

THE OSAGE NATION  
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# GATHER 2019



Grow, Gather, Hunt Program  
Plant Manual

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## Notes

Be careful when gathering, make certain that you know the plant before harvesting. Learn as much as possible from various books, other wildcrafters/gatherers, and the internet about one plant at a time. This is a hobby/skill that will take many years to learn all of the useful plants around you. Learn about a plant and research to see if a certain plant may have a look-a-like that could be harmful.

Herbs even wild ones, are medicine. Treat them as medicine. Check with your physician or pharmacist if you are on any medications. Some medications may interact with wild herbs.

Use of wild herbs as medicine and food are ways that our ancestors took care of themselves and provided a rich supply of nutrients to the body. We know a lot about how most of these plants act and what they do. If you use these plants as medicine or foods, make sure that you don't overdo it. Always start with the smallest doses.



## **STINGING NETTLE**

Stinging nettle causes instant pain and/or itching when touched, but this plant is an amazing plant. It has been used medicinally since Ancient Greece and used as a food source as well. *Urtica Dioica* is the scientific name. It can be found all over the world. It usually can grow from two to four feet and will bloom from June to September.

Why does it sting and how to avoid stinging? The plant has chemicals such as serotonin, histamine, and acetylcholine which irritate tissue. The hairs are like needles and deliver the chemicals under the skin. To avoid this, pick early spring when the plant is smaller and those chemicals are not matured. You can harvest when they are larger just be sure to wear gloves and long sleeves when picking. The dehydrating process and par boiling them for a few minutes will also deactivate the chemicals. Most often the leaves are used, but the roots may also be used for medicines.

According to the University of Maryland Medical Center, “the plant has been used most commonly throughout history as a diuretic and for treating painful muscles and joints, eczema, arthritis, gout, and anemia. Today, it’s used primarily to treat urinary issues, as well as allergies and joint pain”.

There are no look-alikes with this plant, it is unmistakable with the stinging hairs. Stinging nettle has been used for centuries, primarily as a diuretic for bladder retention, bladder infection, along with excessive menstruation, nosebleeds, hemorrhoids, skin issues, chronic diarrhea and to reduce hair loss. This plant is well known for its’ help with Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) helping to reduce symptoms.

Stinging Nettle is used for its' antioxidant, antimicrobial, anti-ulcer, analgesic and astringent uses. It has been used as a poultice, salve, tinctures to reduce arthritis, skin inflammation, heat rash, and sores. This plant in laboratory trials of the extract show it has diuretic, hemostatic and mild blood sugar-lowering effects. The anti-inflammatory effects can be used directly on the effected joint to reduce use of NSAIDs. A product, called Ankaferd blood stopper, is made up of alpinia, licorice, thyme, common grape vine and stinging nettle, and has also shown evidence of reducing bleeding after dental surgery.

Because of the antihistamine and anti-inflammatory qualities, it is a natural treatment for the skin including Eczema.

How to use Stinging Nettle:

You can purchase it from a health food store. They come in dried or freeze dried leaf form, capsules, tablets, and extracts as well as tinctures. You can always go out and gather your own, dehydrate or par-boil the leaves to make your own medicines.

1. Nettle tea – Dried flowers and leaves can be used to steep in hot water to make a tea.
2. Cooked Nettle - Stinging nettle leaves can be stemmed and cooked similar to spinach. Once cooked, they can be added to soup or stew. Nettle has also been pureed and used in recipes like polenta, green smoothies, salads and pesto.
3. When cooked, the nettle has a flavor similar to spinach mixed with cucumber. Cooked nettle is a great source of vitamins A, C, protein and iron.
4. Topical - Stinging nettle can be extracted to use in tinctures and salves.
5. Persistent bladder infections.
6. Decocted and mixed with vinegar to restore hair.
7. Eczema, itching, hives, dysentery, urinary, kidneys treated by tinctures or tea made from leaves and/or roots.
8. Leaves made into a poultice for arthritis and skin inflammation.

Precautions:

1. Always wear gloves when handling fresh stinging nettle.
2. When using with medications, consult your physician before use.
3. Avoid when you are pregnant, stinging nettle does effect the menstrual cycle and may cause contractions and potentially a miscarriage.
4. Diabetes – the plant does effect blood sugars, so take only under the supervision of your provider.
5. When you first ingest Stinging Nettle, it may cause stomach irritation or even diarrhea.
6. Stinging Nettle does interact with:
  - Blood thinners
  - Diuretics and water pills
  - Lithium
  - NSAIDs
  - Sedatives

**Stinging Nettle Soup:**

Wear gloves!

4 Cups vegetable stock

1-quart young stinging nettle (leaves and tender stalk tips only)

Seasonings to taste

Bring the stock to boiling, add the nettle and simmer for 15 minutes. Season to taste. If you don't like the texture, you can puree it.

**Stinging Nettle Stir Fry:**

Wear Gloves!

1 Quart stinging nettle (leaves and tips)

2-Tblsp Olive oil

1 clove garlic

1-lemon squeezed

Using your gloved hands, drop the leaves into boiling water for three-five minutes. Pour off all water in a sieve. In a skillet, warm olive oil on medium heat. Add garlic and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Add drained stinging nettle leaves. Sauté for 3-5 minutes adding lemon to taste. For more lemon flavor, add lemon zest. Serve hot.



