

# An Herbalist's View: Setting up a First Aid Station

7Song-Northeast School of Botanical Medicine  
7Song.com

## Introduction

This handout is to provide ideas for people who want to set up a first aid station. The focus here is on setting up at an outdoor site (i.e., away from public conveniences and utilities, such as electricity), but much of the information is also pertinent for setting up a first aid clinic at a city event, such as a protest. There is not much here that is specific to the herbalist; rather, it is about setting up a clinic space for any practitioner to work.

Much of my experience setting up first aid stations has been at a yearly event called the Rainbow Gathering. This free event takes place in a different National Forest each year and is currently attended by about 4,000-7,000 people (2023). (Previously, there were about 15,000 attendees.) This gathering is usually a short hike in from any road, so our field station is generally the initial place where people seek health care. This handout may seem overwhelming at first; all the health conditions, building the station, finding water, etc. But many of these are unique to the Rainbow Gathering and a few similar large outdoor events. In general, most first aid set-ups are much easier to build and maintain. But I want to give a full rundown for anyone interested in putting together this type of first aid station.

While herbalism is a useful first aid skill, it is to your advantage to work with and learn from practitioners of other health care modalities, such as acupuncturists, counselors, nurses, medical doctors, etc. First aid predicaments run the gamut of problems from traumatic injuries to emotional crises, making it useful to have a range of treatment options to offer your patients. It is helpful to have an understanding of each modality, which can guide your patient towards the best possible treatment available.

As a first aid worker, it is important to take care of yourself and, when possible, fellow healthcare providers. You may find yourself in some dodgy situations, such as being exposed to contagious diseases, aggressive individuals, unpleasant authorities, and inclement weather. At the same time, you may be hungry and sorely lacking sleep. You can minimize a few of these dilemmas by taking appropriate medicines, eating well, and getting enough rest whenever possible. This will also help you make better decisions about the predicaments that come your way.

Basically, it is no fun, nor helpful, to work with cranky individuals. So rest, and do those things that help you return to a positive mental and physical homeostasis. Be

aware that there is a tendency to become too involved in first aid and feel the need to be available all the time. Resist this. The healthier you are, both physically and mentally, the better the quality of care that you can offer.

Many of the fundamentals of running a first aid station are the same, whether it is conventional or holistic-oriented. They include: sanitation, preventive techniques (i.e., disposable gloves), evaluation, counseling skills, and treatment. Improvisation is a big part of setting up and running a clinic. Generally, choices are limited, whether it is where you will set up, how to treat a particular malady, or all the other details that will emerge and test your ingenuity. There are a number of skills, such as acquiring materials and building structures, that may be required for getting a first aid station set up. Since you will not likely be the person taking care of all these details, it is important to learn to delegate and support others involved in these tasks.

## Conditions

These are some first aid situations that may arise. Learn about the ones that seem most pertinent to the circumstances you will be involved in.

- Allergy
- Altitude sickness
- Anaphylaxis
- Animal bites/scratches
- Asthma
- Bleeding
- Broken bones
- Burns
- Constipation
- Contagions
- Cough
- Dental problems
- Diarrhea
- Earache
- Emotional crises
- Exacerbation of a preexisting condition
- Eye disorders
- Food/Water sickness
- Headache
- Heat exhaustion
- Hypothermia
- Infection
- Injury
- Insect bites/stings
- Menstrual disorders
- Mental health crisis
- Nausea
- Pain
- Parasites-external
- Parasites-internal
- Plant dermatitis
- Prescriptions forgotten
- Rashes
- Respiratory disorders
- Seizures
- Shock
- Staph infections
- Substance use
- Sunburn
- Toothaches
- Trauma
- Urinary tract infections
- Viruses
- Vomiting
- Wounds

## Ideas for Setting up a First Aid Clinic

Below are several suggestions to consider before setting up a clinic. Some of these are covered in more detail in other sections. They are divided into planning, setting up, and breaking down the clinic.

