Herbal First Aid for Large Groups
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This handout is an overview of conditions and medicines used in first aid situations, especially those with large gatherings of people. Many of these treatments and suggestions are for those who have some first aid experience. It is important to be able to assess a situation and know if it is within your capability to treat, or if you should seek further assistance. Also, any medicine or treatment may cause complications, so please use caution whenever assisting people. There are many safety issues that one should be aware of which are not specific to herbal first aid (such as hand-washing and sanitation). These can be learned in a variety of first aid classes and programs.

Conditions You May Encounter
These are some of the wilderness, street or home first aid situations that may arise. Learn the ones that seem most pertinent to the circumstances you may find yourself in most often. Bring resources and ask others as new situations arise.

5. Asthma 23. Food poisoning 41. Respiratory disorders
6. Bleeding 24. Foot injuries 42. Scabies
11. Contagious diseases 29. Infections 47. Sunburn
15. Drugs-prescription 33. Lethargy 51. Water-born pathogens
16. Drug-overdose 34. Menstrual ailments 52. Wounds
17. Drugs-psychoactive 35. Nausea
18. Dysentery 36. Pain

Considerations
1. Always use disposable gloves when working on open sores, especially when encountering blood, mucous, saliva, or pus.
2. Keep a flashlight and headlamp in your first aid kit. Occasionally check their working conditions.
3. Take care of yourself when working in first aid situations. Rest and use immune strengthening herbs. Don’t forget to bring personal medications.
4. Check on your fellow workers to see how their physical and mental health is doing. Offer help when you can.
5. Legalities, be aware of possible legal implications of where you are practicing. This is especially true if you hold some type of medical license.
6. Take care of yourself when working in first aid situations. Rest and use immune strengthening herbs. Don’t forget to bring personal medications.
7. Label all of your medicine and supplies carefully.
8. Label all to-go medicines you give to patients so they can get refills later.
9. Be cautious administering remedies with infants, children, elderly persons and with pregnant and nursing women.
10. Once situated, learn the emergency phone numbers of nearby health care practitioners, doctors, hospitals and clinics.
11. Know a variety of herbs for pain as well as specific categories of treatment.
12. With deep cuts and puncture wounds avoid powdered herbs or anything that can prevent proper wound healing.
13. Learn to identify and use common first aid plants, there are likely some around you wherever you are situated.
14. Know your limits, but improvise as needed.
15. Cleanliness and sanitation are very important in first aid. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water. Have a separate bag for medical waste (use red tape to make a red cross on it). Check sanitary conditions of patients. Have just a few people administer the medicine so that messy hands are kept to a minimum (especially with salves and oils). Sterilize your equipment between patients.
16. Be instructive with your patients about their condition. Teach them prevention to help themselves and keep their communities healthier.
17. Organization of medicines saves a lot of time and frustration. Try to continually reorganize them.
18. Check your first aid bag occasionally to replenish empty medicines and check on the quality and freshness of them.
19. Learn how to take charge when needed and learn how to keep a cool head. These two attributes help promote a safe healing environment.
20. Have stimulant beverages on hand such as black tea and coffee for all-nighters.
21. Have plenty of good clean water available for patients and staff.
22. Learn to discriminate between acute and chronic disorders.
23. Learn the basics of preparing a rehydration fluid; to 1-quart water add 6-teaspoons sugar and a half-teaspoon of salt.
25. Learn triage skills. It is important to know who should be treated immediately and who can wait. Remember, that pain is not always the determining factor. Someone who is quiet may need immediate attention.

26. In a firm but friendly manner, let people know if they have communicable or contagious vectors (i.e. staph, lice). Prevention and efforts to minimize these problems early will help all involved.

27. Know your fellow health care workers strengths so you can work cooperatively.

28. Before administering tinctures or any preparations with ethanol, make sure that it is okay for the patient to drink alcohol, even very small amounts.

