

Healing *With* *Herbs*



The Best Medicinal Plants | No Prescription Required

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Disclaimer: This is not intended as medical advice. You should always seek the advice of a qualified medical professional for any medical problems you may have.

Herbal Medicine should never be used for children, or in pregnant or nursing women unless a doctor has advised of its safety.

What Is Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicine or herbalism is the use of plants healing purposes.

☞ Different cultures from around the world offer different types of herbal treatments.

☞ These treatments vary depending on the type of plant that is used and how the plant is prepared.

☞ Herbal medicine is basically the use of berries, nuts, seeds, bark, flowers or roots for medicinal purposes as an alternative or an addition to traditional pharmaceutical medications.

☞ Herbs are able to heal our bodies by altering the cellular composition within us and bringing our bodies back into a healthy balance.

HERBAL MEDICINE



Today herbalism is recognized as a form of alternative or complementary medicine to modern medicine. This 100% all natural therapy method is one of the most popular under the Holistic medicine umbrella, and falls under the category of “biologically based practices.”

A major A 2007 government survey conducted by the Centers For Disease Control found that more than 1/3 of adults use alternative medicine for healing.

The use of herbal medicine focuses on what is actually wrong with the body instead of simply treating the symptoms like traditional medicine does.

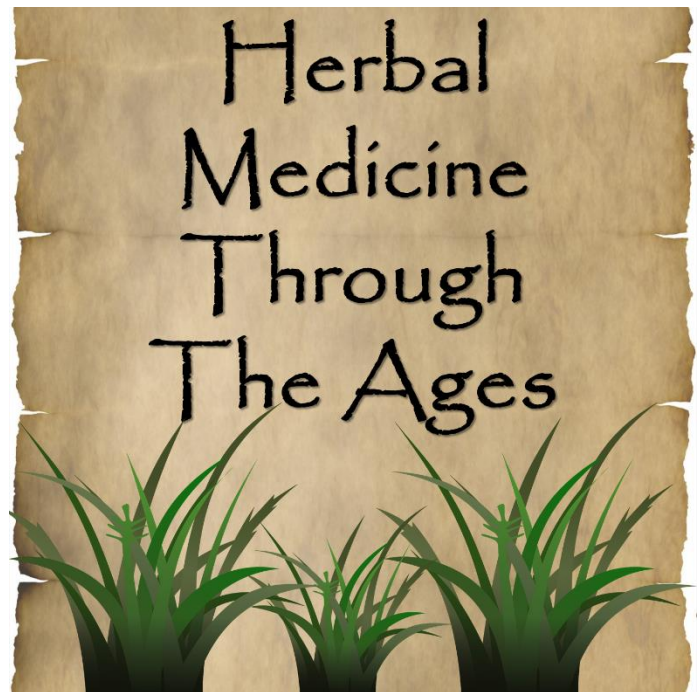
History And Origins Of Herbal Medicine

While this may seem like somewhat of a “fad” or folklore myth to some, in reality, herbal medicine has been around for thousands of years.

Actually, a lot of the pharmaceutical medications used today originated from all natural ingredients and plants, including:

- ☞ Opium that comes from the Poppy plant
- ☞ Aspirin that was developed from Willow Bark
- ☞ Digitalis is made from Foxglove
- ☞ Quinine that comes from the Cinchona tree

Plants were used for medicinal purposes long before history was recorded. Ancient writings have been found that show herbal medicine was being used as early as 3000 BC.



Three Sources Of Herbal Medicine

There are three modalities on which herbal medicine is based:

- ☞ Greek, Roman and medieval sources that are mostly used by Western culture.
- ☞ Ayurveda that is from India.
- ☞ Chinese Herbal Medicine that originates from Eastern philosophy.

These have more in common than not. Mainly the differences stem from the fact that different regions have different native plants, and so different schools of thought exist.

All three of these modalities were based on philosophical and spiritual aspects along with scientific knowledge that was available at the time.

Many early tribes developed herbal treatments and had a specific person in the tribe who specialized in using the herbal treatments. This was usually one of the most powerful people in the tribe.

The Egyptians, Greeks and Romans studied herbal medicine in depth as it gained importance to each of these tribes.

Due to the number of people who were practicing medicine without the proper training during the Tudor era, the king and Britain parliament enforced herbal medicine.