Along with health care practitioners, there are a number of other skills useful in setting up. Look to recruit people for these various tasks, including building structures, kitchen help, and setting up facilities such as latrines and hand-washing stations. People sometimes want to help but don't feel comfortable with their health-related skills, and still want to be involved. Below are a few good

places to start, and perhaps learn more about the medical side as they spend time there.

## **Planning stages**

### **1. Developing a crew.**

- Who will you be working with?
- Will you be joining up with others, or will you be starting your own clinic?
- See 'Crew'

### **2. Donations**

- There are three major types of donations: medicine, equipment, and money.
- Money can be used to buy additional medicines as well as tools to build the structures, transport gear, and people.
- Find creative ways to locate resources and donations to help finance your first aid station.
- Who do you know who would be interested in this type of venture?

### **3. Group dynamics**

- How will decisions be made?
- Will decisions be made by only the involved individuals, by a majority, by consensus, or by other methods?
- How will you communicate to make these decisions: phone, meetings, email, letters, or other ways?

### **4. Preparing and organizing medicines and supplies**

- This can take a long time; start early.
- If you are preparing your own medicines, it will take even longer to make the tinctures and other preparations you want on hand.
- Label your medicines clearly so you know what they are and who they belong to.

### **5. Checklists**

- Have a well-organized checklist of all the medicines you are bringing.
- Make copies for all involved.
- See 'First Aid Checklist'.

### **6. Personal preparation**

- First aid can be physically and emotionally tiring. Do what you can to prepare yourself for this.
- Be sure to bring your own personal medicines and comforts.

### **7. Transportation**

- How will you get people and supplies to the site?
- How will you move them after the station is closed down?
- Will you need to set up carpools?

### **8. Are there local materials available to build the first aid station?**

### **9. If you are planning to wildcraft or make medicines, bring the necessary tools.**

## **Setting up**

1. **Location: finding a suitable site**
  - See 'Location'.
2. **Water**
  - Water is an important consideration. You will need it for drinking by both patients and staff, as well as for washing wounds and equipment.
  - Where is your water source? Is it close by, or will you need to have people carry it to the station? You will need containers for this.
3. **Transportation of patients**
  - How will you move a patient who needs to be evacuated?
  - Are you on a road or trail that a vehicle can travel on?
  - Can one of your personal vehicles be used as a makeshift ambulance to transport patients to an ambulance or treatment facility?
4. **Building the first aid station**
  - Have people who are skillful in building structures.
  - Rope it off to keep it separate from the surrounding area.
  - Tarping is an important skill. A well set-up overhead tarp can make a big difference protecting people and medicines, especially in rain.
  - Latrines, foot-wash stations, and disposal areas may need to be dug.
5. **Wildcrafting**
  - Are there plants in the area that can be used for medicine?
  - If there are, are they gatherable from an ecological perspective?
  - If gatherable, note locations so others can be sent to gather plants.
  - Ask knowledgeable people (such as local rangers) which plants are endangered and should be left alone.
6. **Set up first aid zones within the first aid station**
  - See 'First Aid Zones'.
7. **Shifts**
  - Set up shifts and duties for people helping out.
  - Who will take charge of money, supplies, communications, etc?
  - See 'Crews'.
8. **Organized and clean**
  - Try to make it everyone's duty to pick up trash and keep the first aid station organized and as clean as possible.
9. **Sick area**
  - Set up an area for ill individuals to lie down and be attended to.
  - If they are contagious, a 'quarantine area' is useful.
  - It is beneficial to have a separate area for people who are having a mental health crisis, especially if they are very anxious, unstable, or disruptive.
10. **Staff set-up**
  - Where will you all be sleeping?

- Have a staff relaxing area where you can still watch the station.
- For on-site meetings, set aside a place just far enough away so there are not many interruptions during the meetings.

### 11. **Communications**

- If using radios or other communication devices, have a designated place where one is kept at all times.
- Teach all staff how to use and maintain them.

### 12. **Waste**

- First aid stations create a lot of waste, since many of the supplies are disposed of after a single use.
- Will you be separating garbage for recycling?
- What will you do with infectious waste?
- See 'Sanitation'.

