

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.

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| 1. Allergies | 19. Earache | 37. Parasites |
| 2. Altitude sickness | 20. Emotional crises | 38. Pet's health |
| 3. Anaphylaxis | 21. Eye irritation | 39. Plant rashes |
| 4. Animal bites/scratches | 22. Fever/Chills | 40. Rashes |
| 5. Asthma | 23. Food poisoning | 41. Respiratory disorders |
| 6. Bleeding | 24. Foot injuries | 42. Scabies |
| 7. Broken bones | 25. Headaches | 43. Seizures |
| 8. Burns | 26. Heat exhaustion | 44. Shock |
| 9. Chiggers | 27. Hypochondria | 45. Soft tissue injuries |
| 10. Constipation | 28. Hypothermia | 46. Staph infections |
| 11. Contagious diseases | 29. Infections | 47. Sunburn |
| 12. Coughs | 30. Injuries | 48. Ticks |
| 13. Dental health | 31. Insect bites/stings | 49. Toothaches |
| 14. Diarrhea | 32. Lice | 50. Vomiting |
| 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. Label all of your medicine and supplies carefully.
7. Label all to-go medicines you give to patients so they can get refills later.
8. Be cautious administering remedies with infants, children, elderly persons and with pregnant and nursing women.
9. Once situated, learn the emergency phone numbers of nearby health care practitioners, doctors, hospitals and clinics.
10. Know a variety of herbs for pain as well as specific categories of treatment.
11. With deep cuts and puncture wounds avoid powdered herbs or anything that can prevent proper wound healing.
12. Learn to identify and use common first aid plants, there are likely some around you wherever you are situated.
13. Know your limits, but improvise as needed.
14. 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.
15. Be instructive with your patients about their condition. Teach them prevention to help themselves and keep their communities healthier.
16. Organization of medicines saves a lot of time and frustration. Try to continually reorganize them.
17. Check your first aid bag occasionally to replenish empty medicines and check on the quality and freshness of them.
18. Learn how to take charge when needed and learn how to keep a cool head. These two attributes help promote a safe healing environment.
19. Have stimulant beverages on hand such as black tea and coffee for all-nighters.
20. Learn to 'volunteer' people. This is especially important when you are away from the first aid station and need assistance.
21. Check your patients for allergies, sensitivities and current medications before administering any remedies.
22. Learn to discriminate between acute and chronic disorders.
23. Have plenty of good clean water available for patients and staff.
24. 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.

