Plantain
About HANE

The Herbal Academy of New England is an Educational Resource offering classes, workshops, herbal clinics and weight loss counseling. The academy is also the home of Perch on Bedford Center, retail and wellness center in Bedford, MA.

The academy is committed to researching and gathering information and tools to help support a lifestyle of self awareness and whole body care. We seek to encourage individuals and society to make sustainable and meaningful changes so as to use earth’s resources with greater wisdom and respect. Herbalism includes stewardship of the earth.

As an academy, we bring teachers and students together to learn and to share in an atmosphere of rigor and of community. We seek to encourage learners and teachers in serious study and exploration, both academic and experiential.

www.herbalacademyofne.com
Herbalism, or phytotherapy, which is the use of plants to support the body’s own healing, is practiced by almost everyone in some way consciously or unconsciously.

Herbal medicine has been carried down to us from generation to generation. This is most definitely true for women who have traditionally been the food preparers and caregivers for their families and communities. Women practice herbalism when they tend their gardens, feed their families whole foods, or comfort the ailing with teas and other home remedies. Cultures from the beginning of time and all around the world practice and rely heavily or solely on herbal medicine.

**Herbalism is nothing more than using what grows on the earth as food and as medicine. It’s Earth medicine.**

There are so many ways to use plants as medicine and we will dive into many of these methods in this handbook. We can eat them whole as food dried or fresh; consume them in vinegars and oils; drink them in teas, infusions, decoctions, cordials, and wine; and take them in capsules, pills, tinctures, powders, extracts, and syrups. We can use herbs externally as poultices, ointments, salves, liniments, creams, soaps, and lotions. We can make toothpaste, shampoo, conditioners, bath salts, and medicinal oils. We can make sachets out of lavender, pine, rosemary, cedar or other aromatics to use for sleep. The list goes on and on.

So it is here where we will begin the first process of creating an Herbal First Aid Kit. We must begin with the basics:

Herbal Teas / Syrups / Herb infused oils / Salves and balms / Tinctures / Capsules and poultices
BUYING AND GATHERING HERBS

What to look for when buying bulk herbs:

A certified organic seal. Organically grown herbs are highly preferable to those sprayed with pesticides. Choosing organic is better for everyone.

Sustainably wild-harvested. Plant populations can be decimated from overzealous and unconscious wild-harvesters.

Tightly sealed lid. Air damages plant material. A poorly sealed container may cause moisture to seep inside, causing mold growth.

Vibrant, fresh-looking color. As dried plant matter ages, it starts to fade. Herbs and flowers should be bright and vivid.

Fresh, strong scent. Rosemary should smell like rosemary; peppermint should tingle your nose; chamomile should have a mild apple smell. Some herbs are naturally mild, but if something is 100% odorless, it is likely past its prime.

Taste. Herbs have a wide range of tastes, including bitter, earthy, sweet, pungent, sour, etc. As you gain experience, you will grow familiar with the tastes and scents of your herbs.

Gathering Herbs: Gratitude and Respect

When you grow herbs in your garden or in pots, offer them nourishment through organic methods. Fertilize them with compost, kelp, compost tea, or alfalfa meal; never use pesticides or herbicides to kill the weeds where you want to establish your garden.

Plant medicine is often stronger when they grow in competition with other herbs, what some call “weeds.” We know the truth, of course: the weeds are what we seek, for they make the best medicine.

If planting near your home, plant raised beds located away from the roof drip line to minimize exposure to potential roofing chemicals and contaminants.

When wild harvesting, gather plants that are at least 50 feet back from the edge of the road, never gather near telephone lines (pesticides are usually sprayed along this route), and please remember that you are visiting the plants in their home. A few good manners will go very far in keeping alive abundant and thriving plant populations for the next seven generations beyond us.
Herbal Teas

Tea is an infusion of plant material into water, and is a simple and soothing way to introduce healing compounds into our bodies. Gathering fragrant herbs from our gardens or kitchens and inhaling aromas of flower and leaf reconnect us to the living world. There’s something empowering about using our own hands to create remedies with the humble tools of water, heat, and plants.

While some herbs can be taken in their whole form, preparing an herb with a solvent, such as water, alcohol, vinegar, or glycerin, captures constituents from fibrous plant material that would otherwise pass through the body. Quite simply, extracting plant constituents into an easily absorbed medium grants our bodies easier access to medicinal properties.

Using water, the universal solvent, to make tea is a time-honored tradition of herbalism: a simple, enjoyable and effective way to deliver the water-soluble properties of plants.

Infusion Directions

An infusion is a steeping method, used for the more delicate parts of a plant such as flowers, stems, and leaves.

• Bring water to a boil in a teapot or pot (never use copper, aluminum, or Teflon-coated pots or utensils).
• While the water is heating, crush herbs in your hand or with a mortar and pestle to help weaken the cell walls. Place herbs in a ceramic cup, Mason jar, or teapot.
• Pour hot water over the herbs.
• Cover your vessel to prevent volatile properties from escaping with the steam.
• After steeping, strain through a mesh strainer into a clean container, pressing down on the herbs with a spoon to squeeze out as much liquid as possible.