## **Breaking down and cleaning up**

### 1. **Cleaning up**

- Leave the area as clean, or cleaner, than you found it.
- This usually takes longer than anticipated; make sure you are not left alone to do it.

### 2. **Breaking down tasks**

- General cleanup and getting rid of any waste, especially medical waste.
- Breaking down structures.
- Wood to be put back into the woods, carried out, or burned.
- Tarps taken down (often involves climbing trees).
- Holes to be filled, such as the foot-wash and latrines.
- All traces should be cleaned up.
- Carting all of the materials and garbage out.

### 3. **People**

- Check in with the staff and see how they are doing.
- They may be exhausted or emotionally unsettled, especially if they have not previously worked in a first aid area.
- Collect contact information from people you liked working with.

## **Location**

Location is an important decision for your first aid clinic, though in many scenarios, you may have little choice. Below are some questions and suggestions geared toward a wilderness first aid station, though some of the ideas are more universal.

1. Accessibility for patients is important.
  - Can people who are injured, weak, or sick get to you easily?
2. Can supplies be easily brought to the site by car, wagon, or carried in?
3. Will it be centrally located, and if so, will it be very noisy?
4. Are there a lot of roots or undergrowth that people might trip on?
5. Is it on a hill, making it more difficult to walk to?

6. Are you near any ground transportation, such as an ambulance?
  - Could you get a vehicle in and out for an emergency evacuation?
7. Is there a nearby place where a helicopter can land?
8. Is there shade and protection from the sun and other weather elements?
9. Are the trees spaced apart in a way that you can put up overhanging tarps?
10. Are the trees close enough together to build shelving in between them?
11. Is it an insect-rich area?
  - Are you near a swamp or standing water where there might be a proliferation of biting insects? Are there any wasp or hornet nests nearby?
12. Are there allergy-causing plants around, such as Poison ivy?
13. Are there clear, well-marked paths with signs guiding people to the first aid station?
14. Is the area large enough to meet your needs and include several different areas for diagnosis, treatment, recovery, and the other stations?
15. Does the area feel good to a majority of the people who will be working there?
16. Is there a water supply nearby?
17. Will you be having satellite clinics?
  - How will you communicate?

## **Sanitation**

One of the most important aspects of practicing first aid is proper sanitation, that is, methods to halt the transmission of harmful pathogens. This includes conscientious cleanliness protocols for both patients and practitioners to prevent infection of themselves and others. In places with running water, this job is easier to achieve, but it becomes more difficult in backwoods and other areas where water is less accessible. Use hand sanitizer when there is no water available.

When setting up a first aid station remote from a water source, consider how to address this issue. Options include setting up a pipe system or transporting and carrying the water in. You may need a filter system and other materials, such as buckets.

There are several ways to set up a wash station. Keep in mind that it is easy to reinfect yourself each time you handle something that has been handled by someone else, such as a bottle of soap. An inexpensive option is to use a simple foot-pump and bucket operation (see diagram below). The bucket needs to be continually filled with water.

Good sanitary practices greatly reduce infections from spreading. As you treat one person after another, consider how to avoid transmitting pathogens. And be mindful not to become infected yourself, as first aid workers are continually around infectious agents.

A common way for infection to spread is from the aptly named fecal-oral route. This happens when people do not wash their hands properly after a bowel movement. It is

important to ensure sanitation supplies (soap, water, and bleach) are adequate at the first aid station, latrines, and anywhere where people are preparing and serving food. An important but not fun job is to walk around and inspect kitchens. One could easily feel 'cop-ish' when inspecting food preparation, but it is important work, as they are possible vectors for a major contamination to spread quickly if food preparers are lax about sanitation. Think about this inspection work as community service.

The self-treatment first aid area is a place where unsanitary practices may occur. One common problem is people putting their fingers into salve jars (salves are oil-based and can grow bacteria), and then putting the salve on a wound and re-dipping their fingers into the jar. Provide tongue depressors, Q-tips, or other tools to put in the container. Hang an obvious sign to help teach people safe self-help protocols.