## **CATNIP**

### Catnip origin

This plant is in the mint family. The scientific name is *Nepeta cataria*. All kinds of cats up to lions and tigers go for this plant! This plant has small white purple flowers. The leaves and stems have a volatile oil called nepetalactone. Used in medicinal concoctions are the leaves and the flowers. The nepetalactone is similar to other chemicals found in sedative herbs such as Valerian. This is an attraction for both cats and supposedly humans.

### Health Benefits:

1. Stress reducer – both cats and humans can use this plant. Along with other herbs such as chamomile, lemon balm and valerian this is known to have a calming effect on humans.
2. Popular as a children's tonic in the past, it has been used for colds, coughs, sore throats, restlessness, upset stomach, vomiting, colic, diarrhea and constipation. Used as a tea, the minty flavor most likely is well received from children.
3. In the past, it has been used for Measles, worms, anemia, headache, toothache, hives, fevers, and insomnia.
4. A cough reliever and sleep booster this plant is currently used often for cough and to help fall asleep. This plant has antispasmodic abilities that may help to smooth the bronchi and reduce cough symptoms.
5. As a sleep booster, the nepetalactone is known to have a mild sedative effect and may help with tension headaches as well.
6. Skin soothing – Sipping catnip tea may help with skin problems. It can also help an itchy cat by bathing the cat or human in catnip tea.

## **How to use Catnip**

You can find it often at your local Farmers Markets nowadays as well as many health food stores. Store these in a sealed container in a cool dry place. Crushing the herb will maximize the oil and its' effects.

## **Don't use Catnip for cats on humans!**

Often found in the grocery store shelves are packaged Catnip tea ready for human ingestion.

## **Catnip Tea:**

Combine 1 cup of boiling water with 1-2 teaspoons of dried catnip.

Cover the tea and allow to steep for 10 minutes or up to 15 minutes.

Catnip is generally safe for adults in small amounts. You can drink about 2-3 cups of tea each day. Adults can take 2 teaspoons of catnip tincture up to 3 times each day.

## **Precautions:**

1. Too much catnip in high doses may be unsafe.
2. Do not use catnip sold for animals on humans.
3. Don't give children orally as safety has not been established.
4. Avoid if you have PID or heavy menstruation.
5. Not recommended during pregnancy or breastfeeding.
6. Potential for drug interactions, check with your provider or pharmacist.
7. Always check with provider if you are on any medications.





## **COMFREY**

Comfrey is likely on the list of many using plant remedies. It has been used for centuries for pain and inflammation issues. It reduced pain and inflammation of muscles and joints, can help to speed healing bruises, and thought to help with fibromyalgia. In the U.K., it is prescribed about 15 percent of consultations when the patient has tendon, ligament, fractures, wounds and muscle problems. Comfrey is to be used externally only as it contains Pyrrolizidine alkaloids which are toxic to the liver according to the FDA and many other authorities around the world. It has been banned for use in dietary supplements. Although it isn't used as a tea anymore, it is still a powerful plant to use externally. It contains Allantoin which can promote healing.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

1. **DO NOT USE INTERNALLY!**
2. Use only the leaves of the plant, the root contains a higher level of alkaloids dangerous to the liver.
3. Use topically for up to 10 consecutive days and avoid accumulation of the alkaloids to be safe.
4. People with liver disease, cancer or a history of alcohol abuse should not use even externally.
5. Pregnant or breastfeeding women should not use it.

Comfrey can help with:

1. Arthritis pain – Use topically in a tincture or salve, or create a poultice and apply to the area 2-3 times daily.
2. Lower back relief – Applying a topical extract onto the back has shown to relieve back pain in clinical trials.
3. Fibromyalgia – apply to painful areas.

4. Speeding healing of wounds- The Allantoin aids regrowth of skin and is used in many over the counter medications. A folk term used for this plant is “knit bone” since it was often used to help with healing broken bones.
5. Muscle and joint pain – A large review released in 2013 about the uses medicinally of comfrey states:

It is clinically proven to relieve pain, inflammation and swelling of muscles and joints in the case of degenerative arthritis, acute myalgia in the back, sprains, contusions and strains after sports injuries and accidents, also in children aged 3 years and older.

6. Reduces skin irritation- Soothing skin is most likely due to the allantoin. Studies against the over the counter diclofenac when compared to using on a sunburn, the comfrey was equal or better.

Grows in many gardens and can grow in many climates, prefers the shade. It grows to 2-3 feet and looks a bit “hairy”. It can also have pink, yellow or purplish flowers dependent on the type. Flowers are bell shaped. The most common type grown is the Russian Comfrey. Comfrey is a perennial plant and is not invasive. Seeds or starts can be purchased.



## **ECHINACEA**

*Echinacea Angustifolia*, the purple cone flower. This plant grows wild on the plains and native to North America. Many people will dig the roots to sale as there is a booming business for the plant. It has been used for over 400 years by tribes on the Great Plains. Before antibiotics, this was the go to medicine. Echinacea extract is primarily developed from making a tincture from the roots or the leaves.

This plant is a perennial that grows 6-20 inches with lance shaped leaves. It is often in gardens as it is a pretty addition and attracts butterflies.

The chemicals in the root have higher volatile oils and above the soil has more polysaccharides that help with the immune boosting functions. It also contains essential oils, flavonoids, inulin, polysaccharides and Vitamin C.

