an extract, giving 10 to 30 drops from 2 to 4 times daily.

Dosage depends on the size of the patient and the degree of illness. Use smaller doses as a preventative. I also watch the blood sugar and blood pressure closely when using goldenseal, because it can lower blood sugars and raise the blood pressure.

## Use Goldenseal in Combination with Other Herbs

I particularly like to combine goldenseal with echinacea for a more effective benefit. Goldenseal boosts the effects of other herbs to the benefit of the body.

## Respiratory Problems

Goldenseal reduces irritation and inflammation of the mucous membranes, making it an ideal addition to the treatment of respiratory problems. It is also an anti-microbial and anti-viral. For colds, the flu, and other respiratory problems I prefer to use goldenseal extract, 10 to 30 drops, 2 to 4 times daily for up to 3 weeks, as needed. After 3 weeks, take a week or two off, then repeat the treatment, if needed.

## Bacterial and Viral Infections

The anti-microbial properties of goldenseal are effective against many bacterial infections including vaginal infections, infectious diarrhea, colds and flu, eye infections, and urinary tract infections. I recommend goldenseal root for bacterial and viral infections of all kinds of vaginal infections, use goldenseal infusion in a douche. Infections respond well to both internal and external use of goldenseal extract.

One patient presented with a deep infection under her arm. It had grown to the size of a golf ball, and she was unable to put her arm down without severe pain. I had treated her prior for skin infections; she seemed to be prone to them. I had her use a combination of goldenseal root extract by mouth and as a wash on the skin surface. We were able to draw it to the surface it using warm flax seed oil and cure the infection. She ended up with a hard lump of a scar, but the infection was cured. By following up with a regular wash over the entire area with goldenseal extract, she was able to prevent new infections.

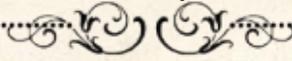
## Skin Eruptions

I treat skin ulcers, boils, rashes, and general skin irritations with topical applications of goldenseal extract applied directly to the problem area. For extensive skin infections or rashes, I also add goldenseal root powder taken internally for up to three weeks. Extensive or chronic problems may require multiple rounds of goldenseal, each followed by a week off.

Mouth ulcers like canker sores and other irritations to the mucous membranes of the mouth can also be treated effectively using this herb.



Goldenseal, Luiscoronel, CC by SA 3.0



### Cleanse Body Toxins

Goldenseal helps remove toxins from the body and purify the kidneys and urinary tract. I use it in combination with other herbs usually for this purpose.

### Lower Blood Sugar Levels in Diabetics

Goldenseal helps boost the production of insulin in diabetics and lowers blood sugar levels. I monitor my diabetic patients carefully when giving goldenseal because some have had elevated blood pressure as a result of taking goldenseal. When blood pressure is a problem, choose a different treatment.

Goldenseal will not replace injected insulin, but it does encourage the body to produce more insulin so that the Type 2 diabetics may be able to reduce their insulin doses over time.

### Yeast and Fungal Infections

I treat yeast infections, athlete's foot, and skin irritations caused by fungi and bacteria such as acne and skin rashes with Goldenseal. Most patients treat the affected area by applying goldenseal extract to the problem area, but one gentleman just added goldenseal extract to his foot bath every night. It took a while to clear up the infection completely, but he finally got relief from a particularly bad case of athlete's foot.

### Bleeding

Goldenseal powder applied to wounds helps stop or control bleeding. I also prescribe it internally for controlling heavy menstrual bleeding and internal bleeding. It tones the blood vessels, reducing bleeding quickly.

### Goldenseal Extract

1/2 cup Goldenseal root, ground into a powder, 2 cups of distilled water

Non-reactive pot: stainless steel or enamel

1. Bring the water to a boil and add the goldenseal powder. Reduce the heat to a low simmer.
2. Simmer the mixture until the water is reduced by one quarter, leaving 1 1/2 cups of liquid in the pot.
3. Allow the mixture to cool to room temperature, then strain out the root.
4. Store the mixture in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or divide into small portions and store in the freezer for longer periods.

### Hardy Kiwi, *Actinidia arguta*

The hardy kiwi is a new plant to me. A farm that I pass regularly began to grow them and I stopped to talk to the farmer. They are an amazing fruit that I enjoy, and I've only just begun to experiment and research the medicinal uses.

The hardy kiwi is a perennial fruiting vine that is known for its vigorous growth and ability to withstand the cold. It is also known as baby kiwi, arctic kiwi, cocktail kiwi, or kiwi berry.

It is a popular cultivated fruit in North America. The plant is a deciduous twinning vine with a woody stem. It easily climbs to heights of 25 to 30 feet, but can reach much higher if sufficient support is available.

The leaves are 3 to 5 inches long with an oval shape. The leaves are bright green with reddish stems and the fruits can be brown, green, or reddish. The fruits are similar in size to a large grape with a smooth skin and sweet flavor.

The plants are either male or female and the flowers must be pollinated for the fruit to set. The small white flowers appear in May.

I sometimes find it growing wild in forests, swamps, and on stream banks, but I rely on cultivated plants for a steady supply.



*Hardy kiwi, Björn Appel, CC by SA 3.0*

## Edible Use

The hardy kiwi fruit has a flavor like the true kiwi fruit, only sweeter. It can be eaten whole, with no need to remove the peel. It is usually consumed raw, but some cooks use it in making jams and chutneys.

## Medicinal Use

Hardy kiwi fruit contain many beneficial vitamins and antioxidants that protect the body from disease. I also use it to treat specific diseases. Unless otherwise noted, eating the fruit provides the beneficial effects.

## Cancer

The kiwi fruits provide protection against and treatment for cancer. In my experience, they are particularly effective for treating cancers of the stomach, intestines, colon, and breast. Eat a serving of kiwi fruit daily. Eating too many may cause a laxative effect.

## Constipation

Kiwi has a laxative effect when eaten in excess and make a good treatment for constipation. Eat a large serving of the fruit to relieve constipation. If action does not occur, repeat the large serving the following morning.

## Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

The protective nature of kiwi on the digestive tract is a help for patients who suffer with IBS. It helps restore normal bowel movements and calms inflammation of the intestinal tract. I prescribe a small serving of kiwi daily.

## Insomnia, Sleep Disorders

The hardy kiwi is rich in serotonin and other compounds that are beneficial to an uninterrupted sleep. It helps fight insomnia and increases the beneficial REM sleep. Insomnia patients are encouraged to include a serving of hardy kiwi in their daily diet.



*Hardy Kiwi, Sten, CC by SA 3.0*

## Anemia

The hardy kiwi is a rich source of both iron and vitamin C, making it a good dietary source for patients with iron deficiency anemia. The vitamin C increases the absorption of iron.



## Boosts the Immune System

Hardy kiwis boost the function of the immune system and prevents the common cold and other related illnesses, especially in children. This affect is probably due to the high concentrations of vitamin C; however, other protective compounds may also be involved.

## High Blood Pressure, Cholesterol, and Triglycerides

The protective nature of hardy kiwi extends to the cardiovascular system where kiwis prevent or lower high blood pressure, blood clot formation, and is protective of the cholesterol and triglyceride levels. It protects the cardiovascular system and reduces the threat of heart attacks and cardiovascular disease.

## Heartleaf Arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*)

I love plants like Heartleaf arnica, also known as mountain tobacco. Often pulled as a weed, it is a member of the sunflower family, with restorative and curative powers. I can usually find it in shady spots including high meadows, coniferous forests, and the western mountains at elevations from 3500 to 10,000 feet. It is native to western North American from Alaska to California and New Mexico, and east to Michigan. I knew of one plant that lived for twelve years, the rhizome survived a wildfire and re-sprouted the following spring.

### Plant Identification

The plant is a rhizomatous perennial growing from one or more erect stems and reaching up to 20 inches, but usually less than 12 inches tall. The stems are hairy with two to four pairs of heart-shaped to arrowhead-shaped leaves. Cordate leaves often produced on separate short shoots, are coarsely toothed and wither when the plant flowers. The leaves on the upper part of the plant are hairy, like the stalk. Lower leaves have rounded tips.

The flowers are small, forming 1 to 5 daisy-like flowering heads per plant. Each flower head consists of a golden yellow disc and 10 to 15 yellow ray flowers.

The rays are pointed and a little over an inch in maximum length. The entire flower heat is about 2 1/2 inches in diameter. The seeds form in a small, hairy achene, 1/3 to 1/2 inch long.

Flowers, appearing May to August, are in small, yellow daisylike heads, 1-5 flowering heads per plant with 10 to 15 pointed tip ray flowers. The base of the flower is generally long, white, and hairy.

### Medicinal Uses

I use the plant both externally and internally to reduce inflammation, calm the nervous system and speed healing. It is antimicrobial and antiseptic. Arnica brings up the body temperature and sometimes induces sneezing.

### Arnica for Sore Throat and Toothache

For a sore throat or a toothache, I recommend chewing the root . If the mouth is too sore for chewing, I mash it and apply it to the swollen area. Gargling Arnica tea is also effective for some patients.



Heartleaf Arnica, Walter Siegmund, CC by SA 3.0



### How to Use Heartleaf Arnica on Skin

I often use heartleaf arnica externally on unbroken skin as a salve, ointment or liniment to promote healing in sprains, muscle pulls, contusions, and bruises. Use diluted ointment on bedsores, poorly healing wounds, incisions, and other areas that need tissue stimulation and healing.

### Arnica for Arthritis

Heartleaf arnica is often beneficial to relieving arthritis pain, especially in cold weather. It warms the area and stimulates blood flow, and its anti-inflammatory properties are beneficial. I use arnica salve or liniment, rubbed into the painful joint, or I apply it as a poultice of bruised leaves or flowers for this purpose.

### Arnica Ointment for Frostbite

Because it is warming and stimulates blood flow to an area, I use Heartleaf arnica for the treatment of frostbite and chilblains. I prefer a poultice of leaves or flowers, or an ointment made with Arnica.

### Arnica Ointment for Bruises, Black Eyes, Muscle Aches, Inflammation, Sprains, Phlebitis, and Swelling

I find that Arnica applied topically is useful in the treatment in a wide variety of external conditions. It reduces inflammation, warms the skin and muscle, relieves pain, and promotes healing.

### Arnica for Skin Problems

I treat common skin problems like infections, itching, open wounds, and eczema with arnica extracts or ointments whenever Arnica is available.



*Arnica cordifolia, Pellaea, CC by 2.0*

### Other Uses of Arnica

Some people use Arnica to make homemade cigarettes, known as mountain tobacco.

Some women report using Arnica as a hair conditioner, but I did not inquire about the procedure for this use.

### Harvesting Instructions

When harvesting from the wild, pick flowers sparingly, I never harvest rhizomes or roots; this destroys the plant. The plant will grow back as long as the rhizome survives in place.

I prefer the flowers for medicinal use but leaves and stems also contain all the beneficial properties. Pick flowers in the early afternoon, after the morning dew has evaporated.

### Warnings

Arnica can be highly toxic if taken internally. I do not recommend internal use unless I can monitor the patient closely. Inflammation and irritation can result from the use of undiluted arnica preparations externally on open wounds. I recommend diluting the oil and extracts with a carrier solution or oil.



## Recipes

### Heartleaf Arnica Oil Distillation

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, a tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer. You'll need heartleaf Arnica flowers, leaves, and stems, water to cover the herbs

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or a tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place the chopped herbs into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to cover the herbs and fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and the distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. Dilute the oil to at least 10% Heartleaf Arnica Oil and 90% carrier oil before use.

### Heartleaf Arnica Tincture

Fresh or dried heartleaf arnica blossoms, leaves, or crushed stems, vodka or brandy, or 80 proof or higher (use 140 proof if using roots)

1. Chop or grind the blossoms, leaves, and stems
2. Place the Arnica herb in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the herbs to cover them completely.
4. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days.
5. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the herbs completely covered.
6. Soak the herbs for 4 to 6 weeks.
7. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid.
8. Discard the herbs. Store the Tincture in a cool place.

Use 1 to 5 drops of tincture in 8 ounces of water as a wash for affected areas or add the tincture to prepared ointments or salves.

### Heartleaf Arnica Ointment or Salve

6 to 8 ounces Heartleaf Arnica Oil, diluted to 10% Arnica oil, 90% (or more) Carrier oil,  
1-ounce beeswax or candelilla wax

For a stiff salve, use 6 ounces of diluted Heartleaf Arnica Oil, or 8 ounces for a looser ointment.

1. Heat the oil gently and add the wax. Stir until the wax is melted and well blended. Watch it carefully; the oil and wax are flammable.
2. Remove the mixture from the heat. Stir it regularly as the mixture cools to prevent separation.

3. When the mixture begins to become translucent, pour it into jars.

## Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)

Also known as a conker tree, Horse chestnut is a large deciduous tree and a member of the Sapindaceae family. I learned of its medicinal value during the war and have been using this tonic ever since.

### Plant Identification

I have seen the horse chestnut often used as an ornamental tree in parks and landscaping. I look for it in the early spring, since it tends to sprout leaves before most trees begin budding. It is a large tree reaching heights of 50 to 75 feet when mature, with a spread of 40 to 70 feet.

Beautiful clusters of white flowers cover the tree in early to mid-May. Flower clusters are 5 to 12 inches across with 20 to 50 flowers in each cluster. The flowers are white with a yellow splotch of color in the center when they open. The yellow color slowly changes to turn reddish as the bloom matures.

Leaves are palmately compound with 5 to 7 oval leaflets. Leaflets are doubly serrated and 4 to 10 inches long, making the entire leaf 12 to 24 inches long.

The trunk and branches develop exfoliating bark as the tree matures, with outer bark peeling away to show the orange bark below.

Each flower cluster produces only one to five fruit. The fruits are 2 to 2 ¼ inches in diameter and covered with a light green spiny shell that turns brown as the nuts mature. The spiny shell contains one or two black, nut-like seeds. Each seed is 1 to 2 inches in diameter, glossy brown in color with a light colored scar at the base.



Solipsist, CC by SA 2.0

### Chronic Venous Insufficiency

I have extensively researched Horse chestnut as a treatment for venous insufficiency, and I recommend carefully dosed seed tinctures. Medicinal preparations can be made at home but should be used with care, starting at low doses and increasing slowly as implicated.

### Edible Parts

Horse chestnuts are not edible. The seeds are slightly poisonous and cause illness when eaten.

### Medicinal Uses

Horse chestnut is a tonic that I use specifically to treat vascular system problems. It helps control varicose veins and hemorrhoids, and it improves the general tone of veins. I use it both topically and internally.



## Lowers Blood Sugar

Horse chestnut lowers blood sugar and can be beneficial for people with diabetes when used carefully and blood sugar is closely monitored. Monitoring is necessary for all patients taking Horse chestnut because hypoglycemia can result from overdosing.

## Varicose Veins

I recommend Horse chestnut seed as a treatment for varicose veins, and my research verifies that many alternative medical professionals agree with me. It reduces pain and swelling in the legs and strengthens the veins. I believe Horse chestnut seed extract to be a safe short-term

treatment for chronic venous insufficiency.

## Harvesting Instructions

I only harvest nuts that have dropped to the ground and released their seed. Nuts that are still on the tree are not mature.

## Warnings

The horse chestnut is known to be mildly toxic, but carefully prepared seed extracts are safe when used properly.

Do not prescribe for children, during pregnancy, or while nursing. Use cautiously in patients taking blood thinning medications.

Monitor patients blood sugar levels, especially when beginning treatment or when increasing dose.

## Recipes

### Horse Chestnut Tincture

6 to 8 fresh or dried horse chestnuts, vodka, 80 proof or better

1. Grind the nuts into small pieces and place in a jar with a lid
2. Cover the horse chestnuts with vodka and cap tightly
3. Steep the nuts in a cool, dark place for 4 to 6 weeks
4. Check the nuts periodically and add more vodka as needed to keep them covered.
5. Strain the nuts out and use the vodka tincture

Add the tincture to olive or coconut oil to make a massage oil. Rub it into trouble spots daily.



*William N. Beckon, CC by SA 3.0*



## Indian Poke, *Veratrum Viride*

There are several plants that go by the name of Indian Poke. It is important to recognize that I am talking about *Veratrum viride* here, not *Phytolacca acinosa* or other pokeweeds. I find *veratrum viride* in pastures, meadows, open woods, damp soils, and swamps along the eastern and western states. It is rarely found in the central states of the US.

### Plant Identification

Indian Poke is an erect perennial herb that can grow from heights of 2 feet to 7 feet. The leaves are broad on the lower part and spirally arranged on the stout stem. This leaves can grow from 4 to 14 inches long and 2 to 8 inches wide.



The leaf blade of this herb is widest near the middle and tapering at both ends (ovate). The leaves are feathery on the underside.

The flowers of Indian Poke are arranged on a large branched inflorescence approximately 1 to 2 1/3 feet long. The flowers are 1/4- to 1/2-inch long with six green to yellow-green tepals. The ovary is positioned above the sepal attachment and produces flat, winged seeds.

The Indian Poke fruit splits along two or more seams (apical pores and teeth) when dry, this is done to release seeds (the fruit is a capsule). The fruit can grow up to 1 1/4 inches long.

### Harvesting the Indian Poke

I wear gloves when harvesting Indian Poke. I prefer to pick individual leaves and leave the plant intact, however many healers cut down the entire plant. I dry the leaves for storage.

Harvest rhizomes only from mature plants. Collect the roots in the fall and dry them for future use.

### Medicinal Use

#### Treating High Blood Pressure and Rapid Heartbeat

The Indian Poke contain chelidonic acid and other alkaloids. Some of the alkaloids expand peripheral blood vessels and lower blood pressure by slowing the heartbeat. I have used *veratrum viride* for lowering the blood pressure and heart rate in the past, but I now prefer other methods. Several pharmaceutical drugs for high blood pressure and rapid heartbeat have been developed from Indian poke compounds.

The herb is highly effective, so only very small doses should be used since an overdose is potentially deadly. The problem with home prepared medications is that the strength can vary from plant to plant and in how it is made. If you choose to use Indian poke for this purpose, start with very small doses of the decoction and give the patient very close medical supervision.

#### Reducing Fevers in Acute Diseases

In acute disease situations such as peritonitis, acute pneumonia, and threatened apoplexy, a decoction of

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



Indian poke acts as a febrifuge and brings down the fever. However, do not forget the other effects of the decoction and use it sparingly under complete medical supervision.

### Body Pain, Arthritis, Muscle Pains

I use my decoction, diluted with water, as a wash to reduce or relieve shoulder pains, intense arthritis pain, severe aches of the muscles and body parts, pains at the rear portion of the neck and fast electric shock in all parts of the body. Alternately, I use a salve made from petroleum jelly and my Indian poke decoction as a rub to relieve pain.

### As a Healing Agent

I make a skin wash with my Indian Poke Decoction, diluting the decoction 1:10 with boiled water before use and using it to wash affected areas. I have also used powdered root rubbed on the skin surface for the treatment of wounds and boils.

### Other Uses

The roots of Indian Poke are slightly soapy and can be used to do laundry. Grate the root and add it to water for a mild soapy effect.

### Warnings

It is advisable to take precaution and use only small doses, Indian Poke is considered to be very toxic.

Veratrum Viride (Indian poke) contains numerous toxins that may cause vomiting and nausea. If the poison is not evacuated, vertigo and cold sweat appear, respiration slows, blood pressure and cardiac rhythm falls, the heart fails eventually leading to fatality.

### Recipes

#### Indian Poke Root Decoction

(For external use only)

1-ounce chopped Indian Poke root, 1-pint Water

Cover the chopped root with water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer the root for 30 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow the decoction to cool. Strain out the root pieces and store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

#### Indian Poke Leaf Decoction

1 ounce chopped Indian poke Leaves, 1 pint of water

Cover the chopped leaves with water and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and allow the leaves to steep for 10 to 15 minutes. Strain out the leaves and store the decoctions in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

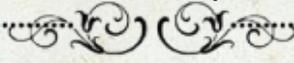
#### Petroleum Jelly Salve

1 Tablespoon of Indian Poke Root or Leaf Decoction, ½ cup of petroleum jelly

Mix the decoction and petroleum jelly together. Apply lightly to the affected area.



Walter Siegmund - Own work, CC by SA 3.0



## Jerusalem Artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*)

Also called sunroot, sunchoke, topinambur, and earth apple, the Jerusalem artichoke is a species of sunflower found in Eastern North America. I enjoy eating the root as a vegetable and prescribe them to patients who need a boost in their immune function and for some digestion problems. I recommend that patients eat the raw or cooked root as part of their daily diet.

### Plant Identification

Jerusalem artichoke is a herbaceous perennial that grows to be 4 to 10 feet tall. Rough, hairy leaves are opposite on the upper part of the stem, while lower leaves alternate. The lower leaves are larger, up to a foot long. Higher leaves are smaller and narrow.

Yellow flowers are a composite of 60 or more disc florets in the flower head, surrounded by 10 to 20 ray florets. Small sunflower seeds grow on the disc. The flower head grows up to 4 inches in diameter.

The edible tubers are elongated, up to 4 inches long and 2 inches in diameter. Their appearance resembles ginger root. However, the color can vary from white to pale brown, or even red or purple.

### How to Use Jerusalem Artichokes

The root tuber is eaten as a vegetable and tastes similar to an artichoke, hence the name. I recommend using the tubers as a substitute for potatoes; but they have a sweeter, nuttier flavor. They can be eaten raw, made into flour, pickled, or cooked. In some people, Jerusalem artichokes cause flatulence and sometimes gastric pain, so watch for gastric problems when Jerusalem artichokes are first introduced to the diet.



*Jerusalem Artichokes, Gila Brand, CC by SA,3.0*



*Jerusalem Artichoke by Paul Fenwick, CC by SA 3.0*

### Medicinal Uses

Jerusalem artichokes' medicinal action is due to its high concentration of inulin. It is one of the best sources of this valuable component available. To use Jerusalem artichoke for medicinal purposes, simply include it as a vegetable in the daily diet.

### Diabetes

Fresh Jerusalem artichokes are approximately 76% inulin (not to be confused with insulin), which helps regulate blood sugar levels in diabetics. During storage, the inulin is converted to fructose, giving the tuber a sweet taste. Tubers grown in warm weather have higher inulin levels than those in colder regions, but all can be used to help control blood sugar in diabetes.



## Digestive Problems

Jerusalem artichokes are useful as a prebiotic fiber to help increase beneficial gut flora. They also stimulate stomach secretions that help control indigestion, dyspepsia, and slow digestion.

I am aware, however, that Jerusalem artichokes cause gas and intestinal pain in some people.

## Enhances the Immune System

Jerusalem artichokes have immune-enhancing properties. They increase the body's defense mechanisms against viruses and bacteria, and they help increase the deployment of white blood cells to areas of infection.



*Jerusalem Artichoke Flowers, Paul Fenwick, CC by SA 3.0*

## Harvesting Instructions

- Dig up the roots in the fall or leave them in the ground over the winter to harvest in the spring. Store them in high humidity to prevent them from wilting and softening. Tubers left in the ground will sprout in the spring. The tubers bruise easily and lose moisture quickly, so I usually prefer to leave them in the ground and harvest them when needed.

## Warnings

Jerusalem Artichokes can cause digestive distress and excessive gas in some people.

## Juniper Berry

I am always happy to see a Juniper shrub nearby, as it has a wide range of healing powers. When there are plenty of ripe berries, I try to dry some for future use. While there are usually berries available in different stages of development, sometimes the birds beat me to the ripe ones.

## Plant Identification

Juniper is usually a small shrub, growing between 2 to 20 feet high, and found throughout the Northern Hemisphere. It is a member of the Cypress Family (Cupressaceae). The shrub has reddish-brown bark that peels off in papery pieces.



*MPF, CC by 2.5*

The leaves are needles, tapering to a spiny point, in whorls of 3, with white bands down the center.

Fruits, technically cones, appear on short stalks. The berries are small, round to oval and up to ½ inch in diameter. Berries are green when young and purple-black when mature. They take 18 months to 3 years to ripen, so both green and ripe berries are often on the same shrub. Each berry usually has three seeds.

## Edible Parts

I like to use crushed berries in cooking to flavor meats and sauces and it is also used as a flavoring for gin. The berries can be used either dried or fresh, but I usually crush them to release their bitter flavor. The astringency is strongest in fresh berries and declines with drying and storage.



## Medicinal Uses

Juniper berries for medicinal use can be incorporated as a flavoring in cooking or taken as an infusion or as Juniper Oil.



*Ripe and unripe berries on the same bush, Pt, CC by SA 3.0*

### Juniper Berry for Heartburn and Indigestion

Juniper is a bitter astringent that improves digestion. The bitters cause saliva, digestive enzymes, and stomach acids to increase, which aids in the digestion of food.

I use Juniper Infusion, Juniper Oil, or recommend using dried, crushed juniper berries to season the patient's food.

### Juniper Berry is a Diuretic

Eating juniper berries may relieve bloating and water retention. It increases urine output and relieves water retention caused by injury, inflammation, or excess sodium in the diet. I often use Oil of Juniper as a diuretic.

### Juniper Berries Prevent Urinary Tract Infections

Because of its diuretic action, juniper helps flush out toxins and bacteria in the urinary tract, which helps prevent urinary tract infections. I recommend 1 to 5 drops of Juniper Oil daily or 1/2 cup of Juniper Infusion, four times daily.

### Anti-Bacterial and Anti-Fungal Properties

Juniper berry is effective against both gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria including E. Coli, pneumonia, gonorrhea, Staphylococcus aureus, and resistant bacteria. It is also a strong anti-fungal for both internal and external use.

### Juniper Oil for Skin Infections, Irritations, and Wounds

A mixture of Juniper oil and lard or carrier oil is used to treat skin infections and wounds. Use a mixture of 1-part Juniper oil and 10 parts carrier oil.

### Juniper for Dropsy

I use Juniper Infusion, four times daily, along with the patient's diuretics to treat dropsy. A quarter to a half cup several times daily helps relieve the swelling of dropsy.

### Juniper Berry as an Anti-Inflammatory, Antioxidant, and Anti-Aging

Juniper berries are high in antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Antioxidants neutralize free radicals responsible for cell damage and aging that leads to the development of diseases like cancer, arthritis, and heart disease.

They also help keep the skin healthy and fight the fine lines and wrinkles that result from aging. My patients that use Juniper berry regularly mostly have younger looking and more resilient skin.



## Juniper Berries as a Contraceptive

I have heard reports of Juniper Berries used as a contraceptive, but I never had the chance to test their effectiveness. I do know that they can cause miscarriage in pregnant women and their use should be avoided by pregnant women and women wanting to become pregnant.

## Harvesting Instructions

Pick only the ripe, dark-blue berries and lay them out to dry. As they dry, they lose some of their blue color and turn blackish. The berries contain the most oil just as they begin to ripen, so I use them fresh whenever possible.

## Warnings

Excessive consumption may cause kidney irritation. Juniper berries should not be used by pregnant or nursing women. They should be avoided by diabetics, persons with bleeding disorders, or after surgery

## Recipes

### Juniper Oil

You will need:

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, a tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

Crushed juniper berries, enough water to cover the berries and the bottom of the pot, carrier oil such as olive oil, coconut oil, or other edible oil.

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of your Juniper berries. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub and into the collection vessel.
5. Place the crushed juniper berries and water into the pressure cooker. Add more water as needed to fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water and the distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. Dilute the oil to at least 10% Oil of Juniper and 90% carrier oil.

### Juniper Infusion

1 ounce juniper berries, 1 pint boiling water

1. Crush 1 ounce of Juniper berries.
2. Pour 1 pint of boiling water over the berries, cover and allow to cool.
3. Strain out the berries.
4. Take in several doses over the course of 24 hours.



## Kudzu, *Pueraria lobata*, *P. thunbergiana*

When farmers began importing Kudzu in the 1930's and 40's, I watched with great interest. The plant grows like crazy, a foot or so per day. Farmers were hoping that the plant would control soil erosion and provide fodder for cattle. Well the cows refused to eat it, but it does control erosion. (I've been told that goats eat it, but they eat most everything.) The problem is that the plant grows so fast that it spreads over everything.

I was interested in the medicinal properties, of course, and began researching and experimenting with its use immediately.



*Kudzu leaves, Bubba73 (Jud McCranie) - Own work, CC by SA 3.0*

### Plant Identification

Kudzu is a twining and trailing perennial vine that climbs high over anything. Folks in the south joke that if you go on vacation, your house may be completely swallowed by the time you get back. It does grow quickly and covers everything in its path. It is a familiar sight to find kudzu covering abandoned houses, telephone poles, trees, and fields.\*

Leaves are grouped into formations of three leaflets at each node. Each leaflet will have its own stalk or petiole. The central leaf has 3 lobes and a petiole that is about 3/4 inch long. The leaves on either side have shorter petioles and usually 2 lobes. Leaves may not have any lobes or may have many more. The leaves are medium-green and grow to be

about 5 to 6 inches long and are covered in very fine hairs.

The vines are long and covered in small bristles that help it climb and cling to vertical surfaces. The vines grow rapidly and become thick and woody as they mature. The vines also grow horizontally, putting down roots at each node.

In August or September, purple or reddish-purple flowers appear in clusters or racemes. Each cluster is up to 8 inches long and emerges from the central petiole of a leaf trio. Seed pods of approximately 2 inches in length form from each flower cluster. The pod is shaped like a bean with lima-bean shaped seeds inside, only smaller. The seed pods are greenish-bronze when mature and covered with fine hairs. They turn brown when dried.

### Edible Use

The leaves, vine tips, flowers, and roots are all edible. The vine stems are not. The roots contain starch, which is edible. They can be roasted and eaten like potatoes or dried and powdered to make a starch much like cornstarch. The flowers make a delicious jelly that reminds me of peach flavored bubblegum.

### Medicinal Use

I give kudzu root for most uses. I dry the root and powder it. The daily dose is 6 to 12 grams, spread throughout the day. I pack the powdered root into size "00" gelatin capsules.

### Estrogen-like Effects

Kudzu has estrogen-like effects that are beneficial for pre-menopausal and post-menopausal women. I have used it to alleviate the symptoms of menopause including headaches, hot flashes, and irregular bleeding.



## Heart Problems, Cardiovascular System

Kudzu decoction is useful for increasing the blood flow in the body by expanding the arteries and vessels. It increases the oxygen supply to the brain and body. It lowers blood pressure and reduces chances of clotting and strokes. It is also a potent weapon against myocardial ischemia.

## Relieves Digestive Spasms

Kudzu soothes digestive spasms and thus treats digestive cramping, Crohn's disease, and Irritable Bowel Syndrome. For chronic conditions, have patients take 6 to 12 grams of kudzu root powder daily. For immediate relief of spasms, give 1/3 cup of Kudzu Decoction, three times daily.

## Measles

Kudzu reduces the infection rate and shortens cases of measles. I prescribe Kudzu powder at the first signs of measles and as a preventative for family members. Patients who take kudzu get well faster than those who do not.

## Diabetes

Kudzu root, taken three times daily, helps stabilize blood sugar levels and improves glucose metabolism. I have noticed that my patients who take kudzu daily have fewer complications from diabetes.

## Alcoholism

Daily kudzu consumption affects the individuals desire for alcohol. My alcoholic patients have reduced their daily alcohol consumption, although they did not give it up completely. I am not sure what the mechanism is here, but I suspect that alcohol metabolism is being altered in some way that gives more satisfaction from less alcohol or perhaps the desire for alcohol is affected. Hangovers and withdrawal symptoms are also improved.

## \*Editor's Note

Kudzu was a major agricultural problem in the South in the 1960's, and early 70's. It has been fought back and is no longer as prevalent as it was. However patches do still exist.

## Recipes

### Kudzu Decoction

60 grams dried kudzu root, chopped, 3 cup water

1. Combine the water and kudzu root and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
2. Turn off the heat and cover tightly. Let the kudzu steep for another 30 minutes.
3. The decoction will be thick. Take 1/3 cup of the decoction, three times a day.
4. Store the remaining decoction in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.



*Kudzu Flowers, Agricultural Research Service, Public Domain*

### Lobelia Inflata (Indian Tobacco)

Called Indian Tobacco because of its use among the Native American populations, this herb has a few other names that are equally revealing: pokeweed, gagroot, vomitwort, asthma weed, and bladderpod. Each seems to refer to one of the properties of the herb, making them easy to remember.

#### Plant identification

Indian Tobacco grows from heights of 1 to 2 feet, and it is more or less erect with a sporadically leaved stem. The stem of the Indian Tobacco is angular with hispid white hairs which are less abundant on the upper part, making the stems smooth towards the top, feathery and rough near the bottom.

The pale green or yellowish leaves of the Indian Tobacco plant grow alternately and become smaller as they ascend the stem. These stems have tiny white dots scattered along the margin and are finely spiked. The upper part of the leaves is almost hairless while the lower part is hairy along the major veins.

The delicate and fragile flowers of the Indian Tobacco are pale bluish to violet in color with a touch of yellow. These flowers are tiny, asymmetrical, and bisexual.



*Indian Tobacco, By H. Zell - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,*

#### Edible parts of the Indian Tobacco

Indian tobacco is not edible, but the leaves are used for flavoring in brewed beverages. They have a mildly bitter taste.

As a child, I spent a pleasant afternoon gorging on a couple of handfuls of pokeweed berries. By dinner time, I was violently ill with terrible stomach pain, muscle spasms, and trouble breathing. Fortunately, Aiyana realized what had happened and was able to treat me quickly. It was still touch and go for a while, and I am told that I was lucky to live through it. I learned a new respect for the plants in my environment that day.

#### Harvesting of the Indian Tobacco

Harvest Indian tobacco in the early summer. Wear gloves to avoid the tiny, spiky hairs that prickle your hands. Collect flowers, leaves, seeds and roots from the plant. Dry the plant parts to increase the concentration of active ingredients before use.

#### Medicinal Uses of the Indian Tobacco

Many medicinal uses call for Indian Tobacco powder. It can be consumed straight, put into a little water, or packed into a capsule to make taking it easier. Traditional use was to smoke the leaves of Indian tobacco, but I do not recommend smoking the leaves because of its toxicity and potentially harmful effects.

#### Treats Respiratory Problems

Lobelia Inflata (Indian Tobacco) treats respiratory disorders such as chronic bronchitis, asthma, pleurisy, and pneumonia. The leaves can be smoked, as the Indian population prefers, or swallowed as a powder in a little water. I believe the powder does the best job of releasing the phlegm from the respiratory system. Start with a dose of 50 mg per day.



## Stop Smoking

Several patients have found success kicking the nicotine habit using Indian tobacco. Lobeline, found in Indian tobacco and similar to nicotine, helps with nicotine withdrawal. I find that this is rarely a successful strategy since the lobelia also contains addictive substances when used regularly. One patient became dependent on the Indian tobacco, only making the problem worse.



*Indian Tobacco Parts, Public Domain*

## Useful as an Antidepressant

Indian tobacco raises the mood of patients suffering from anxiety disorders, dysthymia, eating disorders, OCD, and major depressive disorder. To treat mood disorders, I start with a 50 mg of Lobelia powder daily and raise the dosage slowly if necessary.

## Muscle and Joint Pain, Body Aches

I use a decoction or a salve made from the roots of the Indian Tobacco plant to treat tennis elbow, whiplash injuries, rheumatism, and other muscle and joint pain. Apply the salve or decoction directly to the skin over the painful area and rub it in or make a poultice from the roots and rub it into the aching body parts.

## Minor Skin Irritations

For minor skin irritations, infected wounds, sores, and boils, I make a decoction of boiled crushed roots and use it to wash the affected area, leaving it on to dry in place.

## Relaxing the Neuromuscular System

Indian tobacco is nervine and antispasmodic. It relaxes the nerves, calming muscle spasms and relaxes the patient. I recommend 50 mg of powdered Indian tobacco daily to calm the nerves and spasms.

## Inducing Vomiting

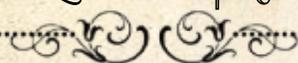
To release poisons or recently ingested harmful substances from the body, I find it necessary sometimes to induce vomiting and Indian tobacco, also known as vomitwort, is good at this. I use a concentrated tincture form of Indian tobacco to induce vomiting.

## Warnings

Due to its lobeline content, Indian Tobacco is considered toxic if taken large quantities. It is advisable to start with small doses then you can increase the dosage over a period. I have recommended a safe dosage as a starting point. Increase the amounts slowly, and only if necessary.

Though side effects associated with the use Indian Tobacco are not common, it is wise to be cautious. Anyone can develop allergies or reactions without warning.

Due to Indian Tobacco similarities to nicotine, it may be toxic to susceptible individuals, including people with cardiac diseases, children, and pregnant women. Excessive use of this herb will cause vomiting and nausea.



## Recipes

### Indian Tobacco Decoction

1-ounce ground Indian Tobacco root or leaves, 1-quart distilled water

1. Bring the water to a boil in a non-reactive pot. Add the ground root.
2. Reduce the heat to a very low simmer and cover the pot tightly.
3. Simmer the root mixture for 20 minutes. Remove from the heat.
4. Strain the decoction and discard the root.
5. Keep the decoction in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze it in portions for longer storage.
6. Use topically or take up 1/4 cup internally.

### Indian Tobacco Tincture

4 ounces of finely shredded or powdered Indian tobacco root, 1 pint of 80 proof vodka or grain alcohol

Clean pint jar with a tight-fitting lid

1. Place the shredded or ground root in a clean glass jar and cover them with alcohol. Fill the jar, leaving about an inch of space at the top for expansion. Tighten the lid.
2. Keep the jar in a cool, dark place and shake it daily. Add more alcohol, if needed to make up for evaporation. Allow the tincture to brew for 4 to 6 weeks.
3. Strain the roots out using cheesecloth or a coffee filter.
4. Allow the tincture to sit overnight then strain it again if needed.
5. Bottle, label, and store the tincture in a cool dark place for up to 2 years.

### Indian Tobacco Salve

Making Indian Tobacco Salve is a two-step process. First, you infuse your oil with the root, then make the salve.

#### Step 1: Making the Infused Oil

2 ounces shredded or ground Indian tobacco root and leaves, 1 cup olive oil, double boiler, water and coffee filter

Bring the water to boil in the bottom of a double boiler, then turn down the heat and let the water simmer. Add the olive oil and Indian tobacco root into the top of the double boiler and place it on the simmering base. The bottom of the oil pot should rest just above the simmering water so that it gets gentle heat. Heat the oil gently for one hour. Remove the oil from the heat and let cool. Strain it through a coffee filter. If you used powdered root, you could leave it in the oil, if desired.

#### Step 2: Make the Salve

1-ounce beeswax (or more), 1 cup infused oil

Heat the oil and the beeswax together, stirring until they are completely mixed. I use a small pot dedicated to salve making for this step because it is difficult to get the pot clean again. Pour the salve into jars or containers and let cool. If the salve is not thick enough for your liking, reheat the salve and add a little more beeswax. Be aware that it thickens more as it cools, so don't add too much.

## Maidenhair Fern, *Adiantum capillus-veneris*

Maidenhair fern, also known as rock fern and Venus'-hair fern, is native to the southern United States and down into Central America and South America. It also occurs at Cascade Springs in South Dakota, warmed by the microclimate of the hot mineral springs. It likes warm damp climates and is most often found in the moist soil of rainforests, woodlands, forests, and along streams. This is one of the plants that I often look for when walking in the woods. It likes to find those moist spots and snuggle in. Sometimes, I will find large plants, but most often I find smaller plants tucked into an out of the way spot. It gives the area a feeling of softness and delicacy.

It grows to 6 to 12 inches tall with clusters of fronds growing from creeping rhizomes. The light green fronds are subdivided into pinnae less than 1/2-inch long. The main leaf stalk is thin, black, and polished while the fine stalks are as thin as a hair, giving it a very delicate look.

### Medicinal Use

#### Respiratory Problems, Bronchitis, Congestion, Sore Throats

The maidenhair fern makes a good treatment for coughs and mild respiratory problems like bronchitis, nasal congestion, and sore throats. It is a mild diuretic which helps in reducing excess mucus. It is also an astringent, anti-tussive, and mild expectorant. I make a syrup with the maidenhair fern that is useful for treating respiratory problems. Take one to two tablespoons of the syrup, three times daily.

#### Urinary Problems, Gallstones, Heartburn, Digestive disorders

Maidenhair Fern Syrup is useful for the treatment of urinary tract and digestive disorders. I give a standard dose of one to two tablespoons of the syrup, three times a day. It helps remove toxins from the digestive tract and protects the mucous membranes from irritation. Maidenhair fern combines well with red mulberry for the treatment of urinary tract problems.



Maidenhair Fern, tato grasso - Own work, CC by SA 2.5

#### Circulatory System, Arteriosclerosis

I use an alcohol tincture or a strong decoction of maidenhair fern leaves to treat circulatory problems. It helps open up blocked veins and improves blood circulation to the body. The infusion is also useful for shrinking varicose veins and hemorrhoids and treating varicose ulcers.

Apply the decoction directly to the affected areas of the body and take 1 teaspoon of the tincture twice daily. Recipes for Maidenhair Fern Decoction and Maidenhair Fern Tincture are found below.

#### Recipes

##### Maidenhair Fern Decoction

1 cup maidenhair fern leaves, dried and crushed

1-pint water

Bring the fern leaves and the water to a boil and turn the heat down to a simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes, then cover tightly and turn off the heat. Let the decoction steep for 15 minutes. Strain out the leaves with a fine sieve.

##### Maidenhair Fern Tincture

3/4-pint maidenhair fern, 1 pint of 100 proof vodka

1. Chop the fern leaves and put them in a quart jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Pour the vodka over the herbs to fill the jar.
3. Cap the jar tightly and shake.
4. Label the jar with the contents and date it.



5. Place the jar in a warm, sunny window and allow the tincture to steep for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking daily.
6. Strain the leaves out with a fine sieve or coffee filter.
7. Store the tincture in a cool, dark place for up to 5 years.
8. Adults: Take 1/2 teaspoon of tincture, every hour until the symptoms improve.
9. Children: Younger children take 2 to 10 drops in juice every hour depending on the child's size and age. Children over 12: take 1/8 teaspoon every hour.

### Maidenhair Fern Syrup

1 cup maidenhair fern leaves, dried and crumbled, 1-pint water, 1 cup raw honey

1. Bring the fern leaves and water to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Cover tightly and turn off the heat.
2. Allow the decoction to steep for 3 hours.
3. Strain out the herb and reheat the decoction until hot but not boiling.
4. Add the honey and stir until it is fully incorporated.
5. Pour the syrup into a sterile glass jar and store in the refrigerator for up to 2 months.

Dosage: Add 1 to 2 tablespoons to a small amount of water or juice and take 3 times daily.



### Male Fern, *Dryopteris Filix-mas*

I love to take long walks in the forest, and I often see male fern there. In the summer and fall, it grows rampant in the shaded, damp soils under the canopy. My favorite use for male fern is as a vegetable. However, it does have medicinal use as well.

#### Plant Identification

*Dryopteris Filix-mas* and commonly known as the Male Fern is a large fern with leaves forming graceful bands of fronds. The plant grows to the height of 4 feet. The male fern has dull-green leaves in pairs of 20-30 on each frond. The plant does not flower but reproduces by spores and the rhizomes.

The male fern is similar to other ferns, and it can be difficult to tell them apart.

It grows quite wide and becomes crowded over time, a distinguishing characteristic. The leaves are usually upright with tapering leaflets, deeply divided and growing in pairs on the main stem. The bark on each frond is usually hidden but is dark brown in

color.

The pinnules and segments are serrated, lobed and barely spinulose, the rachis has hair-like scales, and the petioles are less than 1/4 the length of the leaves. The fronds are oblanceolate to rhombic, approximately 8 to 30 inches long and 4 to 12 inches wide, with the widest part at the middle. The plant has no aroma.

The slowly creeping rootstock forms a crown at the soil surface and a ring of fronds. I find male fern most often in the southern states, it likes a warm climate and grows well in temperate climates.

#### Edible Use

The leaves and roots of the male fern are edible. Cooked leaves taste like asparagus, broccoli, or artichoke. They should be eaten in moderation, in large quantities they can be toxic.



The rhizome can be eaten raw or cooked and are sometimes used to lose weight.



8Male Fern, Public Domain

### Medicinal Uses

#### Treating Tapeworms

Treating tapeworms and other parasites is probably the most common way that I use male fern medicinally. The root stalks are very effective at relaxing the worms and purging them from the body. To use this remedy, I recommend that the root is eaten alone without any other foods.

The roots stalks are anodyne, anti-viral, astringent, vermifuge, vulnerary, antibacterial and febrifuge.

#### Mumps, Colds and Viruses, Fevers

The roots of male fern have anti-viral and antibacterial properties. They lower fevers and help heal the body from viruses and bacterial

diseases.

### Hemorrhage

The root of male fern is useful for the treatment of internal hemorrhage and uterine bleeding. I recommend consuming the root either cooked or raw and without any other foods.

### Boils, Sores, and Other Skin Conditions

Skin infections and irritations such as boils, carbuncles, sores, and abscesses are treated with a tincture made from the male fern root. Apply the tincture directly onto the affected area. My recipe for Male Fern Tincture is found below.

### Warning:

I have never had a problem with male fern. However, caution is advised. Like any herb, use it in moderation.

### Male Fern Tincture

1/2 cup dried male fern root, crushed or powdered

16 ounces Vodka or brandy, or 80 proof or higher

Pint jar with a tight-fitting lid

1. Grind or powder the dried root
2. Place the root in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the roots to completely cover them and fill the jar
4. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days
5. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the jar full.
6. Soak the herbs for 4 to 6 weeks
7. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid
8. Discard the roots. Place the alcohol extraction in a cool place, undisturbed overnight

Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining herb.



## Mayapple, American Mandrake, *Podophyllum peltatum*

Mayapple is one of those plants that I both respect and fear. My own experience with poisonous plants as a child gives me pause. I use mayapple for treating skin cancers, suspicious moles, warts, and similar situations. It can be used internally for other diseases, with extreme care, but I prefer not to take the risk.