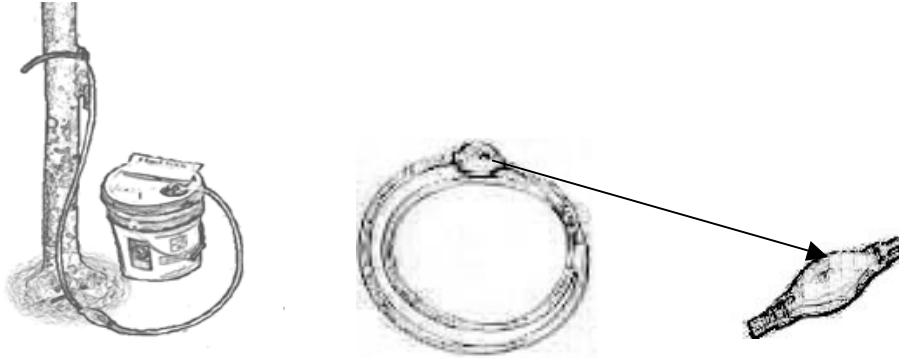
One of the difficulties of setting up a first aid station is what to do with the waste. They range from 'household garbage', to potentially infectious gloves and tongue depressors, to frankly infected blood-soaked gauze. For very infectious disorders, such as cleaning an injury with someone who has hepatitis C, use hazardous waste bags, which are red and well labeled. Or you can make your own. If you know you are dealing with communicable infections, these bags should be dropped off at a proper facility. See 'Working with hospitals'. Household garbage can be dropped off with all other waste, but the disposable gloves and other tainted gear should be clearly labeled as 'medical waste' and then dropped off with regular garbage. This is a precaution for anyone handling and recycling the garbage.

### **Sanitation: Basic Rules**

1. Use disposable gloves whenever touching an open wound, and make sure to use new gloves for each new person. Keep a few pairs on you at all times.
2. Use disposable gloves when handling another person's fluids, including blood, pus, mucus, and saliva.
3. Wash your hands regularly, especially after coming into contact with open wounds, handling anything (e.g., foot basins) that may be contaminated, or having used the latrine. But really, just wash your hands very regularly.
4. Use soap each time.
5. Use Povidone-iodine (Betadine) if you have been in contact with something clearly infectious.
6. Learn the signs and symptoms of infections.
7. Learn about common infectious agents, including water- and food-borne pathogens such as Giardia, Shigella, E. coli, and Salmonella.
8. Learn the early symptoms of the above; this can help prevent the spread of infection.

9. Develop and maintain a serviceable hand-washing station.
10. Have a washing area for bowls, cups, and utensils.
11. Educate about not sharing items that have touched mouths, such as water bottles, bowls, and utensils.
12. Teach others how to take care of themselves and their community.
13. Dispose of all infectious medical waste properly.

### **Foot-Operated Wash Station**



*Simple foot-operated hand-wash station with bucket, tubing, and siphon bulb, which is the part pumped with the foot to move water through the tube.*

### **The Crew: Peopling the First Aid Station**

The people who make up the crew at a first aid station have a strong impact on how well it functions. The way people are treated individually and the quality of the care given keenly affects patients, which in turn will influence whether they come back for follow-ups and recommend you to others. It is also very helpful for people to work well together. This becomes even more important during an emergency.

It is useful for regular first aid workers to have all-around competency skills. Besides knowing their own field of health care, it is beneficial to have skills in triage, working with communication equipment, and knowing what to do in emergencies. When first forming the first aid station, have meetings for everyone to get to know each other and find where each person feels most competent and confident.

There are some basic social skills involved in doing first aid work that are appreciated and useful. Just working to get along and putting small grievances aside is very helpful. Humor can sometimes be useful, as it can help distract the patient from pain. And for the staff, it can help to shrug off the constant pain seen in this line of work. It is easy to get exhausted from being around a lot of physical and emotional pain, and it is helpful to take breaks. There will be times when you will not be able to help a person, at least to their satisfaction, and it is important not to take it too personally. When people are in pain and trauma, they can lash out. It is helpful at times to remind yourself why you are there: to help people. Pain exists, and no one is going to stop all of it. We can only try to make situations more tolerable. If you come in with an 'I'm going to help everyone's problems' attitude, you

will likely get crushed by your expectations.