A study done at the University of Maryland Medical center reports the plant above the ground is the part most effective. Germany regulates its' herbs and the government approves the use of *Echinacea purpurea* as a natural remedy of upper respiratory tract infections, urinary tract infections, colds and slow healing wounds.

Benefits of Echinacea:

1. Research in cancer treatment - published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Stating that, the “medicinal value of phytochemicals contained in Echinacea is clearly evident and indicates that these agents, as well as phytochemicals not yet discovered in other herbs, may be valuable tools to combat tumors.” Particularly research in brain cancer.

2. Immune system booster – it can reduce the chances of getting a cold as well as reduce the duration of the cold. University of Connecticut Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice and lead author of the study Dr. Craig Coleman, added that, “The take home message from our study is that Echinacea does indeed have powerful cold prevention and cold treatment benefits.” As I’ve discovered, it’s one of several effective natural cold remedies”. According to Dr. Coleman, “The significance of that finding becomes clear when you consider Americans suffer from one billion colds annually and spend about \$1.5 billion annually for doctor’s visits and another \$2 billion annually on non-prescription cough and cold treatments.” Echinacea can help prevent colds, but even works better once the symptoms start. It is a favorite herb for naturopaths and integrative physicians.
3. Used as a pain killer by Native Americans. Particularly effective on:
  - a. Toothache
  - b. Stomach ache
  - c. Sore throat
  - d. Snake bites and spider bites
  - e. Headaches
  - f. Pain in the bowels
  - g. Colds and flu
  - h. Burns
  - i. Hard to heal wounds
  - j. As a laxative

Widely used as an extract, salves, and tinctures on herpes sores, canker sores, throat infections, preventing cold and flu. It can also be used as a tea. Watch your intake and limit to 2 cups a day since it does work as a laxative. Regular consumption of Echinacea can alleviate inflammation. The National Institute of Health states it can help with eye inflammation. People with chronic inflammation such as rheumatoid arthritis may benefit with regular use. It also has great effects on skin problems such as Psoriasis, bites, skin infections, wound healing and stings.

4. Echinacea Angustifolia is the species that is considered to help with ADHD. Taking no more than the recommended 20 milligrams at a time.
5. Upper respiratory infections – Since it has the immune boosting and anti-inflammatory characteristics it can help relieve: sinusitis, flu, asthma, colds, croup, diphtheria, strep throat, Tuberculosis, and Whooping cough. Echinacea has shown bronchodilator providing the basis for this herb in traditional medicine as a remedy for the airway disorders.
6. Infection- Helps relieve vaginal infections, genital herpes, urinary tract infections, gum disease.

#### PRECAUTIONS:

1. May have a rare allergic reaction in some people.
2. High doses may cause nausea and dizziness.
3. The Mayo Clinic says yes to pregnant women taking Echinacea, but use with caution as they say safety information is limited.

Echinacea can be purchased over the counter at health food stores, pharmacies, grocery stores and online. The NIH says regular daily use is beneficial to supporting overall health. Be aware of some products as the University of Maryland testing 11 products which 10% had 0% of Echinacea and over half didn't have the amount stated on the label.



## **YARROW**

Yarrow – *Achillea Millefolium* Grows native in the Northern Hemisphere including North America, Asia, and Europe.

### **Yarrow History and Interesting Facts**

- The herb's use in food and medicine is ancient, dating back to the Trojan War around 1200 B.C.
- Legend has it that it was named after Achilles, the Greek mythical hero who used it to stop the bleeding of his soldiers' wounds.
- The Native Americans called it chipmunk tail or squirrel tail.
- In New Mexico and southern Colorado, it's called plumajillo (Spanish for "little feather") because of its leaf shape and texture.
- Yarrow and tortoiseshell are considered lucky in Chinese culture.
- In British folklore, a yarrow leaf held against the eyes was believed to give second sight or clairvoyance.
- Several birds, including the common starling, use it to line their nests.
- Yarrow essential oil has been found to kill the larvae of *Aedes albopictus* (aka tiger mosquito or forest mosquito).
- During Middle Ages, it was part of an herbal mixture known as gruit used in the flavoring of beer prior to the use of hops.
- The flowers and leaves are used to make liquor and bitters.
- The herb is beneficial to gardeners because it improves soil quality and repels certain types of unwanted insects.

This plant was a common vegetable in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, prepared and eaten as spinach is today. It has a flavor like tarragon and can be used in recipes giving flavor and health benefits.

## Health Benefits:

1. Stops bleeding and heals skin – Used for centuries even back to Achilles. Powdered can be sprinkled onto wounds to help stop bleeding and alleviate the pain. It is also a natural antiseptic so can help prevent infection in wounds. It has been used to heal patients effected by napalm used during Vietnam. A name for it was herba militaris since it was used to stop bleeding in war wounds.
  2. Amenorrhea aid – Encourages bleeding in some health disorders such as amenorrhea (absence of menstruation). Other herbs used are motherwort, partridge berry and rue. It stimulates blood flow in pelvic region and the uterus. Not confirmed by studies, but it has been used for this for centuries.
  3. Mild sedative – Anti-anxiety effects found in some research shows short and long term administration that may be similar to Diazepam (Valium).
  4. Mastitis – Breast infection normally a woman breastfeeding. Leaf poultices are especially helpful.
  5. Reducing inflammation – This plant is used in other cultures where it also grows such as in China and Europe where it has been used as a traditional medicine. Fever reducing. Yarrow has anti-inflammatory and astringent properties that makes yarrow a great plant to reduce inflammation and is included in many topical applications for skin conditions such as eczema.
  6. Gastrointestinal – Yarrow has anti-spasmodic abilities which can help alleviate diarrhea, cramping, and flatulence.
  7. High Blood pressure and Asthma – Research was published in Phototherapy which looked specifically at Yarrow's abilities for hypotensive vasodilator and bronchodilator abilities. (lowering high blood pressure, relaxing smooth muscles for breathing). The study's concluded on animal testing that yarrow did confirm the use for lowering blood pressure and reducing asthma symptoms.
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1. Use younger leaves in stews or soups just as you would spinach.
  2. Dry the leaves and use them like any other herb when cooking.
  3. When using heat, add at the last to avoid destroying the flavor as high heat will damage.
  4. Fresh leaves and flowers can be used in salads.
  5. Dried and used for tea.