Another method is solar infusion, which employs heat from the sun to gently extract plant compounds. This will provide milder results but there is something quite special about drinking sun-infused tea!

• Combine herbs and water in a glass jar, and cover tightly.
• Place in a sunny spot for a few hours.
• Strain as directed above.

Decoction Directions

A decoction is a slow simmer, reserved for tough roots and hardy barks that require more time and work to extract constituents.

Many herbalists advocate soaking the herbs overnight prior to decoction to help soften the material.

• Bring water and roots/bark to a boil in a covered pot then lower heat.
• Simmer for 20 – 45 minutes.
• Remove from heat, strain into heat-safe vessel.

Roots can be reused several times in a row before being composted or discarded.

Decoction/Infusion

If your recipe calls for both leaves/flowers AND roots:

• Decoct the roots as instructed above.
• Meanwhile, place the leaves/flowers into a vessel (cup, jar, teapot).
• After 20 – 45 minutes decocting, pour herbs and hot water over the leaves/flowers. steep.

Tea is best consumed the day of brewing, but can also be stored in the fridge for 24 hours.

Proportions

Recommended proportions vary from herb to herb. For beverage teas, about 1 teaspoon of herb per cup of water is the norm, but medicinal teas are generally stronger. Use what works well for you. Some popular proportions are:

• 1 ounce of dried herb per quart of water
• 1 tablespoon dried herb per 8 ounces water
• 1/4 cup dried herb per quart water
With a lot of internal herbal medicines, we start off making a tea. Syrups are no exception. The tea reaches high strength when we concentrate it, usually decocting the blend over high heat so the water boils down and we are left with a smaller amount of tea than we started with, at a much higher concentration. Syrups will preserve for about a year in the refrigerator if they are at least 20% honey or sugar. They are delicious and designed to take frequently.

Syrups

Making Syrup:

The ratio – 1 pt concentrated tea by volume: 3 pts honey by volume (sugar can be substituted)

- Begin with an herbal decoction or infusion that has been reduced to about half or a third of the original amount.
- Add three times as much honey (in volume) to a double boiler (or something you have fashioned yourself that acts like a double boiler).
- Heat gently—honey is more fragile than sugar—avoid a simmer or boil. Then, stir into the tea until it is completely incorporated.
- Divide smaller portions into sterilized jars.
- At this point, you can add tincture and/or essential oils, cap jar and shake it to infuse the added medicine.

A general rule of thumb is 1 tablespoon every 4 hours for adults, 1 teaspoon every 4 hours for children.
Herb Infused Oil

There are a few ways to infuse oil with medicinal and nutritional herbs and we will go through them here. If you have never made an herbal infused oil you are in for a wonderful treat!

Making infused oils is necessary for creating salves and balms which will we introduce in the next section. For best results, use good quality dried herbs as they will not contribute to spoilage and always use clean jars with tight fitting lids. Consider using colored glass bottles which will help extend the shelf life of your oil. We also suggest adding a few drops of vitamin E oil as it helps preserve the oil.

**Cold Infusion/Solar Infusion**

**Materials needed:**

- Good quality dried herb
- Oil (Olive oil is commonly used as it offers some resistance to oxidation and rancidity. Coconut, grape seed, almond and apricot oils are also used)
- Natural wax paper
- Clean, dry glass jar with tight fitting lid
- Labels and permanent marker
- Vitamin E oil (optional)

**Intention**

- The sun or a consistently warm area

This is a folk method which means we are going to eye ball it and not measure or weigh. If you are more comfortable using measurements, the ratio is approximately 1 ounce of dried herb to 10 ounces of oil.

Do not wash the herb or introduce any water to the process by using a wet jar or wet spoon for mixing. Fill the jar about half full with the dried herb and cover completely with oil of your choice. Take a spoon or chopstick and gently stir the mixture making sure that all the plant material is well covered with oil. Before putting on the lid, cover the top of the jar with a small square of natural wax paper then screw on the lid. The wax paper will prevent any harmful chemicals that may be coating the inside of your lid from contaminating the oil.

Heat is what helps infuse the oil so place the jar in a warm spot but not directly in the sunlight unless you are using a dark colored bottle or jar. Take the jar in your hands and roll back and forth to make sure that the herb is well saturated with oil.

![Heat Infused Oil](https://example.com/heat-infused-oil.png)

**Heat Infused Oil**

Place the herb and oil filled jar on a heat element such as a hot plate or perhaps a radiator for 10 days. If using this method you will keep the jar open as this will promote water evaporation. This heat source should not be warmer than 125 degrees F. at any given time. After 10 days this infused oil can be decanted and stored following the directions above.

**Stove top method for herb infused oils.**

Place the herb filled jar in a sauce pan that has been filled about ¼ full of water, simmer for 4-8 hours. Remove jar from saucepan and allow to cool. Decant, bottle, label and store in a cool dark place.

**Oven method for herb infused oils.**

Place the herbs and oil in a large oven proof dish and place in a preheated 250 degrees oven. Turn the oven off and place the herb filled bowl in the oven for 24 hours uncovered. Cool the mixture than pour through a cheesecloth lined strainer into a bowl with a spout. Bottle, label and store following the instructions above.