### Plant Identification

Mayapple is a perennial of the barberry family, growing 12 to 18 inches tall. The leaves are smooth, paired, and umbrella-like. Leaves are palmately lobed, 8 to 12 inches in diameter, with 3 to 9 lobes. Some stems produce a single leaf without any flower or fruit, while others produce two or more leaves and 1 to 8 flowers in the axil between the leaves. The flowers are white, red, or yellow, with 6 to 9 petals.

The plants grow in clumps that originate from a single root. A single waxy, white flower, one inch across, appears from July to August. It droops from the apex of the leaves.

The root is a single rhizome.

The plant is widespread in the eastern United States. I am most likely to find it in woods and clearings. It grows in damp meadows and open woods.



*Mayapple, Jennifer Anderson, USDA, Public Domain*



*Mayapple, Derek Ramsey (Ram-Man), CC by SA 4.0*

### Edible Use

The fruit are edible, but other parts of the plant are poisonous. The fruits are also poisonous until they ripen. They mature into a yellow or red fleshy fruit that is 2 inches long and egg-shaped and wrinkled.

The fully ripe fruit can be eaten raw or cooked and can be made into jams, jellies and pies. It has a peculiar unique but pleasant flavor. The seeds and rind are not edible and must be removed before cooking or eating. The fruit tastes similar to a paw-paw.

### Medicinal Use

#### Warts, Moles, Genital Warts, and Skin Cancers

Mayapple resin from the plant stems is useful for treating warts and moles. I place the diluted resin on the wart, mole, or skin cancers, but I am careful to keep the resin confined to the affected area. A single application only is needed. The mayapple resin is squeezed from the stems, wearing gloves and mixed with alcohol at a 20% resin dilution.

For example, 1 part of resin needs to be diluted with 5 parts alcohol.

This dilution should be strictly observed. Higher concentrations can do harm to the skin, while lower dilutions may not be effective enough. The resin should be allowed to stay on the skin for one to four hours and then washed away.

The lesions whiten within a few hours and begin to wither away within one to two days. Within three days, the lesions begin to disappear.



### Other Cancers

Mayapple has been used to treat other cancers, but I have never used it. The plant is toxic and can result in bad effects, including death. I recommend that mayapple be used only by qualified medical professionals.

### Warning

Do not use during pregnancy or on small children. Avoid handling the resin with bare hands, it is absorbed through the skin and can be toxic or even deadly.

### New Jersey Tea, Red Root, *Ceanothus*,

### *Americanus*

New Jersey Tea, also known as red root, is found on dry, gravelly banks and open woods from Maine to Florida and Oklahoma to Minnesota. It grows to a height of up to 42 inches, although many plants are shorter. The slender branches are herbaceous in the upper part and woody at the base.

I can easily recognize the New Jersey tea plant by the lacy white flowers and the wintergreen scent of the leaves. If you're in doubt, examine the root system, then chew on a leaf and note the flavor. This plant is quite distinctive in flavor and scent.

The root system is substantial and deep with fiber-like root hairs near the surface. Deeper roots are plump and woody with small lumps. The large and deep root system increases the plant's ability to survive wildfires. The plant produces lacy white flowers in clustered inflorescences on long peduncles. The small white flowers appear in oval clusters at the tip of the branches. The fruits produced are dry and burst open naturally to release the seeds.



### Edible Use

The leaves have a refreshing flavor and wintergreen scent. They make a good tea without the caffeine.

### Medicinal Uses

*Fevers, Coughs, Bronchitis, Asthma, Sore Throats, Whooping Cough, Tonsillitis, and Catarrh.*

The root and bark of the New Jersey Tea plant are both desirable for treating fevers, sore throats, and mucous problems. It also works to treat infections in the upper respiratory tract. The roots are astringent and anti-spasmodic with expectorant properties. It has a high tannin content. I prescribe my Red Root Tea, 1 cup two to three times daily, or 1 to 2 tablespoons of Red Root Bark Decoction.

### Stimulates the Lymphatic System

The roots and root bark stimulate the lymphatic system and the immune system. Take one cup of Red Root Tea, two to three times a day.



*New Jersey Tea Plant, H. Zell, Public Domain*

content reduces fluid in the lesions and the astringent properties reduce the symptoms. The dried and powdered bark can also be dusted onto skin wounds.

## Body Wash

The flowers have high levels of saponins and lather well for use in cleaning the body or clothing. To use them for cleaning, mash the flowers and soak in water. Use the lather as a mild soap. Alternately, rub the flowers all over the body to produce a lather. Using the flowers in this way has the added benefit of leaving the body and clothes nicely scented.

## Toothache

Take one mouthful of Red Root Bark Decoction and swish it gently in the mouth to relieve pain and reduce swelling. Hold it in the mouth for a few minutes, then spit it out.

## Harvesting New Jersey Tea Roots

I harvest the roots during spring or autumn, when their color is the deepest red, and dry them for future use.

## Recipes Red Root Tea

1 teaspoon of dried, ground New Jersey Tea root, 1 cup of water

Combine the water and root and bring to a simmer. Simmer the tea for 5 minutes, then allow to cool to drinking temperature and strain.

## Red Root Bark Decoction

1-ounce New Jersey Tea plant root bark, ground or chopped fine, 1 pint water

Bring the root bark and water to a boil and reduce the heat to a low simmer. Simmer the root bark for 30 minutes for ground bark or 45 minutes for finely chopped root bark. Strain the decoction.

## High Blood Pressure

The roots and root bark also contain gentle hypotensive properties that reduce the blood pressure. I prescribe 1 to 2 tablespoons of Red Root Bark Decoction, 2 to 3 times daily.

## Hemorrhoids

The combination of tannins and the anti-inflammatory properties of New Jersey Tea allow it to reduce the swelling and relieve the pain of hemorrhoids. I prescribe the powdered root bark or the Red Root Bark Decoction applied topically.

## Skin Wounds, Dermatitis, Herpes, and Skin Tumors

I use a decoction made from the root bark of New Jersey Tea to treat skin wounds and diseases. The high tannin



## Osha, *Ligusticum porteri*

Osha is perennial plant herb endemic to the Rocky Mountains and the southwestern United States. It is commonly referred to as Osha root, Colorado cough root, bear medicine, bare root, empress of the dark forest, Indian root, Indian parsley lovage, Porter's wild lovage, loveroot, Porter's lovage, Porter's licorice-root, Porter's ligusticum, mountain ginseng, mountain carrot, wild parsley, wild lovage and nipo.

### Plant Identification

This herb (Osha) has an appearance like that of the parsley family. This herb grows differently in different areas, and in ideal conditions, it can grow up to heights of 6 to 7 feet. The parsley-like leaves have a unique reddish tint at the bases where they attach to the root crowns.

The roots of the Osha herb are fibrous with a wrinkled, black or chocolate-brown outer skin. When the outer root is peeled off, the inner root tissue is yellowish-white with a pleasant fragrance that reminds me of lovage.

### Edible Use

The leaves, stem, and roots are edible. The leaves can be used raw salads like parsley. They are also used for flavoring various drinks such as wine-based drinks. They have a salty cucumber-like flavor.

The flowers from the Osha herb are used as a decorative garnish on salads. They have a sweet cucumber-like flavor.



*Jerry Friedman - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0*



*Osha Leaves, JerryFriedman, CC by SA 3.0*

### Harvesting

Harvest the roots and leaves from osha plants that are mature and at least a year old. I dig up older plants for medicinal use and let the younger plants grow for harvesting the next season. You need to dig deep to get the entire root system. I then wash the roots well and separate them and the leaves from the rest of the plant and spread them on a rack to dry.

### Medicinal Uses

Osha is similar to echinacea in its action. It is anti-bacterial, anti-viral, and anti-inflammatory.

### Asthma, Colds, Flu, Viral Infections, Sore Throats, and Bronchial Infections

In addition to its anti-bacterial and anti-viral effects, Osha is also an expectorant. It helps expel mucus that clogs the respiratory tracts during these types of illnesses. It also relieves the inflammation in the bronchial tracts making it easier for patients with asthma and bronchitis to breathe. It promotes sweating which gets rid of toxins and helps bring down fevers.



I use a decoction made from the leaves or the roots of osha for these types of respiratory problems. The decoction also soothes sore throats almost immediately by anesthetizing the throat.

### Detoxify the Body

The diaphoretic properties of the Osha Decoction promote sweating which helps remove toxins from the body.

### Skin Wounds, Infections, Boils

I treat skin wounds and infections by applying Osha Tincture if it is readily available or by dusting the area heavily with the powdered root. Osha's antibacterial properties are effective in helping the skin heal.

### Arthritis and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

The anti-inflammatory effects of osha act on the joints to relieve swelling and the pain of arthritis and rheumatism. It also acts on the nerves to relieve the pressure and swelling that causes carpal tunnel syndrome. For these problems, I prescribe daily use of Osha Tincture, but relief can also be had by chewing on the osha root.

### Nicotine Addiction

Smoking is very addictive and a hard habit to kick. I have had several patients report that they were able to relieve their cravings by chewing on a piece of osha root. I have not used it myself for this purpose, so I don't know how effective it is, but I advise patients to try it. Some patients do have success with it, but I think that success is related to the patient's determination.

### Warning

I do not know whether osha is safe for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. Therefore, I do not recommend it for internal use at these times.

### Recipes

#### Osha Decoction

Add 2 ounces of chopped osha roots and leaves to a pot containing 2 cups of water. Bring the water to a boil and simmer it for approximately 20 minutes. Cool and store the decoction in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Give 1 to 2 tablespoons of the decoction as needed.

#### Osha Tincture

1 pint of 100 proof vodka or other alcohol, or substitute apple-cider vinegar

Dried leaves and chopped roots of the osha plant

1. Place the chopped dried roots and leaves into a pint jar with a tight-fitting lid, filling the jar 3/4 full.
2. Cover the herbs with alcohol or vinegar, filling the jar.
3. Store the jar in a cool, dark place such as a cupboard. Shake the jar daily for 4 to 6 weeks.
4. Strain the herbs out of the liquid, cover it tightly and use within seven years.

Dosage is 1 to 4 ml of the tincture, as needed.



*Osha flowers, JerryFriedman, CC by SA 3.0*



## Oswego Tea, *Monarda didyma*

Oswego tea is also known as American bee balm, horse mint, Indian nettle, Red Bergamot and Scarlet Bergamot. It gets the name Oswego tea because of its use by the Oswego Tribe as a fragrant tea. I am told that it was used by the early settlers as a substitute for imported tea after the Boston Tea Party.

### Plant Identification

Oswego tea is a perennial plant that grows naturally in the United States. It has straight, ridged stems with four sides. The plant grows to three feet tall and has coarse leaves on square stems. The leaves can be smooth, or they might have a thin coating of fine hairs. The leaves have a fragrance similar to bergamot orange tea.

The flowers colors range from deep pink to bright red to purple. They are approximately 1 ½ inches long and grouped in heads of approximately 30 flowers. The flowers bloom in late summer.

The plant spreads on underground shoots, increasing the size of the plant every fall. The plant in the center will begin to die back after three to four years.

I usually find the plant growing in clumps along stream banks, in ditches, and in other moist soil.



Howcheng CC 2.0

### Edible Use

The famous Oswego tea is made from dried leaves of the Oswego tea plant. The tea has a flavor similar to Earl Grey Tea. Oswego tea flowers are sometimes used as a garnish in salads, and dried leaves are sometimes used like sage to flavor meats.

### Harvesting Oswego Tea

Pick the leaves of the Oswego tea plant in the mid to late morning after the morning dew has dried. Pick your yearly supply during the summer and dry them for future use.

Collect the flowers when they are beginning to be fully open. Dry them and store them in a sealed jar in a dark place.

### Medicinal Use

#### Menstrual Problems

Large doses of the tea cause the uterus to contract, bringing on the menstrual period or even causing a miscarriage of pregnancy. The tea should be avoided by pregnant women and those with menstrual problems.

#### Colds, Sore Throats, Congestion

Oswego tea leaves are useful for treating colds, sore throats, and nasal and chest congestion in the form of a tea or in a steam vaporizer. I use the vaporizer with the whole plant. Patients breath in the vapors to open sinuses and clear congestion from the lungs. The tea, taken three times daily, treats colds and sore throats.



## Fevers

Oswego tea is a mild diuretic and expels water from the body in the form of sweat and urination. Sweating helps cool the body and reduce fevers. I prescribe Oswego tea throughout the day while a fever is present.

## Nausea, Vomiting, and Stomach Problems

Oswego tea has a soothing effect on the stomach and can calm nausea and vomiting. Drink the tea whenever nausea or stomach upset is present. Oswego tea is not appropriate for use with nausea caused by pregnancy. Large doses can cause miscarriage.

## Recipes

### Oswego Tea

1 teaspoon Oswego Tea Leaves, 1 cup boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the tea leaves and allow the tea to steep for 6 to 8 minutes. Strain out the leaves and drink.

## Red Raspberry, *Rubus idaeus*

The red raspberry grows wild in forests, but I find it most often in cultivated gardens and farms across the US. It is grown mainly for the sweet-tart fruit, but also for the leaves and roots. I love to eat these berries standing in the field, with the berries going from bush to mouth, so it is rare for me to make it home with a substantial collection. Fortunately, I mostly use the leaves in my practice.

The red raspberry is a perennial which grows from a central cane. Side shoots produce compound leaves with three, five, or seven leaflets. In the wild, it forms open stands when shaded under the tree canopy, but in the open it forms very dense groupings in the open. The plants grow to approximately five to eight feet in height.

Flowers appear in the late spring, growing on short racemes forming on the side shoots. Flowers are less than 1/2 inch in diameter with five white petals.

Fruit develops in the summer and early fall. Each fruit is actually an aggregate fruit made up of drupelets around a central core. The drupelets separate from the core when picked leaving a hollow center.

## Edible Use

The berries are delicious raw or cooked. Raspberry leaves are used to make an herbal tea.

## Medicinal Use

Red raspberry is full of healthful compounds, vitamins, and minerals. It gives the immune system a boost, which helps in all situations. In my practice, I mostly use the tea to increase health and uterine tone during pregnancy.



H. Zell, own work, CC 3.0



Red Raspberry, Karelj, Public Domain



## Pregnancy

I recommend Raspberry Leaf Tea for almost all expectant mothers. It helps with the unpleasant aspects of pregnancy such as morning sickness and tones the uterine muscles to help ease the pain of labor. Mothers who take Raspberry Leaf Tea in my practice have fewer miscarriages and easier births. Most mothers continue using it after confinement to reduce cramping, reduce bleeding, and tone the uterus and pelvic muscles.

I prescribe a cup of tea daily beginning in the third month and increasing to three cups daily in the sixth month. Drink as much tea as can be handled during labor. Continue taking two to three cups of tea after the birth to promote faster healing.



## Diarrhea

For diarrhea, a decoction of the leaves is used. Start with a dose of 1/4 cup, taking more if needed, up to 1 cup. The dose depends on the strength of your decoction, but in most cases, 1/4 to 1/2 cup does the job. Three tablespoons of Raspberry Vinegar can also be used for diarrhea.

## High Blood Pressure

Compounds in raspberries are very heart healthy. They improve the tone of the circulatory system and help lower blood pressure. To reduce blood pressure, take three tablespoons of Raspberry Vinegar, three times daily.

## Wounds, Skin Lesions, Ulcers and Minor Skin Infections

I use Raspberry Leaf Tea as a wash for skin wounds, lesions, bites, and itchy skin. For infected wounds, I dab on some Raspberry Decoction and let it dry on the skin.

## Recipes

### Raspberry Leaf Tea

1 to 2 teaspoons dried raspberry leaf or 3 teaspoons fresh leaves, chopped, 1 cup boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the raspberry leaves and steep for 10 to 15 minutes. Strain and drink warm.

Use up to 3 cups daily during pregnancy or up to 6 cups for other treatments.

### Raspberry Leaf Decoction

1/2 ounce of dried raspberry leaves or 1 ounce of fresh leaves, chopped

1 pint of water

1. Bring the water and raspberry leaves to a boil, reduce the heat and cover the pot.
2. Simmer the decoction for 20 minutes.
3. Remove from the heat and allow to cool. Strain out the leaves and store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.
4. Dosage is 1/4 cup to 1 cup.

### Raspberry Vinegar

2 cups apple cider vinegar, 8 ounces red raspberries, 8 ounces brown sugar

1. Crush the raspberries and add the vinegar. Allow the mixture to steep for 10 days.
2. Strain out the raspberries and bring the vinegar mixture to a low simmer. Add the sugar and simmer until dissolved.
3. Cool. Store Raspberry Vinegar in a tightly closed jar in a dark place.
4. Use the vinegar straight or diluted to treat colds, flu, or other ailments. Take 3 tablespoons, 3 times daily.

### Spanish Moss, *Tillandsia usneoides*

Spanish moss is one of my favorite plants. I like the old-world charm that it implies. When I walk down a dirt road with Spanish moss hanging from the oaks on either side, I feel the history of the area. It affects me the same way that the palm trees do in California.

#### Plant Identification

Spanish moss, *Tillandsia usneoides* is the beard-like silvery-grey string-like that hangs from trees all over the south-eastern United States. The stems are 20 to 25 feet long and thread-like with 1 to 3 inch long leaves.

The plant does flower, but I have rarely seen the flowers. The flowers have three yellow petals and three sepals. The plant is covered by small scales, which absorb water from the air. It has no roots and absorbs its nutrients from the air, rain, and sun.

Spanish moss is an angiosperm of the bromeliad family

The plant grows on large trees and hangs from branch to branch. It is easy to find in the humid savannas, swamps, hammocks, and lowlands. It likes sun and partial-shade.

#### Medicinal Uses

For most medicinal use, I recommend taking Spanish Moss Tea made from fresh moss. Brew a tea made with approximately 1 tablespoon of fresh moss per cup of water.



Leaves of Spanish Moss, Evmore at English Wikipedia, Public Domain

#### Lowering Cholesterol

Spanish moss contains substances that lower the total cholesterol and the bad cholesterol numbers. Consuming the tea daily helps the body eliminate excess cholesterol and keep the arteries free flowing. This is a major benefit for the heart.

#### Balances the Female Hormones

Since the early days of my practice, I have used Spanish moss to help expectant mothers with an easier labor and to promote the production of breast milk. It acts as an estrogen supplement and enhances glandular functioning.



### Diabetes

I use Spanish Moss Tea as a supplement for my diabetic patient. It is beneficial, but not always strong enough to treat diabetes alone. I use it in combination with other herbs such as bottle gourd, prickly pear, red mulberry, and American ginseng. Spanish moss alone helps lower the blood sugar, while these other herbs also increase the production of insulin.

Spanish Moss Tea is especially helpful for diabetic patients who have problems with acidosis and ketosis.

### Rheumatism

The Spanish Moss Tea is also beneficial to the treatment of rheumatism. It has anti-inflammatory benefits that help relieve the joint inflammation and pain.

### Fatigue, Confusion, Senility, Depression

The combination of anti-inflammatory benefits, hormone regulation, and effects on the mental capacity make Spanish Moss Tea an effective supplement for the treatment of fatigue, confusion, senility, and depression.

### Endocrine Gland

Spanish moss has benefits to the endocrine gland for both men and women. It contains hormone precursors that help balance the hormones and it promotes healing of the gland. It promotes sexual development and hormonal balance in adolescents experiencing latent sexual development.

### Stone Root, *collinsonia canadensis*

Stone root, also known as richweed, horse balm, and ox balm is a perennial herb with a pleasing lemon-like scent. It is a member of the mint family. The plant attains a height of four feet when mature and grows from a single, straight stem. Oval-shaped leaves are arranged in opposite pairs on the square stem. The edges of the leaves are jagged.

At the top of the stem is a cone-shaped group of pale yellow flowers that appear from July to September.

The roots justify their name by being as hard as a rock. I find the plant in damp places and shady woodland areas across the United States.

### Medicinal Use

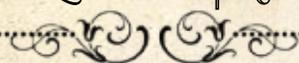
The leaves and root are brewed to make medicinal teas and washes for wounds and cuts. These treatments were used by Native Americans and taught to the settlers in Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and the Carolinas. I learned them from friendly healers along the trail.

### Bladder Infections, Kidney Stones, and Fluid Retention

The root tea has antibiotic effects as well as being a powerful diuretic. It expels toxins from the body along with infecting bacteria. I recommend three cups of tea daily for bladder and kidney problems.



Stone Root Plant, Mason Brock (Masebrock), Public Domain



## Healing Wounds

I recommend using Stone Root Tea as a wash for wounds and minor skin infections. The antibiotic and antiseptic effects are beneficial and the root speeds healing.

## Hemorrhoids, Varicose Veins and Inflammations

Stone root is excellent at reducing inflammations especially those caused by hemorrhoids and varicose veins. Taken internally the root tea improves circulation and strengthens the veins and reduces blood pooling. I recommend drinking three cups of tea daily and using the tea as a wash or compress on the affected areas.



Stone root flowers, R. A. Nonenmacher, CC by SA 4.0

## Sore Throats

Stone root tea, used as a gargle, gives immediate relief for strained larynx and sore throats.

## Digestive Problems

Stone root tea is able to relieve a wide variety of digestive problems including indigestion, heartburn, constipation, diarrhea, and excessive flatulence. It soothes the muscular spasms and improves circulation to the digestive organs, promoting a healthy digestive system.

## Reducing Stress and Anxiety

Stone root tea elevates the mood and increases feelings of well-being while decreasing stress and feelings of anxiety. For some patients it increases energy levels and the libido. For stress, panic, nervousness, and anxiety, I prescribe 3 cups of stone root tea daily, divided into 3 to 4 doses.

## Recipes

### Stone Root Tea

2 teaspoons grated stone root, 3 cups water. Bring the water and stone root to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer and cover tightly. Simmer the root for 30 to 45 minutes. Drink 6 to 8 ounces, three times daily.

## Squaw-Vine (*Mitchella repens*)

I am told that Squaw-Vine gets its name from its traditional use for menstrual problems and in facilitating childbirth. I've also heard it referred to as Partridgeberry or Twin-berry.

## Plant Identification

I often find Squaw-vine in dry woody areas and swampy places. It likes sandy soils and partial shade to full shade. It is a creeping broadleaf evergreen that grows as a very low growing ground cover. The plant grows about 2 to 3 inches tall and spreads 6 inches to 1 foot across. Leaves are oval to round, dark green, and glossy. Each leaf is up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long with whitish veins in pairs along the stem.



By the stem Barnes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Public Domain

Showy white blooms appear in pairs on the stem ends in May to July. Each flower has four lobes and is trumpet-shaped. One pair of flowers forms one bright red berry that ripens in late summer and may stay on the plant until the following spring.

### Edible Parts

The berries are edible, but mostly tasteless, so I don't usually bother with them unless food supplies are scarce.

### Medicinal Uses

I have used Squaw-Vine to treat insomnia, rheumatic pain, and fluid retention, but its main value is to hasten childbirth and treat menstrual problems. It has a tonic effect on the uterus and ovaries.

### Squaw-Vine for Childbirth and Menstrual Problems

I recommend that my patients take frequent doses of Squaw-vine Leaf Tea in the last weeks before childbirth. I have found that it hastens the birth with fewer problems. But, Squaw-vine tea or berries should never be used until the end of the pregnancy; it can cause a miscarriage when used too soon.

Squaw-vine Leaf Tea is also used to treat painful or irregular menses, and menstrual bloating.

To use Squaw-vine Tea, I recommend 1 cup of Squaw-vine Leaf Tea two to three times a day during the last few weeks before the due date. After delivery, the tea is used externally to wash the breasts and treat sore nipples.

### Squaw-Vine as a Sedative

Squaw-vine Berry Tea has a sedating effect on the nervous system. It reduces anxiety and calms the spirit.

### Harvesting Squaw-Vine for Medicinal Use

Harvest the leaves during the summer and dry them in the sun or on a dehydrator for later use. Store the dried leaves in a cool, dry place.

Harvest berries during the early winter while they are at their peak. Use them fresh or split the berries in half and dry for future use.

### Recipes

#### Squaw-Vine Leaf Tea

Use for menstrual problems and childbirth

1 teaspoon Squaw-Vine Leaf, 1 cup boiling water

1. Pour boiling water over the dried herbs.
2. Allow the tea to steep for 10 minutes
3. Strain and enjoy.

#### Squaw-Vine Berry Tea

Use as a sedative

1 tablespoon fresh berries, 1 cup boiling water

1. Wash the berries and remove any withered or discolored berries.



*Squaw Vine, Jolan, Public Domain*

2. Pour boiling water over the berries and allow to steep for 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Mash the berries to pop them and encourage juice.
4. Strain the tea through cheesecloth or a fine mesh strainer.
5. Sweeten with sugar or honey, as desired.
6. Serve hot or cold.



By John Flannery CC BY-SA 2.0

### Unicorn Root, *Alettris farinosa*

One morning I came across an older woman digging up unicorn root. She had collected a rather large supply, which brought out my natural curiosity. We talked for a while, and she confided to me that she used the unicorn root to keep her skin young.

Unfortunately, I did not get the recipe, but she makes a cream from the root which her family members use as a skin cream. Her remarkable beauty testifies to its usefulness. I have not tried it, but washing the skin with Unicorn Root Tea should have the same effect.

I know unicorn root as a useful tonic for female problems and a few other medicinal uses which are listed here.

Unicorn root, *Alettris farinosa*, is a member of the lily family that is found in the eastern US. The Unicorn Root is a perennial herb that spreads using underground rhizomes. It goes by many names including ague root, colic root, starwort, stargrass, white-tube stargrass, Ague grass, Aloerot, crow corn, blazing star, Devil' s-bit, mealy starwort, husk-wort.

I can usually find unicorn root across much of the eastern United States. It is important not to confuse it with false unicorn root, *Helonias luteum* or *Chamaelirium luteum*.

True unicorn root has yellow-green, radial and grass-like leaves of 2 to 4 inches long. They are smooth and with a firm texture. The veins are quite prominent and parallel with 6 to 10 veins per leaf. The radial leaves grow directly from the upper part of the growing end of the crawling rhizome.

It has an erect stem, growing from heights of 2 to 3 inches high. The stem of the Unicorn root is round near the base, but it is angular above. The round stem of this herb has a spike-like cluster of white, small and urn-shaped flowers.

When unicorn root is in bloom it is easily identified, so if you are not sure, wait for the flowers. You'll see tall spike-like racemes of white urn-shaped flowers. The flowers have an unusual appearance because of their warty textured outer surface.

The flowers of the Unicorn Root are perfect and terminal. The flowers are cylindrical, with a yellowish tinge at the rough and wrinkled apex and six divisions at the top.

The ovary of the Unicorn Root is ovate and tapers to a slim style which is cleft into three lobes (trifid) at the apex. The fruit of this herb is may seeded, dry and has an acute pod with three opening valves.

### Edible parts of the Unicorn Root Plant

The edible part of the unicorn root plant is the root. They need to be cooked before eating. They have a bitter-sweet soapy flavor that I find objectionable, but some like them. The leaves of these plant are also used to make tea.



### Harvesting the Unicorn Root

I always wear gloves when harvesting the root and leaves to avoid being injured by the spike-like leaves of the plant. I like to dig up the roots in the late summer and dry them for later use.

### Medicinal Uses

The Unicorn Root has been used as a laxative, anti-flatulent, sedative, treatment for diarrhea and rheumatism and as an antispasmodic. It is a pain killer and has narcotic effects.

I prescribe unicorn root by mouth as a dried root, powdered root, tea, or tincture. I also use a salve made from the infused oil of unicorn root. I have also used the leaf tea.

I have no set dosing guidelines for unicorn root. It reacts differently in some people; I prefer to start with small doses and increase them slowly as needed.

### Treating Habitual Miscarriages

The estrogenic properties of unicorn root make it valuable in treating a wide assortment of female related disorders. I find that it is valuable for its tonic ability on the female reproductive organs and of great use in treating cases of habitual miscarriages. I have patients begin taking unicorn root tea early in the pregnancy and continuing throughout the pregnancy.

### Menstrual Disorders and Menopause Symptoms

The estrogenic activity of unicorn root makes it a good treatment for many menstrual disorders and for the symptoms of menopause including vaginal dryness and hot flashes. I use a root tincture to treat menstrual disorders and menopause symptoms.

I also use unicorn root to treat other gynecological disorders such as amenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, prolapsed vagina complaints and other female gynecological complications.

### Rheumatism Treatment, Muscle and Joint Pain

The roots of unicorn root act as a pain killer and sedative. I use the root to make a salve, which the patient can rub on aching muscles and joints. The salve relieves the pain and calms the muscles.

### Expelling Flatulence

I once had a patient with extreme flatulence, and nothing seemed to help until we tried unicorn root. Unicorn Root Tincture did not completely cure her, but it made the symptoms bearable for her and others around her.

### Treatment of Colic

The root of this herb causes gastric pain, especially when fresh, however, the dried leaves are an acceptable treatment for colic. Use the leaves only to make a tea and give in small doses until relief is gained. The amount of tea needed depends on the size and age of the child, start with a few drops, increasing the dose slowly. You can also use small amounts of powdered root.

### Inducing Vomiting to Remove Toxins

When taken in large doses, unicorn root acts as an emetic and induces vomiting. I have used it to empty the stomach when poisons have been ingested. In smaller doses, it relieves stomach contractions and calms inflammation. It is important to note that the herb itself can be toxic, so it is best to follow a medical professional's advice



## Promotes Appetite

Unicorn Root is well known for its ability to encourage appetite. I have used small doses of Unicorn Root tea with sick patients when weight loss is extreme to promote the appetite so that the patient can heal.

## Warning

Because unicorn root has narcotic and sedative properties, it is easy to take too much. Use with care and always start with small doses. It can be toxic in large doses.

## Recipes

### Unicorn Root Tea

For medicinal purposes only, not to be consumed as a routine beverage.

A few sprigs of shredded unicorn root

1 cup water

1. Place the unicorn root into the water and heat to boiling
2. Remove from the heat and allow the tea to steep for 10 to 15 minutes
3. Strain out the root and use the tea as desired for medicinal purposes

### Unicorn Root Leaf Tea

1/2 teaspoon dried unicorn root leaves

1 cup boiling water

1. Pour boiling water over the unicorn root leaves and allow the tea to steep for 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Strain out the leaves and enjoy.

### Unicorn Root Salve

Making Unicorn Root Sale is a two-step process. First, you must infuse the oil, then make the salve.

#### Infusing the Oil

1 cup Olive Oil or other carrier oil

1/4 cup dried unicorn root

1. Shred or grind the unicorn root into small pieces; grinding is best
2. Place the root into a glass jar and cover it with a suitable carrier oil such as olive oil
3. Allow the oil to steep for 4 to 6 weeks to release the beneficial oils from the root. If you need to speed up the process, you can heat the oil gently for 4 or 6 hours. The oil is done when the color changes from the root
4. Strain the oil through a coffee filter to remove the root
5. Store the oil in a cool, dark place

#### Making Salve

1 cup Unicorn Root Infused Oil

1-ounce beeswax, or more as needed

1. Heat the Unicorn Root Infused Oil gently
2. Add 1 ounce of beeswax and stir until all of the wax has melted and is incorporated into the oil
3. Cool the salve before use.
4. If the salve is not thick enough, heat the oil again and add more beeswax, repeating until you get the consistency you desire.



## Unicorn Root Tincture

Use Unicorn Root Tincture on the skin or take it internally. Start with small doses, a few drops, adding more as needed. Be careful; it is strong medicine.

1/2 cup Unicorn root, shredded  
80 proof vodka, or other alcohol

Pint jar with a tight lid

1. Shred the unicorn root into very small pieces and place it in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Fill the jar with 80 proof vodka and tighten the lid.
3. Let the tincture sit in a dark, cool place for 3 to 4 weeks, shaking the jar daily.
4. Add more vodka, as needed, to keep the jar full.
5. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid.
6. Discard the herbs. Place the alcohol extraction in a cool place, undisturbed overnight.
7. Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining herb residue.
8. Store the tincture in a cool dark place.

## Wild Comfrey, *Cynoglossum virginianum*

Wild Comfrey, also known as blue houndstongue, is native to the Eastern United States. Its range is from New York to Florida and west to Illinois. I usually find it in open uplands and in areas recovering from fire.

### Plant Identification

The perennial plant grows erect and unbranched with fine hairs on the leaves and stem. The leaves are simple, 4 to 8 inches long and 1 to 2 3/4 inches wide with smooth edges. The leaves are larger and denser at the lower end of the stem and grow smaller on the upper end. Plants that do not flower grow more leaves in a rosette, while flowering plants grow from the center of the rosette.



The flowers appear in May to June on two to six racemes. Each has five deep lobes connected to an ovary, which is connected to the style. Flowers are pale blue and approximately 1/3 inch across.

Fruits are produced from July to August. There are one to four nutlets per flower, each having one seed that is covered with bristles that cling to clothing. The nutlets are prickly with a convex surface.

The plant grows a taproot in the spring.

### Medicinal Use

While both the root and the leaves can be used medicinally, the root is more powerful and best used fresh. However, fresh root is not always available, so it is best to keep a dried section available. I use a decoction made from the fresh root most often. My recipe for Wild Comfrey Decoction is found below.

### Jock Itch and Other Itchy Skin

I use Wild Comfrey Decoction to treat jock itch and other fungal infections and itchy skin. Apply the decoction directly to the affected skin twice daily until the infection is cleared.



Wild Comfrey, AlbertHerring, CC 2.0, Generic

### Memory

Wild Comfrey Decoction, taken on a rotating basis of one dose every four days, seems to improve the memory. Wild comfrey should not be taken daily for long-term use as it can damage the liver. I find that one dose every four days is enough to get benefits and protect the liver.

### Burns, Tumors, Bruises, Skin Inflammations, and Contusions

A poultice of crushed wild comfrey leaves is highly beneficial in relieving the pain and helping heal skin wounds, burns, bruises, and inflammations of all kinds. I have used it to remove soreness and chafing in my feet after a long walk. It gives complete and immediate relief. It is equally valuable in relieving pain from severe bruising, sprains, and similar injuries.

### Warning

Avoid large doses and long-term use which can result in liver problems.

### Recipes

#### Wild Comfrey Decoction

3 tablespoons fresh wild comfrey root, ground or crushed and chopped fine

1-quart water

1. Bring 1-quart of water to a boil and add the wild comfrey root. Reduce the heat to a low simmer and cover the pot.
2. Simmer the decoction for 20 minutes for ground root or up to 1 hour for chopped root pieces.
3. Remove the decoction from the heat and cool. Strain through a coffee filter to remove the root.
4. Keep the decoction in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 1 month.
5. Serve 2 tablespoons per dose.
6. Comfrey Arthritis Gel
7. This gel is soothing on arthritic joints. Massage it into sore muscles and painful joints.
  - ¼ cup wild comfrey decoction, see recipe on page 155
  - ¼ cup aloe vera gel, see page 25
  - 2 drops peppermint distilled oil, see page 271
8. Mix the ingredients well and store in the refrigerator. Use within one week.

#### Wild Strawberries, *Fragaria vesca*

Wild strawberries, also called alpine strawberry, mountain strawberry, pineapple strawberry, and woodland strawberry, are delicious eaten straight from the plant.

There is a small patch of wild strawberries hidden away near my home. I have to confess that after a winter of relative inactivity, I begin to get stiff. Many spring mornings, when I am tempted to skip my morning walk, it is thoughts of visiting this berry patch that gets me out of bed and moving. When the berries are ripe, there is no better reward.

### Plant Identification

Wild strawberries are perennials that grow to be about a foot tall. The plant has light green leaves arranged in groups of three. The leaves are oblong and toothed.

The plant spreads by runners that take root and produce a new plant.

Wild strawberries bloom in April and May. The small white flowers have both male and female parts and are insect pollinated. Each bloom has five white petals and a yellow center. The berries mature in June to July, although they can bloom and mature earlier in the subtropical areas of the Southern United States.



*Wild Strawberries, Yakudza, GNU FDL 1.2*

### Edible Use

Wild strawberries are usually consumed raw, however they can also be made into jams, jellies, candies and baked goods. They are sometimes fermented into wine or liqueur.



*By Stickpen - Own work, Public Domain*

### Medicinal Use

The berries, leaves, and roots are used medicinally.

#### Gout

Strawberries are another of the fruits and vegetables that are beneficial for treating gout. They are highly anti-inflammatory and prevent the formation of uric acid crystals in the body. Eating a serving of strawberries daily is protective. I also use celery seeds in food to boost the beneficial effects of wild strawberries for gout.

#### Sore Throat

I also recommend using strawberry tea as a gargle to cure a sore throat. One teaspoon of dried strawberry leaves brewed with one cup of boiling water and strained works well to calm the irritation and inflammation of the throat. I recommend gargling with the tea every hour or as needed.

### Diuretic, Increase Urine Flow

The leaves of the wild strawberry have diuretic and astringent properties that flush excess water and toxins from the body.

## Stomach Problems, Diarrhea, Dysentery

Strawberry Tea made from the leaves of the wild strawberry plant are beneficial in treating dysentery, diarrhea, and other stomach disorders. The berries and juice of the plant are beneficial for treating gastritis.

## Burns, Cuts, Wounds

The antiseptic and anti-bacterial properties of wild strawberry leaves make them a good choice for healing skin wounds such as burns, cuts, and minor infections. I use the infusion as a wash to clean and sanitize the wound then I use fresh chopped leaves as a poultice to reduce inflammation and help it heal. For sunburns, the crushed fruit can also be used as a poultice to cool and soothe the skin.

## Joint pain, Rheumatism

The leaves of wild strawberry are beneficial for treating arthritic pains and other joint pain. I often combine them with St. John's wort for this purpose. They can be used separately or brewed together into one infusion. My recipes for the infusions are found below.

## Recipes

### Wild Strawberry Leaf Infusion

1 teaspoon dried wild strawberry leaves, crushed, 1 cup boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the wild strawberry leaves and steep them for 10 minutes. Strain out the leaves and sweeten if desired. Take one cup, once or twice daily.

### Wild Strawberry and St. John's Wort Infusion

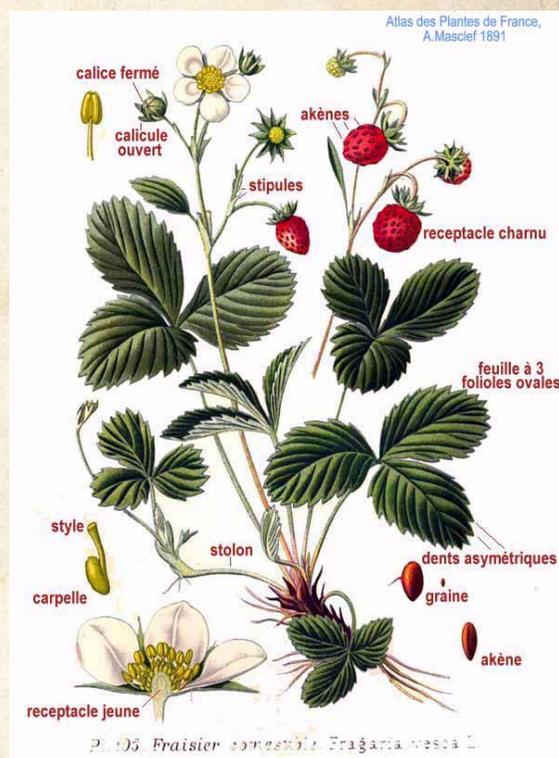
1 teaspoon dried wild strawberry leaves, crushed, 1 teaspoon dried St. John's Wort, 1 cup boiling water, lemon, honey, or sugar, as desired to sweeten. Pour the boiling water over the wild strawberry leaves and St. John's Wort. Steep them for 10 minutes. Strain out the herbs and sweeten if desired. This tea is bitter. The honey and lemon help with the flavor. Drink one cup, once or twice daily.

## Wild Yam, *Dioscorea villosa*

Wild yam root is an anti-inflammatory and pain-reliever. I use it mainly for digestive issues, but it probably has many other uses. It has been over-harvested in recent years and is possibly endangered, so I have been replacing it with other herbs whenever possible. Still, it is a good herb to use if you have a source nearby.

## Plant Identification

Wild yam grows on a highly variable twining vine with smooth stems and alternate leaves. The leaves have prominent veins radiating out from the stem on heart-shaped leaves. They occur in whorls of three and are hairy on the underside.

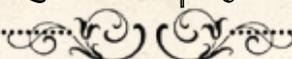


Amédée Masclef - Atlas des plantes de France. 1891, Public Domain



Wild Yam, *Physome*, CC by SA 3.0

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



The vine produces separate male and female flowers from May to August. Prominent three-winged fruit appears in the fall. The roots are tubers.

The plant is found in wet, wooded areas from Florida north to Minnesota and Massachusetts and westward to Texas. The plant has been overused and is becoming harder to find, so I am careful in harvesting to replant tubers for future growth.

### Medicinal Use

I use wild yam either as dried powdered root or as a tincture made from the root. For adults, I give 400 mg of powdered root, twice a day, or 2 to 3 ml of Wild Yam Tincture three to four times daily.



9 Wild Yam Fruit, G. Vaclavek, University of Michigan Herbarium, Public Domain

### Colic, Crohn's Disease, and other Digestive Illnesses

The wild yam is also known as the colic root, indicating its value in treating colic and other digestive illnesses. I find it to be a valuable treatment for healing digestive problems involving cramping, muscle spasms, inflammation, and bloating. I also use it to good effect for irritable bowel syndrome and diverticulitis.

### Rheumatism

The wild yam root contains anti-inflammatories and pain-relieving substances that make it effective in the relief of rheumatism symptoms. I give the powdered root or the extract daily for rheumatism symptoms, and I expect best results with long-term use.

### Wild Yam Tincture

4 ounces powdered wild yam root

1 pint 80 proof or better vodka

1. Place the powdered wild yam root in a glass jar and cover with vodka. Seal the jar tightly and place it in a cool dark place to brew.
2. Allow the tincture to steep for 2 weeks to 1 month, shaking the jar daily.
3. Strain the tincture through a coffee filter. Store it in a cool, dark place for up to 3 years.

### Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*)

As a child, I ate the sweet wintergreen berries and chewed the spicy, tart leaves. The berries taste of the well-known wintergreen flavoring, and I can always identify the plant from its distinctive scent.

### Plant Identification

Although wintergreen oil is now synthetically made, most people can readily identify the distinctive smell. Also known as teaberry, checkerberry, mountain tea,



Wintergreen, Mike Serfas, Public Domain



deerberry, boxberry, ground berry or spice berry, wintergreen is a member of the Heath Family (Ericaceae).

This semi-woody plant forms low growing mats of foliage. The plants are approximately 6 inches tall with evergreen leaves, making them a popular choice for a groundcover. I find the creeping mats in woodland settings and in shaded areas. They like moist, acidic soil and filtered sunlight or partial shade.

Bright green ovals or spoon-shaped leaves have a glossy appearance and a waxy or leathery feel. The leaves are attached in groups near the tip of a small reddish stalk.

Waxy flowers with a droopy, bell-like appearance appear in June or July but are often hidden beneath the ground cover. The brilliant scarlet-red berries ripen in late autumn through winter.



*Wintergreen Flowers, Wing-Chi Poon, CC by SA 2.5*

### Medicinal Uses

Wintergreen oil contains a high concentration of methyl salicylate, a chemical compound used in the production of aspirin. It can be used in creams and ointments for pain relief of sore muscles and joints. Because of its toxicity, wintergreen oil should never be taken internally. Wintergreen oil is metabolized into salicylic acid which is a Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID).

Thirty milliliters of the oil, approximately 1 ounce, contains the equivalent of 171 adult aspirin tablets, a highly toxic amount. This illustrates how concentrated the oil is and why it should never be taken internally, even in small amounts. Because the oil is so potent, even small doses taken internally can be toxic.

Wintergreen Oil is obtained from the leaves by steam distillation.

Wintergreen berries and leaves are effective against pain and help reduce swelling and inflammation. I use it as an oil topically as a poultice, and in creams and ointments. I prescribe the berries and leaves to be eaten or used in tea for internal use.

### Wintergreen for Sore Throat

Wintergreen tea is an excellent remedy to relieve the pain and inflammation in a sore throat. I tell patients to gargle with one mouthful of the tea at a time, using the entire cup of tea over the course of a day, as needed.

### Wintergreen for Headaches, Aches, and Pains

Use wintergreen tea for quick relief of headaches and other aches and pains associated with arthritis, rheumatism, sciatica, and lumbago. It acts quickly to relieve pain and long-term to reduce inflammation and swelling that causes the pain.

Use one to two tablespoons of tea at a time, consuming a maximum of one cup per day.

### Wintergreen Infusion for Colic

Care must be taken when using any herbal remedy with children, so consult a qualified medical professional before using wintergreen or any herb on a child. Wintergreen infusion is useful in relieving colic. I give only a few drops of a weak infusion to relieve gas pains and ease digestion, even less for young children.



## Wintergreen Poultices for Skin Inflammation

Either dried or fresh leaves can be used as a poultice for boils, swellings, skin ulcers, wounds, and sores.

### Warnings

Wintergreen oil is a concentrated form of methyl salicylate and should not be used internally. Undiluted use can also trigger contact dermatitis in some people. Always dilute the oil with a carrier oil or use it in a cream or ointment.

I dilute wintergreen oil in a 1:10 ratio. I use 1 part wintergreen oil to 10 or more parts carrier oil such as coconut oil, olive oil, or other suitable oil.

### Recipes

#### Distilling Wintergreen Leaves for Oil

You will need:

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, a tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

Wintergreen leaves, water to just barely cover the leaves

1. Before distilling, steep the leaves in a small amount of water overnight in a mildly warm location, room temperature is fine, just not cold. Allow the leaves to begin to ferment; this develops the oil.
2. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of wintergreen oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
3. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
4. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
5. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
6. Place the herbs and water into the pressure cooker. Add more water as needed to fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.
7. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
8. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
9. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and the distillation is finished.
10. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
11. Dilute the oil with a maximum of 10% oil of wintergreen to 90% carrier oil. Use topically. Do not take internally.

#### Weak Wintergreen Infusion

Use 1/2 ounce of dried wintergreen leaves per quart of warm water. Steep the leaves for 1 hour, then strain the infusion. Use as directed and make fresh every 24 hours.

#### Wintergreen Tea

1 teaspoon dried wintergreen leaves, 1 Cup boiling water. Stir the dried wintergreen leaves into the boiling water and allow the tea to steep until cool. Take one mouthful only, throughout the day as needed. Maximum dosage: 1 cup per 24 hours.

