



Herbs for First Aid: Trauma & Wound Care

7Song, Director

Northeast School of Botanical Medicine

P.O. Box 6626 Ithaca, NY 14851

607-539-7172 www.7Song.com

Proclaimer: Helping people in first aid circumstances is serious business and one should know their capabilities as they get involved. Herbal medicine and its practitioners have been effectively treating people in these situations since there have been injuries to treat. This handout encourages people to help out whenever possible, and to learn the intricacies of herbal first aid practice. One should wholeheartedly hone their skills, know how and when to ask for help and to take the time to study with knowledgeable persons. For your sake and particularly for the patient's sake, learn your basics and how to do the least amount of harm while lending a hand.

First aid situations have a habit of foisting themselves upon us at unpredictable moments and so you may find yourself involved, no matter what your skill level may be. So seek opportunities to learn this eons-old craft whenever possible. The service of being a calm, sensible, knowledgeable person in these often chaotic and painful situations is a gift to offer to our communities.

Practical and Safety Considerations

- 1) In order to learn herbal first aid, always carry an herbal first aid kit with you. This will transform theory into practice as well as helping out your community.
- 2) Level-headedly assess any trauma situation for its potential seriousness. Decide your priorities and seek or send for help if warranted.
- 3) Be very cautious when moving anybody who has suffered a fall or accident. If they have a spinal or neck injury, moving them can worsen their injury considerably.
- 4) If working with other people's blood, saliva, pus or other bodily secretions, protect yourself by wearing disposable gloves.
- 5) After initially testing a remedy and finding it acceptable, increase dosage cautiously while supervising their condition and tolerance.
- 6) Before administering any tinctures containing ethanol, ask the patient if they have any allergies/strong reactions to alcohol. If they cannot consume alcohol in any volume figure out other ways to administer medicines
- 7) Test remedies for acute pain situations with the a one-drop dosage
- 8) Learn and practice wound wrapping techniques
- 9) If possible, ask the patient if they have any herbal medicine preferences and if they have allergies or strong reactions to any medicines.
- 10) While choosing your remedies, consider the various herbal categories from which to draw your herbal medicines.
- 11) The stronger remedies such as Aconite or Henbane should only be used by experienced hands.

- 12) When entering a trauma situation, try to find a competent person to assist you or run for help if needed.
- 13) Individual adverse reactions to pain relieving herbs are common. When initially administering herbs internally start with a one-drop dosage and check for reactions.

Common Name-Botanical Name List

Aconite – <i>Aconitum</i> spp.	Meadowsweet – <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>
Aloe – <i>Aloe</i> spp.	Motherwort – <i>Leonurus cardiaca</i>
Arnica – <i>Arnica</i> spp.	Myrrh – <i>Commiphora</i> spp.
Barberry – <i>Berberis</i> spp.	Nettles – <i>Urtica dioica</i>
Belladonna – <i>Atropa belladonna</i>	Oak – <i>Quercus</i> spp.
Black cohosh – <i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>	Onion – <i>Allium cepa</i>
Blue vervain – <i>Verbena hastata</i>	Oregon graperoot – <i>Berberis</i> spp.
Calendula – <i>Calendula officinalis</i>	Osha – <i>Ligusticum porteri</i>
California poppy – <i>Eschscholtzia californica/E.</i> spp.	Passionflower – <i>Passiflora incarnata</i>
Canadian fleabane – <i>Conyza canadensis</i>	Pine – <i>Pinus</i> spp.
Catnip – <i>Nepeta cataria</i>	Plantain – <i>Plantago</i> spp.
Cattail – <i>Typha latifolia</i>	Prickly poppy – <i>Argemone</i> spp.
Cayenne – <i>Capsicum</i> spp.	Propolis – bee resin
Chaparral – <i>Larrea</i> spp.	Pulsatilla – <i>Anemone pulsatilla/A.</i> spp.
Chickweed – <i>Stellaria media</i>	Pussytoes – <i>Antennaria</i> spp.
Cinquefoil – <i>Potentilla</i> spp.	Ragweed – <i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia/A.</i> spp.
Comfrey – <i>Symphytum</i> spp.	Rose – <i>Rosa</i> spp.
Conifer resins – various	Sage – <i>Salvia</i> spp.
Cow parsnip – <i>Heracleum</i> spp.	Sagebrush – <i>Artemisia</i> spp.
Echinacea – <i>Echinacea</i> spp.	St. Johnswort – <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>
Epipactis – <i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Shepherd's purse – <i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>
Garlic – <i>Allium sativum</i>	Silk tassel – <i>Garrya</i> spp.
German chamomile – <i>Matricaria recutita</i>	Skullcap – <i>Scutellaria lateriflora</i>
Ghost pipe – <i>Monotropa uniflora</i>	Slippery elm – <i>Ulmus fulva</i>
Ginger – <i>Zingiber officinalis</i>	Spiraea – <i>Spiraea</i> spp.
Goldenseal – <i>Hydrastis canadensis</i>	Tobacco – <i>Nicotiana rustica/N. tabacum</i>
Henbane – <i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	Turmeric – <i>Curcuma domestica/C. longa</i>
Jamaican dogwood – <i>Piscidia piscipula</i>	Valerian – <i>Valeriana officinalis/V.</i> spp.
Kava kava – <i>Piper methysticum</i>	Vervain – <i>Verbena officinalis</i>
Lemon balm – <i>Melissa officinalis</i>	Wild lettuce – <i>Lactuca</i> spp.
Licorice – <i>Glycyrrhiza glabra/G. uralensis</i>	Wild oats – <i>Avena sativa/A. fatua</i>
Lobelia – <i>Lobelia inflata</i>	Willow – <i>Salix</i> spp.
Louse wort – <i>Pedicularis</i> spp.	Witch hazel – <i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>
Mallow – <i>Malva</i> spp.	Yarrow – <i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Marijuana – <i>Cannabis</i> spp.	Yerba mansa – <i>Anemopsis californica</i>
Marshmallow – <i>Althaea officinalis</i>	