**Commonly Found First Aid Plants**

These plants can be found growing wild in a variety of habitats in the United States (depending on region), and may be useful for first aid.

1. **Prickly pear cactus**-pads-Opuntia spp-burn remedy
2. **Beggars ticks**-whole plant-Bidens spp.-decongestant
3. **California poppy**-whole plant Eschscholtzia spp.-nervine, sedative
4. **Catnip**-herb-Nepeta cataria-nervine, GI pain
5. **Chaparral**-leaf-Larrea tridentata-antiinfective
6. **Chickweed**-whole plant-Stellaria media-food, vulnerary
7. **Cinquefoil**-whole plant-Potentilla spp-astringent
8. **Comfrey**-leaf, root-Symphytum spp-vulnerary, demulcent
9. **Cudweed**-whole plant-Gnaphalium spp-demulcent
10. **Geranium**-root-Geranium spp-astringent
11. **Goldenrod**-leaf-Solidago spp-diuretic and soothing eyewash
12. **Gumweed**-leaf, flowers-Grindelia spp-poison ivy remedy, expectorant
13. **Jewelweed**-whole plant-Impatiens spp-poison ivy remedy
14. **Lobelia**-herb-Lobelia inflata-bronchodilator, nerve
15. **Mallow**-root, leaf-Malva spp-demulcent
16. **Meadowsweet**-leaf-Filipendula ulmaria-GI antiinflammatory
17. **Mint**-herb- Mentha spp-stomachaches and flavor
18. **Mullein**-leaf-Verbascum thapsus-respiratory antiinflammatory
19. **Nettles**-leaf, seed-Urtica spp-diuretic, food
20. **Oak**-bark-Quercus spp-astringent
21. **Oregon graperoot**-root-Berberis spp-antiinfective, antiprotozoal
22. **Pine**-sap-Pinus spp-antiseptic, wound remedy
23. **Plantain**-leaf-Plantago spp-drawing poultice, demulcent
24. **Ragweed**-leaf-Ambrosia spp-allergy medicine
25. **Blackberry**-root-Rubus spp-astringent
26. **Sagebrush**-leaf-Artemisia spp-antiinfective
27. **St. Johnswort**-leaf, flower-Hypericum perforatum-trauma medicine, vulnerary
28. **Willow**-bark-Salix spp-antiinflammatory
29. **Witch hazel**-bark, leaf-Hamamelis virginiana-astringent
30. **Yarrow**-whole plant-Achillea millefolium-antiinfective, antiinflammatory
Kitchen Herbs and Household Remedies

Many plants commonly found in homes and kitchens can be used in first aid. Some of these can be used to make other medicines taste better. This is just a very brief overview of their medicinal properties.

• **Aloe** - burn remedy
• **Basil** - for headaches and relaxing
• **Black pepper** - stimulant, may increase absorption of other herbal remedies
• **Cardamom** - soothing for digestion, flavor
• **Cayenne** - stimulating to tissue, both internal and external. A counterirritant and styptic.
• **Cinnamon** - digestive remedy, reproductive tonic and flavor
• **Coffee** - stimulant
• **Fennel seed** - stomachaches and as an eyewash
• **Garlic** - antiinfective, useful for a number of infections.
• **Ginger** - gently stimulating. Antiinflammatory stimulating internally and as a compress. Flavor. Digestive remedy.
• **Honey** - vulnerary and for sore throats. Helpful carrier for other medicines
• **Onions** - antiinfective
• **Salt** - to kill leeches
• **Tea** (green and black) - stimulant
• **Turmeric** - stimulating and antiinflammatory

Single Herbs for First Aid

These are useful single plants to carry in a first aid kit. They are used in their raw un-prepared state as a chew, tea, wash, poultice, compress, powder or bath.