**Double boiler method for herb infused oils.**

Place the herbs and oil in a double boiler and bring to a slow simmer. Slowly heat for 30-60 minutes. Keep the heat nice and low for a longer simmer time and to help release medicinal properties. Decant, bottle and store following the instructions above.

Don’t forget to label!
**Salves and Balms**

**Salves** are the consistency of lip gloss, resulting from the mixture of an oil infused with herbal material and beeswax. They are normally prepared as topical and external applications. They soften when applied to the skin, providing an emollient, healing base that protects the skin and nourishes the wound. Salves can be hard or soft, depending upon consistency desired by the creator.

Sometimes a salve remains high in the delightful aroma of the herbs that are infused into it—then it is called a **balm**. It is also acceptable to improve the smell of a salve with a few drops of essential oils as it hardens.

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Mix approximately 2 oz. of dried herb or a formulation of dried herbs into each cup of oil (almond, apricot, olive, sesame, etc.).

Place this mixture into a ceramic container, uncovered and place into an oven with the door slightly open. Heat the mixture at a low heat for 3-5 hours (100-140 degrees F). Periodically stir the mixture and check the temperature. Alternatively, place over low heat in a make-shift double boiler, or a pot of water which warms the receptacle holding the oil so it can sufficiently warm to infuse the herbs into itself.

Line a large strainer with three layers of cheesecloth.

Remove the warm mixture and pour it into the strainer to separate out the herbs. Let this sit until well-drained and press out the remaining oil. Thank the herbs and compost them (this will significantly impact the intensity of your medicine, for herbs can offer more when we treat them with honor!).

You now have an infused oil. If you desire a salve, measure the amount of infused oil you have at this point and re-warm in your previously chosen method.

Add approximately 1 oz. of shaved beeswax per cup of oil to the oil infusion and melt it completely.

Dip a spoon into the formula and place it into a refrigerator so the salve will cool quickly and you can determine if its consistency is what you desire. If the sample is too soft, add a little more wax to the warm salve; if the sample is too hard, add a little more of the oil infusion.

While warm, pour individual portions into appropriate containers and allow to cool. Then put the lids on and mark them with their names and ingredients. Enjoy!
Tinctures

Tinctures are herbal preparations that use something beyond water as a solvent. By adding liquid to water, you can extract a greater spectrum of the whole plant and preserve the medicine much longer than an infusion or a decoction. Additions to water usually include alcohol, vinegar, and glycerin.

Easy Tinctures

Effective tinctures are reliably made straight from the garden to the kitchen using only a few simple tools: a sharp harvest knife, cutting board, canning jars with lids, cheesecloth, and a bowl. Depending on the herbal parts you are using for your tinctures, a coffee grinder or blender may speed the process but is not crucial. This method requires very little measuring and no weighing.

Two basic parts combine to form the tincture: the menstruum, or liquid component which extracts and the herbal material. The herbs should be clean, vibrant, and have all unusable parts (like stems, fibrous seedheads, etc.) removed from them by garbling. Garbling is the action of herbalist to remove the unusable parts by stripping off the wanted parts of the herb into a bowl. We discard the fibrous plant parts because they tend to have a lower concentration of medicinal qualities, as they consist mainly of insoluble fiber and water.

How to make an easy tincture:

(This process is adapted from Richo Cech’s explanation in Making Plant Medicine.)

- Harvest and garble the fresh or dried herbs off of the stalks OR wash and rinse and scrub dirt off of freshly dug roots. Chop fresh herbs and grind dried herbs into the smallest dicings to expose the most surface area for the maceration—or mixing of herbal constituents into the liquid tincture part.
- Place the herbs in a glass jar labeled with their name and the current date.
- Add vodka to cover the herbs and replace the lid.
- Place the jar in a dark room and shake every day.
- After one moon cycle, or a month to six weeks, strain the mixture through several layers of cheesecloth into a bowl or glass jar. It is often helpful to use a rubber band to affix the cheesecloth to the rim of the jar. Squeeze all of the possible menstruum out of the plant material.
- Allow material to settle overnight and strain again, or decant, through a smaller filter such as filter paper or a thin wire screen.

Mathematical Tincturing

This type of tincture making relies upon the use of a gram scale and a graduated cylinder. The clearest benefits to this method include producing tinctures that can provide measured consistency batch after batch after batch based on the same measured recipe. To achieve consistency from batch to batch, the herbs must continue to be of dependably high quality.

The weight-to-volume ratio is a helpful method in that it relates the weight of the herb you are using to the volume of alcohol you will steep it in.
How to use the Weight-to-Volume Ratio Method for tincture:

STEP ONE

Weigh the herbs once they’re garbled (in ounces), and record this weight in oz. on a scale. It will determine the weight-to-volume ratio for your tincture. Then chop or break up the herbs as best as possible.

STEP TWO - Ratio:

Herb:Menstruum Ratio: Measure the ratio to determine the total amount of menstruum your tincture desires. So, if you have 5 ounces of burdock root and 25 ounces of menstruum, you are making a 1 to 5 (1:5) tincture, because for every one part of herb (by weight) you are using 5 parts of liquid (by volume). Fresh herbs do well at 1:3, or 1:2. Dry herbs are usually 1:4 or 1:5, but really, you decide. Just remember, the higher the volume number (V), the weaker the tincture. Thus, a 1:2 is roughly twice as strong as a 1:4. This will affect the dose.