By the 17th century herbal medicine had become known as the medicine of the poor and women who practiced it were often labeled as witches. In the 19th century science found a way to create medicine without the use of plants and many people stopped using herbal medicine but as the drugs were developed many people found that they were having side effects and once again herbal medicine grew in popularity.

During both world wars there were drug shortages and many people found themselves turning to herbal medicine. More recently the pharmaceutical companies have developed new drugs that have drastic side effects and more people are turning to herbal medicine to avoid these side effects. It is estimated



that as many as 80% of people use some form of herbal medicine currently and the numbers are expected to climb.

Herbs In The Modern World

Herbal medicine has enjoyed a mass amount of popularity in the modern world.

A recent study by the World Health Organization found that about 80% of the global population uses herbs in some way in their health care practices.

The general dissatisfaction Americans have experienced in the last few decades with the rising cost of health care and side effects of prescription medications has prompted considerable interest in holistic and more natural health care methods, which, including, herbalism.

In Germany almost 70% of doctors prescribe herbs to their patients and there are more than 650 plant based medicines available.

Most Commonly Used Herbs

In the United States the most commonly used herbs are:

- ☞ Echinacea
- ☞ St. John's Wort
- ☞ Ginseng
- ☞ Valerian
- ☞ Chamomile
- ☞ Ginkgo (Ginkgo Biloba)
- ☞ Garlic
- ☞ Saw palmetto
- ☞ Feverfew
- ☞ Evening primrose

Who Are Herbalists

An herbalist is a person who has dedicated their life to the study and medicinal use of herbs as well as various other plants. An herbalist is also known as someone who practices healing by the use of herbs. Education of herbalists varies throughout the world although there are training and education standards in many parts of the world.

In the United States the herbalist must obtain their license from the state in which they wish to practice in. Many herbalists receive their training by doing apprenticeships with already established herbalists.



Herbalists deal with many forms of herbalism, including:

- ☞ Botanical medicine
- ☞ Herbal medicine
- ☞ Phytotherapy
- ☞ Herbology

Most herbalists will use fungus, minerals, shells, bee products and possibly animal products depending on the type of diseases and conditions they are treating. \

Herbal Shops

There are herbal shops all over the world, where dried herbs, teas and oils are sold in medicinal form. These are great resources to learn more about the various uses and healing properties of individual plants.

Choosing Appropriate Herbs For Healing



Deciding which herbs that you should use is a process that should not be taken lightly. There are combinations that can be deadly and depending on your health issues you need to be very careful which herbs you choose.

The first thing you need to look at when choosing the appropriate herb for healing is what you are trying to heal. For instance if you take Aloe gel for a headache it will now work because that is not what Aloe gel is used for. So first we look at the disease. You also need to speak with your regular doctor at this point to ensure it is safe for you to use herbal medicine especially if you are on any type of prescribed medication.

You need to make sure that you do thorough research on each herbal medicine before you use it because not everyone out there has all the information. One person may say that you can take ginger root if you have digestive problems but they may not understand that it is highly dangerous to take ginger root if you have high blood pressure. So you need to ensure that you are getting as much information as you can about each herbal treatment.

The following section will discuss several different types of herbal medicines as well as what they are used for but I suggest before you ever begin using any herbal

medicine you should do your own research. After you have decided which herbal medicine you are going to take, you need to decide what form you would like to take it in.

There are those who prefer to use herbal supplements and this is fine if you cannot stand the taste of some herbs such as garlic but you will receive much better benefits if you are using the actual herb in your diet. You may have to take herbal supplements also if the herb you are looking for is not available to you in its natural state.



25 Herbs And Their Healing Benefits

Herbs come from plants, so they are considered botanical. There are many herbal medicines that are available and as you can see there is an herbal medicine for everything from acne to cancer.

Often, they are combined, which, makes them more effective and with less side effects.

It may take some time to find the best herbal medication that is right for you, and it is important to get expert help to get a safe and effective combination.

Each individual herb has its own healing properties and each serves a different purpose, here is a glimpse into some of the most popular and most useful.

But, keep in mind, there are others, and multiple combinations, as well, so please do further study and research.

Valerian

Valerian is one of the most widely used herbs in the United States.