1. **Cayenne** powder-Capsicum annuum. Counterirritant, hemostatic.
2. **Chaparral** leaf- Larrea tridentata- antiinfective, especially good in soaks.
3. **Comfrey** leaf, root-Symphytum spp.- tissue repair, demulcent.
4. **Fennel** seed-Foeniculum vulgare- eye washes, stomachaches, colic.
5. **Garlic**-bulb-Allium sativum-antiinfective, especially for respiratory infections.
6. **Goldenseal**- Hydrastis canadensis-antiinfective, for a wide range of infections.
7. **Licorice**-root-Glycyrrhiza glabra, G. uralensis-demulcent, antiinflammatory. Helpful for a wide variety of conditions including sore throats, toothache, flavoring agent, allergies, and indigestion.
8. **Ma huang**-stem-Ephedra spp.- bronchodilator, stimulant, decongestant
9. **Oregon graperoot**-root-Berberis spp.- antiinfective, for a broad range of infections
10. **Osha**-root-Ligusticum porteri-high-altitude sickness, antiinfective especially good for sore throat and respiratory infections.
11. **Slippery elm**-inner bark-Ulmus rubra-demulcent, drawing poultice, eyewash, nutritive.
12. **Tea** (green or black)-Camellia sinensis-stimulant
13. **Tobacco**-leaf-Nicotiana spp.- insect bite and sting relief
14. **Yarrow**-leaf, flower-Achillea millefolium-Antiinfective, antiinflammatory, useful for a wide range of infections.
**First Aid Plants**

Aloe-Aloe spp.  
Anemone-Anemone spp.  
Arnica-Arnica spp.  
Baptisia-Baptisia tinctoria  
Barberry-Barberis thunbergii  
Black cohosh-Actaea racemosa  
Blackberry root-Rubus spp.  
Boneset-Eupatorium perfoliatum  
Cactus-Opuntia spp.  
Calendula-Calendula officinalis  
California poppy-Eschscholtzia spp.  
Catnip-Nepeta cataria  
Cayenne-Capsicum annuum  
Chamomile-Matricaria chamomilla  
Chaparral-Larrea tridentata  
Chaparro amargosa-Castela emoryi  
Chickweed-Stellaria media  
Comfrey-Symphytum spp.  
Echinacea-Echinacea purpurea  
Eyebright-Euphrasia spp.  
Fennel-Foeniculum vulgare  
Garlic-Allium sativum  
Geranium-Geranium spp.  
Goldenseal-Hydrastis canadensis  
Gumweed-Grindelia spp.  
Horseradish-Armaricia rusticana  
Jamaican dogwood-Piscidia piscipula  
Kava kava-Piper methysticum  
Lavender-Lavandula spp.  
Lemon balm-Melissa officinalis  
Licorice-Glycyrrhiza spp.  
Lobelia-Lobelia inflata  
Marijuana-Cannabis spp.  
Ma huang-Ephedra spp.  
Myrrh-Commiphora spp.  
Oak-Quercus spp.  
Oregon grape root-Berberis spp.  
Passionflower-Passiflora incarnata  
Peppermint-Mentha x piperita  
Plantain-Plantago spp.  
Propolis-Propolis  
Ragweed-Ambrosia artemisiifolia  
Rose-Rosa spp.  
Shepherd’s purse-Capsella bursa-pastoris  
Silk tassel-Garrya spp.  
Skullcap-Scutellaria lateriflora  
Slippery elm-Ulmus rubra  
St. Johnswort-Hypericum perforatum  
Tea-Camellia sinensis  
Tobacco-Nicotiana spp.  
Turkey rhubarb-Rheum palmatum  
Uva ursi-Arctostaphylos uva ursi  
Valeriana-Valerian officinalis  
Wild lettuce-Lactuca spp.  
Wild yam-Dioscorea villosa  
Willow-Salix spp.  
Witch hazel-Hamamelis virginiana  
Wolfberry-Lycium pallidum  
Yarrow-Achillea millefolium  
Yerba mansa-Anemopsis californica

**Useful Remedies to have on hand**

*The herbs marked with * should be used with caution*

1. **Anemone tincture**-drop doses for panic, acute anxiety, ungroundedness. A useful trauma remedy.