Alcohol: Water Ratio: This ratio represents the proportions of the liquids that devise your menstruum. We find that certain herbs produce a stronger tincture when they are steeped in an alcohol that is more concentrated than 40-50%, like vodka. We can obtain a higher alcohol percentage by mixing pure grain alcohol, which is 95% or 190 proof with distilled water until we obtain the correct percentage. Stronger is not best for all herbs – some can be damaged by too high of an alcohol content. The term for the percentage of alcohol that the herb prefers to be tinctured in is solubility.

For instance, the basic menstruum for a dry herb consists of 50% grain alcohol combined with 50% distilled water. The Alcohol:Water Ratio is expressed as 50A:50W. If glycerin is added to the formula, the ratio might look like this: 50A:40W:10G, meaning 50% alcohol, 40% water, 10% glycerin. If your desired solubility is available directly from an alcohol ingredient, as is the case in the easy tincturing method, your ratio would consist of no added water and would simply look like: 100A.

Grain Alcohol consideration: Grain Alcohol is 95% alcohol and 5% water, and if making large amounts of tincture, you may want to consider the percentage factor into your ratio. Otherwise, it is just as well to call it 100% for small batches and remain very close to the exact intended ratio. Grain alcohol effectively preserves the tincture when the volume of grain alcohol measures at or above 22% of the total liquid volume.

Sample Weight:Volume Ratio Tincture Recipe:

1. Take 10 ounces of passionflower leaves and measure 50 ounces of menstruum at 50% EtOH (Ethyl Alcohol). Starting Ratio: for a 50A:50W tincture, as familiar ratio—50mL A (.95 Grain Spirits):50W = 47.5 mL A : 50 W (this will not achieve the desired 50:50 ratio….so let’s figure the details from here)….  
2. 50mL (desired starting point for A) – 47.5 mL (true starting point for A) = 2.5 mL (extra amount of A needed)  
3. 50mL + 2.5 mL = 52.5 mL starting point of 95% EtOH  
4. Final Ratio: 52.5 A:50 W  
5. Now, 2.5 mL is a SMALL amount of liquid in the big picture, which is why we can ignore this detail in small amounts of extract.
Capsules

With the right tools and ingredients you can make fresh and quality capsules in your own home!

You will need vegetable or glycerin capsules, homegrown herbs (dried and ground to powder) or herb powder, and a capsule machine (optional). A capsule machine makes the process of filling the tiny capsules much easier and quicker.

Keep your capsules in a dry and dark/cool place. A cabinet works just fine. In the proper environment, capsules should last up to 12 months.

Crushed and Chewed Leaves

The simplest of all herbal remedies, you can make this right in the garden, field, or forest when in need of a little first aid for a cut, scrape, or bruise. All you need is a little water or saliva and “voila!” you have potent plant medicine.

Honestly, chewing is the most reliable method for a good, sticky paste-like poultice. Kids love to do it and feel empowered when they or their friend gets a bruise—they march right on over to the patch of yarrow and poultice it up for the healing!

Crushed and Chewed Leaves:

Harvest a small handful of clean herbs and either chop or chew them into a pulp. Now, don’t swallow.

If you have chopped them, add a little water and mix so it appears paste-like. When you have sufficiently pulped the herb, spread it on the wound and leave it there for 10-30 minutes until you feel or see relief.

The following are some great direct crushed application herbs:

- Yarrow (Achillea millefolium)—moves blood and is excellent topically for bruises
- Plantain (Plantago major)—soothes bug bites and stings on contact
- Calendula (Calendula officinalis)—a topical vulnerary, heals cuts and scrapes
A poultice is traditionally a variation on the crushed or chewed leaves and a lot more water. The herbal material is made into a paste, using hot liquids. It is then spread thickly onto cloths and applied, while hot, directly to the body. Moist heat transfers the virtues of the herbs to the body, and because the poultice relies upon moist heat, it must be replenished every few minutes.

Poultices have evolved in the world of herbalism into herbal matter with a hot or cold application. Most directly, a poultice is a warm, moist bath for the body to relieve pain and relax tissue.

Various qualities of poultices can be garnered depending on what type of herb you use:

**Emollient poultices** supply warmth and moisture to relieve inflammation and encourage healing. Herbs for emollient poultices include: flaxseed meal, oat meal, bran, bread and milk. Plantain, marshmallow root or mashed vegetables such as cabbage, turnip, potato or carrot.

**Medicated poultices** exercise a specific influence on the body apart from warmth and moisture and are used to penetrate inflamed lacerations, boils, abscesses, or inflamed glands. Choose plants with the following actions: astringents, styptics, vulneraries, anodynes, disinfectants.

Rubefacients cause skin redness, which is a sign of their primary activity: moving the blood by dilating capillaries and encouraging their action. These herbs draw blood from deep within the body to the surface to relieve congestion and inflammation deep within. Stimulating herbs used for rubefacients include: mustard, ginger, cayenne, garlic, and rosemary.