Its Uses Include:

- ☞ Insomnia
- ☞ Anxiety
- ☞ Nervous asthma
- ☞ Hysteria
- ☞ Excitability
- ☞ Hypochondria
- ☞ Migraines and headaches
- ☞ Stomach upset
- ☞ Depression
- ☞ Epilepsy
- ☞ ADHD
- ☞ Chronic fatigue syndrome
- ☞ Muscle and joint pain
- ☞ Menstrual cramps
- ☞ Menopausal symptoms, such as, hot flashes and anxiety.



Caution: Experts report that this herb is likely safe for most people. It can cause side effects in some people, including, insomnia, headache and excitability.

Asian Ginseng

This herb contains the active ingredient, Ginsenosides.

It is used for:

- ☞ Boosting immunity
- ☞ Cold prevention
- ☞ Lower blood sugar levels
- ☞ Improve concentration and learning



Caution: Ginseng sometimes causes nervousness and insomnia and long term use or ginseng use in higher doses can cause upset stomach, headaches and other symptoms.

Saw Palmetto

Multiple studies have shown that Saw Palmetto is effective for enlarged prostate. Other studies have shown that this herb can improve urinary flow and painful urination.



Caution: If you take any medications consult your physician before taking this herb. Saw Palmetto can have negative effects when used with over the counter drugs, like, aspirin and NSAIDs, such as, ibuprofen and naproxen. Blood thinners may interact with Saw Palmetto too.

Feverfew

The leaves of Feverfew are used to make medicine, and it is claimed to have many uses.

☞ Studies have proven it to be affective only for migraine headaches.

Other uses include:

- ☞ Arthritis
- ☞ Irregular menstrual periods
- ☞ Psoriasis
- ☞ Asthma
- ☞ Allergies
- ☞ Tinnitus
- ☞ Nausea and vomiting
- ☞ Dizziness
- ☞ And others



Caution: Chewing Feverfew leaves can be unsafe as it can cause, sores, swelling and loss of taste in the mouth.

Evening Primrose

Evening primrose oil is made from the seed of the evening primrose plant.

Used For:

- ☞ Psoriasis
- ☞ Eczema
- ☞ Rheumatoid arthritis
- ☞ Osteoporosis
- ☞ Raynaud's syndrome



Ginkgo Biloba

- ☞ This herb is used for boosting mental capacity because it enhances blood flow to the brain.
- ☞ In 2009 a conducted that showed Ginkgo Biloba may be used to treat dementia and Alzheimer's disease showing significant improvement in the patients who were given the extract from Ginkgo Biloba.



Caution: there are possible side effects if you are taking anti-coagulates, anti-depressants, or are pregnant so make sure you speak to your doctor before taking Ginkgo Biloba. Those who have a history of a strong allergic reaction to Poison Ivy, cashews, or mangos may be at risk of having an allergic reaction when taking Ginkgo Biloba.

Bee Pollen

- ✎ Although it is not actually an herb bee, pollen has been used to help increase energy.
- ✎ It has also been shown that taking bee pollen daily can help reduce allergies.
- ✎ Bee pollen also strengthens your metabolism, and is a great appetite suppressant which is why many people use it to lose weight.



Caution: You should however never consume bee pollen if you are allergic to bee stings.

Alfalfa

One of the most versatile herbs discovered so far, alfalfa is known to treat many ailments.

- ✎ Gentle laxative
- ✎ Diuretic
- ✎ Digestive aid
- ✎ Inflammation of the bladder
- ✎ Heart disorders
- ✎ Respiratory disorders
- ✎ Stomach problems
- ✎ Arthritis
- ✎ High blood pressure
- ✎ Hair disorders



Caution: Alfalfa has been known to aggravate auto immune disorders, reduce iron absorption, and have an effect on cholesterol levels. Before taking Alfalfa it is very important that you discuss it with your doctor.

Basil

Commonly found in our kitchens, basil is also know to treat several ailments.

- ☞ Boiling basil leaves with honey and ginger is an effective treatment for asthma and bronchitis.
- ☞ It also helps to relieve the mucus that accompany asthma and bronchitis because it is a natural expectorant.
- ☞ Basil can lower your cholesterol, and strengthen a weak heart, and chewing basil leaves will help prevent stress as well as cure mouth infections.
- ☞ In some people, basil can cause low blood sugar.