Preparations and Applications

Acupressure	Exercise	Poultice
Aromatic	Inhalation	Powder
Balm	Liniment	Salve
Bath	Massage	Smoking blend
Compress	Oil	Wash
Dressing	Ointment	Tea
Essential oil	Plaster	Tincture

Combination Formulary

Teas

- **Anti-infection Tea** – Chaparral, Cedar, Echinacea, Yerba mansa, Redroot, Goldenseal
- **Nervine Tea Blend** – Lemon balm, Skullcap, Oatstraw, German chamomile, Passionflower
- **Nutritive Blend**-Marshmallow, Goldenrod, Slippery elm, Avena, Nettles

Oils and Salves-generally in a base of extra virgin olive oil. Salves also contain beeswax

- **Arnica/St. Johnswort Oil**
- **Big Kitty Salve** – Essential oils of Camphor, Tea tree, Eucalyptus, Cajeput, Wintergreen, and Cinnamon
- **Bruise Salve** – Arnica, St. Johnswort, Calendula, Vitamin E
- **Garden Salve** – Calendula, St. Johnswort, Sage, Cleavers, Chickweed, Nettles, Comfrey, Vitamin E
- **Skin Salve** – Red clover, Chaparral, Goldenseal, St. Johnswort, Calendula, Sage, Tea tree essential oil
- **Trauma Oil** – St. Johnswort, Arnica, Valerian, Extra virgin olive oil, essential oils of Tea tree and Wintergreen, Vitamin E

Tinctures and Liniments-Tinctures contain ethanol and liniments contain isopropyl alcohol

- **Antiseptic Tincture** – Propolis, Myrrh, Goldenseal, Witch hazel
- **Arnica Liniment**-Arnica
- **De-Stress Tincture** – Damiana, Oatstraw, St. Johnswort, Vervain, Rosemary, Lavender, Valerian
- **Pain Relief Tincture** – Passionflower, Meadowsweet, Valerian, Motherwort, St. Johnswort
- **Peppermint Spirits** – Peppermint essential oil, Ethanol
- **Staph Dismissed Tincture** – Chaparral, Licorice, Propolis, Witch hazel
- **Tooth and Gum Tonic Tincture** – Yerba mansa, Echinacea, Goldenseal, Rhatany, Myrrh, Selfheal, Vegetable glycerine
- **Un-Headache Tincture** – Feverfew, Skullcap, Blue vervain, Chamomile, Valerian
- **Wound Liniment**- Myrrh, Goldenseal, Cayenne