**Making a Poultice:**

Put the chopped fresh herbs into a clean white cotton sock. Fill another sock and alternate using this sock while the first one is reheating.

Tie the sock at the top and place it into a shallow bowl.

Pour enough hot water over the filled sock to soak the dry herbs, or warm up the wet herbs.

Knead the sock with your hands until it is hot but can touch the skin.

Apply this poultice to the body area until it cools down.

Continue warming the poultice over and over and reapplying it to the affected area until you have done this for 20-30 minutes.
BITES
AND
STINGS
Prevention before remedy! One of our favorite recipes for the Herbal First Aid Kit is natural bug repellent.

Natural Bug Repellant Spray Ingredients

Adapted from Frugally Sustainable.

Ingredients

- 1 ounce witch hazel
- 1 ounce grape seed oil
- 30 drops citronella essential oils
- 20 drops eucalyptus essential oils
- 15 drops lemon essential oils
- 15 drops lemongrass essential oils
- 15 drops cedar essential oils

Directions

- Mix ingredients in a bowl.
- Pour into a small spray bottle and shake well.
- Spray every couple of hours.

Apple Cider Vinegar Relief Spray

Directions

Pour apple cider vinegar into a spray bottle. Spray to any area that itches for immediate relief.

Bug Bite Relief Poultice

Directions

Make a poultice or spit-poultice based on the steps in Chapter One with fresh plantain leaves. Apply the poultice directly to the area for instant relief.

Raw Honey

Directions

Honey works wonders on insect bites! Place a small amount to area and let it absorb. Reapply as needed.
A Drawing Salve

*Adapted from Frugally Sustainable.*

For boils and insect bites.

**Ingredients**

- 1 1/2 cups olive oil infused with goldenseal, chickweed, and/or plantain
- 1/2 cup castor oil
- 1 ounce beeswax
- 1/2 cup activated charcoal
- 1/2 cup bentonite clay
- 1 teaspoon of the following essential oils: clove, rosemary, lemon, lavender, and eucalyptus

**Directions**

- Using infused oils, combine with beeswax on a low heat until melted and remove from heat.
- While still warm, add the remaining ingredients and stir until combined.
- Pour into containers and store in a cool, dark place.
- Apply the salve to affected area and bandage up to 12 hours. Reapply every two hours until healed.

Cooling Aloe Spray

**Ingredients**

- 2 ounces aloe vera gel
- 2 ounces lemon balm hydrosol
- 5 drops peppermint essential oil
- 5 drops lavender essential oil

**Directions**

- Mix ingredients together.
- Pour into a 4-ounce bottle with spray nozzle.
- Apply as needed to bug bites, rashes, or sunburns.
- Store in refrigerator.
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Anti-Itch Cream

A good recipe for bites, poison ivy and other skin problems.

**Ingredients**
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons bentonite clay
- 12 drops of peppermint essential oil
- Approximately 1 tablespoon water (more or less until creamy consistency)

**Directions**
- Combine sea salt, baking soda and bentonite clay in a small bowl.
- Add water and stir until creamy.
- Lastly, add in essential oil.
- Store in an airtight container and use within a week.

Eczema Tea

A seasonal or dietary change can often instigate patches of eczema. This tea approaches the imbalance internally by gently cleansing the lymph.

**Ingredients**
- Equal parts: calendula, nettles, red clover

**Directions**
- Infuse herbs in 8 ounces hot water for 20 minutes
- Drink with raw honey throughout the day
MINOR BURNS AND SUNBURN
Lavender E.O.

**Directions**

For a burn or sunburn, apply a few drops of lavender essential oil directly to area. Repeat 3 times a day or as needed.

Calendula Spray for Burns

**Directions**

In a 4-ounce bottle with spray nozzle, fill to top with calendula hydrosol and 15 drops of lavender essential oil. Add in 5-10 drops of calendula tincture. Shake well and use as desired for burns and rashes.

Plantain Burn Spray

**Directions**

Make a plantain infusion with boiling water and a small handful of plantain leaves. Combine 1 teaspoon of chamomile essential oil with infusion in a small bottle. Cool and then apply to burns as needed.

Yellow Mustard

**Directions**

Apply cold yellow mustard to burn and wrap with gauze.
Topical Diaper Rash Ointment

Adapted from David Hoffman's recipe in Medical Herbalism

These herbs help to nourish and soothe the skin while keeping it dry and are antibacterial. Comfrey root actually grows new tissue on the surface of the skin, and in addition to chickweed and marshmallow root, it contains oodles of calcium. Goldenseal powder is a topical antiseptic.