You can find Yarrow at health food stores or online and in nature. The flowers, leaves and stems can be collected while it is in bloom. Chemicals that are in Yarrow are: luteolin, apigenin, casticin, centaureidin, artemetin, sesquiterpenoids, paulitin, isopaulitin, desacetylmaticarin, and psilostachyin (Dr. Axe). Normal suggested dose per day is 4.5 grams. Always check with your provider to make certain it does not interfere with medications that you may be taking.

## **Yarrow Tea:**

Use flowers, stems and leaves to make a medicinal tea. You can use fresh or dried, but dried is the more common method. Yarrow tastes bitter, use a touch of honey if needed. Adding a bit of lemon will also add some vitamin C.

1 teaspoon dried yarrow (or if fresh, 3 leaves)

1 cup boiling water

1 teaspoon honey (opt)

1 slice of lemon (opt)

Place the yarrow into a cup or tea infuser, add boiling water and let steep for 10 minutes. Remove the leaves if you want. Add the honey and lemon stirring and enjoy.

## **Precautions:**

1. Yarrow can irritate allergies if you are allergic to the daisy family. If you have any reactions when using externally or internally, discontinue use.
2. There is a possibility of the skin becoming photosensitive.
3. Can cause drowsiness and increase urination.
4. Large doses over a longer period has the potential of becoming toxic.
5. Some species of yarrow oil contain “thujone” which is toxic in large amounts. It has a narcotic effect.
6. Yarrow also has Coumarin, which can thin the blood. Don’t use with prescription blood thinners or aspirin.
7. Pregnant women should not use, ask your provider if you breastfeed.
8. Yarrow has not been studied on children, ask your pediatrician.
9. It may interact with these medications:
  - a. Blood thinners (Warfarin, aspirin)
  - b. Lithium
  - c. Stomach acid-reducing (such as omeprazole)
  - d. High blood pressure medications
  - e. Medications that make you sleep or induce sleep.





## **ST. JOHN'S WORT**

St John's Wort is a perennial growing to 3 feet. It has yellow flowers in clusters. It flowers June through September. It is widespread through North America and Europe. The scientific name is *hypericum perforatum*. It has been used for over 2000 years and can be traced as far back as Greek physicians in the first century who recommended its' value as a medicine. It is named St. John's Wort because it blooms around June 24<sup>th</sup>, birthday of John the Baptist. Old English for plant is "Wort". Sales of St. John's Wort have exploded and exceed billions of dollars each year. The active ingredients hypericin and hyperforin, along with rutin, quercetin, and kaempferol are all active in this plant with hypericin and hyperforin the most active medical value. St John's Wort has antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and anti-fungal properties.

Benefits of St. John's Wort:

1. Antidepressant – Many studies have been done on the plant. It has shown to reduce mild and moderate depression and anxiety. It also seems to have fewer side effects than many prescription antidepressants. Make certain that you consult your provider especially if you are taking any other medications.
2. It is often used to improve moods in patients with SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), a disorder occurring in winter months due to lack of sunlight.
3. Relieves PMS – chronic fatigue, depression, aggression, and hormone imbalance is said to be helped by the plant. Studies on women in the U.K. showed St. John's Wort improved the women's' depression, hormone balance compared to the group using a placebo.
4. Menopause – Uses are as a remedy relieving symptoms of menopause. Testing done on 111 women with half receiving a placebo and the other half the St. John's 900

- milligram/day showed improvement in psychological and psychosomatic symptoms which diminished or disappeared in 76% of the women using the St. John's Wort.
5. Inflammation and skin – St. John's Wort has antibacterial properties that can fight inflammation. Topically, it can help relieve skin irritations and small wounds as well as eczema, burns, and hemorrhoids. It has been used for thousands of years treating cuts and abrasions.
  6. OCD – Obsessive compulsive disorder where routines are obsessively repeated and the patient can't control activities and/or thoughts. A study conducted at Dean Foundation for Health Research and Education with 12 OCD patients. Patients were given 450 milligrams, twice daily for 12 weeks. Changes were noted on week 1. At the final testing after 12 weeks, 5 had much or much improved, 6 had minimally improved and 1 had not changed.
  7. Anti-cancer – Hyperforin found in St. John's Wort can interfere with formation and growth of cells. Studies are still being conducted particularly on skin cancers.

### **How to use St. John's Wort:**

You can purchase it in capsules, tablets, tinctures, teas, and lotions, but it grows abundantly in most areas. Again, look at the label. Most will contain 0.3% hypericin. Supplements aren't regulated, so buyer beware. You can also purchase seeds and grow your own. The plant is very invasive so you may want to contain it, but it is very cheery and pretty.