### Yellow Jessamine, *Gelsemium sempervirens*

Yellow Jessamine is a beautiful plant, but it can be deadly. I have treated more than one child for poisoning from the plant. It looks similar to honeysuckle and children sometimes confuse the plants and ingest the poisonous plant. While I do use it internally when other remedies are not available, it carries a risk that is always forefront in my mind, and I keep a close watch on my patients.

Yellow Jessamine is a twining, slender vine found throughout the southern United States. Sometimes referred to as the Poor Man's Rope, Evening Trumpetflower, Woodbine, and the Carolina Jessamine, because of its prevalence throughout the Carolinas.



By KENPEI - KENPEI's photo, CC BY-SA 3.0,

#### Plant Identification

I often find yellow Jessamine climbing over fences, up sign posts and trees, trellises and even the sides of buildings. Yellow Jessamine vines will climb, reaching up to the very tops of trees and onto roofs of buildings if given time. However, they are agile and narrow enough that they do not starve the plants beneath them in sunlight. Without a tall, supporting structure to climb, yellow Jessamine will simply grow into a tangled mound.

Its leaves are simple, blade shaped with a shiny texture that has a waxy texture you can feel when you touch the leaves. Each blade ranges in size from 2 to 4 inches long and less than half an inch wide. The leaves develop a yellow or purple shade in the winter months, but otherwise, the plants produce deep green foliage. It is a semi-evergreen vine, keeping its leaves through most of the winter.

Yellow Jessamine flowers begin to bloom as early as December and stretch through the Spring. Clusters of the fragrant yellow flowers bloom into the shape of fat, five-pointed stars or trumpet-shaped. In the summer, towards the end of the bloom, little capsule-shaped fruit develop. The fruit is typically flattened and pod-like, growing about 1 inch in length. The flowers give off the scent that reminds me of honey.

#### Medicinal Uses

Caution should always be used when working with yellow Jessamine. The entire plant is poisonous, and even small amounts of the extract can be deadly. I have used these preparations in the past, but no longer use them since safer preparations are almost always available.

#### Skin Care

I have used a salve made from yellow Jessamine tincture for boils and treating facial and body acne.

#### Muscle Pain and Arthritis

Yellow Jessamine is sometimes helpful in treating muscle pain and arthritis. I have also used diluted tincture or salve for this purpose, applying either to the afflicted area every few hours. When applied too strong, these preparations sometimes relax the muscles to the point of paralysis, relieving the pain, but rendering the body incapable of use. While this might be desirable during surgery or in extreme situations, I worry that it could be detrimental to the patient.

#### Fevers and Headaches

Yellow Jessamine depresses the nervous system and acts as a sedative.



This is the source of its powers and also the source of its poison. A tiny amount can relieve pain and reduce fevers, while too much has deadly effects. I have seen small amounts of dilute salve applied to the forehead work to reduce headache pain, but I have many more headache cures in my satchel.

### Warnings

It is important to remember that all parts of the yellow jessamine are considered highly toxic and ingestion can even be fatal. Under no circumstances should any portion of the plant be eaten in any form. In the Southern States, it is not uncommon for young children to confuse yellow jessamine for Honeysuckle and require immediate medical attention. The plant is so toxic it can even kill the bees that pollinate it, resulting in colony collapse. Consumption of fewer than 4 milliliters of Yellow Jessamine extract can prove fatal.

Symptoms include sweating, nausea, muscle paralysis, convulsions and muscular spasms, and dilated pupils. If consumed, or if patients experience any of these symptoms, immediate medical treatment is required.



*Photo by I\_am\_Jim, own work, CC by SA 4.0*

### Recipes

#### Yellow Jessamine Tincture

Use with extreme caution

4 ounces of chopped or ground yellow jessamine bark, 2 cups 80 proof vodka or grain alcohol

Combine the alcohol and bark in a clean glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Let them brew for 2 weeks, shaking occasionally. When ready, the tincture will have a violet hue and smell like honey. Strain the tincture and store in a cool, dark place.

#### Jessamine Salve

One ounce of jessamine tincture, 9 ounces petroleum jelly. Mix the tincture and petroleum jelly together to make a salve. Apply sparingly to affected areas.

Wild Plants  
in  
Great Plains



## Anise Hyssop, *Agastache Foeniculum*

Anise Hyssop, also known as blue giant hyssop, lavender giant hyssop, elk mint, and licorice mint. Is a perennial that belongs to the mint family (Lamiaceae.) It is native to northern and central United States.



*saiberiac, Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0)*

### Plant Identification

Anise hyssop grows to between two to five feet tall, with bright green leaves that are notched at the edge and covered with fine white hairs on the underside. New growth has an attractive purple tint. The plant has an aroma suggestive of mint and anise.

The herb is partially woody with branched and usually hairless stems. The fibrous roots are also branching.

Clusters of small lilac-blue flowers appear on elongated flower spikes from July through September.

### Edible Use

Anise hyssop can be used as a sweetener and to make tea. It can be used as a flavoring or seasoning. The leaves and flowers can be eaten fresh, cooked, or dried.

### Medicinal Use

#### Heart Healthy, Angina Pain

The infusion of anise hyssop is a tonic for the heart and a quick remedy for angina pain. I prescribe a daily cup of Anise Hyssop Tea as a heart tonic and instruct patients to drink an additional cup immediately on angina pain. Additional tea can be taken, as needed.

#### Sores, Wounds, Burns

For skin infections, wounds, and burned skin, I prescribe a poultice of anise hyssop leaves. Soak dried leaves or bruise fresh leaves and flowers and apply them directly to the affected area. Cover with a clean cloth. Apply morning and night or as needed to treat any type of skin infection. Anise hyssop leaves have anti-bacterial and anti-viral properties.

#### Facilitates Digestion

Anise hyssop is a digestant, helping to ease digestion and prevent excessive gas and bloating. I advise patients to drink a cup of warm Anise Hyssop Tea with their meals.

#### Diarrhea

Anise hyssop tea is also helpful in relieving diarrhea. I prescribe patients to drink 1 cup of Anise Hyssop Tea immediately, then continue to sip the tea throughout the day even after the diarrhea has been successfully eliminated. Continuing to sip occasionally prevents the return of diarrhea.



### Sore Muscles and Anxiety

I instruct patients to gather 3 to 4 tablespoons of anise hyssop leaves in a square of cheesecloth and hang it from the faucet while drawing a bath. The scent released as the water flows calms the spirit. When the bath is ready, drop the herbs into the bathwater and soak sore muscles in the bath.

### Colds, Flu, Bronchial Congestion

Anise hyssop helps expel mucus from the lungs, making it a good choice for treating colds, flu, and congestion. I recommend that patients use anise hyssop in tea. Take as needed to relieve congestion.

### Herpes

I use Anise Hyssop Essential Oil as an antiviral treatment for Herpes Simplex I and II. Patients place the oil directly on Herpes lesions and drink the tea to treat the virus internally.

### Poison Ivy

Washing the skin in Anise Hyssop Infusion helps relieve the itchiness of poison ivy.

### Athletes Foot, Fungal Skin Infections, Yeast Overgrowth

Soak the foot or infected area in a bath with a strong infusion of Anise Hyssop. I usually recommend steeping four tablespoons of anise hyssop leaves in a quart of boiling water. Add the infusion to the bathwater. Soak daily until the infection is cured.

### Recipes

#### Anise Hyssop Tea or Infusion

1 teaspoon of dried anise hyssop leaves and flowers or 1 tablespoon fresh leaves and flowers  
1 cup boiling water  
Honey, as desired

Add the leaves and flowers to the boiling water and turn off the heat. Cover tightly and allow the herbs to steep for 15 minutes. Strain the tea through a fine sieve. Add honey to sweeten, if desired.

#### Anise Hyssop Essential Oil

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, a tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

Heartleaf Arnica flowers, leaves, and stems, water to cover the herbs

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of an essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or a tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.

## The Lost Book Of Remedies

5. Place the chopped anise hyssop leaves and flowers into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to cover the herbs and fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and the distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. Dilute the oil 10% or less Anise Hyssop Oil and 90% carrier oil before use.

### Common Flax, *Linum Usitatissimum*

Also known as Linseed, this is a useful plant for making medicine, oil, and fabric. I use the oil as an overall health tonic in small doses. In larger doses, it can be toxic or even fatal. Many people take it as a nutritional supplement.

#### Plant Identification

Common Flax is an annual. While I rarely find it growing wild, it is usually easy to find a cultivated crop in Minnesota and the Dakotas. I keep an eye out for it from June to July when the plant is actively growing in the field. The mature plant is 2 to 3 1/2 feet tall.

A loose cluster of stalked flowers grows at the tips of branching stems on the upper plant. The flowers are pale blue to bright blue-violet in color and sometimes white, having deeper blue coloring at its center. Each flower has 5 broadly oval to wedge-shaped petals and a white center surrounded by 5 erect, blue-tipped stamens with a green ovary. The 5 sepals have a lance-shape. The flowers are nearly 3/4 to 1 inch in size.

Flax has simple leaves, alternating, erect and ascending to spreading. They are 1/2 to 1 1/2 inches long and 1/8 inch wide. They are 3-nerved, stalkless, toothless, and hairless. Its stems are mostly unbranched, erect, single or multiple from the base. Branches of the stem are ascending. The stems are round in cross-section, hairless, smooth throughout and almost leafy.

Flax fruit is a round capsule shape having 1/3 inch diameter and a glossy surface. The capsule splits into 10 wedge-shaped sections from the tip with 1 or 2 brown seeds in each.

#### Harvesting

Flax seed is harvested in the same manner as wheat when the seeds mature, turn yellow, and begin to split. Harvest the seed when the plant is dry and free of weeds. The addition of weed seed reduces the effectiveness of the oil. Take care to prevent cracking the seeds.



*Flax Flowers, D. Gordon E. Robertson - Own work, CC by SA 3.0*



## Medicinal Use

### As a Nutritional Supplement

Flax seed is rich in dietary fiber, omega-3 oils, and nutrients. I have been using the oil throughout my career as a health booster, especially for women, and modern medicine is beginning to agree. As more people take flax seed as a supplement, I suspect we will learn more about its miraculous health benefits.

### Cholesterol Control

Flax seed oil has a beneficial effect on cholesterol levels. The healthy oils help lower the total cholesterol and the LDL cholesterol, creating a more healthy balance. For cholesterol control, take one ounce of crushed flaxseeds daily or up to 1 tablespoon of the oil. Taking the crushed seeds is easier for most people.

### Respiratory Problems

I regularly prescribe flax seed oil for the benefit of patients with respiratory problems such as a cough, sore throat, congestion, and the common cold. Additionally, a hot cup of tea made with the infusion of flax seeds gives quick relief from congestion and sore throats.

For congestion and congestive issues like pneumonia, bronchitis, and pleurisy, I apply a loose poultice of crushed flax seed and mustard.

### STDs and Genitourinary Problems

I use crushed flax seeds in combination with false unicorn root to treat gonorrhea, kidney disease, cystitis, and irritations of the genitals and the urinary tract. I usually prescribe the Flax Seed Tea and Flax Seed Oil for use in curing STDs.

### Constipation

For constipation, I recommend two teaspoons of flax seed every morning, taken with a full glass of water.

### Boils, Carbuncles, Abscesses, Herpes and Other Skin Disorders

A hot poultice of flax seed oil draws out the infection and helps heal these common skin problems. I heat the oil until it is hot, but not hot enough to burn, then saturate a cotton ball or soft cloth. Place the hot poultice directly on the affected area and cover to keep it warm.

For boils, add lobelia to flax seed oil and apply it directly to the boil or use as a poultice. The combination of lobelia and flax seed oil work together to draw out the infection and reduce the inflammation.



*Flax Fruit Capsules, D. Gordon E. Robertson - Own work, CC by SA 3.0*



I once had to treat a boil that had grown quite large, I did not want to lance it, but the pressure was building and my young patient was in serious pain. Using the warm oil with lobelia, I was able to draw out the boil. I then washed it with lobelia to prevent the spread of infection.

It looked quite bad when I left, but the next day the thing had reduced to the size of a dime, and it healed completely within a few days.

### Burns

For burns, I apply cool flax seed oil to the skin surface several times a day.

### Balancing Hormones

Flax seed contains substances that balance the female hormones, especially post-menopause. It helps prevent and moderate menopause symptoms.

### Cancer

I have had patients who achieved good results using flax seed and flax seed oil to help battle cancer and to prevent the recurrence of cancer, especially breast cancer and liver cancer. One breast cancer patient was able to not only slow the growth of her cancer but reduce its size by half over a short period. I believe that the combination of balancing the female hormones and the insulin balance helped her achieve this improvement. She then consulted a cancer specialist for additional treatment. I recommend the use of ground flax seed or flax seed oil as a supplemental treatment to all my cancer patients.

### Warnings and Recommendations

Ground and powdered flax seed go rancid very quickly. I keep my flax seed whole until I need them, then grind or crush only the needed amount.

Drink plenty of water with flax seeds. Otherwise they can absorb all the available liquids and clog the system, sometimes causing a bowel obstruction.

### Flax Seed Tea with Honey and Lime

Take this tea whenever a cold or congestion threatens.

2 teaspoons freshly powdered flax seed, 1 ½ cup water, honey, lime or lemon Juice

1. Bring the water to a boil and add the powdered flax seed. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Cool and add honey and lime juice to taste

### Distillation of Flax Seed Oil

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

flax seed, freshly crushed and powdered to release the oil, water to cover the seeds

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of your oil. Otherwise, proceed with our directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.

4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place the powdered seeds into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to cover the seeds and fill the pressure cooker to a level of at least 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor your still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and your distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.



Henbane, photo by K.B. Simoglou - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0,

### Henbane, *Hyoscyamus Niger*

Henbane is a poisonous plant, and I use it very carefully, mostly for external use. It has some good applications internally, but extra care must be taken, and I do not recommend using it internally without the close supervision of a medical professional.

I never have any trouble recognizing this plant. It is a beautiful plant, but the foul odor gives it away every time. Known as henbane, black henbane, or stinking nightshade, it is a member of the Solanaceae family.

#### Plant Identification

*Hyoscyamus Niger* can grow as an annual or biennial and is 1 to 6 feet tall. Annual plants have shorter and weaker flowers than biennial plants. The rosette leaves

have leaf stalks nearly same in length as the leaf blades. Rosette leaves are alternating and soft. Its flowering season starts in June and lasts through September.

The flowers are a funnel shape with 5 lobes. They are brownish-yellow in color with dark purple veins. Flowers have a long-spiked inflorescence arrangement in upper leaves along with young flowers at the pointed end.

Its leaves are grayish green in color and have white veins. Leaves are large, up to 6 inches (15cm) in width and 8 inches (20cm) long. Henbane leaves alternate with coarsely toothed to slightly lobed margins.

The mature henbane plant has leafy, thick, hairy, wide-branched and erect stems.

The shape of fruit resembles a tiny pineapple. The fruit appears after flowering and is 1 inch (2.5 cm) having five lobes. Each fruit is packed with black seeds, and each plant is capable of producing ten thousand to five hundred thousand seeds.

The roots of henbane are whitish in color. The main taproot is stout and branched.

Henbane is not native to the US, but it has done well here. I find it throughout the Northeast, Midwest, and the Rocky Mountains.

Henbane does not tolerate waterlogged soils. I find it abundant in open sites, pastures along fence rows, roadsides, waste areas and riparian areas.



## Harvesting Instructions

To make an effective medicine, henbane must be collected when the plant is in full flower. I watch the plants closely to catch flowering immediately. I've found that if I wait, insects attack the leaves and ruin my crop.

## Medicinal Use

Because the plant is a poison, it is important that all medicines be made precisely and the strength carefully regulated. I prefer to use this plant externally, where there is no danger.

## Internal Use

The plant is used to relieve muscle pain, irritable bladders, and the pain of cystitis. It is a mild diuretic, hypnotic, and anti-spasmodic. The hypnotic action is the same as belladonna, but with milder effects. Its narcotic actions occasionally lead to abuse and total control of dose is necessary.

## Gout, Neuralgia, and Rheumatic Pains

Pain derived from gout, neuralgia, and rheumatism are effectively treated with a poultice made from fresh henbane leaves. Crush the leaves and place them directly over the painful area. Cover with a clean cloth.

The plant has strong pain relieving qualities, and I occasionally use it externally for muscle pains caused by a strain or sprain.

## Hemorrhoids

I recommend a poultice of crushed henbane leaves to reduce the swelling and pain of external hemorrhoids.

## Sweet Grass, *Hierochloe odorata*/

## *Anthoxanthum nitens*

When I walk across sweet grass, I can smell the sweet fragrance of the grass. I love the look of a field of sweet grass bowing to the prevailing wind. This fragrant grass has many known medicinal properties, and I suspect that there are many that I do not yet know.

Sweet grass grows in the north and northwestern United States, across the great plains and in the Rocky Mountains.

Sweet grass, *Hierochloe odorata* is a perennial grass that is hardy even in extreme cold. The blades of grass are not stiff, so the grass grows to almost 8 inches tall before



Sweet Grass, Kodemizer, CC by SA 3.0



*Sweet Grass Seeds, Robert H. Matherbrook, USDA NRCS, Public Domain*

leaning and growing horizontally for another 40 inches by summers end. The blades are shiny and smooth. Beneath the soil, the leaf base is broad and white without bristles.

### Harvesting Sweet Grass

I harvest sweet grass throughout the summer, cutting it above the ground in the amounts needed. I prefer to use it fresh throughout the summer and dry a supply at the end of summer for winter use. Sweet grass harvested after the first frost has lost some of its beneficial compounds.

### Medicinal Use

#### Blood Thinning, Anti-Coagulant Properties

Sweet grass contains coumarin and other components that have anti-coagulant properties. Do not use it for patients with bleeding issues. It is useful in patients with some arrhythmias to prevent stroke. Use it carefully; excess can be toxic.

#### Common Colds, Bronchial Congestion

My Native American friends inhale the smoke from burning sweet grass to treat common colds and congestion. I do not recommend this practice because I worry that the smoke may cause its own damage. I prefer to prescribe sweet grass combined with western meadow-rue seeds to clear nasal congestion.

### Sore Throats, Coughs, Fever

One cup of sweet grass tea is enough to treat sore throats, coughs, and fevers. The tea can be sipped throughout the day as needed for relief.

### Venereal Diseases

Drink 1 cup of sweet grass tea, twice a day to treat venereal diseases.

### Recipes

#### Sweet Grass Tea

1 tablespoon chopped fresh sweet grass leaves, 1 cup boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the chopped leaves and steep for 5 to 8 minutes. Sip or drink as needed for relief.

#### Sweet Grass and Rue Tea

1 tablespoon fresh sweet grass leaves, 1/2 teaspoon meadow rue seeds, crushed, 1 cup water

Add the meadow rue seeds to 1 cup of water and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and add the sweet grass leaves. Cover the tea and allow it to steep for 8 to 10 minutes. Drink or sip as needed to relieve congestion.

Trees  
and  
Shrubs



American Basswood, Daderot, Public Domain

## American Basswood or American Linden, *Tilia Americana*

*Tilia Americana* belongs to Malvaceae family and genus *Tilia*. It is most commonly known as American basswood and American linden. The common name of this plant is from “bastwood,” referring to use of the inner bark, the “bast,” for weaving rope and baskets.

The tree is a native to eastern North America, from the Canadian border, southwest to northeast Oklahoma, and southeast to South Carolina, and west along the Niobrara River to Cherry County, Nebraska. I often find it as far south as the mountainous regions of North Carolina, Tennessee, and northern Arkansas. The western limit for American Basswood is North Dakota, and along the Niobrara River in north-central Nebraska.

It thrives on rich coves, lower slopes, river bottoms, usually on deep, well-drained soils and rarely occurs in pure stands but is usually mixed with other forest species. American Basswood occurs up to about 5,000 feet in elevation in the southern Appalachian Mountains. It is also plentiful along the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence forest regions of North America.

### Plant Identification

American Basswood is classified as a medium-sized to large deciduous tree reaching a height of 60 to 120 feet, and rarely up to 128 feet. It has a trunk diameter of 3-5 feet at maturity. It is a large deciduous tree having gray bark that is furrowed with flat ridges.

Leaves of American Basswood are deciduous, alternate, unevenly heart-shaped or nearly truncate at the base. The blades are 2 to 5 inches wide, thick and slightly leathery, with shallowly toothed margins. They are smooth and hairless on both sides or with some soft downy hairs on the lower surface.

American Basswood flowers are yellowish-white, 1/3 to 1/2 inches across. They grow in drooping clusters of 6 to 20 flowers hanging on a stalk that diverges from near the center of an oblong, leaf-like and strongly veined bract that is 2 to 4 inches long. The flowers are fragrant and nectar-bearing.

Its flowering period is May-June (-July). Usually 1-4 weeks after the leaves appear in mid-May. Its Seeds are dispersed in October. Fruits of this tree are mostly spherical and 8-10 mm in diameter, in a hard and dry pod.

### Edible Use

Edible parts of this plant include flowers, leaves, and sap. Young leaves are good added to salads. The sap obtained from bark makes a refreshing, sweet drink. Sap can also be concentrated to make syrups and used as a sweetener. I like to use the flowers in salads and as a tea substitute.



## Medicinal Use

The medicinal properties of American Basswood include Antispasmodic; Demulcent; Diaphoretic; Diuretic; Ophthalmic; Poultrice; Sedative; Vermifuge.

## Skin Treatments

The tea made from the inner bark of American basswood soothes and softens the skin when used as a wash. Some patients use it as a skin conditioner, but I recommend it for use on burns, sunburns, and skin irritations.

For skin infections and open boils, I use a strong tea (made with twice the normal amount of bark) to wash the affected area.

The bark tea, applied externally, soothes the skin, relieves itching, relieves inflammation and helps prevent infections.

## As a Sedative, Anticonvulsant, and Pain Killer

A Tincture made from the leaves and flowers of the American basswood tree is very effective in treating seizures and other problems related to the nervous system. I use it as a sedative and analgesic in patients with nerve pain, anxiety, insomnia, and seizures. I prescribe 1/2 to 1 teaspoon daily of the tincture when needed or at bedtime.



Plant Image Library - *Tilia americana*, CC by SA 2.0

## Hypertension, High Cholesterol, and Heart Tonic

I find that the tincture made from American basswood flowers and leaves is effective at relieving high blood pressure. Its calming effects extend to the cardiovascular system and relaxes the blood vessels. It also helps lower blood cholesterol levels and helps regulate irregular heartbeats. I prescribe it as a long-term tonic for these heart-related problems.

For heart-related problems, I prescribe the American Basswood Tincture, 1/2 teaspoon take three times a day. The tea is not as effective for heart benefits.

## Boils and Skin Infections

I use a poultice made from American Basswood Tea to draw out boils and skin infections. The anti-bacterial properties of the tea kill the infection and prevent it from spreading while the poultice helps it to open up and drain. To make the poultice, mix a few tablespoons of the tea with enough cornmeal to make a thin paste.

The actual amounts depend on your cornmeal; I prefer to use a fine to medium grind. Spread the mixture over the infected area and its surrounding skin. Leave on as long as possible and repeat as needed. When the infection has been drawn out, wash the area with the tea.

## Conjunctivitis, Eye Infections, and Eyewash

I use an infusion made from American basswood leaves as an infusion to clear up eye infections and conjunctivitis. The Infusion must be made fresh. Apply two to 3 drops to each eye, up to three times daily. To remove foreign substances, flush the eye with the infusion. My recipe for American Basswood Infusion Eyewash if found below.



## Dysentery, Heartburn, and Stomach Complaints

American Basswood Tincture is also good for stomach ailments, heartburn, and dysentery. For stomach issues, I prefer to use the tincture of flowers and leaves for stomach complaints; but the bark infusion has diuretic properties and promotes urination.

### Recipes

#### American Basswood Tea

1 cup water, 1 to 2 teaspoons of inner bark of the American Basswood tree, crushed or ground

Bring the water and inner bark to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer. Simmer the tea gently for 15 to 20 minutes. Cool, strain, and drink or use as a wash.

\*For a strong tea, I use 3 to 4 teaspoons of inner bark

#### Basswood Tincture

Leaves and flowers of American basswood tree

1 pint 100 proof vodka or other drinking alcohol

1. Fill a pint jar about 3/4 full with crushed flowers and leaves of the American basswood tree.
2. Pour 100 proof or higher vodka over the leaves and flowers to cover them completely and fill the jar.
3. Cover the jar tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days.
4. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the herbs completely covered.
5. Soak the flowers and leaves for 4 to 6 weeks.
6. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth.
7. Discard the herbs. Place the alcohol extraction in a cool place, undisturbed overnight.
8. Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining herb residue.
9. Store the tincture in a tightly capped glass bottle in a cool, dark place.
10. Use 1/2 to 1 teaspoon per dose.

#### American Basswood Infusion Eyewash

1 teaspoon American basswood leaves, crushed but not ground

1 cup distilled water

Bring the water and American basswood leaves to a full boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes. Strain the infusion through a coffee filter to remove all particles or herbs. Allow the mixture to cool completely before using. Use Fresh.

#### Ash, *Fraxinus Americana* or *Fraxinus excelsior*

The ash tree, also known as the American Ash, Common Ash, Weeping Ash, and White Ash, is a tall, thin tree that can reach up to 100 feet or more in height and spread when mature. The tree grows tall and thin when young, but it spreads and becomes more rounded as it ages.

#### Plant Identification

In the early spring, before the leaves appear, the branches display clusters of flowers, with male and female flowers on separate plants. The branches are a smooth grayish-green with large 8 to 15-inch dark green leaves that each have 5 to 11



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oval-shaped leaflets. Leaflets are shiny green on top and pale green below. They have a jagged margin. In the fall, the leaves turn yellow, maroon, or deep purple, putting on a magnificent display.

The fruit is a tan winged achene, approximately one to two inches long. Each fruit contains a single seed.

### Medicinal Use

Leaves, seeds, inner bark, and sap are used for medicine.

### Skin Cancers

A Native American friend told me of many uses for the American Ash tree. One of the uses was for treating skin cancers and tumors. He told me how healers in his tribe used the freshly tapped sap of the tree to treat skin cancers and other lesions. They placed the sap on the affected area and surrounding tissue.

Leaving it in place throughout the day, then replacing it again at night. They maintained this twice daily use until the cancer or lesion was completely gone.

### Childbirth

Ash Leaf Extract is used as a tonic and detoxifier after childbirth. Take 1 tablespoon of the extract twice a day for three days.

### Fevers

Ash tree inner bark has tonic and astringent properties. It can be taken as a tea to treat fevers. Ash Leaf Tea is a diuretic and useful for flushing excess water and toxins from the body.

Drink one cup of tonic, three times a day as needed. Do not exceed ten days in a row.

### Jaundice

American Ash leaves are beneficial for treating jaundice. I prescribe an ounce of White Wine and Ash Decoction daily, taken in a split dose, morning and night.

### Sexual Potency

A tincture made from the ash fruits and seeds is useful to treat sexual disfunction and low libido in men. It affects the hormones and must be used in restraint. I allow patients only one dose a day because it is very potent.

My patients report that it is very effective when taken about 30 minutes before sexual activity. Take 5 to 10 drops of Ash Fruit Tincture for Sexual Potency once a day. Take the lowest effective dose, but never more than ten drops.





## Harvesting Ash

When harvesting leaves for teas, I gather the leaves during the summer when the leaves are fully open, but before they begin to change color. The bark is gathered in the spring when new growth is occurring. Fruits are harvested before they drop from the tree and while the seed is enclosed.

## Cautions

Ash can cause vomiting when taken internally, exercise caution.

Ash is very potent and should not be combined with other medicines without the advice of a doctor or qualified health professional.

Do not give ash to pregnant women, nursing mothers, or young children.

Do not use ash for patients with kidney or liver problems.

## Recipes

### Ash Fruit Tincture for Sexual Potency

1/4 cup ash fruits with enclosed seeds, 1 cup 100 proof vodka

1. Chop the fruit in a food processor, blender, or with a knife.
2. Put the fruit in a small (8 ounce) glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Pour the vodka over the fruit to fill the jar. Cover the jar tightly and shake.
4. Leave the jar in a warm place to steep for four to six weeks, shaking daily.
5. Strain out the herbs with a fine mesh sieve.
6. Store the tincture in a cool, dark place for up to 5 years.
7. Take no more than ten drops daily, in a single dose.

### White Wine and Ash Decoction

2 ounce Ash leaves, dried and crumbled, 1-quart white wine

1. Place the ash leaves in a quart jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Pour the white wine over the leaves to fill the jar. Cover the jar tightly and shake.
3. Store the wine infusion in a cool, dark place. Shake daily.
4. Allow the wine to infuse for 4 to 6 weeks.
5. Strain the leaves out with a fine sieve or a coffee filter.
6. Store the decoction in a tightly capped jar for up to 3 months.

### Ash Leaf Extract

1-ounce ash leaf, dried and crushed, 1-quart water

Bring the water and ash leaf to a boil and turn off the heat. Cover tightly and steep the extract for 1 hour. Strain out the leaf. Store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

### Ash Tree Bark Tonic

1 teaspoon dried inner bark of the ash tree, 1 cup boiling water.

Add the inner bark to the boiling water and turn off the heat. Allow the tonic to brew for 15 minutes. Strain out the bark.

Drink one cup of tonic, three times a day for up to 10 days.



## Balsam Fir, *Abies balsamea*

The balsam fir is the popular cone-shaped Christmas tree. It is also known as the Canada balsam, fir pine, silver fir, or silver pine. This tree is native to the northeastern United States. It is easily recognizable by its conic shape, short needle-like leaves, and its spicy, Christmas tree fragrance.

### Plant Identification

Most balsam firs grow to be approximately 45 to 65 feet tall when mature, but some trees can grow much taller. I know of one tree that towers over its neighbors at 80 feet, and it is still growing. The Christmas trees sold for indoor use are only a few years old and still immature. The tree grows in the classic Christmas tree shape, although trees grown for sale are shaped to a more pyramidal shape. In nature, the tree forms a narrow crown that is possibly more rounded than the single point that most commercial trees demonstrate.

The leaves are short dark green, flat needles, each approximately an inch long and silver-blue on the underside. The bark is smooth and grey with resin-filled blisters that form a rough, scaly appearance on older trees. Seed cones are about 1 1/2 inch- to 3 1/4 inch-long and dark purple, turning brown and opening to release the seeds when mature. The seeds are winged and release in September.



*Balsam Fir, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Public Domain*



### Harvesting

#### To Harvest Balsam Fir Pitch

The pitch is found in the blisters on the tree bark. Simply open the blisters with a knife, cutting gently into the blister. If the blister is forcefully popped, the pitch will spray out and cause a sticky mess. The pitch is clear, runny, and sticky. In cold weather, it is thick, almost gel-like. I collect the pitch into a small glass jar with a tight lid.

#### To Harvest Balsam Fir Leaves

The young leaves and shoots are best for making teas and tinctures. I prefer to harvest leaves and young shoots in the spring of each year. I use them to make my tinctures and dry some leaves for use throughout the year. If necessary, leaves can be harvested throughout the year.

### Medicinal Use

Balsam fir is used in many different ways. The leaves and twigs can be used to make medicinal teas, tinctures, and extracts, and the pitch is used as it is or to make a medicinal tea. It has antibiotic, analgesic, and anti-cancer properties. The distilled essential oil or extracted oil are also valuable medicines. The distilled essential oil is strongest, but extracted oil can be used if distillation equipment is not available.



*Balsam Fir Seed Cones with Resin, Cephas - Own work, CC by SA 3.0*

### Healing Cuts, Sores, Wounds, and Abrasions

Balsam fir pitch or resin is easy to use as a salve on cuts, sores, and wounds of all kinds. I cover the affected area with the pitch. It forms a protective cover, helps prevent infection, and helps the wound heal quickly. It has antiseptic and healing properties. For large cuts, I use the stickiness to “glue” the edges of the wound together to help it heal.

### Treating Infections in Sores, Wounds, Cuts, and Abrasions

For treating an infected wound or other skin infections, I use Balsam Fir Essential Oil. The distilled oil is more potent, but infused oil can be used if necessary. Apply the diluted oil directly to the infected area.

### Prevents Lip Chapping and Stimulates Lip Healing

In winter, I often smear a little balsam fir pitch on my lips to prevent chapping. If the lips are chapped, or fever blisters exist, the pitch helps the area to heal quickly.

### Bronchitis, Coughs, Consumption, Sore Throats

For bronchial and chest congestion, coughs, consumption, and sore throats, I use either Balsam Fir Tincture or Balsam Fir Pitch Tea. I have the patient consume about a quarter of the tea immediately, then sip on the remainder as needed to calm sore throat pain, coughs, and bronchial spasms.

Another treatment for bronchial congestion is to add balsam needles to the water and use it in a sweat bath or sauna. The essential oils in the needles will sweeten the air and loosen phlegm from the lungs as it is breathed in. This helps expel the phlegm and ease the breathing.

### Gonorrhea

The Balsam Fir Pitch Tea is also useful for curing the sexually transmitted disease Gonorrhea. I prescribe the tea to be taken twice a day for two weeks or until all symptoms are cleared.

### Anti-Cancer Agent

Balsam fir essential oil has many anti-cancer and anti-tumor properties. The oil stops the growth of cancer cells preventing it from spreading and kills existing tumor cells. The oil also has anti-inflammatory properties which calm the inflammation in the nearby skin.

Take one to two drops of distilled balsam fir essential oil in a tablespoon of olive oil or add one to two drops to a cup of balsam fir tea. Take two to three times daily. Start with one drop, then increase it to two when you are sure you are not allergic or have any reaction. Balsam fir essential oil can be used along with conventional cancer treatment.

### Painful Muscles and Body Aches

Balsam fir essential oil is an excellent pain killer for muscle aches and body aches. I use the extracted balsam fir oil for this purpose. Put a small amount of the oil onto the achy area and massage it into the skin. Patients who use the oil before bed report that they improve quickly and can be back to normal by morning.



## Recipes

### Balsam Fir Pitch Tea

Dissolve a small amount of balsam fir pitch, approximately 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon, into a cup of warm water or a flavorful tea. Drink pitch tea as needed to calm the pain and bronchial spasms.

### Distilled Balsam Fir Essential Oil (Preferred)

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

Balsam fir needles and twigs, water to cover the needles, carrier oil such as coconut oil or olive oil (for dilution)

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of your balsam fir essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.
2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place a quart of fir needles and twigs into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to fill the pressure cooker to a level of 2 to 3 inches and completely cover the fir needles.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and your distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the oil to a glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. Dilute the oil to at least 10% Balsam fir oil and 90% carrier oil before use.

### Extracted Balsam Fir Oil (Use one of these two methods)

#### *Cold Extraction:*

1 ½ pints balsam fir leaves, twigs, and/or bark, dried

Olive oil, or other suitable carrier oil

1. Fill a glass jar 2/3 to 3/4 full of dried balsam fir needles and small pieces of twig or bark.
2. Cover the fir needles and twigs with olive oil.
3. Stir the oil and herbs to make sure the herbs are completely covered with oil, and no air pockets remain.
4. Place the jar in a sunny window for two to four weeks.
5. Strain the oil through a fine sieve to remove the leaves, twigs, and bark.
6. Store in a cool, dark place, and use the oil within one year.

#### *Warm Extraction:*

1. Place the herbs and oil in the top of a double boiler.
2. Fill the bottom of the double boiler with water and heat to a low simmer.
3. Heat the oil and herbs slowly for an hour, checking frequently. The oil should be hot, approximately 120 to 140 degrees, but no hotter.
4. Strain the oil through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Discard the herbs.



## Balsam Fir Tincture

8 ounces dried balsam fir needles, stems, and bark, 100 proof vodka

1. Chop the herbs in a food processor, blender, or with a knife into a powder.
2. Put the dried balsam fir needles, stems and bark in a quart glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Pour the vodka over the herbs to fill the jar. Cover the jar tightly and shake.
4. Leave the jar in a warm place to steep for four to six weeks, shaking daily.
5. Strain out the herbs with a fine mesh sieve.
6. Store the tincture in a cool, dark place for up to 5 years.

## Balsam Poplar, *Populus balsamifera*

Balsam poplar or *Populus balsamifera* is a member of the Salicaceae family (Willow Family.) It is also commonly known as bam, bamtree or eastern balsam-poplar. Its best known as a North American hardwood, but I like it for its medicinal value, especially when treating colds or skin conditions.

I learned to use a knife by stripping bark from balsam poplar limbs. Aiyana would choose the branches she wanted, and my job was to remove the bark for medicinal use. It was good practice with the knife and not too much pressure was required.

### Plant Identification

If you live in an area where balsam grows, you probably already know this tree. But I include the details here, so you can be sure you have the right plant.

*Populus balsamifera* is typically a deciduous tree growing up to 50 m tall. It has brown bark on the branches in the first year which turn grey later as it continues to grow. The twigs are either smooth or may be sparsely hairy. The tree grows at a very high rate and can grow several feet in height each year.

The leaves are deciduous, simple, alternate and are narrow to broadly egg-shaped or lanceolate. They are 5 to 20 cm long and 3 to 12 cm wide. Their bases are tapered like heart shape or squared off and smooth.

The margins are finely toothed and hairy. The Lower side is whitish or pale green and brownish. Leaf stalks are 2 to 10 cm long.

Its flowers are borne in catkins. The male catkins are 1 to 2 inches long. They soon become deciduous with 8 to 60 stamens. The female catkins are nearly 3 to 8 inches long.

The blooms form in mid-spring. The fruits grow as egg-shaped capsules with two to three carpels each. They are usually hairy.

The Balsam poplar is most commonly found from coastal Alaska to the California Mountains, with some growing as far south as northwest Mexico. This tree also reaches from the Pacific Ocean to the regions of Rocky Mountains. I find this tree most often growing on wet to moist sites along rivers and in floodplains. It requires lots of water.



*Balsam poplar, Lynden Gerdes @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database, Public Domain*



## Edible Use

Some frugal housewives dry the inner bark of balsam poplar and grind it into a powder. This powder is used as a thickener in soups or added to flour while making bread. Catkins can be used raw or cooked. They have a bitter taste that doesn't suit my preferences, but others enjoy the flavor.

## Medicinal Use

Aiyana taught me to use balsam poplar as an effective medicine to treat many health problems, especially skin problems and lung ailments. It is also valuable as an antiseptic tonic and expectorant. The leaf buds possess different properties like antiseptic, antiscorbutic, stimulant, tonic and diuretic. The bark, leaf buds, and resin are most often used.

## Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis and Respiratory Diseases

The bark of balsam poplar has proven to be a highly effective treatment for respiratory illness. The anti-inflammatory effects soothe swollen airways, while the herb expels mucus and relieves pain and fever. It also has anti-microbial effects that combat the causes of the disease. I have used balsam poplar bark often for treating colds and respiratory illness with good results. Most patients show immediate positive results with treatment.

When treating severe congestion, I like to use a steam treatment. I put poplar balsam buds into boiling water and have the patient sit nearby, breathing in the cooled steam. This seems to release the phlegm and give quick relief.

## Rheumatism

Balsam poplar reduces the pain and inflammation of rheumatic joints. For rheumatic pain, I prescribe daily consumption of tea made from the bark.

I also use the Balsam Poplar extract as a rub for aching joints where the pain is intense.

## Skin Conditions

For skin diseases, inflamed skin, cuts, wounds, burns, bruises, acne, rashes, and other related skin conditions, balsam poplar is a good herbal treatment. The resin from the buds soothes and moisturizes irritated skin and burns, and the tea makes a good wash for general skin irritations. It relieves pain and itching while calming the inflammation. The resin can be used fresh or extracted with alcohol. My recipe for Balsam Poplar Resin Extract is found below.

## Recipes

### Balsam Poplar Resin Extract

Balsam poplar leaf buds, water, 100 proof vodka or grain alcohol

1. Boil the leaf buds in water until cooked through and the resin separates. Allow the solution to cool.
2. Separate the resin from the water. The resin will be floating on the surface. Drain the leaf buds.
3. Add the resin and drained leaf buds to a jar. Fill the jar with 100 proof alcohol and allow the buds to steep for two weeks, shaking daily.



*Balsam poplar, Vera de Kok, CC by SA 3.0*

4. Strain out the leaf buds and store the extract in a cool, dark place.

### Balsam Poplar Tea

1 ounce of balsam poplar bark, chopped fine, 1 pint of water

1. Add the chopped bark and water to a non-reactive pot and bring to a boil. Cover the pot, reduce the heat, and simmer for 5 minutes.
2. Allow the tea to cool and strain out the bark. Take 1 cup daily.

### Bayberry, *Myrica Carolinensis*

Bayberry fruit is a favorite among the local bird populations, and I use this to my advantage when hunting. I have sometimes been able to sneak up on a flock of wild turkey while they munched on the fruit. It is not as easy as it sounds, however, because the bayberry bushes grow in wet bogs and thickets. Other birds also enjoy the fruit and seeds throughout the winter.

I most often find bayberry growing on the east coast, from Texas to Maryland. They grow in marshes and bogs near the sandy coast. I have also seen them along the banks of the great lakes.

The plant is an evergreen shrub, sometimes deciduous, growing 4 to 6 feet tall. It has long, elongated leathery dark green leaves with jagged edges, hanging from thin, small trunks. The shrubs produce either all male or all female flowers. Male flowers have 3 to 5 stamens, while female flowers produce globular fruit that is coated with wax. Flowers appear in the spring to early summer, and fruit follows in the late summer and fall.

Another bayberry, *Myrica pensylvanica* grows further north, but the range overlaps. I can easily tell the shrubs apart by examining the leaves. The *Myrica pensylvanica* leaves are greener and lack hairs on the fruit wall and papillae. They are also rounder at the tips, while the Southern Bayberry come to a point. *Myrica pensylvanica* does not have all of the healing properties of *Myrica Carolinensis*, in my experience.

### Harvesting Bayberry

I use bayberry root bark for most medicinal preparations, and occasionally the leaves and berries. I collect the root bark in the late fall or early winter and dry it for future use. I store the pieces in sections, then chop it or powder it when needed to keep it fresh. Store the bark in a tightly sealed container in a cool, dark place.

Harvest the bayberries when they are at the peak of ripeness and extract the wax as soon as possible. Retain both the wax and the water for medicinal use.



10 Northern Bayberry, *Myrica pensylvanica*, Photo by Derek Ramsey - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.5



## Medicinal Preparations

### Diarrhea, Colitis and Digestive Issues

I recommend powdered bayberry root mixed in a glass or water for bowel and digestive issues. It is effective in the treatment of diarrhea and colitis. When bayberry root is not available, a tea made from the leaves may be substituted.

### Dysentery

I feel that dysentery needs stronger medicine, so I use a concentrated extract made from the bayberry fruit. My recipe for the extract is found below. The dosage depends on how concentrated the extract is made. I prefer to use a few drops of a concentrated solution over large amounts of tea.



*Bayberries, CC by SA 3.0*

### Common Cold and Sore Throats

Powdered bayberry root in a glass of cold water makes a soothing gargle for sore throats and colds. Cold bayberry leaf tea can also be used. The root bark is an astringent that brings blood to the area to speed healing.

### Reduce Fevers

Those same qualities that bring blood to the surface and speed healing also dilate the capillaries in the skin and induce perspiration. The body is cooled, and the fever is reduced. I recommend a few drops of Bayberry extract to reduce fevers.

### Muscle Aches and Rheumatic Joints

The wax of the bayberries contains pain relieving agents. Combined with the healing benefits of the powdered root, it makes an excellent salve for aching joints and muscles.

## Recipes

### Bayberry Tea

1 tablespoon dried bayberry leaves or crushed root, 1 cup water

Bring the water to a boil and pour it over the leaves or root. Allow leaves to steep for 10 to 15 minutes and root bark to steep for 20 to 30 minutes. Strain the tea. Use hot or cold.

### Bayberry Fruit Extract

Gather bayberries in the mid-fall when the fruit is fully ripe. Wash the berries in cold water and pick out stray sticks, leaves, and other debris. Place the berries in an old pot, preferably one reserved for wax making, and cover them with water by at least two inches. Bring the pot to a simmer, but do not boil. Simmer the berries for at least one hour. Pour off the water while it is still hot and simmer it again for a few more minutes.

Turn off the heat and allow the water to cool overnight. In the morning, remove the solid wax from the water and keep it for other uses. Put the water back over low heat and simmer it again to reduce the volume greatly, leaving a few cups of



water only. This concentrates the medicinal qualities so that only a few drops are needed per dose. Store the extract for up to 3 days in the refrigerator or divide it into smaller containers and freeze it for future use.

### Bayberry Salve = for external use only

1/4 to 1/2 cup extracted bayberry wax, 1 cup olive oil or other carrier oil, more if needed, 1 tablespoon powdered bayberry root

Add the powdered bayberry root to the olive oil and place over low heat. Warm the oil and powdered root together for 30 minutes to extract the benefits from the root. Add the bayberry wax, stirring, until it is melted and the wax and oil are thoroughly combined.

Cool the mixture and test the consistency. Add more wax if the salve is too loose or more oil if it is too stiff. The consistency will depend on your extracted wax and may vary between batches.

### Black Crowberry, *Empetrum Nigrum*

*Empetrum nigrum*, also known as Black Crowberry, is a low shrub that reaches a height of 10 inches. They form a dense mat on the ground because of the bulkiness of the plant. The leaves are simple and narrow, with their sides curled backward. The color of the leaves is light green. Crowberry sheds its leaves every 2 to 4 years. The leaves are covered with glands that are known for producing toxic substances.

Black Crowberry produces small, individual purple flowers during the summer. When I was about 10, I gathered a bunch of crowberries to take home. Another kid came along and dared me to eat them. I couldn't resist a dare, but I have to tell you, I will never forget the taste of that mouthful. They were so sour; I'm surprised my mouth isn't still puckered.



*Crowberry, Maseltov, CC by SA 3.0*

### Edible Parts

The berries or the fruit is the only edible part of the plant, but the twigs are sometimes used as a tea. Crowberries have slightly acidic and bitter taste, which is why they are almost never consumed fresh. They are usually used for pies, jams, jellies, ice-creams, juices, and wine.

