

# Herbal First Aid for Large Groups

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This 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 it 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.

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|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Allergies              | 18. Emotional crises    | 35. Parasites             |
| 2. Altitude sickness      | 19. Eye irritation      | 36. Pet's health          |
| 3. Anaphylaxis            | 20. Fatigue             | 37. Plant rashes          |
| 4. Animal bites/scratches | 21. Fever/chills        | 38. Rashes                |
| 5. Asthma                 | 22. Food poisoning      | 39. Respiratory disorders |
| 6. Bleeding               | 23. Foot injuries       | 40. Seizures              |
| 7. Broken bones           | 24. Headaches           | 41. Shock                 |
| 8. Burns                  | 25. Heat exhaustion     | 42. Soft tissue injuries  |
| 9. Constipation           | 26. Hypochondria        | 43. Staph infections      |
| 10. Contagious diseases   | 27. Hypothermia         | 44. Sunburn               |
| 11. Coughs                | 28. Infections          | 45. Ticks                 |
| 12. Dental health         | 29. Injuries            | 46. Toothaches            |
| 13. Diarrhea              | 30. Insect bites/stings | 47. Vomiting              |
| 14. Drug-overdose         | 31. Lice                | 48. Water-born pathogens  |
| 15. Drugs-psychoactive    | 32. Menstrual ailments  | 49. Wounds                |
| 16. Dysentery             | 33. Nausea              |                           |
| 17. Earache               | 34. 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. Bring personal medications.
4. Check on your fellow workers' physical and mental health. Offer assistance when needed.
5. Be aware of possible legal implications where you are practicing. This is especially true if you hold a medical license.
6. Label all of your medicine and supplies carefully. Keep a checklist.
7. Label to-go medicines so patients can get refills later.
8. Be cautious administering remedies with infants, children, elderly persons, and pregnant and nursing people.
9. Once situated, learn the emergency phone numbers of nearby healthcare practitioners, doctors, hospitals, and clinics.
10. Know herbs for pain and 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 may be some nearby.
13. Know your limits, but improvise as needed.
14. Cleanliness and sanitation are essential in first aid. Wash hands regularly with soap and water. Have a separate bag for medical waste and mark 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 patients about their health conditions. Teach prevention.
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.
18. Learn how to take charge when needed and learn how to keep a cool head. These two attributes help promote a safer healing environment.
19. Learn to 'volunteer' people. This is especially important when you are away from the first aid station and need assistance.
20. Check your patients for allergies, sensitivities, and current medications before administering remedies.
21. Learn to discriminate between acute and chronic disorders.
22. Have plenty of good, clean water available for patients and staff.
23. Learn the basics of preparing a rehydration fluid.
24. 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.
25. Let people know if they have communicable or contagious vectors (i.e., staph, lice).
26. Know your fellow healthcare workers' strengths to work cooperatively.
27. 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 and may be useful for first aid.

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

## 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 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**-Counterirritant and styptic.
- **Cinnamon**-digestive remedy, flavor
- **Coffee**-stimulant
- **Fennel seed**-stomachaches, eyewash

- **Garlic**-useful for several types 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**-antiinflammatory

## Single Herbs for First Aid

These are useful single plants to carry in a first aid kit. They are used in their raw, unprepared 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. **Licorice**-root-Glycyrrhiza glabra, G. uralensis-demulcent, antiinflammatory. Helpful for a wide variety of conditions, including sore throats, toothache, flavoring agent, allergies, and indigestion
7. **Oregon graperoot/Barberry**-root-Berberis spp.-antiinfective for a broad range of infections
8. **Osha**-root-Ligusticum porteri-high-altitude sickness, antiinfective especially useful for sore throat and respiratory infections.
9. **Slippery elm**-inner bark-Ulmus rubra-demulcent, drawing poultice, eyewash, nutritive.
10. **Tea** (green or black)-Camellia sinensis-stimulant
11. **Tobacco**-leaf-Nicotiana spp.-insect bite and sting relief
12. **Yarrow**-leaf, flower-Achillea millefolium-Antiinfective, antiinflammatory, useful for many types of infections.

## First Aid Plants

Aloe-Aloe spp.	Chaparral-Larrea tridentata
Anemone-Anemone spp.	Chaparro amargosa-Castela emoryi
Arnica-Arnica spp.	Chickweed-Stellaria media
Baptisia-Baptisia tinctoria	Comfrey-Symphytum spp.
Barberry-Berberis thunbergii	Echinacea-Echinacea purpurea
Black cohosh-Actaea racemosa	Eyebright-Euphrasia spp.
Blackberry root-Rubus spp.	Fennel-Foeniculum vulgare
Boneset-Eupatorium perfoliatum	Garlic-Allium sativum
Cactus-Opuntia spp.	Geranium-Geranium spp.
Calendula-Calendula officinalis	Goldenseal-Hydrastis canadensis
California poppy-Eschscholtzia spp.	Gumweed-Grindelia spp.
Catnip-Nepeta cataria	Horseradish-Armoracia rusticana
Cayenne-Capsicum annum	Jamaican dogwood-Piscidia piscipula
Chamomile-Matricaria chamomilla	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 graperoot-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  
Yucca-Yucca species