Apply ointment to diaper area after changing. If there is no response after 3 – 4 applications, other factors such as diaper disinfection, diet, and skin disorders should be considered.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon chickweed
- 1 tablespoon marshmallow root
- 1 tablespoon comfrey root
- 1/8 tablespoon goldenseal or barberry root powder
- 1 cup almond oil
- ¼ cup beeswax
- 8 drops lavender essential oil

Directions

- Place sweet almond oil in a pan with the herbs
- Gently heat for 5 to 10 minutes, be careful not to let herbs scorch or burn
- When mixture is hot, add the wax and allow it to melt
- After wax is melted, strain mixture through cheesecloth in a jar with a tight-fitting lid (don’t forget to label!).
- Place in fridge until mixture solidifies
- Store away from heat near infant’s changing area
- Discard used portions after 2 months (Hoffman, 480)
Oatmeal Bath

**Ingredients**

- 2 cups plain oatmeal, blended to finer grains
- 3/4 cup lavender flower
- 1/4 cup baking soda
- 2 tablespoons green tea leaves
- 1 cup milk (optional)

**Directions**

- Add dry ingredients to cheesecloth and tie off.
- Fill bath with warm water and add milk (optional).
- Add cheesecloth mixture to the bath and soak.

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*Adapted from David Hoffman’s recipe in Medical Herbalism*

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CUTS AND WOUNDS
Aloe Vera Gel

**Directions**

Aloe vera is not only good for healing burns, it is also a remedy for sores and other wounds. Apply every few hours to affected area.

**Wound Cleansing Spray**

*Adapted from Frugally Sustainable.*

**Ingredients**

- 1 part water
- 2 parts liquid castile soap
- 10 drops tea tree oil
- 10 drops rosemary essential oil

**Directions**

In a small spray bottle, drop oils into bottom ten fill with water and soap. Shake well and use as needed to clean cuts.

**Crushed Calendula**

The simplest of all herbal remedies, you can make this right in the garden, field or forest when in need of a little first aid for a cut, scrape or bruise.

**Directions**

Harvest a small handful of calendula leaves and chop/chew them into pulp. Mix into a paste with water as needed. When you have sufficiently pulped the herb, spread it on the wound and leave it there for 10-30 minutes until you feel or see relief.

**Homemade Hand Sanitizer**

**Ingredients**

- 1 tablespoon witch hazel
- 15 drops tea tree oil
- 5 drops grapefruit seed extract
- 5 drops eucalyptus essential oil

**Directions**

Add all ingredients into a small spray bottle and shake until combined. Spray as needed.
Echinacea Flower Tincture

The folk method of tincturing is quite simple. When you use the folk method you basically eyeball the amount of herb as well as the amount of alcohol.

**Ingredients**

- Finely chopped fresh or dried Echinacea flowers, roots and/or leaves
- Alcohol (at least 80 proof) vodka or organic grain alcohol
- 1 glass jar with lid

**Directions**

- Place the finely chopped plant material into a glass jar and fill about ¾ full.
- Pour the vodka over the herb slowly, taking time to poke the mixture with a spoon or chopstick to distribute the alcohol completely through the herb material. Make sure that the herb is completely covered with alcohol.
- Screw on a tight fitting lid, placing unbleached wax paper under the lid to prevent corrosion and leaching
- Gently rock the jar back and forth making sure that the Echinacea flower/roots/leaves is well saturated.
- Label the jar with the content and the date that it was made.
- Keep the jar in a cool dark place for 4-6 weeks. During this *incubation* time, be sure to check on the tincture weekly if not daily and gently roll the jar back and forth in your hands observing as you do the alcohol levels, if there is any uncovered herb you will need to add enough alcohol to completely cover the plant material.
- After 4-6 weeks the tincture may be strained and bottled.
Black Elderberry Syrup

This is an easy recipe and one that you may want to have on hand all year around but especially during the flu season. This recipe is safe for children and adults. The dose for children is ½ to 1 teaspoon and the dose for adults is ½ to 1 tablespoon. As a flu preventative you may take a dose once a day every day, but if you have come down with symptoms it is best to take a dose every 2-3 hours. Black elderberries have been shown to prevent flu as well as hasten the recovery for those who have become sick with the flu.

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup black elderberries
- 4 cups water
- 3 tablespoons fresh grated ginger root
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 ½ cups raw wild flower honey (do not give honey to children under 1 year)

Directions

- In a large saucepan combine the elderberries, grated ginger, cloves and cinnamon, and 4 cups of water. Bring this mixture to a boil and then simmer on low heat with the pan covered for about 45-60 minutes. When the mixture is reduced by about half, remove from the heat.
- Allow the mixture to cool completely before pouring it through a cheesecloth-lined strainer and into a glass bowl.
- Taking up the corners of the cheesecloth, wring out the rest of the elderberry reduction.
- Pour 1 ½ cups of raw, wild flower honey into the reduction and mix well.
- You may want to use the elderberries remaining in the cheesecloth in your compost.
- Pour the syrup into a glass jar and keep this remedy in your refrigerator.
Onion and Raw Honey Oxymel

An oxymel is a cider and honey mixture that improves the intensity of bad tasting herbs. It is a good base for a cough remedy or a tonic. This recipe is a traditional folk remedy, and amounts do not have to be exact in order to work.

**Ingredients**

- 1/4 pound honey
- 1/8 pint raw apple cider vinegar
- One medium-sized onion

**Directions**

- Infuse herb into vinegar
- Strain out herb
- Heat vinegar
- Stir honey into vinegar
- Cook to consistency of syrup
- The oxymel is a carrier for infusion, decoction or tincture

Cold & Flu Tincture

*Adapted from Ed Smith’s *Therapeutic Herb Manual*

**Ingredients**

All ingredients are dry unless otherwise stated.