1. Children – only limited studies on children. Consult with your provider before treating a child with St. John's Wort internally. External treatment monitor for allergic reactions at the application site.
2. Adults – no more than 900 -1800 milligrams of St. John's Wort by mouth daily is standard dosage for mild depression and anxiety. Check with your physician.
3. Psoriasis – Use St. John's Wort ointment/salve twice daily on affected skin.
4. Wounds – Apply topically 3 times daily.
5. PMS - label on box

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

1. Safe up to three months taken by mouth seems to be the standard.
2. Trouble sleeping, vivid dreams, restlessness, stomach upset, fatigue, dry mouth, dizziness, headaches, diarrhea and tingling when taken orally. Large doses, may cause a severe reaction to sunshine (photosensitivity). Wear sunscreen especially if you have light skin.
3. Not recommended during pregnancy or breastfeeding.
4. Check with your pediatrician for use with children.
5. Interactions with some medications: Birth control pills, allergy medications, sedatives, migraine medications, and heart disease medications.
6. Check with your physician if you have ANY chronic disorder or disease before use.
7. Livestock which eat the plant can develop severe sunburn, especially white skinned animals. Lesions can develop often on the udders making a cow stop lactating and wean her calf.



## **DANDELION**

Dandelion (c) AltNature 2006

*Taraxacum officinale* Other Names Common Dandelion, Lion's Tooth, Priest's Crown, Pu Gong Ying, Swine's Snout, Dent de Lion Dandelion

Usually one of the first plants to sprout out of the ground in spring, the dandelion has many uses. This plant has antibacterial properties that help to fight infections. The sap from the dandelion has been used to remove warts and corns. You can use the entire plant, root, leaves, stems and flowers both externally and internally.

Dandelion uses:

1. It has been used historically to treat gall bladder, liver, and jaundice. Also been used to treat kidney and urinary disorders, hypoglycemia, stomach ache, low back pain, menstrual cramps, arthritis, and allergies.
2. Dandelion is high in vitamin A and C.
3. Dandelion green leaves are used in salads, flowers are often used to make a wine, roots are often used to make a coffee like drink. All parts of this plant are edible.
4. Dandelion is traditionally used for blood purifier, constipation, skin conditions, joint pain, eczema, and liver function.
5. Dandelion contains a great number of vitamins and minerals making it more nutritious than many common vegetables. The younger the leaves are, the less bitter tasting. Flowers can be eaten raw. Leaves can be cooked like spinach to make them less bitter. Flowers can be fried, pickled, and used in many ways.

**Dandelion Tea:**

2 oz. dried dandelion (any part)

1 qt. water

Boil water and add dried dandelion. Return to boil and continue on a gentle boil for 20 minutes. Often used as a spring tonic thought to improve stomach, kidney, liver and gall bladder.

**Dandelion Harvest and Use Information**

Gather edible leaves and flowers of Dandelion anytime, roots in spring. Dry for later medicinal herb use.



**BLACKBERRY** *Rubus allegheniensis*

Other Names : Allegheny Blackberry, American Blackberry, Bly, Bramble, Bramble-Kite, Brambleberry, Brameberry, Brummel

Blackberries are edible and medicinal. You can use it fresh, make jams and syrups, pies, smoothies and all sorts of edible uses. This plant also has medicinal values. The leaves and root bark are astringent which makes them a very good plant to use for conditions such as diarrhea, dysentery, cystitis and hemorrhoids.

Most astringent is the root, very excellent for diarrhea but it can be used to treat sore throats, gum problems and ulcers in the mouth. Making a syrup from blackberry leaves, root bark, fruit, and a touch of honey makes a good cough and sore throat remedy. Using the leaves to make a gargle is used to treat thrush and an all-around mouthwash. Tannins is the chemical that gives blackberry plant the astringent properties.

Flowers bloom in April to May. Each year they will shoot new stems from the rootstock. The stems will bear fruit in the second year then it will die. They will ripen in late June through to July. Gather them when dark purple. Use with a few days or you can freeze, canned for use through the remainder of the year.

**Medicinal Blackberry Leaf herb tea:**

To 1 ounce of the dried Blackberry leaves and root bark, add 1 pint of boiling water, and steep 10 minutes. Drink a tea cup at a time. Use Blackberry fruit to make jellies, jams, cobblers, and in any recipe where you would use raspberries.



## **CHICKWEED**

Other Names: Common Chickweeds, Star Chickweed, Mouse-ear Chickweed. This is a sprawling perennial common plant in yards.

Chickweed Herbal, edible and medicinal

High in vitamins and minerals, they can be added to salads or cooked like spinach or added to soups and stews. Very tasty plant that is similar to spinach in flavor. It contains: Beta Carotene, calcium, gamma-linolenic-acid, flavonoids, Hentriacontanol, Magnesium, Niacin Oleic-acid, Potassium, Riboflavin, Rutin, Selenium, Thiamin, and Zinc. Chickweed is used as food as well as medicine. Typically, it is an astringent used for diuretic, expectorant, and laxative. Beneficial for kidney, coughs, constipation. It can also be used as a poultice and helps relieve itchy skin. Chickweed tea is a folk remedy used for obesity.