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| 1. Prickly pear cactus -pads-Opuntia spp.-burn remedy | 16. Meadowsweet -leaf-Filipendula ulmaria-GI antiinflammatory |
| 2. Beggars ticks -whole plant-Bidens spp.-decongestant | 17. Mint -herb- Mentha spp stomachaches and flavor |
| 3. California poppy -whole plant Eschscholtzia spp.-nervine, sedative | 18. Mullein -leaf-Verbascum thapsus- respiratory antiinflammatory |
| 4. Catnip -herb-Nepeta cataria- nervine, GI pain | 19. Nettles -leaf, seed-Urtica spp- diuretic, food |
| 5. Chaparral -leaf-Larrea tridentata- antiinfective | 20. Oak -bark-Quercus spp-astringent |
| 6. Chickweed -whole plant-Stellaria media-food, vulnerary | 21. Oregon graperoot -root-Berberis spp-antiinfective, antiprotozoal |
| 7. Cinquefoil -whole plant-Potentilla spp-astringent | 22. Pine -sap-Pinus spp-antiseptic, wound remedy |
| 8. Comfrey -leaf, root-Symphytum spp- vulnerary, demulcent | 23. Plantain -leaf-Plantago spp- drawing poultice, demulcent |
| 9. Cudweed -whole plant-Gnaphalium spp-demulcent | 24. Ragweed -leaf-Ambrosia spp- allergy medicine |
| 10. Geranium -root-Geranium spp- astringent | 25. Blackberry -root-Rubus spp- astringent |
| 11. Goldenrod -leaf-Solidago spp- diuretic and soothing eyewash | 26. Sagebrush -leaf-Artemisia spp- antiinfective |
| 12. Gumweed -leaf, flowers-Grindelia spp-poison ivy remedy, expectorant | 27. St. Johnswort -leaf, flower- Hypericum perforatum-trauma medicine, vulnerary |
| 13. Jewelweed -whole plant-Impatiens spp-poison ivy remedy | 28. Willow -bark-Salix spp- antiinflammatory |
| 14. Lobelia -herb-Lobelia inflata- bronchodilator, nervine | 29. Witch hazel -bark, leaf-Hamamelis virginiana-astringent |
| 15. Mallow -root, leaf-Malva spp- demulcent | 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 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 annum. 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 grape**-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.	Lobelia-Lobelia inflata
Anemone-Anemone spp.	Marijuana-Cannabis spp.
Arnica-Arnica spp.	Ma huang-Ephedra spp.
Baptisia-Baptisia tinctoria	Myrrh-Commiphora spp.
Barberry-Berberis thunbergii	Oak-Quercus spp.
Black cohosh-Actaea racemosa	Oregon graperoot-Berberis spp.
Blackberry root-Rubus spp.	Passionflower-Passiflora incarnata
Boneset-Eupatorium perfoliatum	Peppermint-Mentha x piperita
Cactus-Opuntia spp.	Plantain-Plantago spp.
Calendula-Calendula officinalis	Propolis-Propolis
California poppy-Eschscholtzia spp.	Ragweed-Ambrosia artemisiifolia
Catnip-Nepeta cataria	Rose-Rosa spp.
Cayenne-Capsicum annuum	Shepherd's purse-Capsella bursa-pastoris
Chamomile-Matricaria chamomilla	Silk tassel-Garrya spp.
Chaparral-Larrea tridentata	Skullcap-Scutellaria lateriflora
Chaparro amargosa-Castela emoryi	Slippery elm-Ulmus rubra
Chickweed-Stellaria media	St. Johnswort-Hypericum perforatum
Comfrey-Symphytum spp.	Tea-Camellia sinensis
Echinacea-Echinacea purpurea	Tobacco-Nicotiana spp.
Eyebright-Euphrasia spp.	Turkey rhubarb-Rheum palmatum
Fennel-Foeniculum vulgare	Uva ursi-Arctostaphylos uva ursi
Garlic-Allium sativum	Valeriana-Valerian officinalis
Geranium-Geranium spp.	Wild lettuce-Lactuca spp.
Goldenseal-Hydrastis canadensis	Wild yam-Dioscorea villosa
Gumweed-Grindelia spp.	Willow-Salix spp.
Horseradish-Armoracia rusticana	Witch hazel-Hamamelis virginiana
Jamaican dogwood-Piscidia piscipula	Wolfberry-Lycium pallidum
Kava kava-Piper methysticum	Yarrow-Achillea millefolium
Lavender-Lavandula spp.	Yerba mansa-Anemopsis californica
Lemon balm-Melissa officinalis	
Licorice-Glycyrrhiza spp.	

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 clear 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 grape root 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.

21. **Valerian tincture**- sedative, hypnotic, anodyne, nervine. A very useful sleep aid. Contradictory (agitating) effect common, test individuals for reaction. For pain, stress, trauma.
22. **Wild lettuce tincture**- sedative, relaxant, anodyne. Good for general body pains. Large doses can be helpful.

Accessories

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

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 grape root

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	Lavender essential oil	St. Johnswort
Blue vervain	Lobelia	Vervain
California poppy	Rose	

Vulneraries-aids recovery of wounds

Aloe	Chickweed	Slippery elm
Arnica	Comfrey	St. Johnswort
Calendula	Plantain	Yarrow