2. ***Arnica tincture**- antiinflammatory, useful immediately after injury and trauma to speed recovery. For internal (caution, use drop doses as internal medicine) and external use.

3. **Echinacea tincture**-Immune enhancing plant useful in the early stages of respiratory viruses and for wound recovery. Large doses may be helpful Good after poisonous bites and stings and also for allergies, food poisoning, and bacterial infections.
4. **Ephedra tincture**—bronchodilator and decongestant. May be helpful in asthma. Caution, stimulant action, may raise blood pressure and cause headaches.

5. **Eyebright tincture**—antihistamine-type action. See Ragweed. For allergies.

6. **Goldenseal tincture**—antiinfective. Useful in a variety of viral and bacterial infections. Internal and external use. For respiratory viruses, food poisoning, wounds, bacterial infections.

7. **Herbal heating vinegar**—a combination of herbs usually including cayenne, garlic, horseradish, ginger and the like. Also helps clears sinuses. Tangy and hot for long cold days outside. Use to tolerance.

8. **Immune combination tincture**—a number of different immune-enhancing herbs for working in situations such as clinics, especially as a preventative. Plants include; Echinacea, Reishi, and Astragalus

9. **Jamaican dogwood tincture**—Piscidia piscipula. A well-tolerated pain remedy for general body pains. Also helpful used with other pain and sedative remedies.

10. **Kava kava tincture**—sedative, anxiolytic. Good for frayed nerves and relaxing. Also for pain, stress and trauma.

11. **Lobelia tincture**—for bronchoconstriction, to help breathing from allergic asthmatic reactions. Also helpful for relaxing.

12. **Meadowsweet tincture**—antiinflammatory, especially for the gut. Helpful for stomachaches and injuries. Larger doses may be useful and it is well tolerated.

13. **Oregon graperoot tincture**—antiinfective for a range of bacterial, viral and protozoal infections. Large doses may be helpful. For infectious diarrhea, wounds, respiratory and gut viruses.

14. **Osha tincture**—antiinfective for sore throats and respiratory infections. Useful in combinations with other similar plants. Also helpful for allergies, food poisoning, and wounds.

15. **Pain formula**—a combination of sedative and anodyne herbs to cover a range of pain. Plants include; Jamaican dogwood, Hops, Valerian, Skullcap, Wild lettuce and Silk tassel.

16. **Peppermint spirits**—digestive aid for nausea, stomachaches and indigestion by reducing sense of pain in stomach. Use in small doses, as it is prepared from an essential oil.

17. **Propolis tincture**—antiseptic wound covering for skin and oral mucosa infections. Also helpful as a preventative. Its stickiness makes it a good small wound covering agent and helps to hold bandages in place. For bacterial infections and wounds.

18. **Ragweed tincture**—antihistamine-like action for allergic reactions such as hives, hay fever; food, drug and insect allergic responses.

19. **Skullcap tincture**—sedative, nervine, pain reliever. Good with skeletal muscle pain. It is well tolerated and useful in a wide variety of situations with pain and anxiety.

20. **Sleep tincture**—a number of useful hypnotics and pain remedies. These include; Valerian, Skullcap, Hops, Jamaican dogwood and Kava kava.

22. **Wild lettuce tincture** - sedative, relaxant, anodyne. Good for general body pains. Large doses can be helpful.