- Fresh Echinacea
- Goldenseal
- Fresh spilanthes in flower
- Yerba Santa
- Horseradish root
- Fresh Baptisia
- Elderberry fruit
- Yarrow flower
- Ginger rhizome

**Directions**

Formulate with equal parts of the first six herbs, half as much of the last three herbs in equal parts. If this treatment is started immediately at first signs, the cold or flu can be aborted within 12-24 hours. In persistent cases, adding 30-40 drops of Echinacea Extract to the dosing is helpful.
Cough and Respiratory Congestion Tincture

Ingredients

- Wild cherry bark
- Reishi mushroom
- Skunk cabbage rhizome and roots
- Licorice root
- Thyme leaf and flower

Directions

Equal parts tincture. Indicated in coughs associated with respiratory congestion of colds, flu, bronchitis, and other pulmonary and bronchial affections….and long-lasting symptoms.

Expectorating Cough Syrup

This recipe is for moist phlegmy coughs.

Directions

Equal parts Osha & White Pine Needle Syrup. Follow syrup recipe given in Chapter One.

Cough Syrup Recipe

Directions

- Decoct equal parts wild cherry bark, elecampane, and horehound to total 6 tablespoons from 1 quart into 1.5 pints. Strain herbs.
- Add 1 quart of warm honey to the mixture and incorporate in by stirring.
- Add 4 ounces Echinacea tincture. Shake to mix in the tincture.
- Separate into smaller portions, label and share during cough season with your favorite self-medicating friends!
Diaphoretic Tea

Ingredients

Equal Parts: Elder flowers, yarrow flowers, and peppermint leaves

Directions

• Pour two cups of boiling water over 2 tablespoons of tea blend
• Let steep for 20 minutes
• Strain and drink while hot
• Keep your body and feet insulated and warm for one hour after drinking this tea.
Cough Drops

**Ingredients**
- 1/2 cup organic granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup rice syrup
- 1/4 cup strong infusion or decoction

**Directions**
- Cook the formula down to until it resembles a hard ball, after stirring it the entire time.
- Drop little pieces on a plate to harden.
- If they don’t harden all the way, you can roll them in slippery elm powder or rice flour to shape and dry them up a bit.

Herbal Cold Care Capsules

Adapted from Frugally Sustainable.

**Ingredients**
- 1 part Echinacea angustfolia root powder
- 1 part rose hips powder
- 1/2 part thyme powder
- 1/8 part cayenne pepper powder

**Directions**
Mix together the herbs. Follow instructions from Chapter One.

**Dosage**
Take 1-2 capsules every 2-3 hours and no more than 9 capsules a day. Regime may be continued for 2 days—after that you should reduce the dosage to 2-3 capsules two to three times a day (taking no more than 6 caps a day).

Herbal Decongestant Salve

**Ingredients**
- 1/2 cup organic olive oil
- 1 ounce beeswax
- 1-2 teaspoons of the following essential oils: Menthol, eucalyptus, peppermint, clove bud, thyme

**Directions**
- Stir together the beeswax and olive oil on a low heat until melted.
- Remove from heat and add the essential oils.
- Quickly pour into jars and place lids loosely over containers so the oils don’t escape.
- Allow the salve to cool then apply under the nose and/or to the chest, back, and bottom of the feet.
SLEEP, PAIN, AND STRESS

Stress Relief Tea

Ingredients

• 4 parts linden
• 2 parts skullcap
• 2 parts lemon balm
• 1 part chamomile
• 1 part catnip
• 1/2 part lavender

Directions

• Blend dried herbs together and put into a paper or cotton tea bag.
• Place tea bags in a teapot and fill with boiling water.
• Cover and steep for 15 minutes.

Headache-ease Tea

Ingredients

• 3 parts lemon balm
• 3 parts meadowsweet
• 2 parts catnip
• 2 parts chamomile
• 1/2 part lavender

Use 1/2 cup of herb blend per 1 quart of water. Drink throughout the day.

Headache-ease Tincture

Directions

• 4 parts skullcap
• 2 parts valerian
• 2 parts crampbark
• 1 part blue vervain
• 1/2 part ginger

Take 1 teaspoon at first sign of headache, continue with 1/2 teaspoon every hour until symptoms subside.
Pain-Be-Gone Herbal Liniment

**Ingredients**

- Rubbing alcohol
- Fresh or dried herbs: calendula, rosemary, peppermint, eucalyptus. Other suggestions to combine: thyme, lavender, chamomile, ginger, and/or marjoram.

**Directions**

- Chop (break down) herbs and fill a glass jar 3/4 full.
- Cover the rest with rubbing alcohol.
- For 4-6 weeks, keep in a warm area and shake daily.
- Strain with a cheesecloth and collect remaining liquid into bottles. Keep in a cool place.

Apply to pain, bruises, and sore muscles as desired (externally only).

Easy Calendula Herbal Oil

There are many uses for calendula oil including sore and inflamed muscles, chapped or chafed skin, and bruises.