Caution: Using basil long term is not advised because it can cause liver damage.

Cayenne

- ⌘ Eases an upset stomach, breaks up congested mucus in the lungs.
- ⌘ Helps to prevent migraine headaches
- ⌘ Helps clear a stuffy nose
- ⌘ Helps relieve allergies
- ⌘ Stimulates the digestive system
- ⌘ Relieves gas
- ⌘ Helps reduce the chances of heart attack and stroke
- ⌘ Stimulates the circulatory system
- ⌘ Supports weight loss by stimulating metabolism
- ⌘ Promotes heart health



Caution: Cayenne can interact with some medications so make sure you talk to your doctor before taking it. It has also been shown to irritate the skin when accidental contact is made and should not be inhaled because it will cause irritation to the lungs.

Cinnamon

- ☞ Helps to lower blood sugar
- ☞ Lowers cholesterol
- ☞ Treats yeast infections
- ☞ Reduces inflammation
- ☞ Helps to reduce pain
- ☞ Helps in digestion
- ☞ Reduces blood clotting

Caution: Cinnamon is safe for almost everyone but if you have low blood sugar you should take care to monitor your blood sugar while using cinnamon.



Dandelion

- ☞ Fresh dandelion juice can be applied to wounds to promote healing and fight infection.
- ☞ The white liquid of the plant can be used to remove warts and corns.
- ☞ Dandelion can also be used internally as a treatment for gall stones, kidney disorders, high blood pressure, acne, and eczema.



Caution: Those who are allergic to ragweed should not use Dandelion because it could cause an allergic reaction.

Garlic

- ✪ Garlic is a natural antibiotic that has many healing qualities
- ✪ Help treat acne breakouts
- ✪ It can help improve cholesterol
- ✪ Sooth coughs
- ✪ Treat bronchitis
- ✪ Lower blood pressure
- ✪ Strengthen the immune system
- ✪ Shortens the life of a cold
- ✪ It is also useful for yeast infections
- ✪ A good topical wart treatment



Caution: Garlic can irritate the GI tract, and should not be taken at least 2 weeks before a scheduled surgery because it can cause prolonged bleeding.

Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera is one of the most wonderful healing plants around. The gel inside the meaty stems of this cactus family plant heals burns, cuts and scrapes. It offers a layer of protection to prevent infection of those as well and the list goes on.

- ✪ Helps heal bruises
- ✪ Great to heal and cool sunburn
- ✪ Removes sting from bee bites
- ✪ Alleviates various rashes
- ✪ Helps reduce wrinkles
- ✪ Great facial moisturizer for dry skin
- ✪ Any type of minor inflammation or skin condition can be healed by Aloe Vera



- ☞ Minor body abscesses and acne pimples that are painful and filled with puss get healed fast with Aloe Vera as it promotes drainage, which, will allow it to dry up quickly and heal
- ☞ Soothes Psoriasis
- ☞ Shrinks warts
- ☞ Decreases pigmentation and dark spots on the skin
- ☞ Aloe Vera juice helps to relive gastrointestinal disorders, including, indigestion
- ☞ Aloe juice also has laxative effects
- ☞ It can also help with bloating related to Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- ☞ Aloe juice also helps lower blood sugar levels in diabetics
- ☞ Boiling the leaves and inhaling the vapor can alleviate asthma symptoms
- ☞ When taken orally, Aloe Vera can bring relief for heartburn, as well as, arthritis and rheumatism pain

Angelica

- ☞ Roots and leaves of Angelica are used medicinally as an expectorant for coughs and bronchitis and to stimulate the secretion of phlegm during flu
- ☞ Angelica is also used to increase urine production
- ☞ Helps improve sex drive
- ☞ Kills germs



Caution: If you take angelica you should wear sunblock when going outside as it can make the skin more sensitive to sunlight.

Celery Seed

The fruit and seeds of celery are dried or pressed into oil for use in medicinal form, and sometimes it can be found in capsule form. Juicing celery is another way to ingest it.