Chickweed Tea:

1 Tbsp. dried herb (2 if fresh)

Add 1 cup boiling water and steep for 10 minutes. Good during a cold or flu. Use the fresh chickweed and add to salads in the spring.



**PLANTAIN** *Plantago major*, *Plantago lanceolata*

Other Names: Common Plantain, Broadleaf Plantain, Great Plantain, Greater Plantain, Ripple Grass, *Plantago Asiatica*, Waybread, Waybread, Snakeweed, Cuckoo's Bread, Englishman's Foot, White Man's Footprint, Che Qian Zi (China), Breitwegerich (German)

Edible and medicinal. Use fresh leaves in salads or cooked. Rich in vitamin B1 and Riboflavin. Leaves and seeds are medicinal and have antibacterial, astringent, hemostatic, anti-inflammatory properties. Used often for asthma, emphysema, bladder problems, bronchitis, fever, hypertension, rheumatism and glucose control. It is used in salves, tinctures, teas, and as a poultice. For bug bites, pick a fresh leaf and bruise or chew it a bit to release properties and apply to bite. Itching will relieve almost immediately. Can be used in the same way for poison oak and ivy. Fresh leaves can also be used to help stop bleeding of a wound and with healing the wood. Traditionally, it was used on snake bites too. The seeds are the psyllium of the *Plantago* species. In studies have been able to lower cholesterol, glucose and lower the fat intake. Seeds swell when digested acting as a bulk type laxative. The root is the part that was prized traditionally as the anti-venom remedy for snake bites. Chemical analysis shows that it contains Aucubin, which is an anti-toxin.

Plantain is very common and seems to pop up in driveways often. It is thought to be a noxious weed. It likes sunny areas, it is a food for caterpillars and butterflies. Gather the fresh young leaves in the spring and if you gather after the flower has erupted, dry the leaves for later use. Seeds are in a capsule inside the flower.

### **Plantain Herbal Tea Recipe**

"Medicinal" herb tea: For colds and flu use

1 tbs. dry or fresh whole Plantain (seed, root, and leaves) to

1 cup boiling water, steep 10 min. strain, sweeten. Drink through the day.





**VIOLET** *Viola odorata*

Other Names: Ordinary violet, Common blue violet, Sweet violet, Garden violet  
(Various wild violets pictured)

**Edible and medicinal plant.**

Violets are a medicinal and edible herb. The flowers and leaves are used. Often violet leaves are made into a syrup used for respiratory conditions such as congestion, sore throat and coughing. It can be used externally as well. Fresh leaves crushed and placed on the skin will reduce swelling and soothe irritated skin. You can add the fresh, crushed flowers to a bath and they are very soothing to the skin and the aroma is relaxing. Wild violets are often used in salads. Violet in large doses will contain Violine, an alkaloid that is emetic (causes vomiting). They are often found in lawns all over North America. They are an immigrant from Europe.

**Violet Syrup**

Pour 1 pint of boiling water over 1 cup packed, of fresh crushed flowers and leaves cover and let stand for 12 hours. Strain and squeeze through cloth, add 2 lb. of sugar and boil for 1 hour or until syrupy. Store in glass jar. Give 1 tbs. (1 tsp. for children) 2 or 3 times a day.

**Violet**

- Steep 1 cup dried or fresh herb in 1 cup of water for 10 min. strain, flavor to taste. Take in 1/2 cup doses twice a day.

- Violet flowers and leaves are edible and used as food additives for instance in salad, made into jelly, and candied for decoration.
- Large doses of Violet root contain an alkaloid called violine which is emetic (causing vomiting).
- A decoction made from Violet root (dry herb) is used as a laxative. Tea made from the entire Violet plant is used to treat digestive disorders and new research has detected the presence of a glycoside of salicylic acid (natural aspirin) which substantiates its use for centuries as a medicinal remedy for headache, body pains and as a sedative.
- Violet plant constituents are being studied and show these uses to be valid. Eugenol, Ferulic-acid, Kaempferol, Quercetin, Scopoletin, also show promise in the treatment of many kinds of cancer, arthritis, AIDS, gum disease and more.



**SELF HEAL** Botanical Name: *Prunella vulgaris*. Other Common Names: Common self-heal, selfheal, heal-all, heart of the earth, bronella, pronella, prunella.

**Habitat:** Self-heal is thought to have originated in Europe. Today, it is found in most countries with a suitable habitat, including Europe, Asia, Japan, and North America. It is found everywhere but like area in direct or partially shaded. Found in grassland, roadsides, woodland and wastelands.

Each plant is a hermaphrodite, having both male and female reproductive systems.

The whole plant may be used.

#### **Uses and benefits:**

Self-heal has been used for centuries. Treating everything minor to major including minor cuts to internal bleeding. It has been used as a remedy for diarrhea, fever, high blood pressure, heart and liver problems, and internal bleeding.

Science has shown that it has antibacterial actions that inhibit pseudomas, E Coli, Bacillus typhi and still research continues to see if the herb can treat AIDS, Cancer and Diabetes.

The ointment has been used for bleeding hemorrhoids, swollen anal veins and vaginal inflammation and pain. Eyewash can be made from the plant to relieve swollen, tired eyes and may be effective for conjunctivitis.

Make a mouthwash to be used to soothe sore throats, reduce swelling in lymph nodes, throat and mouth.

Tea made is folk wisdom to treat depression, anxiety and mood swings.

Treatment of problems with the liver, kidneys and gall bladder. No scientific evidence yet.