It is important to learn how to ask good questions to gauge the extent of a patient's pain or damage. In general, consider the tone of your voice, body language, and the words you use. In working with individuals, it is also helpful to be able to let people know the seriousness of their injury without increasing their anxiety level too dramatically. This is important as stress can make everything feel worse. And it is easier to work with and help folks make decisions if they are more relaxed. Learning to share information in a tone and style that allays some anxiety is a valuable tool.

Introduce yourself to each individual, both for courtesy and to learn their name. If they come back, they can ask for you by name if they have any questions or need a refill.

First aid workers may need to rush to an emergency or to check on someone who can't get to the station. Identify who feels comfortable in these situations and make sure they have the appropriate gear ready, such as radios and basic first aid supplies, including medicines they have experience using. Also, first aid workers should travel in pairs so that one can always get help while the other attends to a patient. In a larger event, it is also helpful to have pairs of people to go on regular 'house calls' and roam around and see if anyone might need some assistance (and perhaps goad people into avoiding too much sun or other preventative actions).

## **First Aid Jobs**

Different situations require differing first aid skills. Below are some of the jobs that may be necessary to function well. Generally, each person is performing a few of these at any one time.

1. **Apothecary:** dispensing and organizing the medicines.
2. **Banking:** help collect and distribute funds and supplies.
3. **Carpenters/handypersons:** build shelves and 'furniture', set up and maintain the physical space.
4. **Communications:** setting up and maintaining radios and other communication equipment.
5. **Entertainers:** anyone wishing to bring levity to the house of pain.
6. **General helpers:** to help with assorted odd tasks.
7. **House calls:** people willing to leave the clinic and help where necessary.
8. **Kitchen crew:** feed the hungry staff.
9. **Night shift:** workers willing to work from night till morning,
10. **Self-help area:** this area needs continual organizing, restocking, and cleaning.
11. **Practitioners:** various health-related and medical workers.
12. **Runners:** willing to relay information and fetch and deliver supplies.
13. **Tarpologists:** setting up tarps to prevent excessive sun or rain. Some people are much better at it and usually need to be able to climb trees and work around obstacles. Good tarping can make a big difference, keeping people and medicine safe in inclement weather.

14. **Triage:** prioritizing incoming patients and also matching up clients with practitioners' skills and expertise. Help incoming patients be comfortable.
15. **Water carriers:** hauling water.

### **Crew Considerations**

1. Each individual should know the basics, such as useful common plants, important medicines, how to use communication equipment, safety and emergency protocols, and teamwork strategies.
2. Each person should keep an eye on the first aid station to make sure items are not taken, to know who is part of the staff, and to keep it a reasonably calm and safe place.
3. People should work together to share skills.
4. First aid stations are often teaching spaces for people to learn these medical skills. If you are knowledgeable, help tutor others. If you are learning, be respectful, watch, and learn.
5. Have all staff check their pockets occasionally for any medicines they may have put in there and forgotten. This is a common way for medicines to disappear.
6. Have regular meetings where everyone is required to show up (except a skeleton staff) to find out if there are any medical situations we should all know about, share treatment strategies, and check in to see if anyone needs help.

### **First Aid Zones**

Each first aid clinic will have different needs. These are some of the common 'zones'. Often, they are not distinct from each other and will overlap. This can work well for areas such as triage and treatment, but the kitchen is best kept distinct, as it is often where first aid workers take a break and relax.