Essential Oils

Clove bud	Lavender	Wintergreen
Eucalyptus	Tea tree	

Non-Herbal Items

Ace bandage	Duct tape	Matches/Lighter
Activated charcoal	Eyecup	Microscope 30x
Antiseptic wipes	Flashlight	Povidone-iodine
Aspirin	Gauze pads	Razor blade
Bandages	Headlamp	Scissors
Butterfly bandages	Hot water bottle	Salonpas patch
Candles	Hydrogen peroxide	Soap
Clay	Irrigating syringe	Steri-strips
Cold pack	Lancet	Surgical tape
Disposable gloves	Magnifying lens 10x	Tweezers

General Categories

Adsorbent	Antiseptic	Nervine
Analgesic	Antispasmodic	Rubefacient
Anesthetic	Anxiolytic	Sedative
Anodyne	Astringent	Skeletal muscle relaxant
Antihistamine	Circulatory stimulant	Smooth muscle relaxant
Antiinfective	Demulcent	Soporific
Antiinflammatory	Emollient	Trauma aid
Antimicrobial	Hemostatic	Vulnerary
Antipruritic	Hypnotic	

Definition of Categories

Adsorbent – Capable of attracting and absorbing foreign material

Analgesic/Anodyne – Relieves pain

Anesthetic – Produces a partial or complete loss of nerve sensation

Antihistamine – Reduces the effects of histamine in the body

Antiinfective – Helps to prevent infection

Antiinflammatory – Counteracts or reduces inflammation

Antimicrobial – Inhibits or kills microorganisms and their replication through various mechanisms

Antipruritic – Relieves or prevents itching

Antiseptic – Inhibits putrefaction by destroying microorganisms

Antispasmodic – Relieves smooth muscle spasms

Anxiolytic – Reduces anxiety or nervousness

Astringent – Contracts tissue and reduces discharges

Circulatory stimulant – Excites circulation (locally or systemically)

Demulcent – Soothes irritated tissue

Emollient – Soothing and softening to tissue

Hemostatic – Arrests the flow of blood

Hypnotic – Induces sleep

Nervine – Nourishes and treats nervous system disorders

Rubefacient – A counter-irritant, stimulates localized blood flow and reddening of the skin

Sedative – Calms and allays excitability; sedatives range from mild relaxing agents to stronger sedating action

Skeletal muscle relaxant – Relaxes muscles of the musculo-skeletal system

Smooth muscle relaxant – Relaxes smooth muscles

Soporific – Produces a deep sleep

Trauma aid – Helps people recover their psychic/emotional balance after trauma

Vulnerary – Aids recovery of tissues from wounds

A Few Words about Pain Remedies

In herbal medicine, there are many categories and therapeutic approaches in addressing the relief of pain. Each of these groupings may focus on a specific issue such as individual tolerance to pain remedies, different types and location of pain, specific indications for individual botanicals and what extent of sedation one anticipates or desires. To sum the above up, administering pain remedies can be tricky business. To learn the subtleties of the differentiations, experience is one of the finer teachers along with research and networking with other practitioners. The more attuned the clinician is to understanding the often distinct properties of herbal anodynes and sedatives, the finer their skills will be at ascertaining the proper remedy at the proper time with the proper dosage. One way to begin this process is to learn the therapeutic categories of pain relief such as which remedies act as antispasmodics, skeletal muscle relaxants, or antiinflammatories, or which medicines are strongly sedative compared to those that are pain relieving without altering cognition.

Another important consideration when dispensing pain-relieving agents is to realize that people have substantially different reactions to them. Valerian is a good example: perhaps 1 in 20 people have an opposite reaction from Valerian than the one they were hoping for...instead of inducing relaxation, the Valerian excites them, making relaxation more difficult. Dosage too plays an important role in giving pain remedies. Some people may have a strong reaction to just a few drops of a specific tincture, while others may feel the same effect with a teaspoonful.

One way to test for individual reactions is to initially employ a single drop (one-drop dosage) or less (diluted in water) to check for individual responses. Especially when people are in pain, they can feel subtle differences, either helping or worsening their pain, with a minute dosage.

Many herbal remedies fit into a number of therapeutic categories. Searching to find the remedy that fits within a few categories for the specific situation you are treating will help increase the chance of finding a salutary medicine.