Eczema and Psoriasis can be treated by making a salve from self-heal.

Can be used as a poultice and apply directly on wounds to reduce or prevent infection

### **Dosage and Administration**

These are the recommended dosages of Self-heal.

- **Infusion/Tincture:** Used to reduce or stop most types of bleeding. One or two teaspoonful of crushed and dry self-heal herb can be added to one cup of boiling water and allowed to stand for 10 minutes for proper infusion.
- The herb itself should not be boiled,
- **Decoction:** Prepared with fresh flower spikes and used to treat high blood pressure, bad temper, anxiety, and hyperactivity. The decoction is frequently mixed with Chinese chrysanthemum (ju hua) for more effective healing.
- **Poultice:** Crushed fresh leaves can be applied directly wounds or used as a dressing for small cuts and scrapes to prevent infection.
- **Eye and Mouth/Throat Wash:** Strain a cup of the infusion through cheese cloth of some other fine filter.
- **Herb:** Used as a preventative measure for many ailments. The flowers, leaves, and tender shoots may be chopped and added to soups, stews, and salads.

### **Potential Side Effects and Interactions of Self Heal**

- Self-heal has been used for centuries as a panacea.
- There are no reported or documented serious side effects or interactions of using this herb either externally or internally.
- It does not contain any toxic substance so it cannot be considered poisonous in any way.
- Possible minor side effects include constipation, dizziness, and weakness, but these symptoms are not common.



**SASSAFRAS** *Sassafras albidum*

Other Names: Ague tree, Saxifrax, Cinnamonwood, Saloop, Smelling-stick

### **Sassafras Herb Use and Medicinal Properties**

Sassafras was used for food and medicine by Native American tribes long before European settlers arrived. Sassafras bark was one of the first exports from the New World.

**Caution: May be harmful in excessive doses. The FDA has banned it from being sold for internal use.**

Sassafras tea is from the root bark. Root bark and the pith are used as anodyne, antiseptic, aromatic, carminative, diaphoretic, diuretic, stimulant and vasodilator. Infused it can be used for gastrointestinal, colds, liver and kidney conditions and ailments. Also can be used as a blood purifier.

The oil, (Safrole) is in the root bark and is used as an antiseptic and anodyne for dental industry. Now only production of the oil is by one small factory. Because it is prohibited for use as a flavoring since it is said to have carcinogenic properties, though fewer chances than alcohol. The tree will repel most bugs such as mosquitos. The oil is in all parts of the tree.

Roots were boiled and then added with molasses and would ferment into root beer. Young leaves can be used in salads.

The fruit is a dark blue berry, about the size of a pea, in a red cup, on a red stalk, in a cluster, ripening in Aug.-Oct. All parts of the tree are aromatic. Gather the root bark anytime, dry for later use.



**HYSSOP** Botanical Name: *Hyssopus officinalis*

Other Common Names: Curdukotu, hastipippili, hisopo, yanagi-hakka.

**Plant Description:** Hyssop is a perennial plant from the family mint family. This family has a wide variety of medicinal and kitchen herbs. Other well-known plants in this family are: peppermint, basil, sage, lavender, thyme, and catnip. Similar to others of the mint family, hyssop has a slender, square stem with opposite positioned leaves and can grow to heights of up to two feet. Hyssop flowers from June - October with purple-blue flowers, very fragrant and attract nectar-seeking insects. Some have white or pink-colored flowers.

Hyssop leaves and green stems contain many bioactive compounds such as: rosmarinic and caffeic acids along with pinanones, beta-pinene, limonene, pinocamphone, and isopinocamphone, tannin, glycosides (diosmine), flavonoids, and marrubin., these compounds are found in the volatile oil that can be produced by steam distillation.

### Uses, Benefits and Claims of Hyssop

- Hyssop has been used since biblical times as cleansing ritual and as medicine. Today, it is known that the volatile oil along with other ingredients that are in the leaves and green stems have antibacterial, antiviral and other beneficial properties.
- The infusion or decoction is being used for relief of the symptoms of lung and upper respiratory problems such as the common cold, bronchitis, catarrh, and asthma, as it is antispasmodic, sweat-inducing and an expectorant (to cough up of mucus).
- It can also relieve these conditions by preparing a poultice that can be placed directly on the chest or by applying of Hyssop-oil ointment.

- As a peripheral vasodilator, it is also diaphoretic (induces sweating) and has anti-inflammatory properties. The diaphoretic effect is used to naturally treat infections of the upper respiratory tract by inhaling vapors from hyssop decoctions.
  - The herb's sweat-inducing properties may reduce the symptoms in patients with fever.
  - A Poultice can aid in the treatment of conjunctivitis and as a natural remedy for bruises, insect bites, and muscle pain.
  - Hot decoction vapors are used as a remedy for tinnitus. Prepared as an infusion, hyssop can be used as treatment for colic, abdominal cramps, as a stimulant, to reduce or stop flatulence and to aid upset stomach.
  - Since hyssop acts as a diuretic (increase the urine output) it can flush out excess sodium from the body and help to lower the blood pressure.
  - Less known uses of the infusion or the decoction made from hyssop are the stimulation of menstruation and relief of premenstrual syndrome symptoms, and the treatment of helminthic infections (infections with round- and tapeworms).
  - It may have a calming effect on patients who have anxiety and nervousness.
- For an infusion - 1 tsp. dried herbs steeped in 1/2 cup water. Over the course of the day 1/2 to 1 1/2 cups drink a mouthful at a time.
  - For a decoction - 1 tsp. herb boiled with 1 cup water. The average dose is 1 to 2 cups per day.
  - To make a poultice - the fresh or dried herb soaked in a small amount of boiling water for 15 minutes and soaked on a cloth for application.
  - The crushed fresh leaves, if available, can also be applied directly to the skin for similar effects.