### Accessories
- Activated charcoal
- Aloe gel
- Antiseptic wipes
- Applicators
- Aspirin/NSAIDs
- Band-Aids
- Bandage scissors
- Bandages-Sports wrap
- Bandages-self-adhesive
- Batteries-extra
- Black tea/Coffee
- Butterfly bandages
- Castor Oil
- Clay
- Clean cloth/Towels
- Cold pack
- Condoms
- Cooking pots
- Cups-disposable
- Disposable gloves
- Dressing-a variety
- Dressing-non-stick
- Duct tape
- Electrolyte replacement
- Eyecup
- Flashlight/Headlight
- Gauze pads/strips
- Honey
- Hot water bottle
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Insect repellent
- Irrigation syringe
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Jars with lids
- Label tap
- Magnifying lens
- Matches/Lighter
- Paper towels
- Paper/pens
- Plastic bags
- Povidone-iodine
- Razor blades
- Resources/References
- Scissors
- Small ‘to-go’ containers
- Small containers
- Soap
- Steri-strips
- Stretcher
- String/rope
- Sun block
- Surgical tape
- Tampons/Pad
- Tarps
- Throat lozenges (herbal)
- Toys/Stuffed animals
- Trash bags-heavy duty
- Tweezers
- Vitamins
- Wildcrafting tools

### Herbal Combinations and Formulas
There are many ways to make a useful formula, each with its own particular strengths. These offer some potential ideas.

### Tinctures
1. **Antiinflammatory Tincture** - Willow, Turmeric, Licorice
2. **Antimicrobial Throat Spray** - Calendula, Echinacea, Osha, Baptisia, Goldenseal, Propolis, Thyme essential oil, Vegetable glycerin
3. **Antiseptic Wash (external)** - Propolis, Myrrh, Goldenseal, Witch hazel
4. **Antispasmodic Tincture** - Jamaican dogwood, Silk tassel, Black haw, Wild yam
5. **Cold and Flu Tincture** - Echinacea, Baptisia, Osha
6. **De-Stress Tincture** - Damiana, Oatstraw, St. Johnswort, Vervain, Rosemary, Lavender, Valerian
7. **Decongestant Aid Tincture** - Yerba santa, Wolfberry
8. **Digestive Aid Tincture**- Fennel seed, Marshmallow, Meadowsweet, Chamomile
9. **Headache Tincture**- Feverfew, Skullcap, Blue vervain, Chamomile, Valerian
10. **Pain Relief Tincture**- Jamaican dogwood, Wild lettuce, Valerian, Hops, Skullcap
11. **Peppermint Spirits**- Peppermint essential oil, Ethanol
12. **Respiratory Expectorant Tincture**- Yerba santa, Mullein, Osha, Grindelia, Licorice
13. **Sleep Tincture**- Valerian, Hops
14. **Staph Dismissed (external)**- Chaparral, Licorice, Propolis, Witch hazel
15. **Tooth and Gum Tonic**- Yerba mansa, Echinacea, Goldenseal, Myrrh, Self-heal, Vegetable glycerin

**Teas and Powders**
1. **Antiinflammatory Powder**- Licorice, Turmeric, Willow
2. **Antiinflammatory Tea**- Willow, Turmeric, Ginger, Licorice
3. **Infection Fighting Tea**- Chaparral, Echinacea, Yerba mansa, Boneset, Oregon graperoot, Yarrow
4. **Nervine Tea Blend**- Lemon balm, Skullcap, Oatstraw, German chamomile, Passionflower
5. **Nutritive Tea Blend**- Nettles, Alfalfa, Dandelion leaf, Raspberry leaf Oatstraw, Goldenrod
6. **Respiratory Virus Tea**- Yarrow, Marshmallow, Boneset, Echinacea, Meadowsweet, Osha
7. **Tooth powder**- Clay, Myrrh, Oak
8. **Urinary Tract Tea**- Juniper leaf and berry, Yarrow, Mallow, Uva-ursi, Goldenrod

**Oils**- base of extra virgin olive oil
1. **Arnica Oil**- Arnica
2. **Ear Oil**- Mullein flower, Garlic, Vitamin E, extra virgin olive oil
3. **Trauma Oil**- St. Johnswort, Arnica, Valerian, Vitamin E, essential oils of Tea tree and Wintergreen