**Ingredients**

- 1 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup dried calendula

**Directions**

- Crush herbs with mortar and pestle.
- Add herbs and oil to a clean, dry glass jar.
- Release air bubbles by inserting a clean knife.
- Cover tightly.
- Steep for at least two weeks.
- Strain and compost herbs.
- Rebottle oil.

Easy Calendula Salve

**Ingredients**

- One cup calendula herbal oil (see above).
- 1/4 cup wax (beeswax, carnauba, organic soy, jojoba wax).

**Directions**

- Gently heat herbal oil in a saucepan over low heat.
- Add wax and stir until melted and combined.
- Spoon test for consistency.
- Pour (quickly or salve will harden) into containers with lids and labels.
D I G E S T I O N  &  S T O M A C H - A C H E S

Tummy Ache Tea

**Ingredients**
- 2 ounces chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*) flower powder
- 2 ounces fennel seed powder (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
- 2 ounces dandelion root powder (*Taraxacum officinale*)
- 4 ounces glycerite
- 2 ounces apple cider vinegar

**Directions**
- Mix ingredients together in a glass jar with a lid.
- Store for a month in a cool, dry place. Shake it every day.
- At the end of a month, use cheesecloth to strain out the herbs (or keep them in there if your child does not mind).
- Dose is 1/2-1 teaspoon before meals for adults. Adjust accordingly for your child.

Red Raspberry Leaf Tea

**Directions**
To help stop diarrhea, prepare tea with red raspberry leaf. Follow instructions in Chapter One.

Ginger Tincture

Ginger is a carminative and is often a go to for bloating and stomach pain. Peppermint and chamomile are also recommended for digestive aid.

**Directions**
Follow the tincture instructions from Chapter One. Grate ginger root and fill a mason jar 3/4 full. Cover the herb fully with 80 or 100 proof vodka. Cover. Shake daily for 4-6 weeks and then strain. Bottle and label.
Natural Electrolyte Drink

Ingredients

- 1 quart warm water
- 2 lemons juiced
- 1 lime juiced
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- Raw honey to sweeten

Directions

Combine all ingredients in a blender until combined. Chill drink in the refrigerator and enjoy!

Good Morning Cleanser

A tea to flush the body!

Ingredients

- 1 quart hot water
- 1 lemon juiced
- Dash of cayenne powder
- Dash of ginger root powder
- Raw honey to sweeten

Directions

Add ingredients to hot water and enjoy!
Additional First Aid Essentials

Now that we have explored the many remedies for common ailments, we can finish packing our herbal first aid kit. Below is a list of tools one should always have on hand for emergencies.

- Bandages in multiple sizes
- Gauze and tape for handmade bandages and wraps
- Alcohol
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Thermometer
- Herbal first aid handbook
- List of emergency phone numbers
Dosage Guidelines for Children

Below are three different ways of determining dosages. Rosemary Gladstar works with a simpler's or folk method and offers a simpler's method of dividing by the child's average weight. Clark's Rule and Dr. Young's table resemble Rosemary's method but rely more on mathematical preparations, which are often used when one is distributing tinctures to clients, for accurate comparison and record keeping.

Suggested Dosages for Children

From Family Herbal, by Rosemary Gladstar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 2 years</td>
<td>1/2 to 1 teaspoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 4 years</td>
<td>2 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 7 years</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 11 years</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 to 6 months</td>
<td>2 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 months</td>
<td>3 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 12 months</td>
<td>4 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 18 months</td>
<td>7 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24 months</td>
<td>8 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 3 years</td>
<td>10 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>12 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 6 years</td>
<td>15 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 years</td>
<td>24 drops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 12 years</td>
<td>30 drops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clark’s Rule

Clark’s Rule can be used to change the adult dose into a child’s dose. Divide the child’s weight in pounds by 150 to come up with the approximate fraction of the adult dose to give to the child.

Example: for a 35-pound child, divide 35/150 (or ¼) of the adult dose. Therefore, if the adult dose is 1 teaspoon taken 3 times a day, the child’s dose will be ¼ teaspoon taken 3 times per day (not ¾ teaspoon taken once a day).

Dr. Young’s Dosage Table

Dosages according to age can be approximated with confidence using a method developed years ago by Dr. Young, and adapted from herbalist David Hoffman’s Medical Herbalism, as illustrated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Proportion of Adult Dose</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 g, 1 tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 years old</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>.5 g, 1/2 tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years old</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>.4 g, 1/10 tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years old</td>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>.25 g, 1/4 tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years old</td>
<td>1/8</td>
<td>.125 g, 1/8 tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year old</td>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>.0625 g, 1/16 tsp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Juice

Tinctures can always be administered in a few ounces of juice.

Popsicle Tea

Especially on hot throat, children love popsicles. We make homemade popsicles with 1 quart of herbal tea, 1 cup of strawberries, and 1 banana. Freeze in a popsicle mold and enjoy!

Bath

Add one quart of a strong herbal infusion to your child’s bath. The medicine will soak through their skin. Especially helpful if the child seems dehydrated and refusing to drink copious amounts of liquid.

Tea

Use Clark’s rule to measure out the desired amount of herb for the child. Instead of infusing it into a quart, consider how much tea your child may drink in a day and use that amount of water. Eight ounces is a good starting point.
Disclaimer

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