### **Side Effects and Possible Interactions of Hyssop**

- The essential oil contains pino-camphone. This ketone can cause convulsions and seizures when taken in high doses.
- It is therefore not advisable to take hyssop oil and other hyssop preparations internally in high doses or over a longer time than two weeks.
- As with all natural products allergies can develop. Since these can potentially be life-threatening, a doctor should be consulted immediately, if symptoms like skin rashes, swelling of skin or tongue, difficulty breathing, and/or tightness in the chest develop after the use of hyssop preparations.





**ELDERBERRY** Botanical Name: *Sambucus Canadenis* (Left) *Sambucus Nigra* (Right)

**Plant Description:** **Habitat:** Elderberry prefers moist soil but it can tolerate dry soil. It grows best in full sun. *Sambucus Canadenis* is native to a large area of North America, east of the Rocky Mountains. It also grows wild in parts of Mexico and Central America. Sometimes used as an ornamental shrub, the elderberry bush is in the honeysuckle family. It attracts birds and butterflies and pruning back every few years will keep it looking good in the garden. This shrub produces fruit that has become popular. The white flowers turn into dark purple fruit in late summer. Although the flowers and berries are edible all other parts of this bush are poisonous containing toxic calcium oxalate crystals. *Sambucus canadensis* is a very close cousin of *Sambucus nigra* (European Elderberry).

**Edible parts:** The berries and flowers are edible. Flowers can be tossed into a salad. Eating the berries raw is not favored by many. Elderberries tend to end up as pies, in pancakes, jams, jellies, and in wine making.

Most historians typically trace its healing abilities back to Hippocrates, the ancient Greek known as the “father of medicine,” who described the plant as his “medicine chest” because of the wide array of health concerns it seemed to cure. Whether we’re talking cavemen, ancient Egyptians or ancient Greeks, this natural remedy definitely goes way back, so it’s no wonder it’s known as one of the top antiviral herbs on the planet (Dr. Axe).

Health benefits include naturally improving colds and flu, sinus issues, nerve pain, inflammation, chronic fatigue, allergies, constipation and even touted to help with cancer. When it used within the first 48 hours of onset of symptoms, studies have shown the extract has been found to reduce the duration of the flu and symptoms being relieved around four days earlier. During the 1995 Panama flu epidemic, that government actually employed the use of the elderberry to fight the flu.



## **TINCTURES AND SALVE RECIPE:**

### **Honey Tincture recipe:**

¼ dried yarrow, catnip or other herb with fever reducing components

¼ dried Echinacea leaves or roots (or combination)

½ - 1 cup elderberries (dried or fresh)

Honey

Place herbs into a glass jar. Fill to ½ inch below rim of the jar with honey. The honey can pour slow, but warming it will make it pour a bit easier. Place on the flat lid and screw on the band. In a crock pot, place a folded hand towel in the bottom. Place jar on the towel and fill to just at the shoulder of the jar with water. Place crock pot on warm setting for three (3) days. Check water level daily and add more water to shoulder of the jar adding to the water not hitting the jar as this could crack or shatter the jar. After 3 days, the tincture will be dark. Remove from the crockpot and place to cool on a towel on your counter. When it is warm enough to handle, pour the content through a cheese cloth to remove the herbs. Pour into jars and keep stored on a dark shelf. This tincture is great for cold and flu season and kids love it. Take by teaspoon when symptoms begin to appear. Dose by teaspoon. Will keep generally 6-12 months.

## **Salve:**

Gather your herbs either dried or fresh. Collect herbs that are good for the skin and wound healing such as Comfrey, Yarrow, St. John's Wort, Blackberry leaves, Chickweed, Plantain or a combination of herbs. If the herbs are fresh, let them dry a while until they have lost some of their moisture. More moisture may induce mold growth. Chop or crush the plants to release their oils.

For solar method: Place plants into a glass jar filled to  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  full. Cover with oil, place the lid on and then set in a sunny window for 4-8 weeks.

For faster method: Place plants into glass jar filled  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  full. Cover plants with oil. Place the lid on the jar. In a crockpot, place a folded towel in the bottom then set the jar on the towel. Add water to the shoulder. Set crockpot to warm and monitor water level for 3 days.

For fastest method: Place plants into a pan. Add 1 cup of olive oil. Simmer on the lowest possible temperature for 45-60 minutes. Remove from heat.

After your plants have been decocted and all their components are in the oil. Pour mixture through a cheesecloth to remove the herbal pieces. Squeeze the cheesecloth to get as much of the components as possible. Place the oil into a pan or other source to warm the oil. **DO NOT BOIL.** Add 2 ounces or  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of beeswax, stir to melt. While the oil and beeswax are still warm, pour into tins, jars or whatever you have for your salve. You can add essential oils for fragrance if you like after you have poured it into tins. Also to help preserve the salve, add 3-4 drops of grapeseed oil after you have poured the mixture into the vessel. Do not place the lids on until it has completely cooled. These will keep their potency for 6-12 months.

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