**Liniments** (in isopropyl alcohol)
1. **Arnica Liniment**
2. **Lobelia Liniment**

**Salves**- base of extra virgin olive oil and beeswax
1. **Bruise Salve**- Arnica, St. Johnswort, Calendula, Vitamin E
2. **Infection Salve**- Yarrow, Oregon graperoot, Propolis, Chaparral
3. **Skin Mending Salve**- Comfrey, Calendula, Chickweed, Yarrow
Syrups and Honeys
1. **Cough Syrup** – Elecampane, Horehound, Wild cherry, Lemon, Ginger and Horseradish in a honey base
2. **Garlic Honey**
3. **Osha Honey**

**Essential Oils**
- Clove
- Eucalyptus
- Lavender
- Tea tree
- Wintergreen

**Therapeutic Categories**

**Adsorbents**- capable of attracting and holding foreign material
Activated charcoal Clay
Charcoal

**Allergy herbs**- help reduce histamine allergy symptoms
Ambrosia Lobelia Osha
Eyebright Ma Huang

**Antiinfectives**- broad category of plants that help fight or prevent infection
Calendula Garlic Osha
Chaparral Goldenseal Propolis
Charcoal Myrrh St. Johnswort
Conifer resins Oak Witch hazel
Echinacea Oregon graperooot Yarrow

**Antiinflammatories**- reduce inflammation
Aloe Cudweed Spiraea
Arnica Ginger St. Johnswort
Calendula Licorice Turmeric
Chamomile Meadowsweet Willow
Chickweed Poplar Yarrow

**Antispasmodics**- relieve smooth muscle cramps
Black haw Jamaican dogwood Valerian
Crampbark Silk tassel
Marijuana Skullcap

**Astringents**- tighten tissues
Blackberry root Potentilla Witch hazel
Geranium Rhatany Yerba mansa
Lady’s mantle Rose
Oak Tea
Circulatory Stimulants-stimulates circulation
Bayberry               Ginger               Wild ginger
Cayenne                Prickly ash

Digestive Remedies-useful plants for a variety of gut ailments
Aloe                   Ginger               Peppermint
Bitters                Honey                Peppermint spirits
Cardamom               Licorice             Prebiotics
Catnip                 Meadowsweet         Probiotics
Chamomile              Mint                 Slippery elm
Fennel                 Neutralizing cordial Turkey rhubarb

Demulcents-soothing quality on mucous membranes
Aloe                   Licorice             Marshmallow
Comfrey                Mallow              Slippery elm

Hemostatics-staunch the flow of blood
Cayenne                Shepherd’s purse Yunnan Paiyao
Cinnamon               Yarrow

Pain Remedies-general remedies for pain
Antiinflammatories      Hops                 Skullcap
Antispasmodics          Jamaican dogwood St. Johnswort
California poppy        Kava kava             Valerian
Cannabis                Lobelia              Wild lettuce
Epipactis               Skeletal muscle
Ethanol                 relaxants

Rubefacient-stimulates local blood flow and reddens the skin
Cayenne                 Mustard seed         Topical heat
Friction               Tiger balm

Sedatives-reduce and calm agitation and anxiety
Alcohol                 Kava kava             Skullcap
California poppy        Lobelia              Valerian
Epipactis               Marijuana            Wild lettuce
Hops                    Passionflower

Skeletal Muscle Relaxants-relax skeletal muscles
Black cohosh            Marijuana            Wild lettuce
Kava kava               Jamaican dogwood
Lousewort               Skullcap
**Trauma Aid** - helpful for mental/emotional balance after trauma
- Anemone
- Blue vervain
- California poppy
- Lavender essential oil
- Lobelia
- Rose
- St. Johnswort
- Vervain

**Vulneraries** - aids recovery of wounds
- Aloe
- Arnica
- Calendula
- Chickweed
- Comfrey
- Plantain
- Slippery elm
- St. Johnswort
- Yarrow