### Medicinal uses:

I use the fruit, leaves, and roots of Black Crowberry as a medicine.

### Diarrhea, Dysentery, and Gastroenteritis

Diarrhea and other stomach illnesses respond well to my Crowberry Leaf Infusion made from the leaves and stems of the black crowberry. The infusion calms the irritation of the digestive tract and reduces inflammation so that it can heal. The cooked berries can also be used for gastroenteritis.

### Colds and Flu

My Crowberry and Spruce Decoction is effective in treating colds and flu. It has anti-microbial action, reduces fever, and helps the body to heal quickly. My patients report that this decoction helps them shake the colds faster and lessens their severity.



## Menstrual Problems

Abnormal menstrual bleeding responds well to treatment with the Crowberry Leaf Infusion. Take one tablespoon, three times daily to stop abnormal bleeding and normalize the menstrual cycles.

## Nervous Disorders

For disorders of the nerves, crowberry decoction is a potential treatment. It calms the inflammation, soothes the nerves and seems to help them heal. I have witnessed its use for epilepsy where it reduced the number of attacks over the period of almost a year, but I have not had the ability to study its long-term use in depth. I would recommend trying crowberry as a treatment for situations where nerves are damaged or reacting inappropriately.



Photo by Mary Ellen (Mel) Harte, Bugwood.org, CC by SA 3.0

## Kidney Stones

My Crowberry Decoction is also effective against kidney problems and kidney stones with long-term use. Take one tablespoon of the decoction, three to four times daily when problems are acute, then use a maintenance dose of 1 tablespoon daily to prevent future stones.

## Acne and Skin Eruptions

Crowberry Decoction is a good treatment for acne and other skin irritations such as rashes, bites, or itches. Dab it onto the affected areas and let it dry in place. I have also used Crowberry Leaf Infusion as a wash for the affected skin. Apply the wash or the decoction three to four times a day or as needed.

## Recipes

### Harvesting Crowberry

The fruits of black crowberries are ripe and ready to harvest between August and September. They can be harvested until the onset of winter or it can be allowed to winter on the plant for harvesting in the spring. The berries keep well over winter as long as the birds don't eat them.

### Crowberry Leaf Infusion

1-ounce leaves and stems of the crowberry plant, 1 cup boiling water

1. Chop the leaves and stems into fine pieces and cover them with boiling water. Cover the container tightly.
2. Let the herbs steep until the liquid has cooled to room temperature. Strain out the herbs
3. Drink the infusion in divided doses, four times daily or as needed.

### Crowberry and Spruce Decoction

1 ounce of chopped leaves and stems of the crowberry plant, 1 ounce of immature tips of the spruce tree, chopped fine, 1 pint of water

1. Place the water, crowberry plant, and spruce tips into a non-reactive pot and cover with 1 pint of water.

2. Bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer. Simmer the mixture until the liquid is reduced by one fourth, leaving 3 cups.
3. Cool the liquid until it is cool enough to hand, and then strain out the herbs.
4. Store the decoction in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze for up to one month.
5. Take 1 tablespoon of the decoction, 3 to 4 times daily.

### Black Walnut, Eastern (*Juglans nigra*)

The eastern black walnut is a deciduous tree in the walnut family, Juglandaceae. It is widespread in the Eastern United States. I like to keep a generous supply of this useful herb on hand, and I have been lucky enough to find trees when needed. Many of the trees are being cut for their wood and to clear land, making them harder to find. I now keep notes on the location of the tree when I find it.

#### Plant Identification

To locate this tree, I first look for the tallest trees. Black walnut trees grow to 130 feet tall with a tall, straight trunk in shady areas and a short, broad crown in open areas, so it usually stands out. The bark is grey-black with deep, thin ridges that appear to give the bark a diamond-shaped pattern.

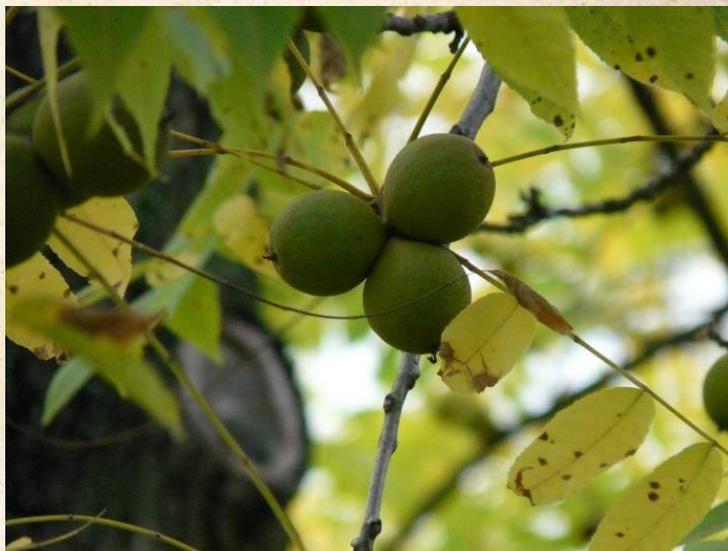
Buds are pale colored and covered in hairs. Terminal buds are 5/16 inch long and oval shaped. Lateral buds are smaller.

I also look for long leaves. The compound leaves are arranged alternately and 1 to 2 feet long. Stems have 15 to 23 leaflets, each 3 to 4 inches long and 3/4 to 1 1/4 inches wide. Leaflets have a rounded base, pointed tip, and a serrated edge. Leaves are dark green, smooth on top and hairy on the bottom.

The black walnut has both male and female flowers. Male flowers appear first on drooping catkins, approximately 3 to 4 inches long, on the previous year's growth. Female flowers appear on new growth in clusters of two to five flowers.



Derek Ramsey, photographed at Chanticleer Garden, CC by SA 3.0



The fruit (nuts) ripen in the fall. A brownish-green husk covers the brown nut. The nut, including the husk, falls to the ground in October or November and is harvested from the ground. The seed is small and hard. Fruit production is irregular with some years producing more than others.

While the nut lacks odor, I notice that most parts of the tree have a characteristic pungent or spicy odor.

#### Edible and Other Use

The seed is edible, either raw or cooked. The flavor is rich and sweet. I've enjoyed the unripe nut pickled, and I always look forward to the spring when that the sap of the tree can be and drunk or concentrated into syrup or sugar.



One of my patients has confided that she uses the black walnut hulls as a hair dye, but I haven't tried it myself.

### Medicinal Uses

Black Walnut is believed to be an Anodyne, anti-inflammatory, astringent, blood purifier, blood tonic, detergent, emetic, laxative, pectoral, and vermifuge. I have heard that the green hulls are more potent than the mature black hulls, but I have success using both green and mature hulls.

### To Treat and Prevent Parasites

Black walnut hull, used along with cloves and wormwood, is my first choice remedy for parasite and worm infections. I have used this protocol for all different types of parasite infections. Start the day with 5 or 6 ground cloves or 20 drops of clove extract in a full glass of water. Follow the cloves with 20 to 40 drops of black walnut hull extract and 20 drops of wormwood extract in 2 ounces of water 30 minutes later. Follow this dosage morning and evening for 2 weeks, stop for 2 weeks, then repeat again for another 2 weeks. This protocol will kill the eggs, larva, and adult worms and parasites. As a preventative, the morning doses only are required.



*Autumn foliage, By Famartin - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0,*

### Skin Care

For preventing and treating blemishes, acne, psoriasis, eczema, warts, poison ivy, and other skin conditions, I make a poultice from ground black walnut husks and water. For sensitive skin, I mix a little of the powdered husk with a carrier oil, cream, or salve. I also recommend powdered walnut hull to be applied dry as a powder.

### Use as an Antifungal

Black walnut hull is usually my first choice for treating fungal infections. Black walnut contains juglone and tannins that I have found to be very effective for treating yeast infections, including *Candida albicans*, in the gut and on the skin. Externally, black walnut is effective against Athlete's foot, ringworm, tinea pedis, xerisus, jock itch and other common fungal infections. I use the juice from the fruit husk externally as a treatment for ringworm or make a poultice from powdered husks when fresh hulls aren't available. I have noticed that powdered hulls applied as a dry powder into the folds of the skin are absorbent, which gives it additional value for surface yeast infections and heat rashes.

### Black Walnut for Digestion

The anti-inflammatory activity of black walnut is useful in treating upset stomach, inflamed colon or gut, and normalizing the digestive process. I've also used black walnut hull to treat constipation, diarrhea, and as a laxative. For digestive problems, I usually recommend 10 to 20 drops of black walnut hull tincture in a little water.

### Heart Healthy Black Walnut

Black walnuts contain beneficial omega-3 fatty acids and other healthy compounds. My patients that eat black walnuts daily tend to lower their cholesterol levels and blood pressure. I believe that they are beneficial for preventing heart disease and reducing heart damage after a heart attack.



### Black Walnut for Sore Throat and Respiratory Conditions

Black walnut is also very effective for soothing sore throats, relieving the irritation and inflammation. To use black walnut for sore throats, I recommend gargling with 20 drops of black walnut extract in a glass of water.

### Black Walnut Hulls for Snake Bite and Spider Bites

Though I have not used black walnut hull for snake bites, I have heard of its use as a poultice. I use black walnut hull poultices to draw the poison from spider bites with good effect. For this application, mix ground walnut hulls with a little water to form a paste. Apply it to the affected part and allow it to dry in place, repeating the application until the swelling and pain are gone.

### Black Walnuts as an Anti-Viral

From ancient times, herbalists have used the nut of the black walnut tree to prevent and treat viral infections. I find that black walnuts and black walnut hulls inhibit the reproduction of viruses, including herpes. I recommend Black Walnut tincture daily as an anti-viral when exposed to a serious virus disease, or the consumption of a small handful of walnuts daily to prevent and treat viral diseases.

### Editor's Note: Black Walnut for HIV

A recent study published in *Phytotherapy Research* found that juglone in black walnut inhibits replication of the HIV virus. While there are no therapeutic recommendations yet, it would be advisable for those exposed or infected by HIV to eat a small handful of black walnuts daily or to take Black Walnut Tincture or Extract daily.

### Harvesting Instructions

I wear gloves when collecting black walnuts since the husk stains my hands. I collect only the nuts that have fallen to the ground, nuts that remain on the tree are not yet mature. Remove the black or green to yellowish green hull from the nut. I eat the nuts and save the husk for use in poultices, tinctures, and for use as a powder. Some herbalists recommend only using the husk green, but I also use the mature, black hulls when the green are not available.

To store black walnuts inside their shell, I lay them out in a layer on paper and allow them to dry for a few days after harvesting. Store them in a dry, squirrel-proof area. To crack nuts, use a hammer, nut cracker, or a vise to crack the shell. Remove the meat inside.

Black walnut leaves can be picked for use throughout the season, I use them as a back up in the off-season, when hulls are not available.

### Warnings

Side effects associated with black walnut use are not common. However, it is important to note that nut allergies are very common. Black walnuts or any of their products should not be given to anyone allergic to tree nuts.

Another caution is associated with the use of black walnuts by pregnant women. While the risk is low, it is possible that birth defects, miscarriage or other negative effects could occur. It is best to avoid black walnut and other herbal remedies if you are pregnant or nursing.

### Recipes

#### Black Walnut Extract

Black walnut hulls, water

Simmer the black walnut hulls, in enough water to cover them, for a few minutes. Turn off the heat and allow the mixture to cool. Strain and keep covered in the refrigerator. Use 6 to 10 drops of Black Walnut extract daily.

### Black Walnut Hull Tincture

A tincture made from black walnut hulls is useful for treating hypothyroidism, gallbladder congestion, and stones, digestive problems including diarrhea and constipation, intestinal worms, fungal infections on the skin. Take 20 drops of tincture in a little water, up to three times daily.

Ground walnut hulls, vodka or brandy, or 80 proof or higher

1. Place the ground hulls in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the hulls to cover them completely.
3. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days.
4. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the hulls completely covered.
5. Soak the hulls for 4 to 6 weeks.
6. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid.
7. Discard the hulls. Place the alcohol extract in a cool place, undisturbed overnight.
8. Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining hull residue.
9. Store the tincture in a tightly capped glass bottle in a cool, dark place.

### Black Walnut Leaf Tincture

The leaf tincture made from black walnut leaves is useful in treating ringworm and other fungal infections, acne, and eczema. I use the leaf tincture when the hulls are not available.

Follow the instructions for making a Black Walnut Hull Tincture, substituting chopped black walnut leaves for the hulls.

### Burning Bush, Western (*Euonymus occidentalis*)

Western burning bush is a species of spindle tree, also known as western wahoo and the winged spindle tree. I have found it in the west, from British Columbia south to California, mostly along the west coast. I find it mainly in shaded streambanks, moist woods, canyons, and high in the mountains.

#### Plant Identification

Western burning bush is a deciduous shrub, growing to 6 to 20 feet when mature. It has slender branches, often climbing, and twigs are usually 4-angled.

The leaves are tiny and ovate, approximately 1/2 inches long, sometimes with rolled edges, and are finely toothed with pointed tips and rounded or tapered bases.

The inflorescence forms on the end of a long peduncle with one to five flowers. Each flower has five rounded maroon to brownish purple petals, finely dotted with white spots, growing around a central nectar disc. Flowers appear April to June.

The fruit is a rounded capsule with three lobes. Each of the three lobes opens to reveal a brown seed surrounded by red pulp.



Western Burning Bush, Dean Wm. Taylor, Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley, CC by SA 3.0



## Medicinal Use

The standard dose is 1 to 6 drops of Burning Bush Tincture or 1 to 2 teaspoons of infusion, depending on the size and age of the patient.

## Western Burning Bush as a Stomach Tonic

Infusions, syrup, and Tinctures are all useful as a stomach tonic, for dyspepsia, indigestion, torpid liver, constipation, and gastric debility. It stimulates the flow of bile and improves the appetite. I prescribe the standard dose listed above for these uses.

## Irregular Menstruation

For suppressed or irregular menstruation and other gynecological problems, I prescribe the standard dose of burning bush tincture or infusion daily.



*Fruit of Burning Bush, Franz Xaver, GFDL, CC by SA*

## To Treat Dropsy

The diuretic properties of western burning bush make it a good treatment for dropsy. It flushes out the retained fluids in the tissues and reduces swelling.

## Anti-Malarial

Western Burning Bush Extract and Infusion both have considerable anti-malarial influence. I use either one in standard doses with quinine after the chill has broken.

## Warnings

Do not prescribe during pregnancy. Do not ingest the fruits of burning bush. They may cause vomiting, diarrhea, and loss of consciousness.

## Recipes

### Western Burning Bush Infusion

1 ounce chopped and crushed western burning bush bark, 1 quart water

1. Place 1 quart of water and one ounce of crushed western burning bush bark in a small pot with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Bring the water to a boil and turn off the heat.
3. Cover the pot tightly and leave it undisturbed to steep as it cools.
4. Steep the bark for 4 hours.
5. Strain well and store the liquid in the refrigerator. Use within 3 days.

This infusion is stronger than a normal tea. Use 1 to 2 teaspoons per dose.

### Western Burning Bush Tincture

Fresh or dried burning bush bark or seeds, chopped and crushed, vodka or brandy, or 80 proof or higher

1. Chop and crush the bark and seeds into small pieces.

2. Place the herbs in a clean, dry jar with a tight-fitting lid.
3. Pour 80 proof or higher vodka or brandy over the herbs to cover them completely.
4. Cover tightly and place the jar in a cool, dark place. Shake the jar every 2 to 3 days.
5. Watch the alcohol level and add more if needed to keep the burning bush completely covered.
6. Soak the herbs for 4 to 6 weeks.
7. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve or cheesecloth. Squeeze out all liquid.
8. Discard the herbs. Place the alcohol extraction in a cool place, undisturbed overnight.
9. Strain again through a coffee filter or decant to remove any remaining herb residue.
10. Store the tincture in a tightly capped glass bottle in a cool, dark place.
11. Use 1 to 6 drops of Burning Bush Tincture daily.

### Catclaw Acacia, *Acacia greggii*

This is an innocent looking tree that can cut you if you get too close. Acacia Greggii is a shrubby tree with common names like Catclaw and wait-a-minute-tree. The height of the tree is usually 3 feet to 10 feet tall, but it can reach up to 30 feet. The diameter of the mature trunk is 8 to 12 inches. The grey and green leaves are deciduous and are at the top of the plant with dry, pointy thorns at the bottom part of the tree. These thorns give the plant its name and make it impossible to pass through. I once treated a boy who had run and pushed his way into a thicket of these trees, then was too wary to push back out. He stayed there for hours, bleeding until a search was mounted and he was safely removed. The thorn has an angry bite.



*Catclaw Acacia, Joshua National Park, Public Domain*

The flower that grows is creamy white with 2-inch spikes and has a fragrance. The flower blooms from April to October.



*By Sue in az - Own work, Public Domain*

Blooms form on densely packed cylindrical spikes. Individual flowers are approximately 1/8 inch across with five cream-colored petals and yellow stamens.

The fruit is a flat, twisted bean pod that grows up to 6 inches long and contains three to five hard, flat brown bean-like seeds. Catclaw Acacia is a native Southwestern American and northern Mexican plant that grows from the extreme south of Utah to Southern Nevada. It is also found in California, Arizona, and Western Texas.

#### Edible Use

Although the under-ripe Catclaw bean pods are edible, they are not usually eaten. Ripe seeds contain poisonous substances. Unripe seeds can be dried and ground for use in cakes and as flour or to make porridge. Unripe pods can also be used as animal feed.

#### Harvesting Catclaw Acacia

For harvesting catclaw acacia, the seeds need to be hand collected before the beans are ripe. Mature beans will split open and should



not be used. The beans produce toxins when fully mature. Dry the beans and grind for use.

### Medicinal Use

Catclaw benefits the immune system, cardiovascular system, reduces inflammation and pain, as well as its benefits for specific illnesses. Take 1/4 teaspoon of powdered seeds, once or twice daily.

### Rheumatoid Arthritis

The anti-inflammatory effects of catclaw helps reduce the pain and swelling of rheumatoid arthritis. My patients report a reduction in pain and in the total number of inflamed joints, over time. In my limited experience, it seems to be safe for long-term use. One patient, an 80-year old woman, suffered greatly from arthritis and had become quite sedentary due to the pain. Within a few weeks of beginning catsclaw, I found her working in the garden on my next visit. She reported that she almost felt young again. Not all patients react as well, but her story keeps me prescribing it. I have only had one patient who had to discontinue use due to increasingly bad headaches; most patients tolerate it well.

### Osteoarthritis

Like with rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis patients also report reduced pain and swelling when using catclaw. The anti-inflammatory effects reduce swelling and pain during activity, however, no reduction of pain at rest was noted.

### High Blood Pressure

Catclaw acts as a diuretic and reduces blood pressure in cases of moderate high blood pressure.

### Warnings

Most patients tolerate catclaw well. However, there is always the possibility for minor or even serious reactions. Catclaw can cause an allergic reaction in susceptible people. Some patients have reported headaches, nausea, dizziness, diarrhea, and low blood pressure.



Creosete Bush with Flowers, Wikipedia Commons

### Chaparral or Creosote Bush, *Larrea tridentate*

*Larrea tridentate* belongs to Zygophyllaceae family and genus *Larrea*. It is also known as creosote bush, greasewood and called chaparral by herbalists and healers. I learned to call it chaparral bush from the Native American healer that introduced me to its medicinal use.

### Plant Identification

Chaparral bush is an evergreen shrub growing from 3 feet to 10 feet tall and rarely 12 feet. The stems of this plant bear resinous, dark green leaves along with two opposite, lanceolate leaflets joined at the base, with a deciduous bristle between them, each leaflet is 2 3/4 inch to 7 inches long and up to 1/3 inch wide. The flowers are up to 1 inch in diameter, with five yellow petals. Galls can be formed by the activity of the creosote gall midge. This whole plant exhibits a characteristic odor of creosote, from which the common name is derived.

This plant is a prominent species in the Mojave, Sonoran, and Chihuahuan Deserts of western North America, and its range also includes regions in southeastern California, Arizona, southwestern Utah, southern Nevada, New Mexico, and Texas.



11 Chaparral, photo by Adbar, CC by SA 3.0

### Harvesting and Storing

I prefer to harvest chaparral bush in dry weather before the plant has flowered so that the highest concentration of the active ingredients is in the leaves. I also collect it at other times as needed when my supplies grow low.

Collection of this plant is best undertaken at midday when the chemical activity of the plant is the highest. It can be dried in a warm, shady place, or in the artificial heat at temperatures less than 130 degrees Fahrenheit.

There are many methods, but one of the simplest methods of drying the herb is to collect the leaves, put them into a large paper sack and then put the sack in a warm, dry place for a few days. I store it in an airtight glass jar in a cool, dark place. For long-term storage, I seal the jar lid with paraffin wax to protect it from humidity.

### Edible Use

I have had the flower buds pickled and used as a substitute for capers. The stems and leaves make a good tea. The resin obtained from the leaves and twigs acts as a preservative for oils and fats. Moreover, the twigs, when chewed, alleviate thirst.

### Medicinal Use

When I first came to know chaparral bush, I spoke to many Native Americans who related its medicinal uses to me. They used a strong tea made from its leaves to treat diarrhea and stomach problems. The young twigs were used to treat a toothache, and a poultice of its leaves was used to treat the chest complaints and as a wash for various skin problems.

### Treating Toothaches

For sensitive teeth and toothaches originating from cavities, I learned to heat the young shoot tips of the plant to produce sap, then drip the sap resin into the tooth cavity. This seals the tooth temporarily and stops the pain.

### Pulmonary and Respiratory Problems, Venereal Diseases, and Urinary Tract Infections

In the past, I used Chaparral Tea and Chaparral Tincture as an expectorant for respiratory problems and as a pulmonary antiseptic, as well as a treatment for VD, rheumatism, and UTIs. In recent years (the 1960s), there has been some concern over possible toxic effects on the liver, so I have begun to limit its internal use. I have not noted liver damage in any of my patients, but I am always careful to do no harm. I have included the recipe for Chaparral Tincture are found below. I have also used Chaparral Tea as a treatment for gall stones and kidney stones. I had the patient sip the tea throughout the day, consuming several cups over the course of the day.

### Wounds, Burns, Bruises, Allergic Rashes, Chicken Pox

A salve made from chaparral bush is a good choice for wounds, burns, bruises, rashes. The tincture applied externally is also a good choice when the skin is not broken. On broken skin, the vinegar has a strong stinging effect and may be too painful to apply. My recipe for the tincture and salve are found below. Chaparral has antimicrobial benefits on the skin's surface. It slows bacterial replication and kills off the infection. For this reason, I find a strong tea, tincture or salve to be best applied directly to the skin. I also sometimes make a poultice from the ground leaves, apply it to the skin, and cover it with a clean cloth.



## Acne, Psoriasis, and Dandruff

I use Chaparral Tincture externally on acne, psoriasis, and Dandruff. The antibiotic and anti-inflammatory properties are beneficial as well as the tannin content and other medicinal benefits.

## Arthritis and Rheumatism

My patients have good results using Chaparral Tincture made with alcohol as a rub to relieve the pain of arthritis and rheumatism. The vinegar variety can also be used, but the alcohol rub seems to work best for most patients with arthritis and rheumatism.

## Recipes

### Chaparral Tincture

1 ounce dried chaparral plant, 1-pint apple cider vinegar (80 proof vodka can also be used). Place the dried chaparral plant into the jar and cover it completely with apple cider vinegar. Allow the plant to marinate in the vinegar for two to six weeks, then strain the vinegar through a coffee filter to remove the herb. Keep it tightly covered in a cool, dry place. Use 1 teaspoon of the tincture, once or twice a day, as needed.

### Chaparral Salve

Carrier oil such as olive oil or liquid coconut oil, dried chaparral leaves, beeswax

1. Fill the jar half-full with dried chaparral. Cover the herbs with olive oil, filling the jar to near the top. Cover the jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Place the jar in a sunny location for four to six weeks, or longer, shaking it daily.
3. Strain out the herbs.
4. Measure the oil and add 1/4 the amount of beeswax. So if you had 1 cup of oil, add 1/4 cup of beeswax. Heat the two together gently only until the wax melts. (I use a tempered jar over a double boiler.)
5. Mix the wax and oil, then put it in a wide mouth container with a tight lid.
6. Use within one year.

## Chokecherry, *Prunus Virginiana*

I think of chokecherry as a plant that has lost its identity. It is edible but rarely eaten these days because of its acidity and astringent nature. It is medicinal but has lost most of its following here also. Insects find chokecherry to be their favorite host plant and some birds feed on the ripe fruit of the plant, but man has mostly ignored this valuable plant.

### Plant Identification

*Prunus Virginiana* is a small tree or a deciduous shrub that grows as tall as 20-30 ft. The leaf blade for this plant is simple, not separated into leaflets (lobed and unlobed). The length of each leaf is measured to be 50-120mm and the width to be 25-55mm.

The leaves are large, about 4 inches in length and 2 1/2 inches wide, and elliptic in shape. They are dark green in color with a glossy upper side and paler on the underside with delicately jagged margins and no hairs. They turn yellow in autumn.



Matt Lavin from Bozeman, Montana, USA, CC3.0

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



Between the clusters of leaves are white showy flowers that are approximately 3-6 inches long. The flowers bloom in May and June, while the fruit appears in August.

Stems are woody with a brown to grey color that becomes more uneven or creased with age. Chokecherry bark ranges in color from brown or gray, to purple and red, but the texture of all the bark is smooth and thin in appearance.

*Prunus Virginiana* is a North American Native that grows across the northern US as far south as North Carolina. I usually have no problem finding it when I'm in the area. I sometimes find it further south in a cultivated setting.

### Edible Uses

The edible part of *Prunus Virginiana* is the fruits and seeds. The raw berry is edible and has a good flavor, but is highly astringent. In cooking, they are generally used in pies and jellies where the sugar counters the sour flavor. The berries contain high amounts of pectin, so they are often combined with lower pectin fruits when making syrups, jams, and jellies. The fruit can also be used to make wine and syrups.

Dried berries are used to make pemmican, and the twigs and bark make a fine tea.

### Medicinal uses:

While the use of chokecherry as a medicinal plant is declining, it is still a vital part of my medicine chest. I use it to cure diseases and as a flavoring agent for cough syrups and other bitter medicines.



CCO, Public Domain

### Liver Disease

I have noted chokecherry to be highly protective of the liver. Combined with its anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial, I find it to be an effective treatment for liver disease and fatty liver. It helps the liver and kidneys get rid of toxins and heavy metals in the body.

### Stomach Illness

I prescribe Chokecherry Infusion for gastritis, diarrhea, bloating, heartburn, and stomach ulcers. It has anti-microbial properties that help rid the body of the underlying causes, and it soothes and protects the stomach lining. The anti-inflammatory properties help relieve symptoms and heal the body. My patients with chronic stomach problems find that regular use of chokecherry results in fewer episodes and faster relief. The herb protects the stomach.

### Colds and Flu

An infusion made from the chokecherry berries treats colds and the flu. It stops the growth and spread of the bacteria and viruses that cause the illness.

### Cancer



Chokecherries are high in nutritive vitamins and other substances that help repair the body from the results of abnormal tissue growth and cancers. It boosts the immune system and helps the body fight off cancer. I have had good results using it as part of a cancer-fighting protocol to fight breast cancer and colon cancer.

### Kidney Disease

Chokecherries help the kidneys and liver get rid of accumulated toxins and heavy metals. I prescribe Chokeberry Infusion whenever the kidneys seem to be struggling or overloaded.

### Open Wounds and Burns

Chokecherry Bark Infusion is an excellent wash for treating sores, open wounds, and large burns. The anti-inflammatory properties along with the anti-microbial properties help the skin and tissue to heal.

### Warning:

The seeds are said to have a high concentration of hydrogen cyanide, which is a poison that gives almonds their characteristic flavor. This toxin can be easily detected by the bitter taste. It is usually present in small quantity. In large amounts, it can be deadly; however, in small quantities, hydrogen cyanide has been shown to stimulate respiration, improve digestion, and suppress cancer growth. Use it carefully.

### Recipes

#### Chokecherry Bark Infusion

1 tablespoon chokecherry bark, ground or chopped fine, 1 cup boiling water, heatproof glass jar with a tight lid. Place the bark in the glass jar and pour the boiling water over it. Cover and seal the jar. Cover it with a cloth to contain the heat and allow it to steep until the water cools. Strain the herb and store the infusion in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours. Take 1 tablespoon of infusion, three times daily.

#### Chokecherry Berry Infusion

Place the chokecherry berries in a non-reactive pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Allow the berries to simmer until they pop and are completely cooked. Sweeten with honey, if desired. Allow the infusion to completely cool, strain it, then store in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours.

### Dogwood, *Cornus Florida*

I always celebrate when I see the dogwood flowering each spring. It signals to me that winter is past and the days will be warming soon. The flowers appear before the leaves when much of the landscape is still bare. This beautiful tree is steeped in history and folklore, but for me, it ushers in the glad tidings of spring.

#### Plant Identification

Dogwood grows in either shrub form or as a small deciduous tree.

The leaves are oval-shaped and prominently veined with a pointed end. They are deep green on the upper surface and a velvety white on the underside. Leaves are untoothed with veins that curve under as they approach the leaf margins.



*Dogwood in spring, Mickaw2, Public Domain*

## The Lost Book Of Remedies

Greenish-white flowers appear in May to June. The small blooms are at the center of four showy, creamy white bracts that appear as petals. Small red drupes form containing one or two seeds each.

### Medicinal Use

The fruit, leaves, and bark are used medicinally. I make a tea and a decoction from the bark that is full of tannins. The drupes are high in vitamin C.

### Malaria

The bark of dogwood trees contains quinine, useful in treating malaria. I recommend Dogwood Bark Tea to treat recurring fevers, including those caused by malaria. The tea induces sweating, which cools the body

### Wound Care

For cuts, burns, and other skin wounds, I use a poultice made from dogwood leaves. I crush the leaves to release their health-giving oils and place them directly on the wound. Cover with a clean cloth.

### Treating Sore Muscles

Dogwood Bark Decoction is useful for easing the pain of sore muscles. Rub the decoction into sore muscles or use it on sore joints.



*Dogwood fruit, KENPEI, CC by SA 3.0*



*Dogwood Leaves, KENPEI, CC by SA 3.0*

### Recipes

#### Dogwood Decoction

A decoction is similar to tea, except made with the hard, woody parts of the herb and cooked for longer periods to extract more of the active ingredients. Decoctions are intended for immediate use and can be stored in the refrigerator for up to three days.

1 ounce of freshly cut and chopped or ground dogwood bark  
2 cups water, distilled is best

1. Place one ounce of freshly chopped or ground dogwood bark into a non-reactive pot.
2. Cover the herb with two cups of water. Bring the water to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer.
3. Allow the herb to simmer until the liquid is reduced by one-quarter (so that 1 1/2 cups of water remain of the original 2 cups.)
4. Cool the decoction and strain.
5. Discard the herb and store the liquid in the refrigerator for up to 72 hours.

Use one to two ounces, up to three times daily.

#### Dogwood Bark Tea

1 tablespoon of shredded or ground dogwood bark, 1 pint of water



Bring the bark and water to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Allow it to cool to drinking temperature and strain out the bark. Drink 1 cup, warm or cold.



*Sambucus Berries, Edal Anton Lefterov, CC by SA 3.0*

### Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*)

Elderberry is a pretty little bush with a lot of potential. My adoptive mother made elderberry syrup every year and dosed me with it when I showed any signs of illness. I have followed in her footsteps, at least in regards to elderberry, and use it to treat colds, bronchitis, skin irritations, bruises, strains, eye irritations, constipation, colic, and diarrhea. It boosts the immune system and promotes healing.

#### Plant Identification

Elderberry grows as a woody shrub, from 3 to 12 feet tall. The stems have a soft white pith. The bark is smooth and green when young with occasional white lenticels. As the wood ages, the bark becomes smooth and brown, and the lenticels become round lumps on the bark. As the shrub

continues to age, the bark develops vertical furrows.

Compound leaves are paired opposite with 5 to 11 lance-like leaves per stem. *S. nigra* usually has five leaflets while *S. Canadensis* usually has 7. I find both species to be equally valuable for medicinal use. Veins in the leaves may disappear after leaving the midrib, or they may continue to the tip of the teeth.

The elderberry blossom is a dense head of white to cream-colored flowers. Flowers are radially symmetrical with five flat white petals and five protruding stamens. The flower head is 6 to 12 inches across.

Elderberries are black or purplish-blue when ripe and occur in clusters.

#### Important Differentiation

Some people have confused elderberry with the deadly poisonous water hemlock, so I want to record the differences. Water hemlock is a herbaceous plant, not woody, and it does not have bark. The main stem of water hemlock is hollow, while elderberry is filled with a soft white pith.

Water hemlock stems often have purple streaks or splotches. The nodes are usually purple. Older plants may be entirely purple. I always point out the differences and make sure that patients know how to be sure of their identification since water hemlock is an extremely deadly poison.



*Sambucus canadensis flower head, J.M.Gara, CC by 3.0*

## The Lost Book Of Remedies



Koehler's Medicinal Plants, Public Domain

### Edible Parts

The *Sambucus nigra* variety of Elderberry is the only variety of elderberry considered non-toxic when used fresh, but I always cook all varieties. Other varieties of elderberry fruit pulp and skin are edible when picked fully ripe and then cooked. However, uncooked berries and other parts of the plant are poisonous. The flowers are edible when completely dried, do not use them fresh.

I use cooked fresh berries to make elderberry syrup, elderberry wine, and cordials. The dried berries make a tasty elderberry tea.

### Medicinal Uses

The flowers, leaves, and cooked berries are all useful remedies.

### Dosage

I recommend 1 to 2 teaspoons of syrup for adults and 1/2 to 1 teaspoon for kids, four times daily, at the first sign of a cold or flu. It reduces the severity and duration of the illness. Use it once a day as a preventative when flu outbreaks are nearby.

Immune-Boosting Elderberry Tea or Elderberry Flower Tea is also a good choice for flu victims. It induces sweating and brings down fevers while lessening the impact of the flu. Take Elderberry Tea two to three times daily.

### Elderberry for Bronchitis and Colds

Ayiana's Elderberry syrup is an anti-viral and anti-inflammatory. It has strengthened my family and patients through many colds, bronchitis, and flu outbreaks. Taken early it reduces the chance of catching the flu. Taken after a flu infection, it reduces the spread of the disease throughout the body and lessens the impact of the virus. My flu victims improve within 24 to 48 hours of taking elderberry syrup, while the average recovery time is six days for those who do not use the syrup.

The flowers reduce inflammation and promote perspiration. They have anti-viral, anti-inflammatory, and anti-cancer properties. I use them to reduce the severity and duration of flu infections. They are most effective in combination with yarrow and peppermint.

### Bruises, Sprains

For bruised tissue and muscle sprains, I use chopped elderberry leaves applied as a poultice to the affected area.

### Skin Irritations, Boils, Eczema, and Skin Eruptions

I use Elderberry Bark Tea to wash skin irritations of all kinds. It soothes the irritated skin, reduces inflammation and gives the patient relief. My recipe for Elderberry Bark Tea, makes only one cup but can be made in bulk and refrigerated for up to 3 days. Wash the irritated skin with cool tea several times daily.

### Eye Irritations

I find that unsweetened Elderberry Flower Tea makes a gentle eyewash for eye irritations. Use the recipe for plain flower tea, without the mint.



## Elderberry Enhances the Immune System

Elderberries have long been recognized as a therapy for a variety of illnesses. It is thought that their beneficial effects are due to their ability to strengthen the immune system. I prescribe a daily dose of Elderberry syrup or tea for sickly patients and those with a weak constitution.

## Elderberries Reduces Cholesterol and Has Heart Benefits

My observations tell me that elderberry reduces oxidation of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and the associated risk of atherogenesis and cardiovascular disease. I use 1 to 2 teaspoons of elderberry syrup daily to treat high cholesterol and as a general tonic for heart patients.

## Warnings

All parts of the fresh plant are mildly toxic. Dry or boil berries before use and dry the flowers. Do not use the fresh plant without cooking or drying.

The bark and root are emetic, causing vomiting, and should not be used internally. The leaves and unripe berries are toxic.

## Recipes

### Elderberry Syrup

Use 1 to 2 teaspoons for adults and ½ to 1 teaspoon for kids. Take once a day as a flu preventative and 4 times daily if infected.

Elderberries, water and honey

1. Place fresh elderberries, with stems removed, in a pan and add a small amount of water to cover the bottom of the pan.
2. Heat the berries gently over medium-low heat.
3. Mash the berries to release the juice or puree the berries in a blender.
4. When all the juice is released, strain the juice through muslin cloth or several layers of cheesecloth. Squeeze the cloth to extract all the juice
5. Measure the juice and mix in an equal amount of honey.
6. Put the syrup in clean pint canning jars and seal.
7. Place the jars in a boiling water bath, completely covered with water and boil for 15 minutes at sea level to 1000 feet in elevation, 20 minutes at higher elevations.
8. Remove the jars from the water and place on a towel to cool. Allow the jars to cool undisturbed.
9. When cool, check the jar seals. Re-process any jar that did not seal or refrigerate it for immediate use.

### Immune-Boosting Elderberry Tea

1 tablespoon dried elderberries, 1/4 teaspoon turmeric powder, 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon powder, 1 teaspoon honey, optional

1. Place elderberries and spices in a small saucepan. Add 1 cup water
2. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes
3. Remove from heat and allow to cool to drinking temperatures
4. Strain through a fine mesh and add honey, if desired
5. This tea can be served hot or col



## Elderberry Flower Tea

1 teaspoon dried elderberry flowers (do not use fresh), 1 cup boiling water, honey or stevia to sweeten, as desired

1. Pour boiling water over elderberry flowers
2. Steep the tea for 10 minutes.
3. Add honey or stevia to sweeten the tea. This is not necessary but improves the sour flavor. Omit sweetener if using as a wash.

## Elderberry Bark Tea

1-ounce dried elderberry bark, crushed into fibers, 1 cup water

1. Bring the elderberry bark and water to a boil and simmer gently for 20 minutes.
2. Allow the tea to cool.
3. Strain off and discard the bark fibers
4. Use the tea as a wash for skin eruptions, infections, and other irritations.

## Honey Locust, *Gleditsia Triacanthos*

Honey Locust is a deciduous tree that belongs to the Fabaceae family and genus *Gleditsia*. It is also known as the Thorny Locust. Its Botanical name is *Gleditsia Triacanthos*.

It is a native to central North America ranging from South Dakota to New Orleans and central Texas, and then as far east as Massachusetts. I think it is one of the most beautiful trees, especially in the fall when the leaves turn a brilliant yellow.

Honey locust is most commonly found on moist, fertile soils near streams and lakes. I also find it on upland woodlands and borders, rocky hillsides, old fields, fence rows, hammocks, river floodplains and rich, moist bottomlands.

### Plant Identification

Honey locusts can reach a height of nearly 66-98 feet with fast growth. Honey locust trees are prone to losing large branches in windstorms. They are armed with thick-branched thorns that can be 8 inches long, mostly occurring on the main trunk and lower branches.

The bark is blackish or grayish-brown in color, with smooth, long, plate-like patches of bark separated by furrows.

Sharp spines or thorns grow on the main trunk and at the bases of the branches. One-year-old twigs have single spines, but older branches have spines arranged in clusters of three. The spines grow from the wood and decrease in number as the tree ages. Young spines are green, but they mature to red, brown, or gray.

Its leaves are deciduous, alternate, pinnately or bipinnately compound and are 4 to 8 inches long. They often have 3-6 pairs of side branches; with pairs of shiny, dark green leaflets. In the fall, they turn bright yellow and drop early.



*Honey Locust Tree by, Famartin, own work*



*Honey Locust Thorns, Greg Hume, CC by SA 3.0*

The flowers are greenish yellow, small and numerous and hanging in clusters. They are 2 to 5 inches long, either staminate (male) or pistillate (female) borne on separate trees. However, each tree will have a few perfect flowers (male and female). The flowers have a pleasant fragrance.

Fruits of Honey locust are flattened and strap-like pods 6 to 16 inches long and 1 to 1 1/2 inches wide. They are dark brown at maturity, pendulous and usually twisted or spiraled, with a sticky, sweet, and flavorful pulp. The seeds inside the pod are beanlike and about 1/3 to 1/2-inch long.

The trees flower in May to June and bear fruit in September to October. The pods sometimes remain on the tree through February.

### Edible Use

The seeds and seedpods are edible. The young seeds taste like raw peas. I have also tried them roasted to make a coffee substitute. The pulp of young seedpods is sweet and can be eaten raw, made into a sweet drink, or made into sugar. As the seedpods mature the pulp turns bitter.

### Preparing Honey Locust Seedpod Powder

To prepare the seedpod powder, the pods must be boiled, soaked, and the seeds removed. Then the pods are dried and ground.

### Medicinal Use

The prominent medicinal properties of Honey locust include anesthetic, antiseptic, cancer-fighting, and stomachic. The pods are antiseptic.

### Cough, Colds, Sore Throats

I prescribe an infusion made from honey locust bark and roots for treating colds and coughs. The inner bark is useful for treating sore throats.

### Anti-Cancer Treatment

The leaves, inner bark, and spines of the honey locust tree are all effective against the growth of cancer cells. I have used a Honey Locust Extract to treat colon cancer, breast cancer, and cancers of the esophagus and larynx. I use the leaves, inner bark, and wood, to make an anti-cancer decoction that inhibits the growth of cancer cells. I prescribe 5 ml of the extract, three times a day or as tolerated. My recipe for Honey Locust Extract is found below.

### Smallpox and Measles

The seedpods are valuable in the treatment of smallpox and measles. Add enough water to 1/2 teaspoon of Honey Locust Seedpod powder to make a thick syrup or use the seedpod pulp fresh. Take three times daily.



## Dyspepsia, Whooping Cough

I recommend Honey Locust Bark Infusion for the treatment of dyspepsia and whooping cough. My recipe for Honey Locust Bark Infusion is below.

### Recipes

#### Honey Locust Extract

1 1/2 pints honey locust leaves and spines, crushed, 1 quart of 100 proof vodka. Place the honey locust leaves and spines in a quart jar, filling it 3/4 full. Fill the jar with 100 proof vodka or other suitable drinking alcohol. Seal the jar tightly.

Place the jar in a warm, sunny spot, like a window sill, and let the herbs marinate for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking every day or two.

Strain the alcohol through a fine sieve or a coffee filter to

remove the leaves and spines. Store the extract in a cool, dark place for up to 7 years. Take 5 ml of extract, up to 3 times daily.



CCO Creative Commons by Hans

#### Honey Locust Seedpod Powder

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil and add the pods. Turn off the heat and soak the pods for at least 4 hours, or overnight.
2. Split the pods lengthwise and remove the seeds. Discard the seeds.
3. Chop the pods into small pieces.
4. Dehydrate the pod pieces at low heat (135 degrees F).
5. Grind the dried pods in a coffee grinder or mortar and pestle until a fine powder is obtained.

#### Honey Locust Bark Infusion

Use the inner bark for this infusion, 2 Tablespoons coarsely chopped honey locust bark, dried, 3 cups water. Bring the dried honey locust bark and the water to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 20 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the tea steep for another 10 minutes. Serve warm. Drink one cup, three times daily.

## Oregon Grape, *Berberis aquifolium*

Oregon grape, also called mountain grape or Oregon grape holly, is a beautiful little shrub used for ornamental and medicinal purposes. I think the leaves look a lot like holly: dark green, leathery and shiny. They are pinnate leaves with spiny leaflets, each leaf about 12 inches long.

The flowers are the state flower of Oregon. They are small, yellow-green flowers grouped in a raceme that produces dark bluish-purple berries when mature. Each flower has six petals and six stamens. At the base of each flower are three green-yellow bracts. They grow in small clusters like grapes. The stems and twigs have a corky appearance.



Oregon Grape, CCO Creative Commons by JamesdeMers



The shrub usually grows three to four feet tall and five feet wide, although it can grow to six feet tall in good conditions. It is native to the American Northwest.

The plant has a small range: from southern Alaska to northern California and from the Pacific coast east to New Mexico. Whenever I am in the area, I look for this herb and stock up on the roots.

### Edible Use

The small purplish berries are edible, although they are very tart and contain large seeds. They are sometimes used to make jelly and wine, but both require extra sugar because of the tartness.



*Oregon Grape Ripe Berries, CCO Creative Commons by ASSY*

### Medicinal Use

I use the bright yellow root of the Oregon grape for medicinal purposes. I use it to make an infusion to be taken three times daily.

### Cleans and Stimulates the Liver, Gallbladder, Spleen, and Blood

Oregon Grape Tea stimulates the liver and the secretion of bile. It also cleans the blood, gallbladder, and spleen. It alleviates the symptoms caused by weakness in these organs, including headaches, digestion problems, and accumulated toxins.



*Oregon Grape Flowers, CCO Creative Commons by Kaboompics*

### Reduce Fevers

To reduce fevers, I encourage the patient to eat the berries or use a jelly or syrup made with the berries. Oregon grapes have a cooling effect on the body and effective at reducing fevers.

### Digestive Disorders

The Oregon grape root tea is excellent for digestive problems including dysentery, diarrhea, gastritis, and other diseases with digestive symptoms. Take three cups daily, as needed.

### Skin Conditions

For skin conditions like acne, boils, psoriasis, eczema, herpes, and other skin conditions related to toxic conditions, I recommend 3 cups of Oregon Grape Tea daily.

### Harvesting Oregon Grape Root

For best medicinal value, I prefer to use roots from mature plants that are at least a year old. I look for the older plants that have attained their full height and have produced fruit. I harvest the roots in the late fall, digging up the entire root system and then replanting the crown roots and any other unused pieces to grow again.



## Cautions

I do not recommend the use of Oregon grape by pregnant women. Patients should limit usage of the berries to reasonable servings and be careful not to over-consume.

## Recipes

### Oregon Grape Tea

1/2 ounce Oregon grape root, dried and crushed, 1-quart water. Combine the root and water in a pot with a tight-fitting lid. Bring to a boil and turn the heat down to a slow simmer. Simmer the tea for 10 to 15 minutes. Strain out the root. Drink one cup of tea, three times daily, as needed.

## Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*

I love the scent and flavor of rosemary. We had a large bush of rosemary growing in the garden growing up, and I would brush against the brush to release the scent every time I walked by. Sometimes I would chew on a sprig. Now I use it mainly to flavor my potatoes and as a medicinal herb.

### Plant Identification

Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*, is a woody perennial herb with pleasantly fragrant needle-like leaves and a fibrous root system. It is an evergreen shrub that can withstand extreme droughts, but not my lawnmower. Most bushes are upright reaching 5 feet tall, but some can develop into trailing plants. The leaves look like tiny pine needles or hemlock needles. They are green on the top and white on the underside, with both sides covered with short, dense, wooly hair.



*Rosemary in bloom, Margalob, CC by SA 4.0*

White, pink, purple, or blue flowers appear in the spring and summer in cooler climates and year-round in warmer climates.

### Medicinal Use

#### Stimulates Digestion

The stimulant properties of rosemary bring better circulation to the digestive organs and help relieve digestive problems, especially indigestion. I recommend using rosemary in the food and taking my tincture or tea with each meal.

#### Improves Concentration and Memory

Rosemary is known as a brain tonic, and my practice has shown it to be true. I have used it for children who are struggling in school with mixed results. It seems to improve concentration and memory, but it does not turn a struggling student into the class genius. It does stimulate the circulatory system and bring more oxygen to the brain.

I have also used it in elderly dementia patients with fair results. It refocuses the brain and improves memory, but the gains are minimal. I use it to slow down the progression of the disease.



For memory and concentration problems, I recommend using Rosemary tea, and I have an excellent recipe for Rosemary Tea with Lemon Thyme. Memory problems also respond to my Rosemary Tincture.



*Rosemary bush, fir0002, GFDL 1.2*

inflamed from arthritis and rheumatism. Patients report that it helps their pain and swelling but does not completely alleviate it. I usually prescribe it in combination with other herbs. (Many good choices are listed here, the choice depends on the herbs available in the patient's location and the severity of the problem.)

### Alleviate Halitosis

Rosemary makes an extremely effective mouthwash. It can get rid of bad breath very quickly. I recommend that patients gargle and rinse the mouth out with my Rosemary Mouthwash every morning and night, more often if needed. My mouthwash recipe is found below.

### Recipes

#### Rosemary and Lemon Thyme Tea

Two tablespoons of dried rosemary leaves or 4 tablespoons of fresh rosemary leaves, two tablespoons of dried lemon thyme or 4 tablespoons of fresh Lemon Thyme, 1 quart boiling water, lemon juice, to taste, honey, to taste

1. Place the herbs in a quart jar and pour the boiling water over them.
2. Let the tea steep for 45 minutes.
3. Strain the herbs out. Drink 1 cup of tea warm or cold. Store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.
4. Add lemon juice and honey to taste just before serving.

#### Rosemary Tincture

Rosemary leaves, finely chopped, brandy, 80 proof

1. Fill a glass jar half full with rosemary leaves. Pour the brandy over the leaves and fill the jar. Seal the jar with a tightly fitting lid.
2. Place the jar in a warm, sunny spot like a window sill, and allow the rosemary and brandy to marinate for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking daily.
3. Strain out the rosemary and pour the tincture into a clean glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Store in a cool, dark place. The tincture will keep for up to 7 years.
4. Take 1 teaspoon, 3 times daily.

### Treating Circulatory Problems and Headaches

Rosemary is a mild stimulant, well-known for increasing the circulation. I use it for problems with the cardiovascular system, poor circulation, and low blood pressure.

These same stimulant properties make it a good choice for alleviating headaches, especially migraines. Rosemary has a mild analgesic effect, but the main relief comes from opening up the blood flow to the brain. I recommend the tincture for headache pain and circulatory problems.

### Inflammation, Arthritis, Rheumatism

The analgesic properties and anti-inflammatory properties help reduce the pain and swelling of joint



## Rosemary Mouthwash

Bring 2 cups of water to a boil and remove it from the heat. Steep 1 heaping tablespoon of dried rosemary flowers or leaves in the water for 30 minutes. Store the mouthwash tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Gargle and rinse the mouth morning and night.

## Sage, *Salvia officinalis*

There are many different varieties of sage, and many of them have medicinal properties, but we are discussing common sage here. I try to use it in cooking so that I get as much of the beneficial compounds all the time.

### Plant Identification

Common sage grows to approximately 2 feet tall and wide. The plant flowers in late spring or summer, producing lavender, purple, pink or white colored flowers.

Leaves are oblong, approximately 2 1/2 inches long and 1 inch wide. The leaves are grey-green colored and wrinkled on the top, while the underside is white and covered in short, soft hairs.



*Sage Leaves, CCO Creative Commons, Own Work Hans*

### Medicinal Use

Sage has antiseptic and stimulant properties that make it a good choice for treating infections and stimulating the circulatory system and digestive tracts.

### Digestion Aid

Sage help in the digestion of rich, fatty meats, which is probably why it is used so often in sausage recipes. (Although, it does lend an excellent flavor.) Its stimulant properties work on the digestive organs to move the fats through the system efficiently and prevent indigestion that often results from eating fats. I recommend the Sage Infusion for this purpose.

### Balances the Hormones for Men and Women

Sage is a mild hormonal stimulant and is effective in balancing the hormones and returning a normal function when possible. I use it for promoting normal menstruation and treating menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes, sweating, headaches, and mental fog.

It is also useful to treat night sweats, premature ejaculation, and night emissions in men.

For relieving hormonal problems use my Sage Infusion or tincture.

### Sore Throats

I have two sage remedies for sore throats. The most effective is the gargle, but many patients object to the flavor. So, I have also put together a better tasting throat spray that is almost as effective. Both remedies contain several herbs that fight infection and calm the inflammation of a sore throat.



### Speed Healing in Wounds

For slow-healing wounds, I make a compress by soaking a cotton pad in my sage infusion. Apply the cotton pad to the wound and hold in place with tape or a clean piece of cloth or gauze. The sage infusion relieves the pain almost immediately, fights infection, and brings more blood to the area to speed healing.

### Encourage Hair Growth and Restore Color to Graying Hair

I use my sage infusion to improve blood circulation to the scalp and roots of the hair. This encourages thick hair growth and can return the natural hair color without using dyes. Massage the infusion into the scalp and through the hair. Leave on for 15 minutes, then rinse off. Apply the infusion 4 or 5 times a week until the hair color is restored, then use it 1 to 2 times weekly to maintain the growth and color.



*Sage flowers, Kurt Stübe, CC by SA 3.0*

### Recipes

#### Sage Throat Spray

3 tablespoons dried or fresh sage leaves, 3/4 cup boiling water, 1/4 cup Echinacea Extract (or use 100 proof vodka), 1 tablespoon honey

1. Pour the boiling water over the sage leaves and allow it to steep for 30 minutes. Strain out the leaves.
2. Add the echinacea extract and honey. Store in a bottle with a spray top, preferably with a fine mist.
3. Spray in the back of the throat as often as needed.

#### Sage Gargle for a Sore Throat

This gargle doesn't taste great, but it does the job.

1 tablespoon dried sage leaves, 1 cup boiling water, 1 teaspoon goldenseal root powder, 5 drops Cayenne Infusion, 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar, with live culture

Pour the boiling water over the dried sage and allow it to steep for 45 minutes. Strain out the leaves and add the goldenseal root powder, cayenne infusion, and vinegar. Gargle with this mixture every hour for as long as you can stand it. Spit out the gargle.

#### Sage Infusion

1/2 cup fresh sage leaves or 3 tablespoons of dried sage, 2 cups water. Bring the sage and water to a boil and turn off the heat. Allow the infusion to steep for 30 minutes. Strain out the leaves. Store the infusion in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Use 1 tablespoon of sage infusion, as often as needed.

#### Sage Tincture

Sage leaves, finely chopped, 100 proof vodka

5. Fill a glass jar half full of fresh sage leaves. Pour the vodka over the leaves and fill the jar. Seal the jar with a tightly fitting lid.
6. Place the jar in a warm, sunny spot like a window sill, and allow the sage and vodka to marinate for 4 to 6 weeks, shaking daily.



7. Strain out the sage and pour the tincture into a clean glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Store in a cool, dark place. The tincture will keep for up to 7 years.
8. Take one teaspoon, three times daily.

### Warning

Sage can significantly reduce the amount of milk produced in nursing mothers. Avoid its use when breastfeeding.

### Sassafras, *Sassafras Albidum*

My adoptive mother Aiyana loved her chamomile tea, but sassafras has always been my favorite. I love to sit by the fire at night and enjoy a warmed mug of sassafras. It seems the perfect way to finish a busy day. When I was young, Aiyana would sometimes make sassafras hard candy from leftover tea. I doubt it was good for us, but it was a rare treat.

Some still believe sassafras to be a cure-all, others value the tree for its flavor and calming aroma. I guess I fall in the middle. The root has value in my medicine chest, but perhaps less now than in previous days.

Sassafras (*Sassafras Albidum*) is a deciduous tree native to North America. It is famous for its aroma and brilliant displays of color in autumn, when the leaves turn yellow, orange, deep red, and even purple before they fall. Sassafras has many uses including teas, traditional root beer, seasoning in Native American and Creole cuisine, and sassafras oil extracts have long provided a calming aroma.

### Plant Identification

When teaching plant identification, I always ask my students to smell the plant first. Most parts of the sassafras tree will give off a faint citrus smell when crushed. However, if you pull a sassafras shrub up by the root, you will get a whiff of old-fashioned root beer.

Sassafras can also be identified by its unique leaf characteristics. Each leaf can have anywhere from a single lobe up to five lobes, all occurring on the same tree. However, the most recognized shape of a sassafras leaf is the two or three-lobed leaves that look like mittens.

Sassafras blooms in early spring, with groups of little yellow flowers that grow 1-2 inches long. In the fall, sassafras yields small berry-sized blue drupe fruit, with a fleshy outside and a small seed inside. The fruit is a favorite snack of deer and other wildlife.

I can usually find sassafras trees most anywhere in the southern US and westward into parts of Michigan and Kansas. It usually grows in open spaces, woodland clearings, fields, and often along fences. In warm climates with good rainfall, the tree can grow as tall as a hundred feet or more, but I also find small trees and dense, bushy thickets of sassafras growing as a shrub.

### Edible Use

Nearly every part of the tree is useful for food or medicine. The powdered leaves of the tree are used as a thickener and flavoring. The flavor is spicy, earthy, and similar to coriander seed.



12Sassafras, by Wowbobwow12, CC by SA 3.0



The most famous use of sassafras root is in traditional root beer recipes. However, the use of sassafras root was banned in 1960 by the Food and Drug Administration after studies found safrole, the chemical component of sassafras root, to be a possible carcinogen and linked safrole use to higher rates of cancer and liver damage with extended use. I believe it to be safe for short-term use of a month or so.

### Medicinal Use

The leaves, roots, and pith from the tree are used medicinally.



*Sassafras male and female flowers, by Ittiz, CC by SA 3.0*

### Erythema and Skin Inflammations and Irritations

I make a thick mucilage from the pith of the sassafras tree for the treatment of skin irritations and inflammations and apply it directly to the wound. Alternately, a poultice made from bruised fresh leaves can be applied to large areas or the leaves can be rubbed onto itchy bug bites and small irritations.

### Heals Wounds

For wound healing, I apply a poultice made from fresh, crushed leaves over the wound and cover it with a clean cloth to keep it in place. The sassafras leaves stimulate the flow of blood to the area and speeds healing. The poultice also relieves the pain.

### Headaches, Menstrual Pain

The pain-relieving properties of Sassafras Leaf Tea are helpful for headaches and many menstrual symptoms including cramping, bloating, and heavy bleeding.

### Kidney Problems, Swelling, and Fluid Retention

Sassafras Leaf Tea is an excellent diuretic, producing more urine and flushing toxins from the body.

### Dental Care

When a modern toothbrush is not available, I grab a sassafras twig and give my teeth and gums a scrub. The twig not only leaves behind a pleasant flavor and clean teeth, but it also has anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory benefits.

### Lice Treatment

Sassafras Oil, diluted with a carrier oil, is used to get rid of head lice. To use this treatment, add 1/4 teaspoon of sassafras oil to 1/2 cup of warm olive oil. Mix and apply to the scalp. Cover the head and wait 30 minutes to 1 hour. Shampoo the hair thoroughly to remove the oil, then use a nit comb to remove the dead lice and nits.

### Colds and Flu

For colds and flu, I prescribe Sassafras root tea, twice daily. The tea relieves some of the symptoms of the illness and speeds healing.



## Recipes

### Extracting Sassafras Oil

For external use only

A large piece of sassafras root, water

1. Dig up a large piece of sassafras root, at least two inches thick and as long as possible. Clean the root, then peel off the bark.
2. Allow the bark shavings to dry.
3. Place the dried bark in a pot of simmering water and allow it to simmer for 4 to 6 hours. The oil will be released from the bark.
4. Allow the water and oil to cool undisturbed in the refrigerator overnight.
5. Skim off the oily layer on the top of the water. This oil is very potent, dilute it before use and do not take internally.

### Sassafras Pith Extract

1. Remove a section of a live sassafras branch and peel off the bark.
2. Shave the pith into thin strips or shreds.
3. Soak the pith shreds in water for 3 hours. Strain the pith out and use the mucilage.

### Sassafras Root Tea

Sassafras root tea is prepared differently than most teas.

Sassafras roots, small pinch of salt, optional and water

Pot with a lid

1. Clean the roots with a brush under running water to remove all dirt.
2. Place the sassafras roots in the pot and cover with cold water, filling the pot about 3/4 full. Add a small pinch of salt. Use more roots for a stronger tea or more water for a weaker tea. Make a weak tea if you have not had it previously.
3. Put the water and roots on high heat until it comes to a boil, then turn down the heat. Keep the roots at a high simmer until the water turns a deep red color. This may take a few hours.
4. Turn off the heat and cover the pot with a lid. Allow the tea to steep for 5 to 10 minutes while it slowly cools a little.
5. Strain the tea and drink hot, it takes on a more bitter flavor when cool. The tea can be refrigerated and reheated for later use.
6. Sweeten the tea with sugar or honey, if desired.

### Sassafras Leaf Tea

1 teaspoon dried sassafras leaves, 1 cup of water

1. Bring the water to a boil and let it cool slightly. Pour the very hot, but not boiling water over the dried sassafras leaves.
2. Allow the tea to steep for 10 minutes. Strain out the leaves and enjoy.

### Saw Palmetto (*Serenoa repens*)

I only find Saw Palmetto on the Southern Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains, but they are especially prolific in Florida and parts of South Carolina and Georgia. I usually find dense thickets of low-growing plants (7 to 10 feet maximum height.) I also find it as undergrowth in wooded coastal areas.



## Plant Identification

The light green or silvery-white saw palmetto leaves form a rounded fan containing approximately 20 leaflets. The petiole is covered with sharp teeth or spines. Leaves are 3 to 6 ½ feet in length with leaflets 2 to 4 feet long. The leaves resemble leaves of the genus *Sabal*.

Flowers are yellow-white on densely covered compound panicles up to 2 feet long. Each flower is approximately 1/5 inch across.

Saw palmetto fruit is a large reddish-black drupe when ripe. Berries appear at the end of the summer as green to brown berries, ripening to a reddish or purple-black color.

## Medicinal Uses

I have used saw palmetto berries for reproductive tract and urinary tract problems of all kinds. I recommend 2 grams of crushed saw palmetto berries daily for best medicinal use, less for preventative purposes.



Ted Bodner, CC by 3.0

## Saw Palmetto Berries as a General Tonic

I use the juice of crushed berries as a general tonic for health. It relieves even the most troublesome coughs and promotes expectoration. I also use it for stomach aches, indigestion, and dysentery. Its sedative and diuretic properties are beneficial and remarkable.



Karan A. Rawlins, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org, CC 3.0

## Urinary Tract Problems

I recommend 2 grams of Saw Palmetto berries as a treatment for urinary tract problems, including urinary tract infections.

## Prostate Problems

I prescribe Saw Palmetto with good success for patients with prostate swelling, cancers, and other prostate problems. It is a safe and desirable treatment for men with mild to moderate Prostatic Hyperplasia. It improves the need for frequent urination, a common problem among my aging male patients.

## Increased Libido and Delayed Menopause

Saw palmetto has long been believed to increase the libido in both men and women. It is said to increase fertility in women and delay the onset of menopause.

## Possible Use for Alopecia

Although I have not yet tested it, I am told that Saw Palmetto is a treatment for Androgenetic Alopecia, a type of hair loss and baldness caused by hormone imbalance.



## Harvesting Instructions

I pick the ripe purplish-black berries by hand in August and September, then spread them out to dry. I store them in a cool, dry, and dark place.

## Warnings

Avoid use of saw palmetto for patients with a blood clotting disorder, liver disease, or pancreas disorder.

Do not use saw palmetto for pregnant or breastfeeding women. Saw palmetto increases fertility and makes birth control pills less effective. Do not give saw palmetto to children.

## Quaking Aspen, *Populus tremuloides*

*Populus tremuloides* belongs to the Salicaceae family. It is a deciduous tree native to cooler regions of North America. It is also known as trembling aspen, American aspen, and Quakies. It's one of several species that are referred to as aspen and is the state tree of Utah. The tree is referred to as quaking because of its flexible flattened petioles.



*Quaking Aspen, By Famartin - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,*

## Plant Identification

Quaking aspen is a native tree with a height ranging from 16 to 100 feet tall, but it is usually less than 50 feet. It has a rounded crown and lateral roots that may extend out over 100 feet. The vertical sinker roots may extend downward up to 10 feet from the laterals. The bark is usually greenish-white to gray-white. The bark is often peeling and thin, becoming thicker and furrowed with age, especially toward the base of this tree.

The leaves are simple, deciduous and are broadly ovate to nearly round. They are usually 1 1/2 to 3 inches long with small rounded teeth on the margins. They have slender, flattened petiole. They are dark green and shiny on top and pale green on the underside. The leaves turn bright yellow, yellow-orange or reddish in color after the first frost.

The flowers are dioecious or polygamodioecious because bisexual flowers may be produced on staminate and pistillate trees. The male flower (also called staminate) and female flowers (pistillate) are on separate trees. Flowers of each type is borne in pendant catkins.

The fruits of Quaking Aspen are narrowly ovoid to flask shaped capsules that are nearly 2/10 to 3/10 inches long. They split to release the seeds which are nearly 2mm long. Each seed is with a tuft of long, white and silky hairs that are easily blown by the wind.

In North America, Quaking Aspen is the most widely distributed tree. I have found it from Alaska across the Northwest Territories to Quebec and Newfoundland, south to West Virginia and Virginia, and in all of the western North America US states, except Oklahoma and Kansas. I have never seen it in the southeast.

## Edible Use

Like many barks, it quaking aspen is often dried and ground into a powder that is added to flour. It can be eaten raw or cooked and makes a good thickener for soups and stews.



The sap can be tapped and used for drinking or as a flavoring. The catkins can also be eaten raw and cooked.

### Medicinal Use

This is another one of the plants that Aiyana taught me how to use. She used it, as I do, to treat wounds, skin problems, and respiratory problems. She valued it for its antiseptic and analgesic properties.

### Rheumatoid Arthritis

Quaking aspen is another tree whose bark contains anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties. This is a powerful combination for treating rheumatoid arthritis. I prescribe an infusion made from the bark taken three times daily to relieve the swelling and pain. It can also be used externally over the painful joint. I find that it complements the use of Black Cohosh, when available.

### Chilblains, Wounds, and Hemorrhoids

I use Quaking Aspen Bark Infusion for the external treatment of chilblains, wounds, and hemorrhoids. Application to the skin reduces swelling, brings healing blood flow, and disinfects the wound. For infected wound care, a poultice made of crushed roots is applied to the wound and held in place by a clean cloth.

### Respiratory Problems

For coughs, colds, congestion, and other respiratory problems, I like to use an infusion of quaking aspen bark. I find it to be effective in treating coughs and congestion because of its anti-inflammatory properties. It also effectively reduces fevers and helps the patient rest more comfortably.

### Menstrual Problems and Menopause

For menstrual problems and menopause, I like to use a combination of quaking aspen and black cohosh. The two together act to relieve pain and cramping, hot flashes, moodiness, night sweats, headaches, heart palpitations, vaginal dryness, and mental fog. They balance the hormones and normalize the menstrual cycles. I prescribe a combination of Quaking Aspen Infusion, twice daily, and 80 milligrams of black cohosh root, twice daily. Do not use Black Cohosh for treatment of women with endometriosis.



13-Quaking Aspen Catkins, Famartin, CC by-SA 4.0

### Harvesting Quaking Aspen Bark

Aiyana taught me to be very careful when harvesting bark from the quaking aspen and other trees. Bark taken too liberally kills the branch or, if taken from the trunk, it can kill the tree. I learned early to remove side branches from the tree, then remove the bark and dry it for later use.

### Recipes

#### Quaking Aspen Infusion

1 ounce of quaking aspen inner bark, chopped fine or ground, 1 pint of water

1. Place the water and bark into a non-reactive pot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.



2. Allow the infusion to cool completely, then filter to remove the herb.
3. Store the infusion in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.
4. Take 1 to 2 tablespoons, 2 to 3 times daily or as needed.

## Red Alder, *Alnus rubra*

Red Alder, or *Alnus rubra*, is a distinctive shrub native to the northwest coast of the US. It is a deciduous broadleaf member of the birch family that gets its name from the distinctive rusty-red coloring that develops on the bruised or scraped bark.

### Plant Identification:

Red Alder tree has medium sized broad leaves and grows to between 60 and 100 feet tall. Trees that grow in the forest develop a little tapered trunk that extends up to a narrow and round shaped crown. While trees grown in the open have a broad cone-shaped crown.

Its leaves are greyish underneath and bright green on the top. They have an oval-shape and pointed tips. The coarsely toothed edges curled downwards—a trait that distinguishes it from other elders. A ladder-like pattern is formed by its veins.

Its flowers develop as female or male clusters. Female flowers are on woody brown cones, while male flowers are long, drooping reddish catkins.

The oval-shaped female cones are just under an inch long and produce 50 to 100 seeds that look like a narrow, winged nut.

The Red Alder tree is most commonly found in moist areas within 120 miles of the Pacific Coast of North America from Alaska to Southern California. I find it along streams, rivers, and other moist areas at lower elevations. I have only rarely seen it cultivated outside this area, so I make sure to stock up on Red Alder bark whenever I am in the area.

### Edible Parts

The catkins of red alder trees can be eaten raw or fresh. I find the flavor to be too bitter for my preferences, but I know them to be rich in protein and nutrients.

The inner bark is sometimes dried and powdered, then used as a flour to thicken soups and sauces or to make bread.

The sap of the red alder is my favorite for food use. It has a sweet flavor, especially when collected on a warm winter day when the night temperatures are approaching freezing. I use it to sweeten a warm drink on a cold night.

### Medicinal Use

Aiyana taught me early on how to use red Alder for a wide range of health problems. She used an extract or decoction of the bark in most cases, although a decoction of the cones is preferred for bleeding and hemorrhages.



*Red Alder Leaves, US Bureau of Land Management, Public Domain*



### Diarrhea, Indigestion, Dyspepsia

I find my Red Alder Decoction to be useful for stomach debility of many types. It relieves the pain and calms the stomach muscles.

### Fevers, Headaches, Rheumatic Pains

Red Alder contains a painkiller that works like aspirin to reduce fevers and relieve pain. I prescribe an infusion of bark for this purpose; take 1 to 2 ounces of the decoction three to four times daily, as needed.

### Insect Bites, Poison Oak, Rashes, Swellings, Tumors, Eczema, and Other Skin Irritations

For skin irritations, bites, swellings, tumors, and rashes, I use Red Alder Infusion directly on the skin. The red alder soothes the skin, relieves the pain, and reduces swelling and inflammation.

I have also used the decoction combined with skin applications for swellings and tumors under the skin. In my experience, red alder bark works quickly to reduce these tumors.

### Lice, Scabies, Mites

To get rid of lice, scabies, and mites, boil the inner bark and leaves of the red alder in vinegar and allow it to cool. Massage this solution into the affected areas. It kills the insects and eliminates the problem.



Walter Siegmund - Own work, CC by 2.5



Red Coloration on bark, Walter Siegmund, CC by 2.5

### Tuberculosis

Minaku, a friend and the daughter of a Blackfoot healer told me many stories of treating tuberculosis, lymphatic problems, and syphilis with Red Alder. I have not verified its effectiveness against tuberculosis or lymphatic problems for myself, but I have used a decoction of the bark as a treatment for secondary syphilis. I found that Red Alder has an inhibiting effect on the disease, but I didn't find it to be a reliable cure. Minaku advises the use of Red Alder Decoction for these purposes.

### Harvesting Red Alder Bark and Leaves

Collect red alder leaves during the summer and use them fresh. The bark is collected in the spring when new growth is occurring.

Choose a young branch, about 2 to 3 years old. Remove the branch from the tree and remove the outer and inner bark. Dry the bark for future use. Fresh bark can cause vomiting and stomach upset; this problem is overcome by drying the bark.



## Recipes

### Red Alder Decoction

1 ounce of Red Alder Dried Bark or Cones, depending on use

1 pint of Water

1. Crush or grind the dried bark into small pieces. Place it in a non-reactive pot with the water over medium heat. Bring the mixture to a simmer.
2. Simmer the herbs until the water has reduced by 1/4 to 1/3, leaving 1 1/3 to 1 1/2 cups of liquid.
3. Cool the decoction and strain out the bark or cones. Store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.
4. Use 1 to 2 tablespoons per dose, 3 to 4 times a day. I determine the dose by the patient's size and age.

### Red Elderberry, *Sambucus racemosa*

Red Elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), also known as a scarlet elder, stinking elderberry, and bunchberry elder, is a beautiful elderberry plant native throughout North America. It is used as a food source and for medicinal purposes. I find that it is not as strong in healing properties as *Sambucus nigra*, but it makes a good stand-in when the common elderberry is not available.

### Plant Identification

Red elderberry is a deciduous shrub that grows in milder climates along rivers, in swamps, and in forests throughout the United States. It is especially common in deciduous forests and mountain ranges. It prefers direct sunlight and can often be found at higher elevations.

Red elderberry is a larger shrub that appears treelike when mature, growing up to nearly twenty feet in height. The branches of the red elderberry are often broad and tend to arch outwards from the center of the plant. The branches are soft to the touch and pliable, with a spongy center. The oval shaped green leaves cluster along the branches, growing outwards from the base in groups of between 3 and 7 leaves per cluster.



Red elderberry tree, Walter Siegmund, CC by SA 3.0

The growing season of the Red Elderberry begins in the early months of spring and, once blooming, generates numerous tiny off-white flowers in pyramid-like clusters during the spring and summer months. Clusters of fleshy, drupe fruit grow bright red and occasionally purple during these months.

The foliage gives off a potent odor, which is the source of one of the Red Elderberry's nicknames, the stinking elderberry. The fruit is popular with birds, who often carry seeds with them and distribute them throughout their range. The flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies during the growing season as well and this is a source of great joy to me.

### Edible Use

The berries are edible when cooked and I often enjoy them in jellies, syrups, and pies. Cooked red elderberries have a bitter taste and pungent odor which is easily alleviated by mixing the berries with other fruit or sweetening them with honey or sugar while cooking.



## Medicinal Use

### Fever Reduction, Cold Remedy and Laxative

Tea or thin syrup made by boiling red elderberries and consuming the liquid works as a tonic for colds, fevers, and as a laxative. Strain out the seeds and drink the liquid fresh. The tea causes the body to sweat, which cools the body to relieve the fluid. Also, healing compounds in the berries ease the symptoms and help the body heal faster. The tea helps relieve fevers, cold symptoms, and aid constipation.

### Stop Bleeding

To stop wounds from bleeding, I use the bruised leaves of the red elderberry plant directly on the wound as a poultice. Substances in the leaves help the blood to clot and stops bleeding.

### Boils, Abscesses, and Skin Infections

The leaves of the red elderberry draw out fluid and pus from boils and abscesses, helping to relieve pressure and pain while encouraging healing. I apply bruised fresh leaves as a poultice.

### Warnings

Red elderberry berries are toxic when raw and can cause upset stomachs and indigestion; however, they are safe and edible when cooked. The rest of the plant, including the leaves and stems, have the potential to be even more toxic and should not be eaten, even after cooking.



Red elderberries, Walter Siegmund, CC by SA 3.0



Red Mulberry, Duhamel du Monceau, Public Domain

## Red Mulberry, *Morus rubus*

The deciduous red mulberry tree grows to a maximum of 65 feet high, with most trees averaging between 35 to 50 feet. The trunk diameter averages 18 inches. This beautiful tree has a nice rounded shape. I find it growing in the Eastern United States, as far east as mid-Texas and north almost to the Canadian border.

The leaves are alternate, egg-shaped or heart-shaped, and approximately 3 to 6 inches long and 2 to 5 inches wide. They are broadly cordate with a notch at the base and a pointed tip. Most leaves on mature trees are unlobed but leaves on young trees often have 2 to 3 lobes with a serrated margin. The leaves have a rough upper surface while the underside is covered with soft hairs. The leaves fall in the autumn.

The leaf petiole secretes a milky sap when cut or injured.

The flowers are small, yellow-green or red-green, with male and female flowers usually on separate trees. The flowers open in the early spring as the leaves emerge.



The trunk is burly and covered with dark brown bark that is scaly or sometimes smooth. Branches reach out from the trunk and are covered with fine hairs.

### Edible Use

I have eaten mulberries both raw and cooked. They are most often used to make pies, pastries, and jellies, but I like them raw. They also make a very nice fruit wine. The flavor is sweet and delicious.

The dried wood is useful for barbecue and smoking meats. It adds a smoky flavor that is sweet and mild.

### Medicinal Use

The leaves, fruit, and bark all have medicinal value. I use the fruit and leaves during the summer months when they are readily available and switch to bark tea during the winter when the trees are bare.



*Mulberry, Aomorikuma, CC by SA 4.0*

### Heart Disease

In my experience mulberries have proven to be beneficial for the heart. They reduce inflammation in the arteries and veins, lower cholesterol, and lower the risk of heart disease. Eating the berries or drinking the wine, in moderation, confers all the benefits.

### Alzheimer's Disease and Parkinson's

Eating mulberries regularly also protects the brain from inflammation and the effects it causes. They reduce chronic inflammation and slow down the disease process.

### Urinary Tract Problems

Mulberry Leaf Tea is a potent weapon against urinary tract infections and other problems. The leaves are anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial. Combined with their healing properties and superior nutrition, the leaf tea resolves the problem quickly. Use 1 teaspoon of leaves to make one cup of tea and drink twice daily.

### Ringworms

Ringworms respond well to the application of mulberry sap taken from the cut leaf petiole. Apply the sap directly to the affected area once or twice a day, as needed.

### Diabetes

The leaves and bark of the red mulberry tree help reduce the blood sugar levels in diabetic patients and increase the production of insulin. They also protect the heart, liver, and kidneys from damage by the disease. Some patients have reported that they also aided in weight loss. I usually recommend leaf tea, switching to bark tea during the winter months if a dried supply is not available.

### Anti-Aging Benefits

A number of my patients believe that the red mulberry fruit slows down the aging process. I have no way to measure this. One patient even claims that the berries prevent her hair from turning grey. I have to admit that she has a nice head of hair, but I don't know whether the berries are responsible.



*Slippery Elm, Public Domain*

## Slippery Elm, *Ulnus rubra*

My patients with Crohn's Disease and other digestive upsets feel that Slippery Elm is a miracle herb. They are not particularly fond of the taste or texture of the tea but tell me that it is worth it for the relief they feel. After one cup of tea, it is easy to understand the origin of the name; it makes a thick, slippery mucilage of a tea that you can almost eat with a spoon.

Native to North America, the slippery elm prefers moist forests in the eastern US. I have found it from North Dakota to Maine, south to the northern part of Florida and west to eastern Texas. It is also called Indian Elm, Moose Elm, and Sweet Elm.

This deciduous tree grows to between 40 to 60 feet.

The medicinally valuable inner bark is white and mucilaginous.

Leaves are oval, approximately 3 to 7 inches long and up to 3 inches wide. The leaves have a rough, sandpaper-like texture on top and are soft and hairy on the underside. The edges are sharply double-toothed and distinctly uneven at the base. The leaves are often reddish when emerging from the bud, turning dark green as they mature, and then a dull yellow in the autumn.

Seeds appear in March to May and are papery, winged, and yellowish-green. Each fruit has one seed and is about 1/2 inch wide and hairless.

### Medicinal Uses

I use slippery elm most often as a bark tea or simply have the patient chew on a piece of bark. The bark has mucilage which contains beneficial compounds. The inner bark contains a small number of tannins and is the most valuable part of the bark for medicinal purposes.

### Coughs and Sore Throats, Bronchitis, Pleurisy, and Tuberculosis

When the fresh bark is available, I have the patient chew on a small piece to relieve a cough or a sore throat. Alternately, the Slippery Elm Tea will also relieve the irritation and treat respiratory diseases of all types. Either produces mucilage which coats the throat. It is also useful for treating nasal and bronchial catarrh.

### Urinary Tract Infections

Follow the instructions below to make my Slippery Elm Tea. It delivers medicinal compounds that release the UTI from the body and help it heal.



*14 Slippery Elm flower buds, Wikipedia Commons*



### Boils, Cold Sores, and Cuts

Mix a small portion of powdered slippery elm bark with a small amount of boiling water. Allow it to sit for a few minutes to cool and thicken. Place the thickened paste on boils, cold sores, cuts, and other skin irritations.

### Joint Pain, Gout, Arthritis, and Bruises

The Slippery Elm Paste described above can be used on the skin to relieve joint pain and bruises. Slippery Elm Tea taken internally morning and night will hasten healing and provide relief from gout and arthritis pain.

### Crohn's Disease, Digestive Disorders, Diverticulitis and Stomach Pain

Here is one place that slippery elm really shines.

Patients with Crohn's and irritable bowel disease achieve much relief from Slippery Elm Tea, even describing it as a miracle cure. It also works for other forms of digestive problems and stomach pain. It has a calming effect on the digestive tract.

### Colic

Slippery elm is safe for use with children and is nourishing. It has a comforting effect on the body as well as the digestive tract and soothes the distress of colic.

### Harvesting Slippery Elm

For best results, it is important to collect the inner bark from older trees. Remove the inner bark from larger branches as they are harvested from the tree or cut a rectangle of bark from the tree without cutting around the tree. If the bark is removed all the way around the tree, it will die.

Once the bark is free, remove the outer bark, keeping the inner bark closest to the wood. Cut the harvested bark into small pieces and dry it for future use.

### Slippery Elm Bark Tea/Pudding

Combine 1 teaspoon to several tablespoons of ground inner bark from slippery elm

1 cup of warm water or milk

Mix the water or milk with the ground bark and simmer the mixture gently for 10 to 15 minutes. Add less bark for a thinner drink or more to thicken it to pudding consistency. Flavor it as desired with cinnamon, ginger, honey or sugar. Consume 1 cup, 2 to 3 times daily, or more if desired.



*15 Slippery Elm leaf, note the uneven edges at the base, Ohio Department of Natural Resources page, Public Domain*



## White Pine, *Pinus strobus*

A Cherokee healer in the Great Smokey Mountains taught me most of what I know about using white pine as a valuable medicine. We spent a happy week swapping stories and remedies around the campfires and hiking to find the most gorgeous views. It was early fall and the weather was crisp but not yet cold in the daylight. The leaves were changing, and the mountains were a brilliant canopy of color.

*Pinus Stobus* belongs to Pinaceae family and *Pinus* genus. It is also known as the eastern white pine, northern white pine, white pine, and soft pine. The Native American Haudenosaunee tribe called it the Tree of Peace. It is a large pine native to the eastern United States.

### Plant Identification

The white pine is the largest conifer of the eastern and upper Midwest forests and reaches 150 feet in height and nearly up to 40 inches in the diameter. The trees produce tall, cylindrical stems in the dense strands with pyramidal-shaped crowns, characterized by distinctive, plate-like branching that is especially noticeable as the trees become older.

On young growth, the bark of white pine remains rather thin, smooth, and greenish-brown in color. On older trees, the bark becomes dark grayish-brown in color and deeply fissured.

The evergreen leaves or needles of white pine are in clusters of 5, soft and flexible, 2.5 to 5 inches long, and are usually bluish-green in appearance. The cones of this plant are nearly 4 to 8 inches long and about 1 inch thick. They can remain attached for several months after ripening in the autumn of the second season.

The seeds of this plant are  $5/32$ - $3/16$  in long and have a slender  $5/8$ - $3/4$  inch wing. The seeds are dispersed by the wind when the cones open.

White pine distribution ranges across southern Canada from Manitoba to Newfoundland and runs throughout the northern and eastern states from Minnesota and northern Iowa to the Atlantic coast, and southward along the Appalachian Mountains to Alabama and northern Georgia.

### Harvesting the Seeds and Inner Bark

Eastern white pine has a fruit that is a large elongated cone. The fruit should be Harvested in the fall as the scales in the cone begin to open, but before the small winged seeds have been shed. The fruit of white pine may be allowed to dry, where it will open the scales and shed the seeds. For small quantity of white pine seeds, the cone scales can be pulled apart to retrieve the seeds. They can be stored in dry place for long periods in airtight containers in the refrigerator.

The bark is collected in the spring when new growth is occurring. Choose a young branch, about 2 to 3 years old. Remove the branch from the tree and peel off the bark. Peel off the outer bark and dry the inner bark for future use.

### To Extract the Pine Resin





*Pine Needles, Hardyplants, Public Domain*

The resin extracted from pine can be used as water-proofing and building fires, however, I like it for its medicinal use.

The resin is a powerful antibiotic, and I use it to effectively heal wounds with all kinds of infections. My Cherokee friend told me how he had nearly lost a toe to gangrene before coating it in white pine tar. A pink scar on his misshapen toe was the only reminder of the event.

To extract the pine tar, burn the branches slowly in a smothered flame. Collect the tar when the fire has cooled.

## Edible Use

Its edible parts are Flowers, inner bark, and seeds. Its edible uses include it to be used as condiment and tea. I have eaten the seeds or “nuts,” and find them pleasantly flavored, but it takes a lot of work to collect a The dried inner bark can be ground or pulverized to make

a flour. The flour can be used in baking and as a starch thickener. It is nutritious and useful to fend off hunger when other foods are not available, but the flavor is more bitter and resinous than I would prefer.

## Medicinal Use

The bark and pitch are used for medical preparations. The inner bark is the most valuable because of its high tannin content and its other medicinal qualities.

## Wounds, Skin Infections

Externally white pine is a very useful treatment for various skin complaints, wounds, sores, burns, boils, etc. It is also used in the form of liniment plasters, poultices, herbal steam baths, and inhalers.

A plaster is easily made by soaking a piece of inner bark in water and applying it to the wound, or the bark decoction can be used as a wash to clean and treat the wounds. For infected wounds, I use both. The tannins are astringent, drawing out the infection and helping the wound heal. A poultice of the pitch has proven to be effective in drawing out toxins from boils and reduce the pain.

## Diarrhea

For diarrhea, I use the White Pine Decoction, whose recipe is below. The decoction relaxes the spasms of the intestinal tract and allows the bowels to regain normal function.

## Respiratory Tract Problems, Mucous, Coughs

The inner bark of the white pine contains mucilage and other compounds that relax the mucous membranes and the openings of the respiratory tract. It also helps reduce the phlegm so that the body can expel it by coughing. For respiratory tract problems, I prescribe 2 ounces of the White Pine Decoction two to three times daily.

For seriously congested patients, I add white pine bark to a steam bath and breath in the steam. It helps release the congestion allowing the patient to breathe easier.



*Pinus Strobus Cone, Wikipedia Commons*



## Rheumatism and Joint Pain

Pine tar makes an effective remedy for rheumatism and sore joints. I boil the resin in water to make an internal dose and mix the resin with oil or butter to use externally. This mixture is also good for treating and preventing infections.

## Worms

Tapeworms, flatworms, and roundworms are killed and expelled from the body with a mixture of pine tar and beer. For some of my patients, this was their favorite cure.

## Colds and The Flu

I use white pine bark as a preventative and remedy for the cold and flu. When one member of the household came down sick with a cold or flu, I recommend that all family members begin taking powdered pine bark or White Pine Decoction. The white pine wards off infection and lessens the symptoms of those who are infected.

## Sore Throats

Sore throats can be treated by a tea made from the young needles. Use one tablespoon of fresh needles in 1 cup of boiling water.

## Recipes

### White Pine Bark Decoction

For this decoction, remove the outer bark and use the inner bark. Cover the bark with water and bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer it until the liquid is darkly colored. Cool the decoction and store it in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

## White Sage, *Salvia apiana*

White sage, also known as sacred sage or bee sage, is an evergreen perennial shrub found in the southwestern United States. I find it mostly along the coast of Southern California.

The shrub grows to between 4 and 5 feet tall and about 4 feet wide. The whitish leaves release oils and resins when rubbed, giving them a strong scent.

White to pale lavender flowers appear in the spring and bloom through the summer. They grow on many 3 to 4 feet flower stalks that are sometimes pinkish in color. The flower petals pucker back allowing the stamens to dangle on the sides.

The flowers attract bees, which have trouble getting to the nectar. Hummingbirds are also attracted and have no trouble collecting nectar from the flowers with their long beaks.



White Pine Bark, Derek Ramsey, CC by SA 4.0



White Sage Flower, Stan Shebs, CC by SA 3.0



### Edible Use

I have witnessed housewives using the pounded seeds of white sage to supplement their flour for preparing bread and gruel and I have eaten biscuits prepared this way, but I have not tried to prepare it myself.

The leaves and stems are also edible.



*Dried white sage flower, Roger Culos, CC by SA 4.0*

### Medicinal Use

I prescribe White Sage Infusion for coughs and colds. The seeds are also used medicinally to cleanse the eyes by some healers, but I have not tried this myself.

### Childbirth

I had a long conversation with a Cahuilla woman in Southern California about herbs and healing.

She is one of the few remaining Cahuilla with a knowledge of herbs and cures. She tells me that she uses the roots of white sage to prepare a tea that gives strength and healing during childbirth. The herb is avoided during pregnancy, then consumed when the time for delivery is at hand. I have not used the herb myself for this purpose.

### Coughs and Colds

White Sage Infusion made from the leaves of the plant are good for treating colds, coughs and for purifying the blood of illness. It has antibacterial qualities that speed healing. I have used the leaves as an addition to a steam bath to release mucus and open up congested airways.

### Cleaning the Body and Home

I have seen the leaves of white sage used as a form of hair shampoo and for cleaning the body. The leaves are crushed in water and then rubbed into the hair and onto the body. For cases of body odor, a poultice was made of the crushed leaves and applied under the arms.

To clean the house after illnesses, the area is purified by burning white sage leaves in the room.

### Recipes

#### White Sage Infusion

1 teaspoon of dried white sage leaves, crushed, 1 cup of water

Bring the leaves and water to a boil and reduce to a simmer. Simmer the infusion for 2 minutes then turn off heat and cover the pot for 10 minutes.

#### White Sage Root Tea

Follow the recipe above, substituting powdered white sage root for the leaves.



## White Willow, *Salix alba*

White willow is a deciduous tree that grows to be up to 90 feet tall. The trunk is up to 3 1/2 feet in diameter, and the branches are pliable. The branches lean downward, and the trunk often leans as well. The pliable and leaning branches give this tree a graceful appearance with flashes of green and white. I find it extraordinarily attractive, especially in the early spring.

The leaves are lance-shaped and pale green, mostly without stipules. They are covered in white hairs on the top and bottom of the leaf. The undersides of the leaves are white, giving the tree its name. Leaves are 2 to 4 inches long and approximately 1/2 inch wide.

Flowers grow on catkins in the early spring, producing male and female catkins on separate trees. Male catkins are 1 1/2 to 2 inches long and female catkins are a little shorter. In mid-summer, the female catkins produce small capsules containing minute seeds covered in white down.

The tree bark is green-brown to grey-brown. I find the tree most often in moist areas like moist woods, riverbanks, and low-lying areas across the country.



White Willow, MPF, CC by SA 3.0

## Medicinal Uses

The bark, dried leaves, and the ash of white willow logs are used for medicinal purposes. I scrape up the ash of logs burned in a kiln for use in medicinal preparations. The ash is very caustic.

## Warts, Corn, Skin Blemishes

To remove warts, corns, and skin tags, and other blemishes, I recommend the ash of white willow mixed with vinegar. Put this mixture on the blemish once or twice a day until the blemish is gone. It slowly eats away at the blemish, removing it from the body.

## Headaches, Fevers, Joint pain, Arthritis, and Rheumatism

White willow has aspirin-like compounds in the bark which act to relieve pain and reduce fevers. I recommend White Willow Tea for pain and fever relief. Unlike aspirin, white willow bark does not thin the blood or cause stomach upsets.

## Menopause Symptoms

White Willow Tea is beneficial for symptoms of menopause including night sweats, hot flashes, and headaches.

## Digestive Problems

I recommend 1 cup of White Willow Leaf Tea taken after each meal to relieve indigestion and other digestive problems. The tea enhances the digestive process.



## Cautions

- Do not use white willow in children suffering from low-grade fevers.
- Do not take white willow if you are allergic to aspirin.
- Do not use long-term.

## Recipes

### White Willow Bark Tea

1 to 2 grams white willow tree bark, 1 cup water

Simmer the tree bark and water together for about 10 minutes. Cool, strain, and drink warm or cold. Drink one cup of tea, three to five times daily.



### White Willow Leaf Tea

1 to 2 teaspoons crushed, dried willow leaves, 1 cup boiling water.

Pour the boiling water over the leaves and steep the tea for 5 to 10 minutes while it cools. Drink 1 cup, warm or cold, after meals.

### Pain Relief Aperitif

3 cups sweet white wine like Muscat or Muscadet, 3 tablespoons dried and crushed willow bark

Combine the wine and bark in a container with a tight-fitting lid. Macerate for 4 weeks. Strain the wine. Drink 2 tablespoons of wine to alleviate pain.