Celery has been used to treat:

- ☞ Nervousness
- ☞ Headaches
- ☞ Exhaustion
- ☞ Joint pain
- ☞ Loss of appetite
- ☞ It also works as a digestive aid and to regulate bowel movements
- ☞ Celery also helps with relaxation and sleep
- ☞ It kills bacteria in the urinary tract
- ☞ It helps to control intestinal gas
- ☞ Has been reported to increase sexual drive

Caution: Celery oil and seeds in medicinal form are not likely to be safe during pregnancy and in large amounts can cause miscarriage. It is also advised to avoid celery in healing forms while nursing. Medicinal celery is not advised for those with kidney problems. And, since it can affect the central nervous system it should not be taken at least 2 weeks before surgery as it can interfere with anesthesia.

Chamomile

The list of healing powers of Chamomile is quite large including:

- ☞ Insomnia and relaxation and calming of anxiety
- ☞ Menopausal depression
- ☞ Loss of appetite
- ☞ Dyspepsia
- ☞ Colic
- ☞ Aches from flu and colds
- ☞ Diarrhea
- ☞ It also helps with neuralgia
- ☞ Teething
- ☞ Vertigo
- ☞ Motion sickness
- ☞ Conjunctivitis
- ☞ It soothes inflamed skin
- ☞ Migraines

Caution: Chamomile is included in the “generally regarded as safe” (GRAS) list by the FDA. Not advised in large amounts during pregnancy as it may cause contractions.



Echinacea

Leaves, flowers and roots of Echinacea are used to make medicine to primarily treat infection. Here are the specific uses:

- ✎ Infection in colds, flu and other upper respiratory infections.
- ✎ It is also a blood cleanser
- ✎ It can help with carbuncles and boils
- ✎ Blood poisoning
- ✎ Urinary tract infections, vaginal yeast infections and genital herpes
- ✎ It has been known to help with gum disease, tonsillitis and throat infections
- ✎ It has also been used to fight typhoid, syphilis malaria, and diphtheria
- ✎ Chronic fatigue syndrome
- ✎ Migraines
- ✎ Rheumatism
- ✎ Heartburn
- ✎ Pain
- ✎ Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder
- ✎ It can also be used topically to treat common skin ailments, like boils, burns, abscesses, and cuts and scrapes
- ✎ Eczema and psoriasis
- ✎ Bee stings
- ✎ Hemorrhoids



Caution: Echinacea can cause allergic reactions in children and adults who have allergies to daisies, mums, marigolds and ragweed.

Eucalyptus

Eucalyptus is a tree that's leaves are dried and turned into a medicinal oil.

- ☞ Eucalyptus is wonderful when its vapor is breathed in to clear the lungs, open airways and stimulate nasal passages.
- ☞ It is often used in spas as a special steam room that includes the vapor of Eucalyptus.
- ☞ It is also used in aromatherapy.
- ☞ It can help with bronchitis and asthma.



There are other uses, but, little scientific data exists as to their effectiveness.

Caution: Eucalyptus oil is not safe when drank or applied to the skin undiluted.

Thyme

Has a high content of oil and can be used as an essential oil or can be made into a tea, and when used in medicinal form can alleviate:

- ☞ Has expectorant qualities that help with cough
- ☞ Asthma
- ☞ Cold symptoms



Mint

Mint is a great herb and is known to relieve:

- ⌘ Heart burn, gas, upset stomach
aid digestion
- ⌘ Nausea
- ⌘ Cold symptoms
- ⌘ Flu
- ⌘ Sore throat
- ⌘ Eye infections
- ⌘ Bad breath.
- ⌘ Mint is also known to stimulate
senses and improve moods
- ⌘ Hiccups



Beet Root

- ⌘ One of the favorite benefits of beet root for most people is that it enhances sex. Beet root contains a high amount of boron which affects the production of the sex hormone in humans.
- ⌘ Boost mental health and increase your energy levels by using beet root all while naturally cleansing your liver.

Caution: Taking too much beet root can cause low calcium levels and kidney damage.

Cat's Claw

- ☞ Provides immune system support
- ☞ Helps detox the body naturally
- ☞ Is an anti-inflammatory that helps control pain
- ☞ Provides pain relief and swelling caused by arthritis

Caution: Cat's claw has been used as a natural form of birth control and should not be taken by those who are pregnant.