Categories of Pain Remedies

*These medicines are found in the Combination Formulary

General Pain Remedies

Aconite	Gelsemium	Oats
Belladonna	Henbane	Pain Relief*
Big Kitty Balm*	Hops	Passionflower
Black cohosh	Kava kava	Silk tassel
California poppy	Lobelia	Skullcap
De-Stress*	Lousewort	St. Johnswort
Epipactis	Marijuana	Valerian
Ethanol	Nervine Tea*	Wild lettuce

Anesthetics

Cayenne	Ethanol	Yarrow
Clove bud ess oil	Heat	

Antispasmodics

Belladonna	Henbane	Skullcap
Black haw	Marijuana	Valerian
Crampbark	Silk tassel	

Sedatives

California poppy	Kava kava	Skullcap
Epipactis	Lobelia	Valerian
Ethanol	Marijuana	Wild lettuce
Hops	Passionflower	

Skeletal Muscle Relaxants

Black cohosh	Lousewort	Skullcap
Kava kava	Marijuana	Wild lettuce

Wound Protocol

- 1) Determine seriousness of wound.
- 2) Stop excessive bleeding – use hemostatics.
- 3) Clean thoroughly – check for any extraneous matter that may cause infection or prevent the wound from healing.
- 4) Use pain relieving herbs and preparations.
- 5) Apply antiinfectives and astringent botanicals.
- 6) Use herbal antiinflammatories if necessary.
- 7) Dress the wound. Use clean gauze. Do not wrap too tightly.
- 8) Check regularly and change dressing as needed.
- 9) If wound becomes infected, clean and débride and probe for foreign material. Re-dress.
- 10) If infection spreads (especially with fever) seek assistance.
- 11) Treat wounds promptly to help prevent and arrest infection and scarring.

Other Notes

- 1) While tinctures with alcohol they contain, are often admirable antiseptics, they discourage tissue repair.
- 2) Do not apply Comfrey initially to a wound, especially if it is deep or liable to infect. The superficial skin growth that Comfrey initiates can allow infection to proliferate underneath.
- 3) Learn to apply butterfly or other helpful bandaging techniques.
- 4) Be aware that many serious infections are spread by blood. Use disposable gloves if in doubt.
- 5) Know when and when not to se salves or other 'greasy' applications. They are often useful on the outside, reddened area of a puncture wound, while antiseptics are used directly on the puncture itself.
- 6) If using slaves, use a clean applicator to remove the salve from its jar to avoid contamination.

Categories for Wound and Injury Remedies

*These medicine are found in the Combination Formulary

Adsorbents

Activated charcoal	Clay
Charcoal	Gauze

Antiinfectives (includes antiseptics & antimicrobials)

Antiseptic Wash*	Myrrh	Tea Tree essential oil
Calendula	Oak	Tree resins
Chaparral	Oregon graperoot	Urine
Charcoal	Osha	Witch hazel
Echinacea	Propolis	Wound Liniment*
Garlic	St. Johnswort	Yarrow
Goldenseal	Staph Dismissed*	

Antiinflammatories

Aloe	Ginger	Spiraea
Arnica	Licorice	St. Johnswort
Calendula	Meadowsweet	Turmeric
Chickweed	Poplar	Willow
German chamomile	Pussytoes	

Astringents

'Tea'	Lady's Mantle	Rose
Blackberry root	Oak	Witch hazel
Canaigre	Potentilla	Yellow dock
Geranium	Rhatany	Yerba mansa

Circulatory Stimulants

Bayberry	Ginger	Rosemary
Cayenne	Prickly ash	Wild ginger

Hemostatics

Canadian fleabane

Cayenne

Cinnamon

Shepherd's purse

Yarrow

Yunnan Paiyao

Rubefacient

Big Kitty Salve*

Camphor

Cayenne

Friction

Mustard seed

Tiger balm

Topical heat

Wound Liniment*

Trauma Aid

Anemone

Blue vervain

California poppy

Lavender ess. oil

Lobelia

St. Johnswort

Vervain

Vulneraries (includes Emollients)

Aloe

Arnica

Calendula

Castor oil

Comfrey

Garden Salve*

Marshmallow

Plantain

St. Johnswort

Slippery elm