## Witch Hazel, *Hamamelis Virginiana*

Witch hazel is such a welcome sight in the winter, especially where the weather is brutally cold. Its bright yellow flowers with strap-like petals appear in the late fall, and often the blooms last until early spring. *Hamamelis Virginiana* is a tall shrub or a small tree, which usually grows to the height of 20-30 ft and spreads as wide as 25-30 ft. The plant is native to North America, and I can usually find it growing from Florida to Texas and Nova Scotia to Minnesota. I have also found it in the north-eastern states.

### Plant Identification

It is quite easy to identify this plant because of its unique canopy-like shape and its elongated, 2.5 to 6 inches long base leaf with a dark green upper layer and a pale-green lower surface. However, my favorite way to look for the plant is to hunt in the dead of winter. It is usually the only tree blooming. Mark the location and come back whenever you like.

The plant grows in multi-trunks and forms a disorganized cluster. With its bright yellow flower and strap-like petals, though it does not require an excessive amount of light, it becomes leggy when it does not get enough sunshine.



*Witch Hazel Tree, Colorado Food Forrest*

The flowers grow at the same time as the leaves and are bright yellow in color with at least 4 long slender leaves. The bark and twigs are usually found in two colors, light brown and gray, depending on the habitat. The bark develops rough patches and becomes scaly as the tree ages.

### Edible Parts

I first enjoyed the capsule-like fruit of the witch hazel tree as the guest of a Chippewa man. He showed me how to peel the fruit to expose the edible nutty seed interior. I think of him and the conversations we shared every time I eat these pistachio flavored nuts.



*Witch Hazel Flowers, Wikipedia Commons*

### Medicinal Use of Witch Hazel Tree

#### Skin Care Uses

For cosmetics and skin/personal care products, Witch Hazel Astringent, made from the bark of the tree works as skin conditioning agent that is usually used on the dry and damaged skin for better appearance and restoring the suppleness of the skin. I also use it to treat boils, sores, and skin ulcers. It reduces inflammation and irritation and soothes the skin.

#### Sore Muscles

Applying witch hazel to sore muscles relieves the pain and inflammation. However, my favorite way to relieve muscle pain is to boil the bark in the water used in a sauna or steam bath. Add pieces of bark or small twigs onto the hot rocks for a relaxing and soothing steam bath.

#### Colds and Coughs

Witch hazel bark is an astringent containing tannins that bind proteins. They tighten the tissues and reduce the mucous and inflammation of a cold or flu. They soothe inflamed airways and reduce swelling. I recommend warm (not hot) witch hazel tea applied as a compress for respiratory illnesses, including coughs, colds, and even asthma. Place the compress on the chest and throat and breathe in the vapors.

#### Stop Bleeding from Wounds

I apply witch hazel astringent to bleeding wounds to tighten the tissues and stop the bleeding. For large wounds, soak a cloth in Witch Hazel Astringent or Witch Hazel Tea and cover the wound.

#### Hemorrhoids and Other Itching

Witch Hazel Astringent reduces the swelling of hemorrhoids and soothes the itching caused by hemorrhoids and other skin irritations. To use Witch Hazel Astringent for hemorrhoids, I recommend soaking a soft cloth or cotton pad in the astringent and using it as a poultice. Replace as needed.

#### Other Uses of the Witch Hazel Tree

I do not have the talent, but many people are able to use a forked witch hazel branch as a divining rod to find water underground. The diviner holds each end of the y shaped branch, using the tail to point to water. When the ends are held gently, the divining end points downward to indicate when water is below.



## Harvesting Witch Hazel Bark

Removing the bark from a witch hazel tree will kill the tree, so it is important only to collect branches which have fallen. You can prune a branch carefully, using sanitized tools, if needed, but do not remove bark from the trunks or main branches.

## Recipes

### Witch Hazel Astringent

This witch hazel astringent is much stronger than the store-bought variety. It contains concentrated tannins and is for external use only.

1. Collect 1 pound of fresh twigs as soon as the tree has flowered. The tonic properties are strongest immediately after flowering.
2. Remove the leaves and flowers. Chop the twigs into small pieces. I find that pruning clippers make this job easier.
3. Place the chopped twigs into an extra-large stainless steel or enamel pot.
4. Cover the twigs with one gallon of distilled water and bring to a boil.
5. Reduce the heat, cover the pot, and simmer the water for at least 8 hours, adding water as needed to keep the twigs covered. You can use a crockpot on medium or high for this step if you have one.
6. Allow the mixture to cool, then strain the mixture to remove the twigs.
7. Keep the witch hazel refrigerated and use within a few weeks. Yields one gallon.
8. For long-term storage, add 9 ounces of vodka or grain alcohol to 23 ounces of tonic.



*Yerba Santa, Public Domain*

## Yerba Santa, *Eriodictyon californicum*

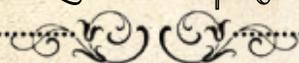
Yerba Santa has been used in traditional Native American remedies for centuries, and I was introduced to the plant by a healer I met in California. Many healers believed it to be capable of relieving a variety of ailments from respiratory issues to colds and pain relief. In fact, some tribes along the western coast of the United States believed the Yerba Santa to be a holy plant, invested with significant healing properties and playing an important role in traditional healing practices.

The Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon californicum*), also known as Mountain Balm, Consumptive Weed, or Bear Weed, is an evergreen shrub native to the coastal chaparral and Redwood forests of the Pacific Northwest.

### Plant Identification

When in the area, I like to collect a supply of Yerba Santa. I start by looking for little colonies of the plant growing along dried, rockier slopes, ridges, and hillsides. They are especially common on eastern and southern facing surfaces. They can reach between three and eight

feet in height, with many straight protruding branches. Their long, lance-shaped leaves are dark green, growing from a short stem. The more mature leaves often feel sticky to the touch and may even appear sooty or black. This is the result of a common fungal growth that forms on mature Yerba Santa shrubs.



The pink and purple flowers of the Yerba Santa bloom in the spring months and can attract birds and butterflies. The gray fruit coalesces around a small seed capsule containing little hard black seeds. The shrub itself is an occasional source of nutrition for some animals, especially deer in the winter, but the leaves have a pungent and unpleasant odor and a bitter taste which makes them undesirable in more plentiful seasons.

### Culinary Use

Surprisingly, because of the bitter leaves, Yerba Santa extract can be used as a taste enhancer, especially effective in masking unpleasant flavors. To make the extract, take about an ounce of the leaves and place them in a Mason Jar. Pour in boiling water to the top and let steep overnight. Strain and store the extract. I sometimes use the extract to mask objectionable flavors in tea or extracts.



*Yerba Santa, Wikipedia Commons*

### Medicinal Use

#### Topical Skin and Pain Relief

I was taught to use the lance-like leaves of the Yerba Sera to relieve arthritis and muscle spasms by applying the leaves directly on the afflicted area. Mature leaves should stick naturally to the skin thanks to their sticky residue.

#### Asthma, Fevers, and Respiratory Infections

Yerba Santa contains chemical components that are believed to alleviate and loosen mucus in the chest when applying the plant as a poultice. To make the balm, the leaves should be crushed in a shallow dish and steeped in boiling water for ten to fifteen minutes. Once cooled, the loosened leaf mixture can be rubbed on the chest.

#### Fever Relief

Likewise, a tea made from 1 teaspoon of Yerba Santa leaves and 1 cup of water can be used to relieve fevers. Drink two tablespoons between three and five times per day until symptoms dissipate.

#### Mouthwash

A natural mouthwash made by balling up washed leaves and letting them dry in the sun. Once dried, these little balls are chewed. The initial taste is bitter, but after a brief moment of chewing, spit out the leaf ball and drink some water. The taste gives way to a pleasant, natural sweetness.

#### Warnings

Yerba Santa can negatively affect the body's ability to take in iron and other important minerals, so it is not advised for women who are nursing or pregnant.



## Moringa oleifera, Drumstick Tree

Moringa oleifera, commonly known as drumstick tree, horseradish tree, ben oil tree, or benzoil tree. It is an extremely useful tree because of its healing properties, nutrition, and for the oil produced from the seed pods.

I first encountered this tree on a farm that had imported it from India. The plant was fascinating for many reasons and I have kept up with the progress and use of this amazing plant.

This deciduous tree is very fast growing, going from a seedling to maturity in a single year. The roots taste like horseradish and the leaves are eaten as a green vegetable. It is also useful for water purification. The plant is now widely cultivated in the tropical and subtropical areas of the United States and is often grown in greenhouses or under plastic in cooler areas.



*Moringa oleifera*, CC3.0, <http://www.cropsforthefuture.org>

Mature trees reach a height of up to 40 feet if not pruned with a trunk diameter of 1 1/2 feet. Most growers trim the trees back to a maximum of 6 feet, so that the leaves and seed pods are easily harvested. The tree park is whitish-grey in color and surrounded by thick cork. Young shoots have a purplish or green-white bark that is hairy. Branches are drooping and fragile, while leaves are feathery and tripinnate.

Asexual flowers appear within the first 6 months of planting. They grow in thin, hairy stalks in drooping clusters. Each flower is approximately 1/2-inch long and 3/4-inch across. Five yellowish-white petals of varying sizes surround the fragrant center. In cool regions, flowers appear between April and June, but in warm regions flowering happens twice a year or year-round when the weather is hot without significant cool temperatures. Fruit pod

production usually occurs in the second year and increases in the third year.

The seed pods hang from the former flower clusters, forming a three-sided brown pod of 10 to 20 inches in length. Each seed is approximately 1/3 to 1/2 inch in diameter with papery wings that aid dispersion.

Moringa propagates easily from seed or cuttings and the germination rate is high when planted in well-drained soil. Cuttings from shoots that are two inches in diameter and three feet long take root and grow well when planted at least 6 feet apart.

### Edible Use

Moringa leaves are cooked and eaten as a green. In areas where nutrition is poor, moringa is often used as a seasoning for rice or other foods. The dried leaves are sprinkled on top of the food at every meal to increase the vitamin content of the food.

### Medicinal Use

Moringa is reported to reverse or cure many different health problems, especially those caused by environmental pollution and toxins. It is also highly effective for diseases caused by poor nutrition as it is high in vitamin and mineral content. Nearly every part of the plant can be used medicinally.



*Moringa oleifera* leaves, Obsidian Soul, CC3.0



## Anti-Inflammation. Anti-aging and Antioxidants

Moringa has earned the nickname “the miracle plant” due to its ability to fight inflammation and the effects of aging, including age-related eye problems. Patients take 2 to 4 grams of moringa leaf daily.

## Diabetes

I have found that diabetic patients taking at least 2 grams of moringa daily have better control of their blood sugars, especially fasting levels. Moringa consumption also has a positive effect on insulin patients when eaten with a high-carbohydrate, low fat meal.



*Drumstick Tree Flowers, Venkatx5, CC3.0*

## Detoxing the Body and Improving Digestion

Because of its purifying effects and anti-inflammatory properties, moringa is helpful to treat stomach ulcers, liver disease, kidney damage, and complaints of the digestive tract, including urinary tract infections, constipation, edema, diarrhea, candida, fungal infections, and other infections. Moringa oil is especially beneficial to the liver function and helps the body rid itself of heavy metals and other toxins.

## Joint Problems and Arthritis

Arthritis, rheumatism, and other joint problems are improved with the daily use of moringa. It is highly effective at reducing the related inflammation and its readily available vitamins and minerals help to rebuild the joint and stop erosion. Patients report that pain is reduced within two to four weeks of daily use. I have been taking moringa daily for about a year now and find that it has greatly decreased my joint pain and increased mobility.

## Treats Skin Problems

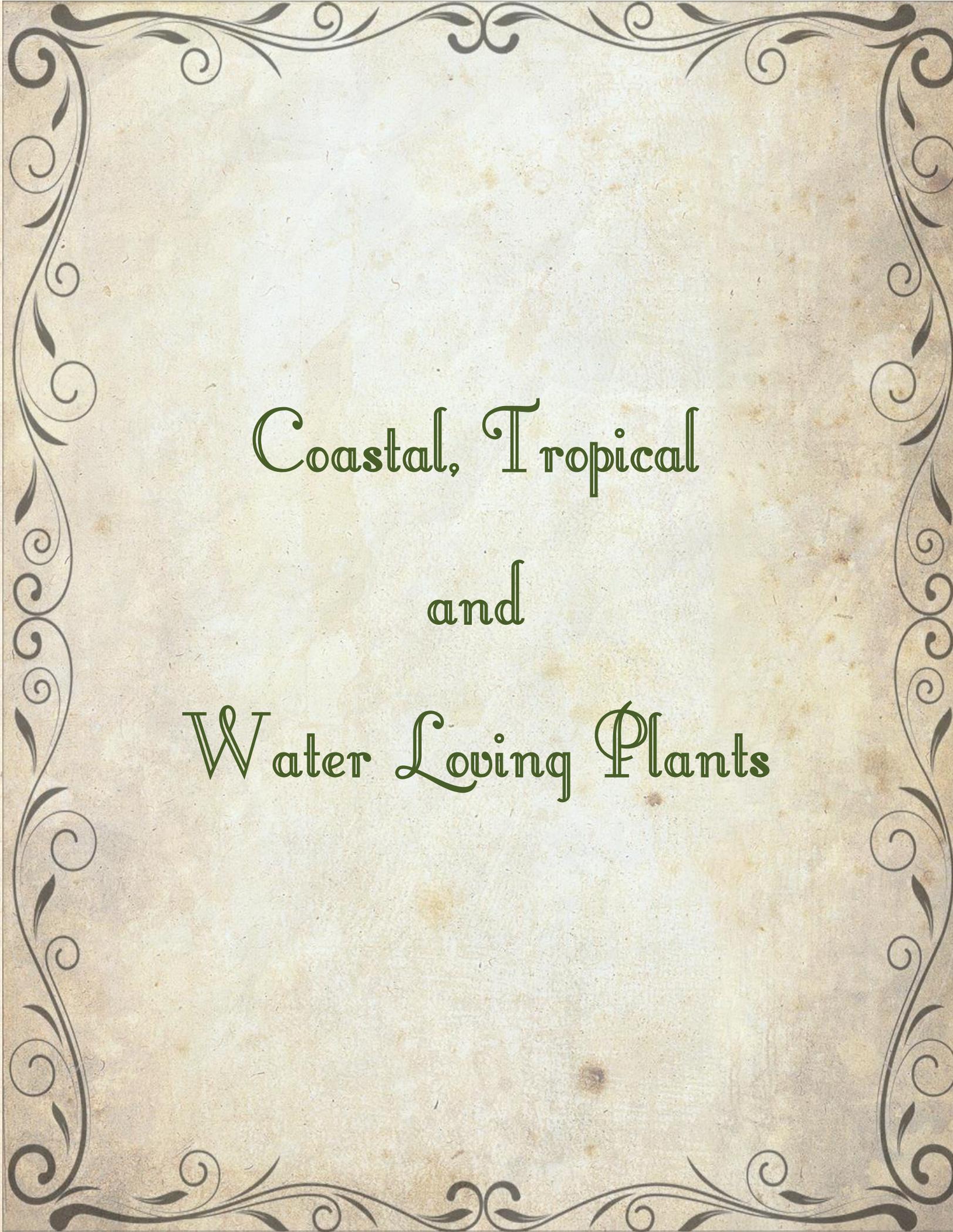
Moringa contains natural antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral compounds that protect the skin from infections. I prescribe moringa oil for these purposes and find that it is effective at reducing inflammation and treating acne, skin infections, gum disease, dandruff, abscesses, and eliminating viral warts, athlete’s feet and jock itch. It also helps soothe and heal wounds, bites, and burns. Applied regularly, the oil hydrates the skin and eliminates dry, itchy patches.

## Stabilizes the Nervous System and Improves Brain Health

Moringa’s high levels of tryptophan helps stabilize nerve and brain function and increase the production of serotonin. I often prescribe it for patients suffering from mood swings, insomnia, fatigue, and depression.

## Water Purification

I have not had the opportunity or need to test water purification by moringa yet, but I have spoken with several people who recommend moringa seeds to purify water. Heavy metals, toxins, and salts in water bind to the moringa seeds and remove them from the water. The seeds also have antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal effects. Reportedly, only 1/2 gram of ground moringa seed is needed to purify 1/2 gallon of contaminated water.

A decorative border with intricate, symmetrical scrollwork and leaf patterns in a dark grey or black ink, framing the central text.

Coastal, Tropical  
and  
Water Loving Plants

## *Amaranthus caudatus*



*Amaranthus caudatus, Tubifex, CC by SA 3.0*

*Amaranthus caudatus* is a brilliantly beautiful plant. The tails of bright red flowers make it easy for me to locate it, even at a distance.

*Amaranthus caudatus* is an annual flowering plant; It is also called loves-lies-bleeding, tassel flower, velvet flower, foxtail amaranth, pendant amaranth, and quilete.

The plant grows to be from three to eight feet in height in full sun and a spread of one to two feet. It usually grows as a summer annual, blooming from July until the first frost.

The flowers are tiny and blood red, with no petals. They bloom in drooping tassel-like panicles. They hang down in terminal and axillary panicles that are 12 to 24 inches long. The seeds ripen in September.

*Amaranthus caudatus* is widespread throughout the United States and I can usually find it wherever I go. It grows on disturbed ground and waste areas.

### Edible Use

The leaves and Seeds of *Amaranthus caudatus* are edible. Amaranth leaves are good cooked and eaten as a vegetable green or used raw in salads. The seeds are used as a grain. They do not need to be cooked, but I like them toasted in a little oil and mixed with chocolate or molasses for a special treat. I also eat them as a cereal or in trail mix. I sometimes use the stems in stir-fries or soups.

The seeds are also good in salads when sprouted.

### Medicinal Use

The plant is astringent, anthelmintic and diuretic.

### Diabetes

I advise patients with diabetes to substitute *Amaranthus* for rice and to eat the seeds and leaves as often as possible. The plant has anti-diabetic properties that help regulate blood sugar and bring it down significantly. Patients report better control of their blood sugars when using *Amaranth* in their daily diet.

### Lowers Cholesterol

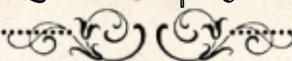
The *Amaranthus* seeds and oil are a healthy chose for those with hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and high cholesterol.

### Sore Throats, Mouth Sores, and Aphthous Ulcers

A gargle made from dried and powdered amaranthus leaves is an effective treatment for sore throats. I make the gargle by boiling 2 tablespoons of powdered amaranth leaves in 1 cup of water for 10 minutes. Let it cool and gargle with it three or more times a day.



*AnRo0002 - Own work, CC0*



Ulcers on the tongue and mouth sores respond to this gargle also, swish it around in the mouth and gargle with it several times a day.

### Menorrhagia, Stop Bleeding

*Amaranthus caudatus* is a powerful blood clotting agent and works to stop excess menstrual bleeding. I recommend bringing 1 tablespoon of amaranthus root powder to a boil in 1 cup of water. Let it cool, then consume.

For external bleeding, I use the root powder to dust the affected area. It quickly stops nosebleeds, bleeding from wounds, and other small bleeds.

### Vaginal Infections

I use both amaranthus leaves and root powder in the treatment of leucorrhoea. Patients can drink a solution of 1 tablespoon of amaranthus root powder soaked in one cup of water overnight or make a douche by boiling 2 tablespoons of amaranthus leaves in a quart of water for 10 minutes. Strain this solution to make a douche for leucorrhoea.

### Warnings

Avoid *amaranthus caudatus* should not be used with patients who suffer from gout, rheumatoid arthritis, or kidney disorders. It should not be given to pregnant women, nursing mothers, or babies.

### California Buckwheat, *Eriogonum fasciculatum*

When I wish to make use of California Buckwheat, either for eating or medicinal use, I need to harvest the plant in a timely manner. When I see a flock of seed-eating birds nearby, I know I may have waited too late. The birds make a feast of the seeds. Fortunately, the plant produces well, so there are usually some left for me. This is less of a problem in cultivated fields.

California Buckwheat belongs to Polygonaceae family and genus *Eriogonum*. It is a wild buckwheat species which is also commonly known as California buckwheat and eastern Mojave buckwheat. This shrub is a native to the Southwestern United States, California, and Northwestern Mexico. Here is what you need to know to be sure you have the right plant.



*California Buckwheat – Bert Wilson, own work*

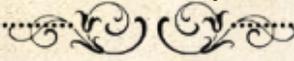
### Plant Identification

*Eriogonum fasciculatum* has many variations in appearance, forming a compact, patchy bramble or a spreading bush approaching 2 meters in height and nearly 3 meters wide. This plant has numerous branches that are flexible and slender.

The leaves are nearly egg-shaped and are 1 1/2 to 2 inches long and less 1/2 inch wide. The leaves usually grow in a cluster at nodes along the branches and are woolly and leathery on the undersides and are rolled under along the edges.

Its flowers commonly appear in dense, frilly clusters which may be a tiny fraction of an inch to 6 inches in width. Each distinct flower is white and pink and only a few millimeters across. The Flowering period occurs from May to October.

Its seeds are usually light brown, angled and are very small.



I find California buckwheat growing naturally on the dry slopes and canyons near the coast from San Diego County north to Marin County. I can also usually find it in Utah, Nevada, California, Arizona and northwestern Mexico along dry slopes, canyons and washes in scrub.

### Harvesting / Management

The seeds mature in early fall. The seed of this plant dries on the plant, which allows some leeway in harvesting. Usually, the seeds are collected after the heads have dried and turned to a rusty brown. The heads can easily be hand stripped into open tubs or bags.

### Edible Use

The seeds are used in raw form or dried for later use. It seeds can be ground into a powder and made into mush or used as a flour. Young sprouts can also be eaten, and the seeds are sometimes sprouted for edible use.

### Medicinal Use

The seeds, flowers, and roots are all used for medicinal purposes. Older, mature plants are more potent. The roots are dried and ground for medicinal use and a strong, thick tea is made from the leaves or the roots.

### Wound Care

Both the leaves and roots are used, either fresh or dried, for the care of skin wounds. Fresh leaves or flowers can be applied as a poultice. Ground leaves and roots are ground, mixed with water or oil and applied as a poultice. California Buckwheat Tea can be used as a wash.

### Colds, Coughs, Sore Throats

A mild leaf tea is warranted for cold, coughs, and sore throats. The hot root tea can also be used for colds and laryngitis.

### Diarrhea, Stomach Illnesses

For diarrhea and other stomach troubles, I use a strong decoction made from the roots of California Buckwheat. It cleans out the system and gets rid of the irritants.

### California Buckwheat is Heart Healthy

A tea made from dried flowers or dried roots is taken to prevent heart problems. I use it to strengthen the patient during the critical recovery period after a heart attack or for patients with a weak heart.

### Oral Care

For sore gums or for use as a mouth-wash, I prefer weak leaf tea. It is a mild pain reliever and calms inflammation. Swish a mouthful of tea around for a few minutes, then spit it out.



*California Buckwheat, Stan Shebs, CC by SA 3.0*



## Headaches

For headaches and other aches and pains, I choose to use a strong tea made from the leaves. It relieves the immediate pain and flushes toxins from the system to prevent further episodes.

### Recipes

#### Strong California Buckwheat Root Tea

1 tablespoon California buckwheat shredded root, 1 pint of water. Mix the root into the water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer. Cover and simmer the tea for 15 minutes.\* Strain and serve warm or cold.

\*For a weaker tea, reduce the brewing time to 5 minutes

#### California Buckwheat Leaf Tea

1 teaspoon California buckwheat leaves, dried or 1 tablespoon fresh, 1 cup boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the leaves and steep for 5 to 10 minutes. Strain.

#### California Buckwheat Decoction

Follow the directions for the California Buckwheat Root Tea above but allow the tea to simmer for 1 hour.

## California Poppy, *Eschscholzia californica*

The California poppy has sedative and healing effects but is not psychoactive or narcotic-like some poppy species. Unfortunately, I find it only in a very limited area, so I have to make my medicines when I can get it and carry them with me or store them when I am home.

The California poppy is a species of flowering plant in the Papaveraceae family and genus *Eschscholzia*, native to the United States and Mexico. It is an ornamental plant and also used medicinally and in cooking. It is also known as Golden Poppy and Cup of Gold owing to its golden appearance.



*California poppy, Wikipedia Commons*

### Plant Identification

The Golden poppy is a flowering herbaceous annual or deep-rooted perennial. California poppy has a growth form that is low-spreading to erect, 1/2 - 2 ft tall, with basal and cauline foliage which is generally blue-green in appearance.

Its Leaves are compound, with three finely divided lobes, and are nearly smooth with no hair.

California poppy produces upright flowers on freely branching stems having four satiny petals, colored bright orange to light yellow. The flowers may also have distinct, darker orange centers. Golden poppy can be distinguished from the other species by its torus rim, a collar-like pedestal at the receptacle, which is unique to the species.

Seed capsules of California Poppy are cylindrical in shape and burst open longitudinally from the base when ripe. Its capsules open explosively, providing the primary means of seed dispersal, ejecting the small seed nearly 6 feet from the parent plant. Seeds are nearly spherical with a micro-sculpted surface, usually gray to gray-brown in color when mature. Seeds number varies from a few seeds to greater than 100 per capsule.



*California poppy flower, Wikipedia Commons*

The Golden poppy is native to the western United States from southern Washington south into Baja Sur, and from the Channel Islands and Pacific coastline east to the Great Basin and regions of the Sonoran Desert. The California poppy occurs across a variety of habitats including coastal, foothill, valley and desert regions, at elevations below 7000 ft.

### Edible Status

Its leaves are edible and can be used cooked. Caution is advised because other plants in the family are poisonous.

### Medicinal Use

The Golden Poppy is a bitter sedative herb that acts as a diuretic, relaxes spasms, relieves pain and promotes perspiration. The whole plant is harvested when it's in the flowering period from June to September and dried for use in tinctures and infusions. I prescribe 1 to 4 ml of California Poppy Tincture or 1 cup of California Poppy Infusion at bedtime.

### Sedative Properties

Golden poppy has a sedative action that is useful in the treatment of anxiety, nervous tension, insomnia and incontinence (especially in children). The watery sap of this plant is mildly narcotic and has been used to relieve a toothache. It is similar in its medicinal effect to the opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), but it is much milder in its action and does not depress the central nervous system. I advise patients to take it at bedtime since it induces sleepiness.

### Normalizes Psychological Function

In my use, I have noticed that the California poppy seems to normalize the thinking patterns of patients with psychological problems, especially children. It does not have a narcotic effect, but it does calm the spirit of patients and help them regain normal function. I use it for all kinds of psychological problems. Its effectiveness depends on the source of the problem. For psychological problems, I recommend 1 to 4 ml of California Poppy Tincture taken at bedtime. Smaller doses can be taken in the morning if needed. However, it does have a sedative effect.



*Field of California Poppy, Doncram, GFDL*

### Suppresses the Milk in Nursing Mothers

When lactation is not desired, I use California Poppy Tea made from the roots as a wash on the breasts to suppress the flow of milk. It gives the patient more comfort and helps the milk dry up quickly.

### Recipes

#### California Poppy Infusion

1 to 2 teaspoons of dried California poppy plant, 1 cup boiling water. Make a strong tea by infusing the dried herb in boiling water for 10 minutes and allowing it to cool.

Drink one cup of the infusion at night before going to bed. It induces sleepiness.



## California Poppy Tincture

1 pint of 100 proof vodka or other alcohol, or substitute apple-cider vinegar, dried or fresh California poppy plant

1. Place the chopped fresh herbs or dried plant into a pint jar with a tight-fitting lid, filling the jar 3/4 full.
2. Cover the herbs with alcohol, filling the jar.
3. Store the jar in a cool, dark place such as a cupboard. Shake the jar daily for 4 to 6 weeks.
4. Strain the herbs out of the liquid, cover it tightly and use within seven years.

Dosage is 1 to 4 ml at bedtime.

## Cattails, Typhaceae

Traveling through wetlands, I am always happy to see the cattail spikes growing near the water's edge. This plant has sustained me through a few hard times. Practically the whole plant is edible, depending on the time of year and I value it highly for its medicinal use.

Cattails are grasses, common in and near marshes, ponds, and other wetland areas throughout the United States. The sword-like leaves are similar to many grasses, but the plant is readily identifiable by its brown corndog-like flowerheads that are not produced on its poisonous look-alikes. I've also heard the plant referred to as bulrush, punks, and corndog grass.

Growing 4 to 8 feet tall, cattails are perennials. The leaves are spear-shaped, hairless, and alternate, growing from a simple stem that terminates in a large number of male flowers forming the spike at the end of the stem. The flowers wither once the pollen is shed.

Cattails flower from May through July. Tiny female flowers form a dense, sausage-shaped structure just below the male spike. This structure can be up to 12 inches long and 1/2 to 2 inches in diameter. The tiny seeds grow on fine hairs. When ripe, the cottony fluff blows away to disperse the seeds.

Cattail rhizomes are edible and nutritious. They can be easily made into a flour by scraping the starch from the fibers and allowing it to dry. They can also be boiled, steamed, fried, or mashed and eaten like a potato. The small pointed shoots on the rhizomes in early spring are good peeled and sliced for a salad or used in stews. The rhizomes are starchy and contain gluten. The flavor is mildly sweet.

In the spring, the outer part of the young plant can be peeled and eaten raw or cooked like asparagus. In the summer, I harvest the green flower spike and remove the outer sheath like you would shuck corn. I boil the flower spike and eat it like corn on the cob. The flavor is delicious and much like corn.

In late summer, an abundance of pollen eventually forms and can be harvested for edible and medicinal use. It is easy to collect several pounds quickly in a thick patch. Simply bend the pollen-laden stalk over and shake it into a bag or other container. This pollen makes an excellent thickener or flour extender for baking and for making cattail pancakes or cornbread.

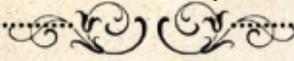
## Medicinal Uses

### Treating Skin Conditions

I've had much luck treating skin infections and other skin problems with cattail, and every part of the cattail is useful for this purpose.



*Cattails, Public Domain,*



The starchy root makes a healing poultice for burns, boils, sores, cuts, insect bites, and bruises. I either pound the roots and use the pulp or when time is important, I split the root and bruise the fibers inside, then apply the exposed pulp to the wound. I also recommend the fuzz from the flowers for treating small burns and skin irritations. Apply the fuzz directly to the wound and cover with a clean cloth.

### Treating Small Wounds, Insect Bites, Toothaches, and Relieving Pain

The jelly-like sap that seeps from the lower stems has antiseptic properties. I can usually find it between young leaves and scrape it up with the back of a knife.

I use it for treating small wounds, especially when infection might be a problem. It also acts as a powerful pain killer when applied topically and can be ingested without harm. It makes an ideal pain reliever for toothaches, teething pain, and sore gums, but it can also be used on insect bites and other skin irritations. Just rub a little on the sore spot for fast pain relief and to reduce inflammation.

### Abscesses and Infections

Clean abscesses with an antiseptic skin wash made by boiling the leaves. When the abscess is clean, combine 5 to 10 grams of cattail pollen with a small amount of honey and spread over the wound. Cover with a clean cloth and leave in place. Wash and replace the honey-pollen two to three times a day as needed.

### Fungal Infections

The gel found between the lower leaves is an excellent treatment for nail and foot fungus. Apply the gel one to two times daily until the infection is clear. I find that nail and foot fungus begin to clear within a few days, but treatment should be continued until the fungus is completely cured.

### Diarrhea and Dysentery

I prescribe eating young cattail flowers to treat diarrhea and dysentery. When the fresh flowers are not available, a tea made from dried flowers can be used or mix root flour in a cup of hot water.

### Well Baby Care

Apply the fuzz from the flowers into the skin folds to prevent chafing and diaper rash in babies.

The jelly-like sap found between lower stems numbs the gums and relieves teething pain when rubbed sparingly onto the baby's gums.

### Cancer Prevention

I have recently been looking into cattails as a cancer preventative, especially for cancers of the lymphatic system. Cattail's anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties slow the growth and spread of cancers of all types. This deserves more study but seems promising.



Skalle-Per Hedenhos, Own Work, CC by SA 4.0



## Antiseptic and Styptic Properties

Burned cattail leaf ash is an excellent styptic for wounds and an antiseptic. To make the ash, build a small fire using cattail leaves. Allow the fire to burn completely, then scoop up the ash. Use when cool or store it in a dry place for future use.

Cattail pollen, dusted on externally, is also good for bleeding. It speeds clotting and helps prevent infection. Once bleeding is no longer an issue, I mix the pollen with honey and use it to prevent infection and speed healing.

## Bleeding and Menstrual Properties

I use 5 to 10 grams of cattail pollen, taken by mouth, to lessen the severity of heavy menstrual bleeding and for postpartum bleeding and pain.

## Internal Bleeding

Both the pollen and the flower are useful for internal bleeding due to bruising, vomiting blood, bloody stools, bloody urine, hemorrhoids, uterine bleeding, vaginitis, and urethritis. It doesn't treat the cause of the bleeding but helps stop bleeding and prevent anemia. I give a teaspoon of pollen or dried flower.



*Cattails, Public Domain*

## Contraindications

The coagulant properties could be a problem for people with poor circulation, as it may slow down the blood even more and stimulate clotting in the skin. Pregnant women should not use cattail.

## Recipes

### Cattail Flower Tea

1 tablespoon fresh cattail flowers or 1 teaspoon dried cattail flowers  
1 cup boiling water

Pour the boiling water over the flowers and allow the tea to brew for 10 minutes. Sip the tea to treat diarrhea.

## Cocoplum, *Chrysobalanus icaco*

The cocoplum is one of my favorite wild fruits. I find it readily along the beaches and enjoy the sweet-tart flavor of the fruit. I have also heard it referred to as paradise plum and Icaco.

## Plant Identification

Along the shoreline and in cultivated situations, the cocoplum grows to form a shrub that is 4 to 8 feet tall, but inland the plant forms a bushy tree that grows to 20 to 30 feet tall. It grows in subtropical and tropical areas, but I mainly find it along the saltwater shores in southern Florida. There are three main types of Cocoplum. "Red Tip" and "Green Tip" varieties that grow inland and a "Horizontal" type that grows along the coast and is salt tolerant. I usually find them along the beach, on small islands, and hammocks near salt water or inland near fresh water.



While all three varieties have a similar medicinal use, I am most familiar with the coastal-horizontal type. It sends down roots from horizontal branches creeping along the soil or sand.

The leaves are alternate and egg-shaped with a small indentation at the tip. Each is about 1 1/2 inch to 3 inches long and has a tough, leathery texture and glossy appearance. New leaves can be yellow-green to reddish and are light green when mature.

The small white flowers appear in clusters at the end of the stems. The resulting fruit can be white, yellow, red, or purple with a thin skin. They usually bear crops in the spring and another in later fall. The fruits are oval shaped, about 1-inch long.

The bark is grey to reddish brown with white flecks.

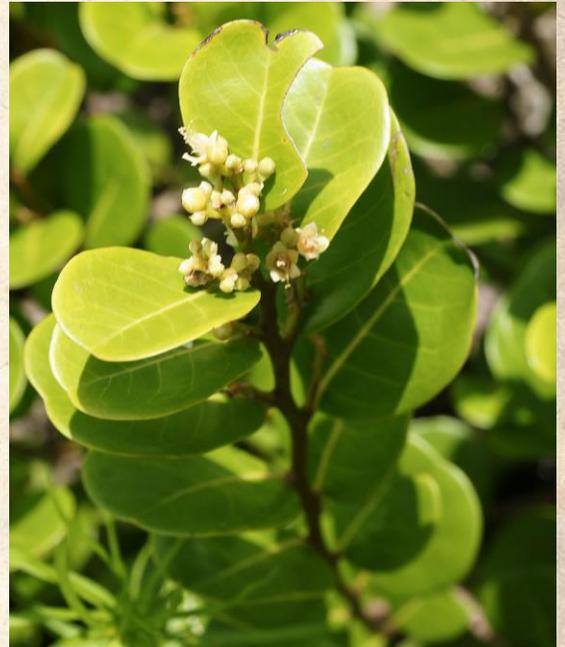
### Edible Use

The cocoplum fruit is often eaten raw or made into jams, jellies, syrups, and fruit desserts. The seed is also edible after the hard shell is removed.

### Other Uses

The leaves have been used to make a black dye that is decay resistant. It is used to treat cloth and fishing nets.

The seeds within the fruit are very oily and can be used as a light or heat source. A Miccosukee Indian in South Florida showed me how to use them to make candles by spearing the kernels with a thin stick and lining them up to form a candle that burns very well. The oil can also be pressed and used like almond oil.



By © Hans Hillewaert /, CC BY-SA 3.0



Cocoplum fruits, Ripe and immature. Daniel Di Palma, CC by SA 4.0

### Medicinal Use

#### Eye Health

Cocoplums are an excellent source of beta-carotene and vitamin A, useful for treating night blindness and macular degeneration. It also helps protect the eyes from harmful UV rays. I advise patients to enjoy eating the fruits either raw or cooked to build up an ample supply of vitamin A.

#### Heart Health

Cocoplums help increase the healthy high-density cholesterols in the body. It helps prevent excess lipids in the blood and sustains healthy blood cell structure. It helps treat atherosclerosis and reduces the risk of heart attack and strokes.

### Healthy Immune System

In addition to its vitamin A content, cocoplums also contain high levels of vitamin C, K, and the building blocks that your body uses to make vitamin D. They are also rich in minerals and antioxidants. Eating the cocoplum fruit strengthens the immune system and helps prevent degenerative diseases.

Because of their high vitamin and mineral content, I often recommend that pregnant patients eat the fruit for a natural source of vitamins.

### Cranberry, *Vaccinium macrocarpon*

I love cranberries for their tart flavor. The juice is a very effective remedy for my practice but is too bulky and heavy to pack for my nomadic lifestyle. Since the berries are only available in the fall, I like to keep a dried supply on hand.

#### Plant Identification

The cranberry shrub is a member of the Ericaceae family. These low growing, creeping shrubs rarely top 8 inches in height. They have long wiry stems, or vines, that stretch to 7 feet long. The shrub grows in acidic bogs, swamps, wetlands, and poorly drained meadows throughout the colder climates of the Northern US.

The plant has small, oblong, evergreen leaves that are speckled with tiny dots on the underside. The leaves are leathery and 1/4 to 1/2-inch long. Dark pink flowers with distinct reflexed petals appear June through August. The style and stamens are exposed and point forward. The cranberry fruit is a small berry that is larger than the leaves. The berry is white when immature, usually turning dark red when ripe. Cranberries can be deep red, pale pink, or even white when ripe and have an acidic taste.



*Cranberry Bush, CCO Creative Commons*

#### Edible Parts

The berries are edible, but they are very acidic. The addition of sugar makes them more agreeable. I like cranberry sauce and juice. I use dried berries for medicines and sometimes use them, with sugar, to make juice.

#### Medicinal Uses

I find cranberries to be an effective preventative and remedy for early stage urinary tract infections. I have heard they work by preventing the adhesion of bacteria to the lining of the bladder and gut, thereby preventing infection. If the infection is too well entrenched, other remedies may also be required. Cranberries have high levels of antioxidants, vitamin C and salicylic acid, which helps relieve pain and put the body on a healing path.

#### Using Cranberries for Medicinal Purposes

To get all of the benefits of cranberries for medicinal purposes, simply consume the fruit or its juice daily for as long as needed. Cranberry juice is sour, but more palatable when diluted with water or when sugar or honey is added. Two ounces of cranberry juice diluted in 8 ounces of water is sufficient for a daily dose.

#### Using Cranberry for Urinary Tract Infections

Consumption of cranberries or their juice prevent the bacteria in the urinary tract from multiplying and clinging to the walls of the bladder, allowing them to be easily flushed out of the system. Regular consumption of cranberry juice prevents urinary tract diseases.



Unfortunately, cranberries are not as effective in treating established UTIs, but some patients report success. The juice does not kill the bacteria, and reinfection can occur if juice is discontinued while bacteria are still in the system. For UTIs, drink 2-10 ounces of cranberry juice daily, mixed with water.



*Cjboffoli, CC by 3.0*

### Cardiovascular Health

Flavonoids in cranberries are high in antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and decrease the risk of atherosclerosis. They also suppress the oxidation of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL), an added benefit for heart patients.

### Cold and Flu Prevention

Cranberry juice inhibits the *Haemophilus influenza*, a common cause of ear infections and respiratory infections in childhood. The juice prevents the flu virus from adhering to the skin surface. Cranberry juice is also effective in fighting sore throats and the common cold.

Cranberry juice contains high concentrations of anti-inflammatories that I believe to be the effective agent against the lung inflammation caused by the influenza virus. The virus is also prevented from adhering to the cells, and the infection is prevented or inhibited. I have noticed faster recovery from both colds and flu viruses when cranberry juice is taken daily.

### Cranberry Treats Peptic Ulcers

Cranberries help reduce the risk of stomach disorders, including peptic ulcers caused by *Helicobacter pylori*. Along with preventing the adhesion of bacteria to the stomach lining, the high flavonoid content of cranberries suppresses the infection and helps the body heal.

### Cranberry Antitumor Effects

I believe cranberry to be a powerful anti-tumor agent, based on my observations and the recommendations of other healers. Medicinal compounds within the fruit are observed to inhibit the growth and spread of lung, breast, prostate, colon, and other cancers.

### Cranberry Juice for Memory Loss and Lack of Coordination

I have noticed that cranberries help protect against the problems of aging, including memory loss and lack of coordination. I have had patients given cranberry juice for other problems improve in these areas. I recommend that patients with these problems continue taking cranberry juice daily, and I am hoping for further evidence of improvements, but this needs more study.

### Warnings

Patients who take Warfarin need to be careful when taking cranberry. Additional anti-clotting effects of cranberry put them at high risk of bleeding.

Cranberries contain salicylic acid, a component of aspirin. People who are allergic to aspirin should not consume cranberries, and people who regularly take aspirin for blood thinning should be careful and avoid taking too much cranberry juice.

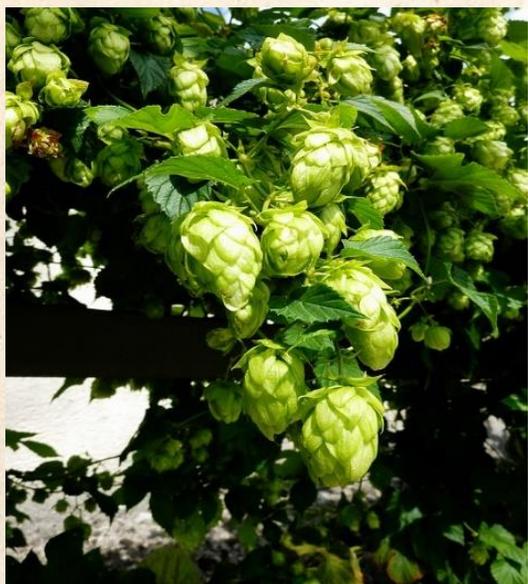


## Recipes

### Fresh Cranberry Juice

4 cups cranberries, 4 cups water, 1/4 cup lemon juice, 1/4 cup orange juice, sugar to taste

1. Bring the cranberries and water to a boil, turn down the heat and simmer the berries for 25 minutes or until all the berries have popped and the berries are cooked.
2. Pass the cranberry mixture through a food mill on the smallest setting.
3. Pass the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve. Mash the pulp slightly to increase draining, but not hard enough to push the pulp through.
4. Mix in the orange juice and lemon juice.
5. Add sugar to sweeten the juice, if desired.



Hops CCO Creative Commons, own work by moritz320

### Hops, *Humulus lupulus*

Hops is a species of flowering plant that belongs to Cannabaceae family and genus *Humulus*. This plant is a native to Europe, western Asia, and North America.

Hops are described as a bine plant rather than a vine because, because unlike vines, they have hairs that are stiff and downward facing that provide stability and allow the plant to climb. These shoots enable the Hops bine to grow anywhere from 15 to 20 feet high. Hop flowers are fragrant and attract butterflies.

#### Plant Identification

The hops plant has dark green colored, heart-shaped leaves on a fibrous stalk with finely toothed edges.

The male and female flowers of the hops plant spring from the axils of the leaves on separate plants. The male plant flowers grow in panicles and are about 3 to 5 inches long.

The fruit of the female plant is called a strobile and resembles small pine cones. When fully ripened the strobiles measure about 1 1/4 to 2 inches long, in a rounded, oblong shape having a number of overlapping, yellowish-green bracts, attached to a separate central point containing a small fruit (achene) at the base.

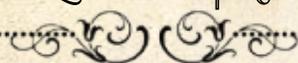
It is found wild in every state except Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida, and I have been able to find it cultivated there.

### Harvesting Instructions

It is easiest to lower the vines in order to collect the hops when it is time for the harvest. The harvest timing varies with the climate. Only the female plants are harvested and used in brewing, both the pollinated and unpollinated fruits of hop called strobili are harvested.

### Edible Use

The leaves and the root can be used to prepare tea and flavor drinks. Most people associate hops with brewing beer, but they can do much more. Young leaves and shoots are sometimes used cooked or in a salad. Their flavor is unique and tastes delicious. Extracts from the Hop plant and its oil are used as a flavoring in non-alcoholic beverages, candy, baked goods, and puddings.



*Hops leaves and flowers, CCO Creative Commons, own work by moritz320*

### Medicinal Use

Hops are known to be tonic, nervine, diuretic and anodyne. The volatile oil of this plant produces sedative and soporific effects, and the bitter principle is stomachic and tonic. Because of this, Hops improves the appetite and promotes sleep.

When used for sedative purposes the hops must be used fresh and consumed immediately. The effectiveness of the done declines rapidly. For other medicinal uses, dried and stored herbs may be used.

The infusion of this plant is a vehicle for bitters and tonics. The tincture prepared from hops is stomachic and is used to improve the appetite and digestion.

### Nerve Disorders, Seizures, and Heart Disease

The bitter principle in Hops has proven to be one of the most effective vegetable bitters obtainable. It is effective for the treatment of heart disease, neuralgia, nervous disorders, and seizures.

### Bedsore, Infected Sores, and Wounds

Apply Hops Tincture directly to the wound, or in the case of open wounds, pour it on a dressing and apply the dressing to the wound. The antibacterial properties of the hops help kill the infection and heal the wounds.