## Useful Single Tinctures

*Herbs marked with \* should be used with caution.*

1. **Anemone tincture**-low doses for panic and acute anxiety. A useful trauma remedy.
2. **Echinacea tincture**-Immune enhancing plant useful in the early stages of infections and wound recovery. Large doses may be helpful.
3. **\*Ephedra tincture**-bronchodilator and decongestant. May be helpful in asthma. Caution, stimulant action, may raise blood pressure and cause headaches.
4. **Eyebright tincture**-antihistamine-type action. See Ragweed. For allergies.
5. **Jamaican dogwood tincture**-Piscidia piscipula. A well-tolerated pain remedy for general body pains. Also beneficial used with other pain and sedative remedies.
6. **Barberry/Oregon graperoot tincture**-for bacterial, viral, and protozoal infections. Large doses may be helpful. For infectious diarrhea, wounds, respiratory and gut viruses.
7. **Kava tincture**-sedative, anxiolytic. Good for frayed nerves and relaxing. Also for pain, stress, and trauma.
8. **Lobelia tincture**-for bronchoconstriction, to help breathing from allergic asthmatic reactions. Also helpful for relaxing.
9. **Osha tincture**-antiinfective for sore throats and respiratory infections. Useful in combinations with other similar plants. Also helpful for allergies, food poisoning, and wounds.
10. **Propolis tincture**-antiseptic wound covering for skin and oral mucosa infections. Also helpful as a preventative. Its stickiness makes it a good wound

covering agent and helps to hold bandages in place. For bacterial infections and wounds.

11. **Ragweed tincture**-antihistamine-like action for allergic reactions such as hives, hay fever, and insect allergic responses.
12. **Valerian tincture**- sedative, hypnotic, anodyne, nervine. A very useful sleep aid. Contradictory (agitating) effect common, test individuals for reaction. For pain, stress, trauma, sleep.

## Accessories

- Activated charcoal
- Aloe gel
- Antiseptic wipes
- Applicators
- Aspirin/NSAIDs
- Band-Aids
- Bandage scissors
- Bandages-Sports wrap
- Bandages-self-adhesive
- Batteries
- Butterfly bandages
- Castor Oil
- Clay
- Clean cloth/Towels
- Cold pack
- Condoms
- Cooking pots
- Cups-disposable
- Disposable gloves
- Duct tape
- Electrolyte replacement
- Eyecup
- Flashlight/Headlight
- Honey
- Hot water bottle
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Insect repellent
- Irrigation syringe
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Jars with lids
- Label tape
- Magnifying lens
- Matches/Lighter
- Menstrual products
- Pads
- Paper towels
- Paper/pens
- Plastic bags
- Povidone iodine
- Razor blades
- Resources/References
- Scalpels
- Scissors
- Small 'to-go' containers
- Small containers
- Soap
- Steri-strips
- Stretcher
- String/rope
- Sun block
- Surgical tape
- Tarps
- Throat lozenges
- Toys/Stuffed animals
- Trash bags
- Tweezers
- Vitamins
- Water filter
- Wildcrafting tool
- Wound dressings

## 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, Yucca
2. **Antimicrobial Throat Spray**-Calendula, Echinacea, Osha, Baptisia, Barberry, Propolis, Thyme essential oil, vegetable glycerin
3. **Antiseptic Wash** (external)-Propolis, Myrrh, Barberry, Witch hazel
4. **Antispasmodic Tincture**-Jamaican dogwood, Silk tassel, Black haw, Wild yam
5. **Cold and Flu Tincture**-Echinacea, Baptisia, Osha, Barberry

6. **De-Stress Tincture**-Damiana, St. Johnswort, Vervain, Rosemary, Lavender, Valerian
7. **Decongestant Aid Tincture**-Yerba santa, Wolfberry, Grindelia
8. **Digestive Aid Tincture**-Fennel seed, Marshmallow, Meadowsweet, Chamomile
9. **Headache Tincture**-Feverfew, Skullcap, Blue vervain, Chamomile, Valerian
10. **Immune combination tincture**-Especially as a preventative. Echinacea, Reishi, Astragalus
11. **Pain Relief Tincture**-Jamaican dogwood, Valerian, Hops, Skullcap
12. **Peppermint Spirits**-Peppermint essential oil, Ethanol
13. **Respiratory Expectorant Tincture**-Yerba santa, Mullein, Osha, Grindelia. Licorice
14. **Sleep tincture**-Valerian, Hops, Jamaican dogwood, Kava.
15. **Staph Dismissed** (external)-Chaparral, Licorice, Propolis, Witch hazel
16. **Tooth and Gum Tincture**-Yerba mansa, Echinacea, Barberry, Myrrh, Self-heal, Vegetable glycerin

## Teas and Powders

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

**Oils**-base of extra virgin olive oil. Used externally.

1. **Arnica Oil**-Arnica
2. **Ear Oil**-Mullein flower, Garlic, Vitamin E
3. **Trauma Oil**-St. Johnswort, Arnica, Valerian, Vitamin E, Wintergreen essential oil

**Liniments** (in isopropyl alcohol). Used externally

1. **Arnica Liniment**
2. **Chaparral Liniment**
3. **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 grape root, Propolis, Chaparral
3. **Skin Mending Salve**-Comfrey, Calendula, Chickweed, Yarrow





**Digestive Remedies**-useful plants for a variety of gut ailments

Aloe	Fennel	Mint
Bitters	Ginger	Peppermint
Cardamom	Honey	Peppermint spirits
Catnip	Licorice	Slippery elm
Chamomile	Meadowsweet	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

California poppy	Jamaican dogwood	Skullcap
Cannabis	Kava	St. Johnswort
Epipactis	Lobelia	Valerian
Ethanol	Skeletal muscle relaxants	Wild lettuce
Hops		

**Rubefacient**-stimulates local blood flow and reddens the skin

Cayenne	Tiger balm	Topical heat
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**Sedatives**-reduce and calm agitation and anxiety

Alcohol	Kava	Skullcap
California poppy	Lobelia	Valerian
Epipactis	Marijuana	
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**-aid recovery of wounds

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