Side effects reported from taking cat's claw include dizziness, nausea and diarrhea. Cat's claw may also stimulate the immune system for that reason it should not be taken with medications that are used to lower the immune system. Cat's claw may interact with some prescription medications so make sure you talk to your doctor before taking cat's claw.



Skullcap

- ☞ A mild sedative that helps with insomnia, anxiety, convulsions, and tension.

There is not enough information about skullcap at this time to determine if there are any adverse side effects or drug interactions.

Yohimbe

Yohimbe is an herbal alternative to the many erectile dysfunction medications on the market today.

☞ Yohimbe aids in sexual desire, libido stimulation, as well as overall circulation.

Caution: Yohimbe can cause irregular or rapid heartbeat so if you have heart problems you should consult your doctor before taking yohimbe. In North America Yohimbe can only be obtained by prescription from your medical doctor. Those who suffer from schizophrenia, PTSD, liver disease, kidney disease, depression, anxiety, or diabetes should not use Yohimbe.



Safety Practices

There are so many things that can go wrong when someone tries to treat a disease on their own, not knowing all of the side effects or interactions of herbal medicine can lead to devastating results.

☞ It is best if you speak to a herbalist before taking any type of herbal treatment and you should always talk to your regular doctor before adding any herbal treatment to your daily life.

☞ Although herbal treatments are all natural, it is possible to overdose on them causing serious damage to your body or even leading to death. Some herbal medications taken at the wrong dose can be poisonous to people. You must be very careful when taking herbal medicines.

☞ When you begin using herbal medicine, you should only add one medicine to your health regime at a time. This will ensure that if you do have an adverse reaction you will be sure what caused it. You should also check to make sure the herbal medicines you are taking do not interact with one another.

☞ Another important warning herbal medicine is you must make sure that you know exactly what each herb will do. For example if you are taking one herbal medicine in to help lower your blood sugar and another herbal medicine for another health problem you have to make sure the second medication does not lower blood sugar because you could end up in a coma.



Herbal Medicine Safety, Interactions And Warnings



☞ If you are younger than 18 it is not advised for you to take any type of herbal medication unless it has been prescribed by a doctor.

☞ You should never exceed the suggested dose amount and do not take the medicine for a longer period of time than suggested.

☞ Be very careful when using any type of herbal medicine that was produced outside of the US. Poisonous ingredients have been found in herbal medicines that are produced elsewhere, predominantly Mexico and India.



☞ Keep track of what you take. When you add a new herbal medicine to your regime, keep a journal detailing how it is effecting you. Make sure you take note of any changes that you experience so that you can discuss it with your doctor if needed.

☞ Never take herbal medicine when you are pregnant or nursing before talking to your doctor. These medicines can be passed on to the baby causing unreparable damage.

☞ Check to see if the product lists any side effects or drug interactions. Keep in mind that this will not be possible for fresh herbs and you should check reputable online for this information.

Regulation Of Herbal Medicine

No organization or agency regulates herbal medicine or herbal supplements, like the FDA regulates prescription drugs in the United States.

There are no rules for supplement manufacturers as far as the ingredients they list, or any regulation as to the amount of the particular herb that is included in the product.

Some follow the practice of standardization, which, means that the product is guaranteed to have a specific amount of the active ingredients of the herb.

This is why it is best to consult with an expert and to know exactly what you are buying.

Consult With An Expert

There are several qualified experts in herbal medicine:

- ☞ Herbalists
- ☞ Some medical doctors
- ☞ Chiropractors
- ☞ Naturopathic physicians
- ☞ Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners

Never Self Diagnose

Finally one last tip that is of utmost importance and that is to never self-diagnose.

Checking the internet for the symptoms you are experiencing before you talk to your doctor is completely fine and it may actually help point them in the right direction faster than normal, but, that does not mean you should ever take any type of medicine, herbal or otherwise without a diagnosis from a licensed doctor.

The main reason that you should not self-diagnosis is that nine out of then times people are wrong about what they think is wrong with them. Let the doctors do their job and tell you what is causing your symptoms and then you can learn about which herbs maybe helpful.

How To Find An Expert In Herbalism

You can contact the American Herbalists Guild (AHG), their website is: www.americanherbalistguild.com.

To find a licensed naturopath, go to the American Association of Naturopathic Physician's website at www.naturopathic.org.