### Irritable Bladder

My Hops Infusion is a useful tonic for treating the symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome and an irritable bladder. The bitter properties and the sedative qualities reduce spasms of the bladder and the bowel, relieving the symptoms temporarily without affecting the underlying cause.

### Anxiety, Insomnia, and Use as a Sedative

Hops have a strong sedative action when consumed freshly prepared. For insomnia and anxiety, I prefer to give a combination of hops and valerian root.

I prescribe one cup of freshly made Valerian and Hops Infusion at bedtime.

If sleep induction is not desired, such as for anxiety, I give one cup of tea that has been stored in the refrigerator overnight. The compounds that induce sleep evaporate quickly.

### Jaundice, Liver Problems, and Indigestion

I prescribe two tablespoons of Hops Tincture, taken on an empty stomach for the treatment of Jaundice, liver problems, and indigestion. The tincture is a useful tonic for these problems and provides relief. It can be taken daily for chronic problems such as these.

### Bruises, Boils, and Inflammation

I apply a poultice made of crushed hops over bruises, boils, inflamed tissue, and rheumatic joints. I sometimes add chamomile flowers along with hops for a more broad spectrum treatment when I don't know the cause.



## Asthma, PMS, and Muscle Spasms

Hops have powerful anti-spasm compounds that relieve the cramping from menstruation and muscle spasms of all kinds. It even relieves the bronchial spasms that cause asthma symptoms. Give two tablespoons of hops tincture or a cup of tea made with one teaspoon of hops whenever symptoms occur. The tincture is best used on an empty stomach.



Hops field, Wikipedia Commons

### Recipes

#### Hops Tincture

- 1 1/4 cup of freshly cut hops
- 1 pint 100 proof vodka or brandy
- 1. Pack the freshly cut hops into a pint jar with a tight-fitting lid.
- 2. Fill the jar to the top with the vodka or brandy, making sure all the hops are covered. Seal the jar and place it in a cool, dark place such as a cupboard.
- 3. Shake the jar daily to help infuse the alcohol.
- 4. Strain out the hops and put the alcoholic tincture in a tightly sealed dark bottle. Store it in a cool, dark place for up to one year. The beneficial compounds in hops decline over time, so a fresh tincture is best.
- 5. Give two tablespoons daily before taking food.

## Valerian and Hops Infusion

1 quart of water, 1 heaping tablespoon of fresh hops, 1 heaping of chopped valerian root, maple syrup, if desired

1. Bring a quart of water to a boil and add the herbs. Cover the pot and turn down the heat to a very low simmer.
2. Simmer the infusion for 5 minutes, then turn the heat off. Leave the pot covered and allow the herbs to steep for another 45 minutes.
3. Sweeten the infusion with pure maple syrup, if desired.
4. Drink 1 to 1 1/2 cups of the infusion for each dose.



1 Christian Fischer, CC by SA 3.0 Unported

## Water Plantain (*Alisma subcordatum* or *Alisma Plantago-Aquatica* var. *Parviflorum*)

When I get close to a swamp, wetland, marsh and coastal areas, I make a point of looking for the Water Plantain. This is a valuable plant in my practice, and I try to keep it on hand.

### Plant Identification

Water plantain is erect in shallow water and can droop in deep water. The herb grows to 1 to 3 feet. Broad leaves may float on the water surface or be submerged. The leaves are sometimes tapered or rounded at the base. Underwater leaves often grow as long, ribbon-like leaves.

The inflorescences are highly branched with whorls of perfect white or pink to pink-purple flowers.



Flowers have three petals, six stamens, and many carpels. Each carpel has one ovule and style. Flowers appear from June to August and seeds ripen from July to September.

### Edible Parts of Water Plantain

When I have time for a long cooking period, I boil the leaves and petioles of water plantain for a vegetable dish. Raw, the leaves and root are toxic, but the poisons are destroyed by heat and drying. I cook them for a long time to make sure all toxins are destroyed.

I harvest the roots in the winter and boil them for immediate use, or dry them for the future. The roots are rich in starch and taste salty. I find them to be a good starch source in the winter when food supplies dwindle.

### Medicinal Uses of Water Plantain

I use most parts of Water Plantain medicinally, including the fresh and dried roots, leaves, and seeds. To use Water Plantain, I have the patient eat it as part of the daily diet. Instruct the patient to be sure water plantain is thoroughly cooked before use.



*Bff, Creative Commons by SA 3.0*

### Water Plantain for the Kidney and Liver

Water plantain root (dried) is a diuretic and can help the body get rid of excess water. It helps reduce edema, diarrhea, and difficulty producing urine. The leaves treat cystitis, renal calculus, and gravel.

### Inhibits Hepatitis B Virus

My experience shows that dried water plantain inhibits the hepatitis B virus (HBV) in exposed patients.

### Prevents Fatty Deposits in the Liver

Water plantain, eaten regularly prevents non-alcoholic fatty deposits on the liver. It has a protective effect and is useful in the treatment of Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) caused by a high-fat diet.

### Water Plantain for High Blood Pressure

Because of its diuretic properties, water plantain helps reduce blood pressure. It also helps reduce blood lipids and lowers cholesterol.

### Powdered Water Plantain Seed for Bleeding

Dried and powdered water plantain seed is an astringent and helps control bleeding. I apply it directly to the wound to disinfect, stop bleeding and promote healing.

### High Blood Sugar and Diabetes

Water plantain lowers blood sugar levels in my non-insulin dependent patients. I have also found that water plantain is effective in the prevention and treatment of diabetic nephropathy (a diabetic kidney disease.)

# The Lost Book Of Remedies

## Increase Milk Secretion in Lactation

Lactating mothers in my practice report that the leaves improve their milk secretion.

## Water Plantain for Colds and Fevers

Water plantain is a cooling herb, useful for reducing fevers. It is also an expectorant, expelling excess phlegm from the body. I find these properties useful for patients with severe colds, flu, and fevers.

## Water Plantain for Digestive Ailments

I use water plantain stems, dried and eaten or grated into the water for treating digestive disorders such as cramps, stomach flu, and heartburn.

## Water Plantain Poultice Bruising and Swelling

Water plantain contains anti-inflammatories that work to reduce swelling and bruising, I crush the fresh leaves and use them as a poultice over the swollen area. Cover it with a clean cloth and replace as needed until the swelling is reduced and the area is healing.

## Water Plantain for Reproductive Problems

I have prescribed water plantain for sterile patients who later conceived. The plant is said to promote conception, and that agrees with my observations. The powdered seed is said to cause sterility, so avoid the seed when trying to conceive.

## Warnings:

In some people or with prolonged use, water plantain can cause skin irritation. While water plantain is considered safe, it can irritate the digestive tract with long use.

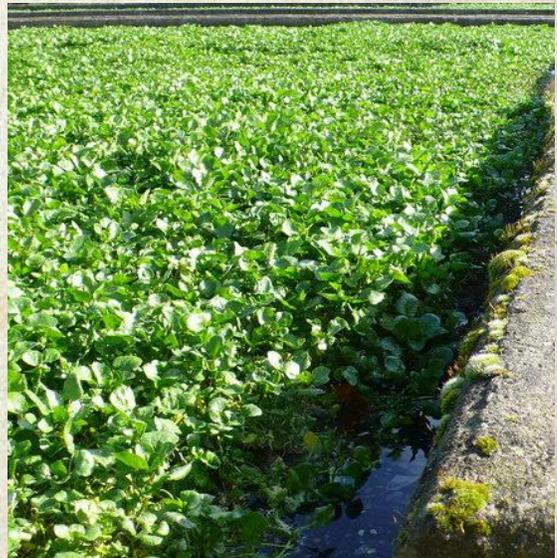
## Watercress, *Nasturtium officinale*

I first encountered this herb as a condiment for my sandwiches and salads and later learned to use it medicinally from a Chinese healer who became a fast friend. He used the watercress in the soup for almost every purpose, but I have experimented with other treatments over time.

Unfortunately, as our waterways are becoming polluted, it is even more important to make sure that the water I harvest watercress from is clean. I now grow my own whenever possible.

Watercress is an aquatic plant belonging to the Brassicaceae family and genus *Nasturtium*. It is related to garden cress, mustard, radish, and wasabi—all noteworthy for their piquant flavor. Even though it bears the name *Nasturtium*, it should not be confused with plants with the common name of nasturtium, within the genus *Tropaeolum*.

It is a rapidly growing, aquatic or semi-aquatic, perennial plant. Watercress is considered to be introduced to North America and is



*Watercress floating on the water, photo by Dudley Miles, CC by SA 4.0*



now found in almost every state. It is especially prevalent in the Pacific Northwest, having been found in nearly every county in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.



*Watercress, photo by Masparasol, CC by SA 3.0*

I typically find it growing in clumps in the cold, gently flowing, and shallow freshwater. However, I also see it often in stream margins, ditches, and sometimes in moving waters. Watercress is an emergent perennial herb. It is easily found in waters that do not freeze through the winter.

### Plant Identification

Older leaves of Watercress are compound with many wavy-edged, lance or Oval-shaped leaflets growing from a central stalk. The leaves have a strong taste of pepper. The Watercress leaves are between 1 1/2 and 4 3/4 inches long, with the end leaflet typically being the largest.

The Watercress has a 4 to 24 inches tall stem with thin and fibrous roots at the bottom. At the top of these stems and the short stalks, its flowers are less than 1/5 long and have four white pedals.

Watercress fruits are nearly 1/3 to 1 inch long and about 1/10 of an inch wide and found on stalks that are less than 1/2 inch long. They are thin, slightly curved cylinders and contain 4 rows of small, round seeds.

Watercress is sometimes confused with *Amoracia lacustris*, and other *Nasturtium* and *Rorippa* species, which includes *Nasturtium microphyllum*, and has just one row of seeds in its pods instead of the four rows that watercress has. The Watercress can also be confused with Western bittercress, which tends to grow in wet soil rather than water.

### Harvesting Instructions

The leaves of watercress can be harvested most of the year and are used fresh. Here are my tips for harvesting watercress:

Harvest watercress only from known clean water supplies. Polluted water can contaminate the herb.

Use scissors to snip the tops of stems when they are nearly 6 inches long. Never take more than a third of the plant at any one time to protect the future supply.

Do not pull on the stems of the plant directly; the whole plant may be uprooted.

This plant wilts quickly, so it is best harvested for immediate use. It can hold in the fridge for up to 3 days in a plastic bag or submerged in water.

### Edible Status

The leaves and seeds are edible and used mainly as a condiment or a garnish or in salads.

### Medicinal Use

This plant is used for the treatment of many health disorders. It is considered to have anti-rheumatic, antiscorbutic, diuretic, purgative, depurative, expectorant, hypoglycaemic, odontalgic, and stimulant properties.

This plant is very rich in vitamins and minerals. It is considered an effective cleansing herb, and its high content of vitamin C makes it particularly valuable as a tonic and for chronic illnesses.

## The Lost Book Of Remedies

For medicinal use, patients can consume it fresh, eat it as soup, or make an infusion. The herb is best used fresh, but it can also be dried for future use.

### Immune Booster

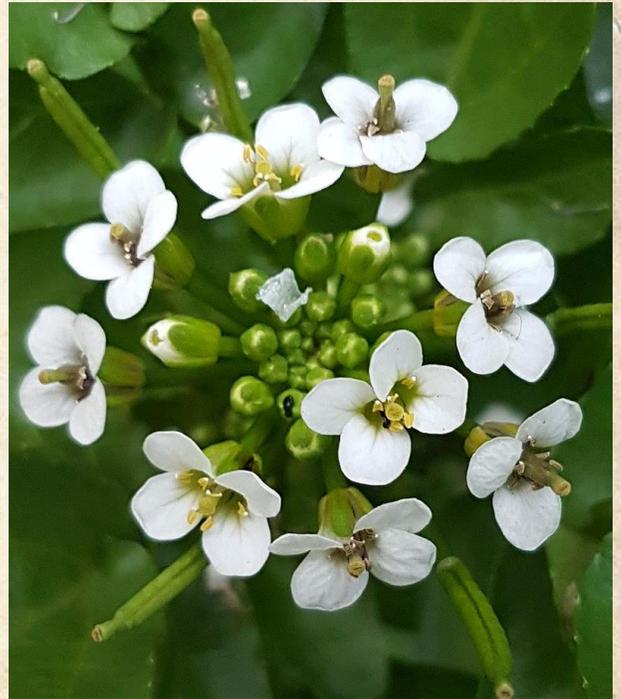
The high nutrition and medicinal properties of watercress make it an excellent treatment for restoring immune function and health to the body. Patients can eat the watercress raw, drink the juice or the infusion, or eat the soup. All provide the necessary nutrients and healing benefits.

### Treating Tuberculosis

The freshly pressed juice of watercress is used to treat tuberculosis by some healers. I have not tried to use it for this purpose, so I cannot attest to its effectiveness. Healers who use it report that they have patients drink one cup of watercress juice daily, in divided doses. Large doses taken all together can cause stomach upsets.

### Swellings of the Lymphatic Systems

I use a poultice prepared by crushing fresh watercress leaves as a poultice for healing swollen glands of the lymphatic system. I prefer to cover the poultice with a bandage taped into place and change the poultice at least once or twice a day.



*Watercress flowers, photo by Paul Venter, CC by SA 4.0*

### Headaches and Anxiety

I recommend Watercress Tincture made with vinegar to treat headaches and anxiety. Saturate a handkerchief or a piece of cotton cloth in the tincture and wring it out. Place the cloth over the patient's forehead and closed eyes.

### Mouth Sores, Swollen Gums, Bad Breath, and Hot Flashes

I learned this recipe from a Chinese immigrant in Colorado. He claimed that Watercress Soup was an ancient Chinese remedy for these kinds of problems as well as curing the hot flashes caused by menopause. My patients have declared it delicious, and I am impressed with its nutrition and medicinal properties. I recommend that patients eat the full recipe of soup daily. For hot flashes, consume it cold, otherwise warm is preferred.

### Dermatitis, Eczema, and Chronic Skin Diseases

For chronic skin conditions, watercress juice or my Watercress Infusion is very effective. It takes time for the remedy to work, so give it time. Patients will enjoy a boost to the immune system, better nutrition, and gradual healing of skin diseases. Drink one cup of the infusion daily and use it to wash the affected areas twice a day.

### Gout, Kidney Stones, Swellings, Water Retention, and Expelling Mucous

Swelling in the body such as water retention, gout, and swellings of other causes, are effectively treated with Watercress Infusion. I prescribe one cup of the infusion daily to expel excess water and mucus from the body. Watercress Infusion also encourages the dissolution of kidney stones so that they can be flushed from the body.



### Cautions

- Choose your watercress from clean water sources. Fouled water can contaminate the herb.
- Excessive use of this plant can lead to stomach upsets.

### Recipes

#### Watercress Tincture

Rinse freshly picked watercress thoroughly and pack it into a clean and sterile glass jar with a tight lid. Bring some apple cider vinegar to a low boil and pour it over the watercress to fill the jar. Let the watercress steep for 3 to 4 hours, then strain it through a coffee filter. Pour it back into the glass jar and cap it tightly for long-term storage.

#### Watercress Soup

1/2 cup loosely packed watercress, washed thoroughly, 1/2 cup sliced carrots, 1 quart of water, salt and pepper to taste

Simmer the watercress and carrots in the water slowly over low heat for 30 to 45 minutes or until the water is reduced by half. Consume the entire recipe of soup with its vegetables. Makes one serving.

#### Watercress Infusion

Gather a saucepan full of watercress and clean it meticulously. Place the watercress in a ceramic or stainless-steel pot. Add enough cold water to barely cover the watercress. Bring the herbs to a boil and lower the heat. Simmer the herbs until they are soft and yield their flavor and nutrients to the water.

Filter the herbs out and store the infusion in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. The flavor can be enhanced if needed by mixing it with tomato juice or other vegetable juices.

Nationwide  
Plants



## Agrimony, *Agrimonia eupatoria*

I always know there is agrimony nearby when I find my pants legs coated in cockleburrs. As pesky as they are, I rejoice knowing that a ready source is available. Agrimony, also called sticklewort or church steeples, is found across the United States in every state except Idaho, Nevada, and Utah. It is a pretty plant with spikes of tiny yellow flowers called church steeples. I find it to be very useful as a medicinal herb and I appreciate its availability.

This deciduous perennial plant is dark green and covered with soft hairs that are useful in spreading the seeds. It grows to a height of 39 inches. The leaves are serrated pinnate leaves.

The roots are deep rhizomes.

The short-stemmed flowers have a spicy, apricot-like scent. They appear from June to September on long spike-like racemose inflorescences. Each flower is an urn-shaped cup with rows of hook-shaped bristles on the upper edge. There are five sepals and five yellow, rounded petals. Each petal has 5 to 20 stamens, with the petals and stamens rising above the tip of the flower. The flower attracts flies, bees, and butterflies.

The flowers produce fruit with hooked bristles called cockleburrs that attach to grazing animals (and my pants legs) and are spread throughout their range.



*Agrimony Flowers, Oswald Engelhardt, GNU FDL*



*Agrimony Cockleburrs, CCO Creative Commons*

I usually find agrimony growing along roadsides and in the woods.

### Edible Use

The leaves are used for tea, and the fresh flowers are added to home-brewed beer to enhance flavor and convey health benefits.

### Medicinal Use

Both the leaves and seeds are used in medicinal preparations. I tend to rely on the leaves in my practice, most often prescribing Agrimony Tea, three times daily. Some patients prefer to take Agrimony Wine which is an acceptable substitute when taken according to the dosage instructions.

### To Induce Sleep

Placing a sprig of agrimony under the person's head is believed to induce sleep. I don't know if it is the herb or just breathing in the scent, but this seems to work for most people. I tell my patients to put the herb under their head and rhythmically breathe in the aroma. Some patients have trouble waking up after using agrimony. Remove the herb from the room, if necessary.

### Wound Care and Skin Diseases

Agrimony is well suited and effective for wound care applications. It stops excessive bleeding by promoting the formation of clots in the wound. It is astringent and containing tannins. Agrimony tea can be used as a wash for wounds and all types of skin diseases or the fresh leaves can be pulverized and applied directly to the wound as a poultice.



### Digestive Problems, Diarrhea,

I prescribe my Agrimony Tea for use with digestive problems. Sip on one cup of tea, three times daily. The tea acts as a tonic to the digestive system and heals underlying problems.

### Gallbladder, Liver, and Kidney Problems

The Agrimony Tea is a tonic for the internal organs including the gallbladder, liver, and kidneys. I prescribe it for use with internal problems often.

### Migraines

An herbal poultice made from fresh agrimony leaves and applied to the head is a good topical treatment for migraines. The released oils and aromatic compounds soothes the pain and lulls the patient to sleep.



### Conjunctivitis and Eye Infections

For application as an eye wash, I mix equal parts of Agrimony Tea with boiled and cooled water. For this application, it is best to use distilled water or filtered water in the tea and dilution.

### Acid Indigestion

For acid indigestion, my Agrimony Wine is a good treatment. Take 2 tablespoons of the wine infusion three times a day.

### Harvesting Agrimony

I prefer to harvest agrimony during the late spring to early summer when the herb is in full bloom. I hand pick the leaves, flowers, and stems. I use the herbs fresh or dry them for later use.

### Warnings

Some patients have developed an allergic rash with sun exposure while using agrimony. Do not use with patients using anti-coagulant therapy or with patients taking blood-pressure medications. Avoid using agrimony with pregnant and nursing mothers.

### Recipes

#### Agrimony Wine

3 cups red wine, 40 grams fresh agrimony leaves, chopped, 10 grams ground oak bark, 20 grams alfalfa leaves

Mix the herbs into the red wine and steep in a cool, dark place for 4 weeks. Strain the wine through a coffee filter and store in a cool, dark place. Drink 2 tablespoons, 3 times daily or as needed.

#### Agrimony Tea

1 to 2 teaspoons of powdered agrimony leaves or 3 teaspoons of crushed fresh leaves, 1 cup boiling water, honey, to taste, if desired. Steep the agrimony leaves in boiling water for 5 to 10 minutes. Cool and strain. Take one cup, three times daily.



## Chicory, *Cichorium intybus*

Common chicory is a woody perennial herbaceous plant for the Asteraceae Family found throughout North America and known as an invasive species in several states. Common chicory is also often called blue daisy, blue dandelion, blue sailors, blue weed, coffeeweed, cornflower, succory, wegewarte, wild endive, and horseweed.

While I am completely familiar with this common plant, it is sometimes confused with Curly Endive (*Cichorium endivia*), a closely related plant often called chicory. I must remember to point out the difference to patients.



By Alvesgaspar, CC by 2.5

### Plant Identification

For identification purposes, note that the stems of chicory (*Cichorium intybus*) are rigid, branching, and hairy, with lobed toothed leaves similar to dandelion leaves in appearance. The lower leaves are large, spreading, and covered with hairs. Segments are coarsely toothed.



Public Domain

The plant grows to be 1 to 5 feet tall with numerous flower heads, between 1/4 to 1 1/2 inches wide, appearing in clusters of two or three. Light purple, lavender, or light blue, and rarely pink or white flowers appear from July until October. Petals grow in two rows with toothed ends. The blooms close in the early afternoon and open again in the early morning. When in flower, chicory has tough, hairy stems with grooves.

The root is a long, fleshy taproot that grows larger as winter approaches.

### Edible Parts

The leaves have a bitter taste, but the bitterness can be reduced by cooking them in water and draining off the water. I prefer young leaves boiled, then sautéed with garlic or other seasonings. Sometimes I use the leaves and blanched buds in salads.

The most famous use of the roots is to make a coffee additive or substitute. I roast the roots and grind them to stretch my coffee when my supply runs low. I actually prefer the taste of chicory as a coffee additive, but I prefer not to use it alone unless I am completely out of coffee. Chicory is also grown as a forage crop.

### Medicinal Uses

Root chicory contains oils effective at eliminating intestinal worms and parasites. The flower is a remedy for many everyday complaints and illnesses. I use it as a tonic and diuretic, and as a treatment for gallstones, gastro-enteritis, sinus problems, headaches and skin wounds. The seeds are also used.

### How to Take Chicory for Medicinal Use

For external use, wash blemishes with chicory tea or apply crushed leaves as a poultice to affected areas.



## Chicory as a Sedative

The milky juice from a fresh root is a mild sedative, suitable for calming the patient.

## Chicory for Skin Eruptions, Swellings, and Inflammations

I use an infusion of chicory herb for washing and treating skin eruptions. A poultice made by bruising the leaves and applying directly to the skin is good for swellings and skin inflammations.

Many of my patients report that chicory infusion used as a wash nourishes the skin and gives it a more radiant and youthful appearance. They use it as a face and body wash daily.

## Liver and Gallbladder Disorders

I often recommend the flowers, seeds, and roots of chicory in the treatment of liver disorders. It is beneficial in promoting the secretion of bile, treating jaundice, and treating enlargement of the spleen. For liver and gallbladder problems, I prescribe 1 to 2 ounces of decoction of the flowers, seeds, or roots, three times a day.

## For Eye Problems

Chicory helps establish proper functioning of the optic system, mostly because of its high vitamin A content. Chicory tea is also useful as a soothing eyewash (unsweetened.)

## For Delayed Menstruation

The seeds of the herb are beneficial for relieving delayed or obstructed menstruation.

## For Digestive Problems

I recommend a chicory coffee or tea made from the roots or leaves for the treatment of digestive problems.

## Harvesting Instructions

Choose plants that have not been exposed to toxic car fumes and chemical spray along roadsides. Leaves and flowers are easily picked throughout the season.

To the harvest the roots, I wait until late fall when the roots have had time to grow and store up energy for the winter. I loosen the soil around the base of each plant, grab the plant at the base, and pull up as much of the tap root as possible. Scrub them clean and use them fresh or dry them for future use.

## Warnings

Chicory can cause contact dermatitis in some people. It can also cause skin irritations and rashes if taken internally by susceptible people. Avoid chicory during pregnancy; it can stimulate menstruation. Chicory can interfere with beta-blocker drugs for the heart. Do not prescribe chicory if the patient is taking these drugs.

## Recipes

### Chicory Decoction

I use Chicory Decoction to treat jaundice, liver enlargements, gout and rheumatic complaints. Made from fresh root, Chicory Decoction is said to be effective for gravel, but may require long-term use for complete effectiveness. In moderate



amounts, chicory is a tonic and increases the secretion of urine. Take one to two ounces of Chicory Decoction daily, as needed.

### Chicory Syrup

I give Chicory Syrup as a mild laxative for children, as it is non-irritating. I make Chicory Syrup by mixing chicory tea with honey.

### Chicory Coffee

Clean the roots and chop them into small pieces. Lay them out on a cookie sheet to roast. Roast them in a very slow oven or fire. When the roots are completely roasted and dried throughout, grind them into a powder. Store the powder sealed in a cool, dry place. Brew as for coffee.

### How to make Chicory Decoction

A decoction is similar to tea, except made with the hard, woody parts of the herb and cooked for longer periods to extract more of the active ingredients. Decoctions are intended for immediate use and can be stored in the refrigerator for up to three days.

1 ounce of freshly cut and chopped chicory leaves or root, 2 cups water, distilled is best

1. Place one ounce of freshly crushed and chopped chicory leaves or root into a non-reactive pot.
2. Cover the herb with two cups of water. Bring the water to a boil and reduce the heat to a simmer.
3. Allow the herb to simmer until the liquid is reduced by one-quarter (so that 1 1/2 cups of water remains of the original 2 cups.)
4. Cool the decoction and strain.
5. Discard the herb and store the liquid in the refrigerator for up to 72 hours.

Use one to two ounces, up to three times daily.

### Chicory Tea

1 teaspoon of chicory blossoms, leaves or root, 1 cup of boiling water, honey to sweeten, if desired. Pour 1 cup of boiling water over the herbs and let them steep for 10 to 15 minutes. Sweeten the tea with honey, if desired. Drink one cup of tea, once or twice a day.

### Chives, *Allium schoenoprasum*

*Allium schoenoprasum* belongs to Amaryllidaceae family and genus *Allium*. It is also most commonly known as Chives. It is a close relative of the garlic, shallot, leek, scallion, and Chinese onion. This perennial herb is widespread across the United States.

These plants are often cultivated in home gardens, but also occur wild in many areas. They are mostly used as a culinary herb.

### Plant Identification

Chives are herbaceous bulb-forming plants. They grow from 12 to 20 inches tall. The bulbs are usually conical, slender, about an inch long and nearly 1/2 inch across. They grow from roots in dense clusters. The stems, called scapes, are tubular and hollow and are



Chives, photo by AnRo0002, CCO



up to 20 inches long and about an inch across. The stems have a softer texture, although, before the emergence of the flower, they may appear stiffer than usual.

Chives have grass-like leaves, which are shorter than the scapes. The leaves are also tubular or round in cross-section and are hollow which distinguishes it from garlic chives, *Allium tuberosum*.

Its flowers are usually pale purple in color and star-shaped with six petals which are ½ to 1 inch wide and produced in a dense inflorescence of 10-30 flowers together. Before opening, the inflorescence is typically surrounded by a papery bract.

Flowers are produced in small and three valved capsules. Chives usually flower in April to May in the southern region and in June in the northern region of the country. The seeds mature in the summer.

I can find chives most often in damp meadows and rocky pastures. They prefer calcareous soils.



16Chives in bloom, AnRo0002, CCO

### Harvesting Instructions

Chives can be harvested as soon as they are big enough to clip and use. I usually just snip off the leaves at the base. The plant will continue to grow and can be harvested 3 to 4 times a year when young (the first year) and even monthly as they mature. I store my chives fresh in a plastic bag in the refrigerator or I dry them for future use.

### Edible Use

The leaves, roots, and flowers are all edible. The leaves have a mild onion flavor and can be used with mixed salads or to add flavor in soups. I use chives' flowers as a garnish in salads.

### Medicinal Use

The Chives have similar medical properties to those of garlic but weaker and faint in comparison with garlic. For this reason, it is used to a limited extent as a medicinal herb. The Chives also include mild stimulant, antiseptic and diuretic properties.

To get the benefits of chives, patients simply have to eat them daily. I recommend adding chives to foods the patient normally eats. Patients can add chives to soups, sauces, fresh salads, egg dishes, and potato dishes. The leaves are usually cut into small pieces and added to the food before cooking and as a fresh garnish before serving.

### Digestion

Chives contain sulfide compounds that are effective in easing digestive problems. They also have antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties that act on a wide variety of digestive problems. Chives are effective in promoting good digestion and comforting an upset stomach. They do not cause the objectionable breath of onions and prevent bad breath from digestive causes. They are also good for patients with no appetite, as they have an appetite stimulant effect. I recommend eating chives daily for patients with digestive problems.

### Lowers Blood Pressure, Cholesterol, and Promotes Heart Health

Like onions, chives lower high blood pressure and have a diuretic effect. Like other plants in the onion family, they contain allicin which helps reduce the levels of bad cholesterol in the body and improves the circulatory system and heart health.



Regular consumption of chives reduces plaque in the arteries, relaxes the blood vessels and lowers the patient's risk of heart attacks and strokes.

## Detoxing the Body

The mild diuretic properties of chives help flush toxins from the body and encourage urination. They also help eliminate excess salts, fats, and water from the body. By detoxing the body, they help all the body systems run more efficiently and healthfully.

## Anti-inflammatory

Chives have mild anti-inflammatory properties and should be eaten by patients with anti-inflammatory diseases such as arthritis, rheumatism, autoimmune conditions, and inflammatory skin conditions.

## Boosts the Immune System

Chives contain a wide range of vitamins and minerals, including vitamin C, which helps boost the immune system and stimulates the production of white blood cells.



Two different duckweed species, Eric Guinther, GNU FDL 1.2

## Duckweed, *Lemna minor*

I find duckweed to be a valuable plant for healing, but I am always careful about where I harvest it. The plant absorbs toxins, heavy metals, and other poisons from the water it grows in. I am careful to only use duckweed from clean water supplies and prefer to grow my own whenever possible.

## Plant Identification

Duckweed, also called water lens and bayroot, are perennial aquatic plants that float on or just below the surface of still or slow-moving water.

Duckweed is a small floating plant, 1/16 to less than 1/2 inch across, with many species less than 1/8 inch across. They usually grow in large colonies floating on fresh water, still

water, and slow streams. Duckweed can be found in every state. A single root-hair protrudes down from each frond. The entire plant is less than 1/2 inch from root tip to frond.

The plants lack obvious stems or leaves. The structure is a small thallus or frond that floats on water. While the plant does produce flowers, reproduction is mostly by asexual budding, which occurs at the base of the frond. Flowers occasionally appear, in groups of three, in June and July.

## Edible Parts

Duckweed is a high-protein food source for waterfowl and can be used as chicken feed. It is eaten by people in some parts of the world as a vegetable, but the flavor is less than desirable. It is a good protein source, with more protein than soybeans.

## Medicinal Uses

I prescribe duckweed juice when a fresh source is available, however one to two grams of dried duckweed powder is also effective. The plant has many therapeutic uses both internally and externally.



### Duckweed as an Anti-Microbial and Anti-Fungal

A Chippewa woman once told me that duckweed juice would cure bacterial and yeast infections and my work has proven her to be right. I've used it for many different bacterial infections including urinary tract infections, St. Anthony's fire, measles, bronchitis and also against Candida with great success.

I recommend that patients drink duckweed juice daily until all signs of the disease are gone. Small doses spread over the day seem to be most effective.

### Duckweed for Jaundice

I've also used duckweed for treating jaundice. I believe that its ability to absorb toxins helps detox the blood and liver. I recommend duckweed juice daily for jaundice patients.

### Duckweed for Headaches and Body Aches

I prescribe the juice of duckweed to treat normal aches and pains including headaches and body aches. The anti-inflammatory benefits help relieve swelling and inflammations of muscle and joint pains, including arthritis and gout. For muscle and joint pain, I use a poultice made by crushing the plants and applying it to the painful area.



*Duckweed, Lemna minor, Rasbak, Own work, GNU FDL 1.2*

### Harvesting Instructions

I am careful to avoid harvesting duckweed from roadsides and polluted waters. It is known to accumulate heavy metals and other toxins that may be present. I choose duckweed from fresh, clean water whenever possible, but in most cases I prefer to grow my own supply.

To grow duckweed, I take a few plants from a clean water supply and move them into a pool or other container with a clean water supply (non-chlorinated). They reproduce and grow quickly. To harvest, I scoop the plant from the water and use it fresh or allow it to dry for later use.

### Warnings

Duckweed contains high levels of calcium oxalate which can contribute to the formation of kidney stones.

### Evening Primrose, *Oenothera biennis*

Evening primrose belongs to the Onagraceae family and genus *Oenothera*. It is also known as evening-primrose, evening star, and sun drop. The evening primrose name is given because its flowers usually open between six and seven o'clock in the evening. It is a majestic sight to see and smell.

### Plant Identification

*Oenothera biennis* is a biennial, herbaceous plant. The flowers are partially to fully closed during the day and opened in the evening. The bright yellow to gold colored corolla is 2-5 cm wide, with four petals. The fragrant flowers last only 1 to 2 days.

The erect stem of the Evening primrose, which sometimes branches near the top of the plant, can be covered with hairs. This plant grows from 1 foot to 8 ½ feet tall.

Its basal leaves, which form a rosette, are from 4 to 12 inches long. The stem has lanceolate-shaped leaves alternate, 1 inch to 6 inches long, that are shallowly toothed and wave-like at the edges. The leaves of the plant are hairy. The plant flowers from June to October.

I can usually find this plant in eastern and central North America, from Newfoundland west to Alberta, southwest to Texas, and southeast to Florida where it is native. It is also widely naturalized elsewhere in subtropical and temperate regions.

I look for evening-primrose in dry open fields, along railroad embankments, along roadsides and waste areas, and also in open woods. It is considered invasive in many parts of the country.



17 By George Chernilevsky - Own work, Public Domain

### Harvesting, Preparation, and Storage

The seeds of evening primrose ripen from August to October, and they should be collected when ripe and pressed for oil and before they dry out. Flowers must be plucked in full bloom, be quick in picking them as they die off the very next day. One should gather the leaves and stem "bark" when the flowering stems have grown up. The bark of evening primrose is stripped from the flowering stem and dried for later use; the leaves are also harvested and dried at that time.

I dig the roots in the second year when they are larger and more potent.

The seeds, flowers, bark, and leaves can be dried for storage.

### Edible Status

All Parts of evening primrose are edible, including the flowers, leaves, oil, root, and seedpods. Its roots can be eaten like salsify either cooked or boiled. Its flowers are good in salads. Young seedpods can be cooked or steamed. Its seeds are edible and contain approximately 28 % oil by weight.

### Medicinal Use

#### Balancing Women's Hormones

Evening primrose oil balances the female hormones and naturally treats the symptoms of PMS, including breast tenderness, water retention and bloating, acne, depression, moodiness, and headaches.

It is also useful in the treatment of polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), helping to restore fertility and normalize the menstrual cycle to otherwise barren women. Patients using evening primrose have better outcomes than those who don't, and some are ultimately able to become pregnant and carry the child to term.

#### Hair Loss in Men and Women

Evening primrose attacks the hormonal causes of male pattern baldness and androgenetic alopecia in women. By balancing the hormones, it prevents further hair loss and, in some patients, helps hair grow back.



I recommend that patients take 500 mg of oil twice a day and also rub the oil into the scalp daily. Hair regrowth is at its peak when both methods are followed.

### Skin Diseases

I also use evening primrose oil for patients suffering from skin problems such as acne, eczema, psoriasis, and atopic dermatitis. It balances the hormonal causes of these diseases, reduces inflammation, and promotes healing while reducing symptoms such as itching, redness, and swelling. Patients report relief after about six months of taking evening primrose daily. They also report that it improves the overall condition of the skin and relieves some of the age-related skin damage. I recommend 500 mg of evening primrose oil, twice a day, on a permanent basis.

### Arthritis and Osteoporosis

Evening primrose is a good supplement for patients with rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis. With several months of use, my arthritis patients report that pain and stiffness are greatly reduced. It also balances the hormones that cause bone loss in osteoporosis and increases the bone density. I recommend 500 mg of Evening Primrose Oil, twice a day on a permanent basis.

### Gastro-Intestinal Disorders

The bark and leaves are astringent, sedative, and healing. They are effective in treating gastro-intestinal disorders caused by muscle spasms of the stomach or intestines. They calm the spasms and allow the digestion to regain proper function. I recommend Evening Primrose Tea made from the bark and leaves for gastro-intestinal problems.

### Whooping Cough

For whooping cough, I recommend giving a teaspoon to tablespoon of Strong Evening Primrose Tea in each dose. Continue dosing with small amounts of tea as needed to alleviate the cough.

A syrup made from the flowers is also effective for whooping cough and is easier to get young children to swallow. Boil the flowers in a small amount of water, strain, and sweeten with sugar.

### Asthma

Asthma can also be treated with Evening Primrose Tea. I prefer to give about a half-cup of tea at the beginning of the attack, and allowing additional doses as needed. The tea relieves the bronchial spasms and opens the airways, allowing the patient to breath easier. It does not cure the asthma, only treats the symptoms.

Depending on the causes of the asthma, it may be beneficial to also give 1 gram of Evening Primrose Oil daily, divided into 2 or 3 doses. The oil works best for asthma with allergic causes, but it has no harmful effects and is worth trying for a few months to evaluate whether it helps the patient.

### Blood Pressure and Cholesterol

Regular consumption of this oil helps to reduce blood cholesterol to safe levels and lowers the blood pressure. Best results are achieved by long-term use; it is not intended to be used for acute situations.



By AnRo0002 - Own work, CCO



## Bruises, Piles, and Other Skin Wounds

I use a poultice made from the ground and moistened root to treat piles and bruises. The root reduces inflammation and helps heal the wound.

## Other Uses

I have not tested these uses, but I have been told by other healers that evening primrose oil is very effective in the treatment of multiple sclerosis, hyperactivity, and alcohol-related liver damage.

## Recipes

### How to Make Cold-Pressed Evening Primrose Seed Oil

1. Begin by grinding your seeds. Fresh seeds are best. You can use a flour mill, sausage grinder, auger type juicer, coffee grinder, or blender to grind the seeds into a paste. It may take several passes through the grinder to get a fine grind. Add a tiny amount of water, only if necessary to facilitate grinding.
2. Gather the ground seeds into a ball and knead them by hand to release the oil, catching it in a small bowl. Knead and squeeze the seeds until the oil is released, this may take some time
3. Place the seed paste into a seed bag or use a coffee filter and tighten it to release even more oil into the bowl.
4. When you have gathered as much oil as possible, filter it through a fresh filter to remove any remaining seed remnants.

The standard dosage for internal use is 1 gram of oil daily, broken into 2 to 3 doses.

### Strong Evening Primrose Tea

1-ounce bark and leaves, crushed or chopped into small pieces, 1 pint of water

1. Bring the water and herbs to a boil and reduce the heat to a low simmer. Simmer the herbs for 5 to 10 minutes, depending on your tastes. Longer simmering releases more of the beneficial substances but does not improve the flavor.
2. Allow the tea to cool and strain out the herbs. Keep the tea refrigerated until needed and use within three days.



Flower of Feverfew 1Feverfew by Vision, CC 2.5

### Feverfew, *Tanacetum parthenium*

Feverfew is an herb that I highly value for my own use. I have long suffered from migraines and nothing I tried offered any help, until I found this miracle herb.

This bushy perennial is a member of the Aster Family and grows along roadsides, on rocky slopes, walls, waste places, and is cultivated in some home herb and ornamental gardens. It likes full sun or partial shade and dry soil. Also known as *Chrysanthemum parthenium*, wild chamomile, and bachelor's buttons.

### Plant Identification

Feverfew grows into a bushy shape, approximately 1 to 3 feet tall. It grows from a taproot, sprouting round, leafy stems. The leaves are yellow-green and pinnately divided into slightly rounded divisions. The upper leaves are more lobed and toothed. The leaves have a distinctive bitter aroma and taste.



Flowers appear in June to August, depending on how far north I travel. The flowers are daisy-like, only smaller, with a large yellow disk and short white rays. The center disk is flat, unlike chamomiles which are conical.

### Edible Parts

Feverfew leaves are edible but strongly bitter. I use a small amount as a condiment, and I drink a cup of Feverfew tea regularly.

### Medicinal Uses

I harvest feverfew leaves and flowers shortly after the flowers appear in June and July. I always make sure I dry a supply for future use. Because of my migraines, this is a herb I never want to run out of. I make the dried leaves into capsules, liquid extracts, and teas.

Typical doses are 2 to 3 leaves per day, with a proportionally reduced dose for children over the age of three. Adjust the child's dose according to the child's weight. A 50 lb child would take 1/3 of the adult dose.

### Feverfew for Migraines

I can personally attest to the benefits of taking Feverfew regularly as a preventative for migraine headaches. I take it daily and it has reduced the frequency of migraine attacks and the intensity of the pain.

If you choose to take feverfew for migraines, you should cultivate a reliable supply and dry plenty for future use. The migraine headaches return quickly and with intensity when the herb is discontinued or if doses are missed.

To use feverfew as a migraine preventative, I chew 1 to 4 leaves per day or drink 1 cup of Feverfew Tea daily.

### Feverfew for Arthritis

Some of my patients use feverfew for arthritis and rheumatism. The leaves and flowering heads are anti-inflammatory and, taken daily, they reduce the pain and inflammation associated with these diseases. I usually recommend feverfew tea every morning, but capsules of ground leaves are more convenient for some patients.

For muscle pain and localized arthritis pain, I use a Feverfew Poultice over the affected area. It relieves pain and calms the inflammation.

### Feverfew for Colds and Fevers

Feverfew gets its name from its traditional use treating colds and fevers. I recommend a cup of Feverfew Tea for older children and adults. A few drops of a warm infusion is good for colic in babies and young children.

### Feverfew for Menstrual Cramps and to Regulate the Menses

Feverfew is an antispasmodic and pain reliever that is particularly good at relieving painful menstrual cramping. I recommend a cup of feverfew tea every 2 to 3 hours as needed to control cramping. If the patient regularly suffers from painful cramping, she can begin drinking a cup or two of tea daily a day or two before the menstrual period is expected. Do not use feverfew if you may be pregnant.



Leaf: 2Leaf of Feverfew, Steffen Heinz Caronna, CC by 3.0



## Worms or Intestinal Parasites

I also use feverfew as a cure for intestinal parasites such as roundworm, tapeworm, flukes and other parasites. It contains chemical components which kill the parasites and eliminate them from the body. I recommend chewing 2 to 3 leaves or taking up to 300 mg of powdered feverfew one to four times daily.

## Warnings

Some people have an allergic reaction to feverfew and dermatitis can also occur with skin contact. Chewing the leaves can cause mouth sores in susceptible people.

If patients are allergic to ragweed, marigold, or chrysanthemum, they may also react to feverfew.

Do not use during pregnancy or for patients who have blood coagulation problems.

## Recipes

### Feverfew Tea or Warm Infusion

Steep 1 heaping teaspoon of feverfew leaves and flowerheads in 1 cup of hot water. Allow the infusion to cool to lukewarm, then drink it or apply as directed.

### Feverfew Poultice

Bruise a bunch of feverfew leaves and flowers and place them over the affected area. Wrap the poultice with clean fabric or gauze to hold the poultice in place. Change twice daily.



Goosefoot, Photo by Rasbak, CC by SA 3.0

## Goosefoot, *Chenopodium*

Goosefoot is said to get its name from the shape of the leaves. I have not compared them closely, but I suppose they resemble a goose foot. The herb is a member of the family Amaranthaceae. It is a perennial herbaceous and flowering plant. Goosefoot is also called chualar and is related to the herb lambs quarters.

The herb is not native to the US, but it grows well here and can now be found nationwide. I usually look first for the tall stems, growing up to 5 feet or more, with goose foot shaped leaves. However, as the plant grows, it becomes heavy and leans until it finally rests on the ground or is supported by surrounding plants.

The leaves alternate and vary in appearance. Leaves closest to the ground are roughly diamond-shaped with teeth around the edges. Further up the stem the leaves are rhomboid, coated with a waxy substance, and a white underside.

Small flowers are symmetrical, growing on a densely packed inflorescence that grows up to 1 1/2 feet tall.



## Edible Parts of Goosefoot

In the US the plant is considered a weed; however, in some places, the plant is grown as a food crop. The young shoots, leaves, and seeds are edible. Goosefoot has a strong flavor that is slightly sweet.

The young shoots and leaves are cooked and consumed like spinach. Though the leaves and young shoots can be consumed while raw they should be used in small quantities as they can be toxic in large quantities.

The seeds of this herb should also be cooked or soaked in water before use. I've seen frugal cooks grind the soaked and rinsed seeds into a powder and mix it with flour for baking.

## Harvesting the herb

The herb goosefoot can be harvested by either plucking the leaves or by cutting the whole plant. When I am in a hurry, I cut off the whole plant and pull out the stems. However, I prefer to hand pick the small tender leaves and shoots. This takes longer and is tedious, but the plant is more tender. Using the hand pick method, you can also get several pickings per season.

I have noticed that goosefoot always seems to be covered in dust, so it is always necessary to wash the leaves before use.

## Medicinal Uses

### Soothing Burns

I use a poultice made of goosefoot leaves to soothe burns. Bruise the leaves and place them on the burned area. Apply a clean cloth over them and leave in place for a few hours.

### Skin Irritations

The soothing properties of the herb extend to bug bites, rashes, and other skin irritations. Apply as a poultice, use the tea as a wash, or rub the leaf directly on affected areas.

### Urinary Problems

I advise patients with urinary problems to chew goosefoot seeds in moderation and to eat the cooked plant. The leaves do contain oxalic acid, however, so it is not indicated for individuals prone to kidney stones.

### Laxative Effects

The leaves of the goosefoot plant are loaded with fiber. This fiber, along with its medicinal properties makes it very effective in preventing and treating constipation. Cooked goosefoot leaves loosen the stools and increase the bowel movement.

### Blood Purifier

The juice of goosefoot leaves is a blood tonic and purifier. I use Goosefoot Decoction to cleanse and purify the blood.

### Use as a Contraceptive

Currently, we have much more effective birth control methods available, so I have never needed to prescribe this.



*Young goosefoot, 6th Happiness, CC by SA 3.0*



In the past, however, women used the powder made from dried goosefoot leaves to suppress fertility and prevent pregnancy.

## Dental Health

I have used goosefoot as a temporary treatment for dental issues including pyorrhea, bad breath, mouth ulcers, cavities, and toothaches. Patients chew the raw leaves or take a decoction of the leaves.

## Cure for Worms and Parasites

Goosefoot is an anthelmintic that works by killing and expelling worms and parasites from the body. To be effective, the patient should eat cooked goosefoot leaves daily for several weeks or until the problem is relieved.

## Inflammation and Swelling

The leaves have anti-inflammatory properties that are good for relieving inflammation internally and externally. For internal use, lightly steam the leaves and eat them as a vegetable. Externally, apply the mashed leaves to inflamed joints and swollen areas as a poultice.

## Anemia

Goosefoot leaves are high in iron and help the body make hemoglobin and red blood cells. I advise patients to add cooked goosefoot leaves to their daily diet to help build the blood and increase stamina.

## Colds, Flu and General Illness

Goosefoot leaves contain vitamin C which is beneficial in fighting off colds, the flu, scurvy, and other illnesses. Serve lightly steamed goosefoot as a daily vegetable to prevent and treat these diseases.

## Other Uses

The goosefoot roots can be crushed to make a mild soap substitute. I have never tried this, but I have heard that it works well for many people.

## Recipes

### Goosefoot Decoction

1-ounce goosefoot leaves, 2 cups of water

1. Chop the leaves fine and place them in a non-reactive pot
2. Add the water and bring to a boil
3. Reduce the heat and simmer gently until the water is reduced by one quarter. (One and a half cup of water remain.)
4. Strain and store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days
5. Take in divided doses as indicated

### Goosefoot Tea

Use the tea as a wash to clean skin irritations, 1 ounce of chopped goosefoot leaves, 1 cup water

1. Place the leaves and water over heat and bring to a boil.
2. Remove from the heat and allow the tea to steep for 10 minutes.
3. Cool and use externally to soothe and clean inflammations and skin irritations.



## High Mallow, *Malva sylvestris*

High mallow is a spreading herb that grows as a perennial in the United States. In the wild, the plants grow to between 3 to 10 feet high with straight or decumbent growth. Branches are bare or covered with fine soft hairs.

The leaves are dark green in color until the plant flowers, then they lose their color and the stems become ragged in appearance. Leaves are roundish with three, five, seven, or nine shallow lobes of 1 to 2 inches long and 1 to 1 1/2 inches wide.

Purple-pink flowers bloom between May and August and are about two inches in diameter with dark veined petals. The flowers appear in axillary clusters of two to four and form along the main stem on short stems. Flowers at the base of the stem open first.

The fruit looks like compressed disks, leading to the nickname "cheese flower." Ripe seeds are brownish-green to brown and about 1/5 to 1/4 inches in diameter.



18 High Mallow, Alvesgaspar, CC by SA 3.0



19 High Mallow, KENPEI, CC by SA 3.0

### Edible Use

The young leaves are edible and make a nutritious green vegetable when boiled. I have not tried them raw. As the leaves mature, they become more bitter and inedible.

### Medicinal Use

I prefer the Mallow Root Tea as a remedy when using mallow. I believe it to be more potent. However the leaves and flowers can also be used.

### Nausea, Stomach Upsets, and Digestive Upsets

I use Mallow Leaf or Root Tea for relief from nausea when the underlying cause is not known. It works well for stomach flu, ulcers, and other stomach upsets, soothing inflammation and promoting normal bowel function.

### Soothes Irritated Mucus Membranes

Mallow Seed Tea is helpful for cases of irritated membranes and mucus production. It soothes the lining of the respiratory tract and other mucus membranes in cases of colds, coughs, bronchitis, and other inflamed membranes.

### Urinary Tract

I also use the tea for urinary tract infections and irritations in conjunction with anti-bacterial herbs. It relieves the swelling and irritation of the urinary tract and helps promote healing.

### Teething

Mallow Root Tea is safe for use with children and is a good antidote for teething pain and inflammation. Rub the tea onto the gums as often as needed.



## Recipes

### Mallow Root Tea

1 tablespoon of shredded or powdered mallow root, 1 pint of water

Bring the root and water to a boil and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes. Allow it to cool to drinking temperature and strain out the root. Drink 1 cup, warm or cold.

### Mallow Seed Tea

½ ounce crushed mallow seed, 1 pint of water. Bring the root and water to a boil and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes. Allow it to cool to drinking temperature and strain out the root. Drink 1 cup, warm or cold.



20 Nutslets or seeds, (unmilled), by SA 410

## Lady's Thumb, *Polygonum persicaria* or *Persicaria maculosa*

Lady's thumb, also known as hearts ease is a broadleaf weed that is often found growing in large clumps at elevations below 5,000 feet. It often grows in disturbed soil across the US. I find it most often in irrigation ditches, rice fields, and irrigated agricultural land, or near ponds, lakes, marshes, and streams.



Lady's Thumb (*Polygonum Persicaria*) - Wikipedia

### Plant Identification

The leaves are narrow and lance-shaped with wavy edges, growing up to six inches long and two inches wide. They usually, but not always, have a dark green to purple smudge in the center. The leaf nodes are surrounded by thin papery membranes that wrap around the stem, with bristles at the base. Leaves are arranged in an alternate pattern below the flowers. Leaves may be hairless or covered sparsely with tiny, stiff hairs.

The one to three feet long stems are erect or spreading. The plant looks like pale smartweed, but pale smartweed lacks the leaf smudge and the hairs on the leaf sheath.

The small, dark pink, rose, or rarely white lady's thumb flowers are densely packed in clusters along the one-inch terminal spikes. They spike open, while those of the pale look-alike smartweed remain closed. Each bloom is approximately 1/8 inch across with five petals that are connecting at the base.

Fruits of lady's thumb are brown to black and glossy. They have three sides and are egg-shaped. Each fruit contains one seed and is tiny, less than 1/12 of an inch long.

### Edible Use

The leaves and young shoots are eaten either raw or cooked. I have had them and found the flavor to be edible. I gather young leaves and sprouts in the spring to mid-summer. As they mature, they begin to become peppery in flavor, which I find objectionable. The greens are good raw in a salad. I also boil the leaves in water for 5 to 10 minutes and season them with vinegar and butter.

The seeds are also edible, but they are rather small and require work to harvest enough to make a serving.



## Other Uses

I learned from the Native American People to rub the leaves on my horse to keep the flies and other insects off.

## Medicinal Uses

The plant is Astringent; Diuretic; Nutritious; Rubefacient; and Vermifuge. I use it as a tea, stronger decoction, or by applying the leaves directly to the skin.



*Stem of Lady's Thumb, Martin Olsson, CC by SA 3.0*

## Heart Benefits

The plant is considered a tonic for the heart. Its diuretic properties flushes excess water from the body, bringing down the blood pressure. It is also believed to increase the functioning of the heart, hence the nickname Hearts ease, but I have seen no real evidence of heart benefits, other than the diuretic properties.

## Fungal and Yeast Infections

Athletes feet, jock itch, and vaginal yeast infections are treated topically with Lady's Thumb Decoction or by rubbing the bruised leaves directly on the skin. For vaginal infections the decoction is used in a douche.

## Stomach Pains

For stomach pain and digestive upset, I prescribe a weak tea made from 1 teaspoon of lady's fingers leaves steeped in 1 cup of water.

## Skin Ailments

Lady's thumb increases the blood circulation at the skins surface, supporting healing. The astringent properties are also valuable here. I use it for poison ivy, poison oak, skin rashes, and other skin ailments. Rub the crushed leaves on the skin or form a poultice for the skin surface.

## Rheumatism

For rheumatic pain in the foot and legs, I prescribe a soak in a tub of warm water containing a decoction of lady's thumb. For other joints, the decoction can be mixed with flour to form a wet poultice to help relieve the pain. My recipe for Lady's Thumb Decoction is found below

## Recipes

### Lady's Thumb Decoction

1 ounce of Lady's Thumb leaves or seeds, 1 pint of water

1. Crush the leaves. Place them in a non-reactive pot with the water over medium heat. Bring the mixture to a simmer.
2. Simmer the herbs for 45 minutes to 1 hour.
3. Cool the decoction and strain out the herbs. Store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or in the freezer for up to 1 month.
4. Use 1 to 2 tablespoons per dose, 3 to 4 times a day. I determine the dose by the patient's size and age.

## Peppermint, *Mentha piperita*

Peppermint is also called balm mint, curled mint, and lamb mint. The plant is easily recognized by its classic scent and flavor.

Peppermint likes moist, rich soil. It is often found along river banks, streams, and other moist areas. It can tolerate sun or shade as long as there is sufficient water.

I once planted a small peppermint plant in a shady spot next to a drippy faucet. The plant flourished there and within a few years had taken over a good bit of the back yard. It spreads quickly by roots and the rooting of stems that touch the ground.



Peppermint, Aleksa Lukic - Own work, CC by 3.0

### Plant Identification

Peppermint is a perennial plant growing from 1 to 3 feet tall. It has smooth, square stems and dark green leaves with reddish veins. The leaves are 1 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches long and about half as wide. They have coarsely toothed margins, a pointed tip, and are covered in short hairs. The purple flowers are about 1/4 to 1/3-inch long and appear in mid- to late summer. The flowers do not produce viable seeds. The plant grows quickly, spreading by underground roots and rooting stems.

### Edible Use

Peppermint is a refreshing flavoring for many uses.

### Medicinal Use

#### Gastroenteritis, Indigestion, Flatulence, Stomach, Intestinal, and Liver Problems

Peppermint leaves and the tea made from peppermint is well known as a treatment for indigestion, excess gas, nausea, and other stomach upsets. Some patients use peppermint candy for this purpose, but the leaves made into tea work so much better. I recommend that patients sip on peppermint tea throughout the day as needed to control and cure stomach problems such as these. It works quickly, but continued sipping is recommended. (If you choose to use peppermint candies for children, make sure they contain real peppermint oil and not an imitation or substitute.)

Peppermint oil stimulates the flow of bile in the body and aids digestion in this way. It is useful for treating problems in the stomach, intestines, and liver.

Peppermint oil also contains anti-bacterial and anti-viral components that treat the causes of gastroenteritis while calming the symptoms.

### Menstrual Cramping

Peppermint oil relaxes the muscle spasms of the uterus and relieves menstrual cramping. Patients with menstrual cramping can drink peppermint tea or take peppermint oil. The oil is very strong, so only a drop or two is needed.



## Appetite Suppression and Stimulation

Peppermint temporarily inhibits hunger, and this can be useful, but when the effect wears off the hunger returns more powerfully. It can be used as an appetite stimulant in this way, just be aware that it takes time to work.

I use this for patients with chronic illness and for children who are failing to thrive due to a lack of appetite.

## Headaches and Migraines

The oil also relieves the spasms that cause some types of headaches. For this purpose, I use extracted analgesic oil or a drop of distilled peppermint oil mixed into a tablespoon of olive oil. Rub the oil onto the forehead or on the scalp over the affected area. The headache will lift quickly. Distilled oil is stronger, but extracted oil is easier to make.

## Diarrhea, Spastic Colon, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, and Crohn's Disease

Peppermint calms the stomach and intestinal tract, relaxing the muscles and soothing the mucous membranes. It helps treat diarrhea, spastic colon, and irritable bowel syndrome by alleviating the spasms of the intestines and colon. Patients can enjoy these benefits by drinking peppermint tea as often as needed.

## Itchy Skin

Peppermint oil acts to slightly numb the skin surface so that it can relieve pain from insect stings, itchy skin, and mild skin irritations. It also has an anti-bacterial component, and it works to bring an increased blood supply to the skin to speed up healing. I recommend using Extracted Peppermint Oil for itchy skin. If the distilled oil is used, mix one drop in a tablespoon of olive oil and mix it before use.



Peppermint Flowers, Sten Porse, CC by SA 3.0

## Arthritis, Gout, Neuralgia, Sciatica

These same numbing qualities make it an effective treatment for muscle aches, joint pain, and nerve pain coming from near the surface. Massage the area with Extracted Peppermint Oil to relieve the pain. It does not treat the underlying causes, but my patients report quick relief for the worst of the pain.

## Recipes

### Peppermint Tea

1 teaspoon peppermint leaves, 1 cup boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the peppermint leaves and allow the tea to steep for 8 to 10 minutes. Strain and drink.

### Peppermint Oil Distillation

Distillation equipment: a still OR small pressure cooker, glass tubing, tinned copper tubing, flexible hose, tub of cold water, collection vessel, thermometer

A quart or more of Peppermint leaves chopped fine, fresh is best, water to cover the herbs

1. If you have a commercially available still, follow the instructions for steam distillation of an essential oil. Otherwise, proceed with my directions to use a pressure cooker for steam distillation.

2. Build a cooling coil out of tin plated copper tubing. Wrap the tubing around a can or other cylinder to shape it for cooling the oil.
3. Use a small piece of flexible hose to connect the copper tubing to the pressure cooker relief valve. The steam will rise through the valve and flow into the copper tubing to cool.
4. Bend the copper tubing as needed to place the coil into a pan or a tub of cold water. Cut a small hole in the bottom side of the tub for the copper tubing to exit the tub. Seal the exit hole with a stopper or silicone sealer. The tubing now runs down from the pressure cooker, into the cooling tub, out of the tub into your collection vessel.
5. Place the chopped leaves into the pressure cooker. Add water as needed to cover the herbs and fill the pressure cooker to a level of at least 2 to 3 inches.
6. Heat the pressure cooker gently and watch for the oil to begin collecting in the collection vessel. The oil will begin to distill near the boiling point of the water, but before the water boils. Watch for oil production.
7. Monitor the still to make sure it does not boil dry.
8. Collect the distillate until it becomes clear or until most of the water has distilled. The cloudy oil and water mixture indicates oil in the distillate. Once the distillate is clear, it contains only water, and the distillation is finished.
9. Transfer the distilled oil to a dark glass bottle with a tight lid for storage.
10. The oil is strong and should be diluted with a carrier oil like olive oil in a ratio of one part peppermint oil and nine parts carrier oil. Use the diluted oil for medicinal purposes.

### Extracted Peppermint Oil

3/4 cup dried peppermint leaves, 1 cup olive oil

1. Combine the peppermint leaves and olive oil in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Shake daily.
2. Allow the oil and peppermint to steep in a dark cupboard for 4 to 6 weeks.
3. Strain out the peppermint leaves and store the oil in a cool dark place for up to 1 year.
4. Use as a topical relief for headaches, muscle cramps, or as a massage oil for muscle pain.

### Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

I always keep *Achillea millefolium*, commonly called yarrow, in my medicine bag. It is a good all-purpose medicine with many uses. I find it most often in temperate regions around the US and I have occasionally heard it called by other names, most notably nosebleed plant, and plumaillo. I recognize it by its feathery leaf shape, texture, and scent, but the details are here for the benefit of patients who may not be familiar with it.

#### Plant Identification

Yarrow is an herbaceous perennial that grows from a spreading rhizome. The plant has an upright structure with one or more feathery leaves growing along the stem, and the lower and middle leaves are the largest. Plants grow to be 10 inches to 40 inches tall in full sun to partial shade.



Pink Yarrow Flowers, Ivar Leidus, CC by SA 3.0



*Yarrow Field, Public Domain*

## Leaves

The leaves are 2 to 8 inches long, bipinnate or tripinnate, and can be hairy. Leaves are arranged spirally on the stems in groups of 2 to 3, on each side of the stem. Each leaf is divided into many leaflets, which are further divided into smaller leaflets. The silver-green leaves are fern-like, feathery, and deeply-dissected.

Flowers appear from May to July. Each inflorescence grouping, or flower, is a cluster of 15 to 40 disk flowers surrounded by 3 to 8 oval or round ray flowers. Below each flower is 4 to 9 bracts. The flowers are tiny and long-lasting.

The scent of yarrow is similar to chrysanthemums. Colors range from white to yellow, pinks, and red. The plant is considered a good companion plant in many gardens. It

repels many garden pests while attracting beneficial insects such as the predatory wasp and ladybugs.

## Edible Parts

I like Yarrow leaves raw in salads or cooked. Like many greens, they have a bitter flavor and are best when picked young. The plant is very nutritious; however, I don't recommend eating a lot of it because of its blood clotting factors. The flowers and leaves are used to make tea, but I find the leaf tea to be bitter. A little honey helps.

## Medicinal Use

I use all parts of the plant medicinally. Yarrow is best when young, picked in the spring or early summer. I dry the leaves, stems, and flowers for later use on a dehydrator when available, or by placing them in a warm, dry location, preferably out of the sunlight, and bringing them inside at night. They can also be dried in a barely warm spot near a fire, close enough to dry the herb gently, without cooking or overheating it. Once the herb is dry, store it in a capped jar in a cool, dark, and dry location.

## Yarrow to Stop Bleeding

I love yarrow for its ability to quickly stop bleeding by contracting the blood vessels and encouraging clotting. Yarrow contains anti-inflammatory and antibacterial compounds that ease swelling and promote healing. It also helps disinfect wounds.

Before applying yarrow, I always clean the wound. Yarrow will quickly stop bleeding and bind any dirt or infectious materials into the wound, so be sure the area is clean before use whenever possible.

To use yarrow leaves on a wound or abscess, I chop the leaves finely and apply to the wound. I cover the wound with a soft cloth and leave it in place for 10 to 15 minutes. I repeat the compress 2 to 3 times daily until the wound is healed over and the swelling is gone.



*Illustration in Koehlers Medizinal-Pflanzen, Franz Eugen Kohler, Public Domain*



I also use yarrow oil or tincture for treating nosebleeds and other minor injuries. It is a quick remedy and always available. I place a few drops of oil or tincture on the affected area or apply it to a tissue or compress cloth and place it on the wound.

### Yarrow for Bruises, Sprains, Swelling, and Hemorrhoids

For bruises, sprains, hemorrhoids, and other swellings, I use a poultice of yarrow stems pounded into a paste and applied to the injured area. I cover the area with a soft cloth to hold the pulp in position and keep the area clean. Repeat the treatment 2 to 3 times daily to reduce swelling and speed healing. I also use yarrow oil or salve for bruises, sprains, swelling, and hemorrhoids.

### Yarrow Tea for Colds, Fevers, and Measles

I find yarrow to be effective in reducing the duration of the measles virus, colds, and fevers. I recommend that patients chew raw yarrow or cook it and eat it to induce sweating and reduce fevers. Patients can also take 2 to 3 drops of Yarrow Tincture for colds and fevers.

I also like Yarrow tea as another good way to treat a fever, cold, virus or similar ailment. It is especially useful when taken early in the illness when symptoms first appear. It opens the pores, encouraging perspiration, and purifies the blood.

### Yarrow Tea for Menstrual Problems

I use Yarrow tea to treat menstrual problems ranging from a lack of menstruation to excessive bleeding and cramping. It tones the uterine muscles after childbirth, reduces cramping, and prevents hemorrhage. I offer the tea daily for the relief of gynecologic conditions, digestive problems, cramping, and endometriosis.

### Yarrow Root for Dental Pain

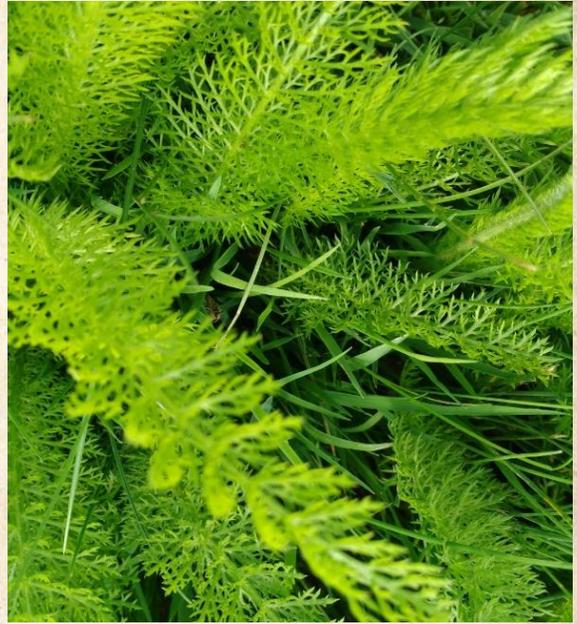
To reduce inflammation and relieve dental pain, I recommend that patients chew on a piece of fresh yarrow root or yarrow leaves. In addition to its anti-inflammatory and anti-infection benefits, yarrow contains salicylic acid, a pain reliever that acts quickly.

### Yarrow for Headaches and Sinus Congestion

For headaches and sinus congestion, I have my patients inhale the steam of cooking yarrow. I recommend adding fresh or dried yarrow leaves to a small pot of water and bring it to a boil, then breathing in the steam. Patients can also add yarrow to the vaporizer, if they have one available.

### Warnings

Do not eat yarrow or take yarrow tea during pregnancy. Some people are allergic to yarrow. Do not use it if you are allergic to plants in the Asteraceae family, if you develop a rash, or if any irritation occurs.



*Yarrow Leaves, Sigman, Public Domain*



## Recipes

### Yarrow Poultice

Saute chopped yarrow leaves and stems in a little oil to wilt it and warm them through. Place the herb in a clean towel or cheesecloth and put it on the affected joint. Keep the poultice in place until the herb has cooled completely.

### Yarrow Tea

One teaspoon dried yarrow flowers or leaves, one cup boiling water, sweetener, if desired. Pour one cup of boiling water over one teaspoon of dried yarrow flowers or leaves. Cover and allow the tea to steep for 3 to 5 minutes. Sweeten with honey, syrup, or sugar as desired.

### Yarrow Tincture

Fresh yarrow leaves and flowers, vodka, Brandy, or other alcohol, 80 proof or higher

1. Chop yarrow into one-inch pieces and pack it tightly to fill a glass jar.
2. Fill the jar with alcohol and cover it tightly.
3. Check the jar every few days and add more alcohol as needed to keep the jar full.
4. Allow the tincture to steep for a minimum of 6 weeks.
5. Strain the alcohol through a few layers of cheesecloth and squeeze out all the liquid.
6. Discard the herbs, label the jar and store your tincture in a cool, dark place.

### Yarrow Oil

Fresh or dried yarrow leaves, olive oil, liquid coconut oil, or other carrier oil, water in a separate pot, heatproof container

1. If using fresh yarrow, cut the leaves into one-inch pieces and allow them to dry for a day.
2. Place the herbs into a jar or heatproof container and add oil just to cover the herbs.
3. Fill a small pot about 1/3 full of water and bring to a boil. Turn the heat down to a simmer.
4. Place the jar or container of oil into the water, preventing the water from getting into the oil container. Use the water like a double-boiler to gently heat the herbs and oil for 30 to 60 minutes.
5. Allow the oil to cool, then filter it through a couple of layers of cheesecloth. Squeeze the cheesecloth to get all the oil. Discard the herb and use the oil for medicinal purposes.

### Yarrow Salve

½ cup Yarrow Oil, ½ ounce Beeswax

1. Melt the beeswax and mix it with the oil.
2. Allow it to cool to room temperature and check the consistency. If it is not thick enough, proceed to step 3.
3. Warm it and add more beeswax if necessary until it is the desired consistency.

### Tea for Colds and Flu

This yarrow tea is useful for treating colds, flu, and general illnesses.

1/2 teaspoon yarrow leaves, dried  
1/2 teaspoon chamomile leaves, dried  
1/2 teaspoon mint leaves, fresh or dried  
1 cup boiling water

Place the herbs in a cup and pour 1 cup of boiling water over it all. Allow the leaves to steep for 8 to 10 minutes or until cool enough to drink. Strain out the leaves and drink.

The Lost Book Of Remedies

# Household Remedies



## Activated Charcoal

Activated charcoal is an effective way to remove toxins and poisons from the body. It reduces bloating, and gas traps toxins and acts as an antidote to some poisons.

### Medicinal Use of Activated Charcoal

#### Detoxify the Body

Activated charcoal has tiny pores throughout that attracts and traps toxins in the body. The toxins bind to the surface and pass through the body. To use activated charcoal to detoxify the body, I recommend taking 10 grams of activated charcoal approximately 1 ½ hour before each meal. Do this for two to three days. Drink 12 to 15 glasses of water per day during the cleanse. If you become constipated, drink a glass of warm water with lemon and honey every half hour until the constipation is relieved.



#### Poisoning

Activated charcoal is useful for removing chemical poisons that have been ingested. Organic poisons such as pesticides, fertilizer, bleach, and mercury bind to the surface of the charcoal, preventing adsorption in the body.

I also use it to prevent the adsorption of an accidental or intentional overdose of drugs. It is effective against the ingestion of overdoses of aspirin, acetaminophen, opium, cocaine, and morphine. Charcoal must be administered quickly, within an hour of ingestion, and in quantity. For adults, a large dose of 50 to 100 grams is required and 10 to 25 grams for children. Charcoal must be taken with a large quantity of water.

#### Food Poisoning

Many people do not realize that activated charcoal is useful for the treatment of nausea and diarrhea in cases of food poisoning. Adults take 25 grams of activated charcoal and children need 10 grams. I give the charcoal with large quantities of water immediately upon suspicion of food poisoning. Larger doses may be needed.

#### Snake Bites, Poisonous Spider Bites, and Insect Stings

For snake and poisonous spider bites, including bites from the black widow spider and the brown recluse, I use a mixture of equal parts activated charcoal and coconut oil. Mix them together and cover the bite and a wide surrounding area with the mixture. Cover with a bandage to prevent staining clothes. The poison from the bites moves into the tissue surrounding the bites, so a wide area around the bite needs to be covered with the activated charcoal. After two to three hours, rinse the area well and reapply. Repeating the application until the inflammation is gone and the wound is healing. For insect bites, apply a small dab of the mixture, repeating every hour until the sting is gone.

#### Acne

I treat acne with activated charcoal mixed with aloe vera gel. I smooth the mixture over the affected areas and let them dry. Then rinse off completely. I prefer to treat the entire area, but it can also be used for spot treatments. Activated charcoal can also be mixed into soap and body wash for use in affected areas.

#### When to Avoid Activated Charcoal

Do not use activated charcoal in cases of poisoning by petroleum, alcohol, lye, acids and other corrosive chemicals.



Do not take activated charcoal if you are taking prescription medications. It can interfere with some medications. Consult your doctor for more information on your medication.

### Warnings

Activated charcoal is not the same as barbecue charcoal. Barbecue charcoal should never be consumed.

Drink 12 to 15 glasses of water daily when taking activated charcoal. The water prevents dehydration and constipation caused by the activated charcoal.

### Bleach

Bleach is a good disinfectant for most household surfaces. It kills most bacteria, viruses, and fungus. I use it to sanitize surfaces in treatment areas, disinfect laundry, decontaminate blood spills, and disinfect equipment. In addition, it has medicinal uses for treating skin.

### Medicinal Use of Bleach

#### Bed Sores, Diabetic Ulcers, Eczema, Inflammatory Skin Conditions

Soaking skin in a very dilute bleach solution is effective to treat bed sores, diabetic ulcers, eczema, and other inflammatory skin conditions. Use one tablespoon of regular strength bleach per gallon of water. The bleach solution is dilute enough not to harm the skin while calming inflammation and killing bacteria on the skin. Do not use undiluted bleach or bleach in higher concentrations.

For a full 40-gallon tub, use  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of household bleach in warm water. Soak in the chlorinated water for five to ten minutes, rinse the skin completely with fresh water. Pat dry. Apply lotions, emollients, or medications after a bath. Repeat two to three times weekly, or as needed.

### Sanitizing Water for Drinking

Unscented bleach is suitable for sanitizing water for drinking purposes. Add five drops of bleach per quart of water or  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of bleach per gallon of water. Stir thoroughly and allow it to sit for at least one hour before drinking. If the water is cloudy, filter it before adding the chlorine. This treatment kills most bacteria and viruses found in water, but may not kill all. It does not remove chemicals or other toxins from water.

### Using Bleach for Disinfecting

For disinfecting surfaces, I use a higher concentration of bleach:  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water. (1 to 3 tablespoons per quart of water.) I let the bleach water stand on the surface for at least 2 minutes, then I wipe dry or allow to air dry. This solution needs to be made fresh daily.

### Warnings

Do not use undiluted bleach or high concentrations of bleach directly on the skin. Bleach can cause dryness of skin irritations. Do not use with patients who have an allergy to chlorine.

### Boric Acid

I use boric acid for a number of different purposes. It is especially effective for treating fungal infections of all kinds. Boric acid is not the same as borax. For medicinal use, always use therapeutic grade or pharmaceutical grade boric acid.



Boric acid is a white crystalline acid ( $H_3BO_3$ ) containing boron. It is sometimes called hydrogen borate or orthoboric acid. It is usually used as a dry powder, although it can be mixed with water to make a dilute acid for sanitizing purposes. Boric acid should never be taken by mouth.

### Treating Yeast Infections

Boric acid suppositories are an excellent treatment for vaginal yeast infections. They are particularly useful for treating patients who have had multiple yeast infections that keep returning because the boric acid can be used regularly as a preventative once the infection is cured.

I recommend 600 of boric acid per suppository. Stuff the boric acid into a size "00" gelatin capsule and place the cap on it securely. Insert one suppository into the vagina every night just before bed. Patients should be warned that they may experience irritation or a burning sensation, but it will quickly pass. There will also be a discharge.

Use one suppository each night for one week if this is an isolated yeast infection.

If the patient has been having problems with recurring infections, use the suppository every night for two weeks and then continue using one suppository twice a week for a year. This long-term use kills off the roots of the infection before it can re-infect the patient.

### As an Eyewash

Boric acid makes an easy eyewash for treating even serious and contagious eye infections. It can also be used for minor eye irritations and common childhood infections such as pink eye and conjunctivitis. It kills the bacterial infection and reduces inflammation.

Before using the eyewash, make sure all of your materials are sterile including the eyedropper or eyecup. Sterilize before every use. Follow my recipe below to make the eyewash.

Use an eyedropper or eye cup to wash the eye with the sterile eyewash. Blink several times and roll the eyes to be sure the eyewash gets into all the corners of the eye. Repeat three times a day until the infection is cleared.

### Athlete's Foot, Nail Fungus

Boric acid is an excellent remedy for athlete's foot and toenail fungus. Dust the boric acid powder onto the foot or nail and put a few sprinkles into your socks each morning. At night, use my Boric Acid Foot Cure (recipe below.) The boric acid kills the infection, neutralizes the odor, and eases the associated itching. Continue to use daily until the infection is completely gone.

### Jock Itch

Jock itch also responds well to a dusting of boric acid over the affected area. Apply boric acid in a light dusting, but make sure the entire area is covered. Repeat the application morning and night until the infection is completely cured.

### Swimmers Ear, Ear Infections

To treat swimmers ear, mix two tablespoons of rubbing alcohol with  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of boric acid. Mix thoroughly until all the boric acid is dissolved, then drop into the ear. I prefer to fill the ear canal, then drain it completely. Treat both ears, even if only one is infected.

### Recipes

#### Boric Acid Foot Cure

1 cup rubbing alcohol, 2 teaspoons of boric acid

1. Mix the ingredients in a sterile jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Apply to the feet with a cotton ball or swab every night. No double dipping.
3. Allow the alcohol to dry on the feet and leave on until morning.

### Boric Acid Eye Wash

1/8 teaspoon pharmaceutical grade boric acid powder.

One cup distilled water, boiling

1. Sterilized jar, lid, and spoon sterilize in a pressure cooker (best), or by boiling for 10 minutes
2. Place the boiling water into the sterile jar and allow it to cool.
3. Mix the boric acid into the sterilized water and stir it with the sterilized spoon until it is completely dissolved.
4. Use the eyewash up to three times a day, as needed. Always use sterile tools with each use.

### Cayenne Pepper

Cayenne is used sparingly as a seasoning agent because of its spicy heat. It is a spice found in most home spice cabinets but has significant medical benefits

#### Medicinal Use

Cayenne is a warming herb, heart tonic, and digestive aid. It also releases hormones that improve the mood. It is rich in vitamins and minerals that support the immune system. I use cayenne as a powder, in capsules, added to water for soaking, in rubs, and in salves.

Cayenne is a powerful stimulant and consuming too much can cause stomach problems. A small amount goes a long way with this herb.

#### Stops Bleeding

Cayenne is a powerful styptic. It helps blood to clot both internally and externally. For small cuts and wounds, I put a thick layer of cayenne directly onto the cut. Large wounds benefit from both external administration and internal use. As soon as I have the wound covered in cayenne, I have patients drink a glass of water containing one teaspoon of cayenne pepper. It helps the blood clot quickly.

#### Sore Throats

A singer gave me this tip. She said that singers must perform and cannot afford a sore throat. So, at the first sign of irritation, they begin gargling several times a day with 10 to 20 drops of Cayenne Infusion mixed into a glass of water. It works if the patient can stand the heat.

#### Colds and Flu

Cayenne is an excellent supportive preventative and remedy for colds and the flu. I help bring down fevers and expel mucus. It works best in combination with other herbs such as echinacea root, goldenseal root, and marshmallow root. I use these herbs in combination with cayenne to make a cold and flu preventive capsule.

#### Poor Circulation, Warming the Hands and Feet

Cayenne is an effective herb for increasing circulation and for warming cold hands and feet.





I recommend sprinkling a powder made from equal parts cayenne and dried ginger powder into the shoes or the toes of the socks. Cayenne can be used alone, but it is often too irritating. Use only a pinch, approximately 1/8 teaspoon at most.

Another remedy that I use is to add five drops of Cayenne Infusion to a foot bath of warm water.

### *Achy Joints, Rheumatism, Arthritis, and Muscle Strains*

I recommend using Cayenne salve for achy muscles and joints. The pepper increases blood circulation to the area and warms it naturally. It soothes and relaxes the muscles and helps relieve pain. Rub a small amount of Cayenne Salve over ache muscles and painful joints.

### *General Tonic and Immune Booster*

I prescribe five drops of Cayenne Infusion added to a cup of vegetable juice or water as a general tonic. It improves whole body blood circulation and gives the immune system a boost. Take the infusion once or twice a day, as needed.

### *Diabetes and Blood Sugar Control*

Cayenne has a significant effect on blood sugar levels and can help bring them down in diabetic patients. I recommend that diabetic patients take one capsule of cayenne powder with each meal. The cayenne must be taken regularly to give the best effects, which increase over time.

Hypoglycemic patients should avoid the use of cayenne in foods and supplements.

### *Warnings*

Use gloves when preparing this herb. I know the pain that comes from failing to follow this recommendation. I once handled the fresh peppers with bare hands, chopping them for a pickle. When done, I washed my hands thoroughly several times. I knew the danger and was obsessive in the washing. About an hour later, I touched my eye. Words cannot express the pain I immediately experienced. To make it worse, I somehow spread the oils to the other eye. I thought I was going blind because my eyes were watering so much that I could not see. I am not sure how long it took to get over it, but it felt like hours. It is a mistake that I will never make again.

### *Recipes*

#### *Cayenne Infusion*

1 teaspoon dried cayenne powder, 1-pint water

Mix the cayenne powder and water together in a small pot and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and let the infusion cool. This infusion should always be used diluted. For most uses, a few drops of Cayenne Infusion added to a cup of water is enough. It can also be used topically.

#### *Cold and Flu Prevention Capsules*

Mix together thoroughly:

1/4 cup echinacea root powder, 1/4 cup goldenseal root powder, 2 tablespoons marshmallow root powder, 1 to 2 tablespoons cayenne powder

Pack the powder into large gelatin or vegetable capsules. I use the "00" size. If you use smaller capsules, increase the dosage. Store the capsules in a glass jar with a tight lid.

To Use: Take 2 capsules every 2 to 3 hours at the first sign of symptoms. Continue this dosage for the first two days, then reduce the dosage to 2 capsules, 3 times daily until all symptoms are gone.



### Cayenne Salve

Use this salve with care. Wash your hands very well after applying it and do not touch your eyes!

½ cup olive oil, 1 tablespoon dried cayenne pepper flakes, 2 tablespoons beeswax, 3 to 4 drops wintergreen essential oil

1. Place the olive oil and cayenne flakes into the top of a double boiler. Bring the water in the bottom of the double boiler to a simmer.
2. Simmer the pepper and oil mixture for 30 to 60 minutes, keeping an eye on the water levels in the bottom of the double boiler.
3. Remove the oil from the heat and allow it to cool slightly, strain the pepper flakes out and discard.
4. Return the oil to the heat and add the beeswax. Stir until the beeswax is completely melted, then remove from the heat.
5. Add the wintergreen essential oil and stir well. Pour the salve into a suitable container with a tight-fitting lid.

### Warming Ginger Cayenne Salve and Massage Oil

This salve is a great choice for muscle pains, arthritis and achy joints, bruises, and other deep tissue pains.

### Warming Ginger Cayenne Massage Oil

1 cup of olive oil, coconut oil, or other carrier oil, 1 tablespoon cayenne pepper powder, 1 tablespoon ginger root, dried and powdered, 1 tablespoon arnica flowers, dried, 1 tablespoon Osha root, dried and ground

1. Add the cayenne, ginger root, arnica, and osha root to the oil in a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Shake well.
2. Place the jar in a warm place like a sunny window for 3 to 4 weeks, shaking daily.
3. Strain the oil through a coffee filter to remove the herbs.

### Warming Ginger Cayenne Salve

1 cup Warming Ginger Cayenne Massage Oil

¼ cup beeswax, shaved, chopped, or shredded

1. Combine the beeswax and massage oil in the top of a double boiler. Warm gently until the beeswax is melted.
2. Stir the salve to completely combine the wax and oil.
3. Pour into wide-mouth jars or tins to cool.
4. When cold, cover and store in a cool, dark place.

Massage a small amount of salve into sore muscles and joints daily. It can take a few weeks to give maximum results.

Do not use on face or mucous membranes or open cuts or wounds. Do not use with pregnant or nursing patients. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap after use.

### Cold and Flu Prevention Capsules

Mix together thoroughly: ¼ cup echinacea root powder, ¼ cup goldenseal root powder, 2 tablespoons marshmallow root powder, 1 to 2 tablespoons cayenne powder

Pack the powder into large gelatin or vegetable capsules. I use the "00" size. If you use smaller capsules, increase the dosage. Store the capsules in a glass jar with a tight lid.

To Use: Take 2 capsules every 2 to 3 hours at the first sign of symptoms. Continue this dosage for the first two days, then reduce the dosage to 2 capsules, three times daily until all symptoms are gone.



### Epsom Salts

Epsom salts is a crystalline mineral salt with the chemical formula  $MgSO_4$ . When mixed with water, the salt breaks down into magnesium, sulfur, and oxygen. All of these are beneficial for the body and can be absorbed through the skin, one of the reasons that Epsom salt baths and foot soaks are so popular. It is also a powerful anti-inflammatory used to treat muscle soreness and skin inflammations.

### Epsom Salts Treat Magnesium Deficiency, Stress, and Benefits the Body Systems and Chronic Diseases

An Epsom salt bath is a good way to destress and treat a number of health issues at the same time. Magnesium is a mineral that is vital to health, yet many of my patients present with a deficiency. An Epsom salt bath allows the magnesium to be absorbed by the body and is beneficial for the heart, bones, muscles, and other organs.

Epsom salt baths are beneficial for treating any disease that might cause or result from a magnesium deficiency, especially chronic diseases like heart disease and arrhythmias, osteoporosis, chronic fatigue syndrome, arthritis, and some mental illness.

### Detoxifying the Body

The dissolved sulfur in an Epsom salt bath helps the body flush out toxins. It pulls toxins and heavy metals out of the body.

### Reduces Inflammation

A soak in Epsom salt also reduces inflammation and pain in sore muscles, swellings, and skin inflammations. A long soak has the ability to reduce swelling and pain almost immediately.

### To Benefit from an Epsom Salt Soak

To receive all of these benefits, encourage the patient to soak in an Epsom salt bath for at least 40 minutes to 1 hour. I recommend two cups or more of Epsom salt in a full bath tub of warm water. For a foot soak, add 2 tablespoons of Epsom salt per gallon of warm water. To aid the detoxifying process, patients should drink plenty of water before, during, and after the soak.

### Listerine

Listerine is a combination of alcohol and essential oils that are good for killing bacteria and fungus on the body. In addition to sanitizing the mouth and sweetening the breath, it is useful for killing bacteria and fungus in wounds and on the skin.

### Medicinal Use of Listerine

#### Get Rid of Lice

Listerine can be used to kill lice in the hair. Apply Listerine to the scalp and hair, soaking it well. Cover it with a disposable shower cap and leave it on for 2 hours. Wash and rinse like usual. Use a lice comb to remove the nits.

#### Get Rid of Ticks

This is one of my tricks for getting a tick to turn loose. I soak a cotton ball or pad with Listerine and use it to cover the tick for 10 to 15 seconds. The tick will usually let go quickly and can be removed with tweezers.



### Treat Itchy Skin

I sometimes use Listerine to treat pain and itchy skin caused by bug bites, bee stings, poison ivy, allergies, psoriasis, and acne. It sanitizes the area, reduces pain, and relieves the itch temporarily.

### Clean Blisters and Wounds

Clean wounds and blisters with Listerine to keep them from getting infecting. The Listerine kills bacteria on the skin surface. Repeat several times daily to keep the wound clean.

### Toe and Nail Fungus

Add a cup of Listerine to your foot soak to treat nail fungus. Soak daily until the fungus clears up completely.

### Other Uses

#### Kills Mold and Mildew

Listerine also kills molds and mildew. I use it in a spray bottle to kill small spots of mold and mildew. Spray the area thoroughly and let it soak in.

### Potassium Permanganate

Potassium permanganate is a chemical compound with medicinal use for the cleaning of wounds, treating skin conditions, and disinfecting water. It is a strong oxidizer, capable of starting fires when in contact with oxidizable materials.

### Medicinal Use

#### Skin Infections

Potassium permanganate can irritate or even burn the skin when used in strong solutions. It must be carefully prepared into very dilute solutions before use. Only a small amount is needed to provide relief from skin infections including canker sores, ulcers, abscesses, acne, dermatitis, eczema, vaginal thrush, and vulvovaginitis.

I apply a small amount on small wounds and soak larger areas in a very dilute solution. If necessary, a dilute potassium permanganate water bath can be used. Compresses can also be used.

#### Wound Cleansing

Cleaning wounds with dilute concentrations of potassium permanganate kills bacteria, funguses, and viruses. This prevents wound infections.

#### Fungal Infections

Fungal infections such as athlete's foot is easily treated by soaking the foot in a dilute solution of potassium permanganate for about 15 minutes, twice a day, for two or three weeks. These soaks kill or inhibit the growth of the fungus. The patient should be aware that the treatment will temporarily stain the foot brown, but normal color will return when the soaks are finished.

#### Cholera Prevention

Potassium permanganate is an effective way to sanitize water for drinking.



Clean food and drinking water is necessary to prevent infective diseases such as cholera and dysentery. To prepare water for drinking with potassium permanganate, add permanganate granules to 1 gallon of water, one or two at a time, until the water turns pink. Allow the water to sit for 30 minutes before drinking or using. The water is safe to drink while the pink color remains. If the color is purple, you have added too much permanganate and the water is unsafe for drinking. Add more water to dilute it until the color is pink.

### How to Prepare

Potassium permanganate must be dissolved and diluted by clean water before using. Dissolve one 400 mg tablet or granules in 1 gallon of water. Use the water to soak weeping skin wounds and infections for 1 hour, but no more. Use potassium permanganate as a short-term solution while treating the underlying conditions. Do not use potassium permanganate internally or in the eyes.

### Other Uses

Water purification, as described above under preventing cholera. Potassium permanganate is also useful for starting fires.

### Warnings

Potassium permanganate is an aggressive oxidizer and will readily start fires when in contact with suitable materials. It must be stored in a non-reactive plastic bottle.

Strong solutions can cause burns. Dilute the solutions as recommended.

Potassium permanganate will stain almost everything it comes into contact with in a nice shade of pink or purple.

## Diatomaceous Earth

Diatomaceous earth (DE) is composed of fossils formed by tiny algae-like organisms called diatoms. It is a slightly abrasive powder that is safe for consumption by humans and animals. It has health and medicinal benefits to the body. Be sure that your DE is marked as food-grade. Non-food grade DE is not safe for human consumption.



### How to Take Diatomaceous Earth

Mix one teaspoon full of diatomaceous earth in a glass of water. Drink it one hour before eating or two hours after eating. Repeat this dose for 10 days, then wait another 10 days before repeating the cycle. Do this for 5 full cycles of 10 days on and 10 days off. Diatomaceous earth can also remove medications from the body, so check with your doctor before use, if you are taking medications.

### Diatomaceous Earth Detoxifies the Body

Diatomaceous earth is negatively charged which allows it to attract positively charged toxins and heavy metals from the body and flush them from the body.

### Kills Parasites



Diatomaceous earth naturally kills parasites and viruses in the digestive tract. By using the 10 days on and 10 days off schedule, it kills parasites in all stages of the reproductive cycle, ending the infestation.

### Improves Joint and Bone Health

DE is a natural source of silica and other trace minerals required by the body. Silica is essential for healthy joints, ligaments, and bones.

### Encourages Heart Health

Diatomaceous Earth helps lower cholesterol and blood pressure which encourages a healthy heart and circulatory system.

### Clean Teeth

DE is an abrasive that is safe to use as a toothpaste.

### Other Uses

Diatomaceous earth has many uses around the home. One of its most valuable household and garden uses is in killing fleas, bedbugs, cockroaches, spiders and other insects. You only need to dust it in the areas where infestations exist. It is completely safe with kids and pets.

It is also valuable as an abrasive cleanser, an absorbent, deodorizer, and in water filtration.

### Cautions

Diatomaceous earth is a fine abrasive powder. It can be harmful if inhaled or if it gets in the eyes. Wear proper protective clothing when using.

### Recipes

#### DE Toothpaste

½ cup of diatomaceous earth

½ cup coconut oil

1 to 2 drops peppermint essential oil

Vegetable glycerin, as desired for texture

Mix together and use as toothpaste.