1. **Apothecary:** where the medicines are situated. These medicines are for the practitioner's use only. There may be a separate area for people visiting to help themselves to medicines.
2. **Compost pit:** kitchen and food wastes.
3. **Fire pit:** to keep warm and hang around at night.
4. **Foot-wash area:** to treat foot cuts and sores. A place to use washbasins with an open pit to work over, so wastewater doesn't lie on the ground where people walk.
5. **Graywater pit:** to dump out non-infectious wastewater away from treatment.
6. **Hand-washing station:** placed nearby for accessibility.
7. **Kitchen:** for cooking and eating food.
8. **Latrine:** nearby for people who are sick.
9. **Latrine:** further away for those who can walk there.
10. **Quarantine:** for patients with highly contagious diseases,
11. **Recovery area:** for patients to lie down while recovering from various ailments. Useful to have this area covered and contain cots and blankets.
12. **Recycling:** for recyclable goods
13. **Staff area:** a dedicated area for the staff to take a break. This could also be a place for staff meetings.
14. **Self-treatment area:** where people can treat themselves for minor

- problems such as sunburn and cuts. Keep this area stocked with basics.
15. **Supply area:** for storing medicines. It usually needs to be continually organized. This area is for staff only.
  16. **Tea making area:** separate from the kitchen to cook up medicinal teas.
  17. **Treatment:** general-where most medical work is performed.
  18. **Treatment:** specialized. Some treatments require privacy or protection from the elements, such as acupuncture and massage.
  19. **Triage area:** to prioritize patients, usually near the entrance.
  20. **Waiting area:** a place to wait for a practitioner. Chairs, stumps, or homemade benches are helpful.

## Equipment

There is a ton of gear one could purchase and bring to a first aid station. Before you do, here are a few ideas to consider. Consider what type of physical set-up you will have and the health conditions you expect to encounter. Some of this gear is expensive, so start searching for equipment a while before you will need it. This will give you time to find inexpensive and/or used equipment. There are also places to post 'wish lists' to see if others have what you want. And consider holding fundraisers and think about who you can ask for donations.

The more equipment you have, the more you have to lose. It is important for all workers to ensure equipment isn't lost or borrowed and not returned. This happens easily enough for items such as stretchers (which are pricey), as people will be carrying them far from the first aid station. Equipment can also get mangled, and there is the consideration of where to store it between first aid events. The bulk and weight of the equipment can also be an impediment if you are hauling it somewhere distant from a road.

That said, much of this equipment is very useful and hard to improvise on the spot, such as a stretcher. The gear will reflect your medical skills. If you are not trained to use an oxygen tank, then it is just a liability.

Below is a basic equipment list and does not cover herbal or other medicines. For a more extensive list, please see my First Aid Checklist (a handout on my website).

## Equipment List

1. **Buckets:** 5-gallon. For hauling water and for foot and hand soaks.
2. **Cell phone:** for communication within and outside the event.
3. **Communication equipment:** radios and similar.
4. **Cots:** for sick folks and tired personnel.
5. **Duct tape:** everybody's favorite.
6. **Kitchen gear:** for hungry staff. Also, tea-making equipment.
7. **Knives:** various uses.
8. **Money:** to purchase needed items.
9. **Paper and pen:** to take notes and write instructions for patients and labels.
10. **Plywood:** to build shelves and latrines.

11. **Recorder:** to record observations.
12. **Shovel:** dig latrines, foot-wash ditch, compost, gray-water, and fire pit.
13. **Sign-making materials:** for around the clinic and to help people find the station.
14. **Stretcher:** there are several types; research which one would work best for you within budget constraints.
15. **Tarps:** for shade and protection.
16. **Tools:** hammer, screwdrivers, cordless power drills, rope, string, saw, etc.
17. **Wheelbarrow:** to haul gear around.

## Logistics

Here are some ideas to consider regarding unforeseen issues before setting up your first aid station.

1. **Egos-**When different practitioners have different ideas on how to treat someone, how do you decide on which method of treatment to use? This could be about differences within the same discipline (e.g., herbalists) or across disciplines (e.g., herbal medicine vs. conventional medicine). Respect is key here.
2. **Working with local authorities-**There is often an opportunity to interact with various health care workers and officials who may be monitoring or inspecting your first aid station. This can be a very mixed experience as they may have little knowledge or feel disapproving of holistic medicine practices. But also, they may know a lot about local health care facilities and other pertinent information. A lot hinges on the relationship you build. Be open about your capabilities and also firm in your desire to be there and help. While sometimes they come with a bureaucratic mindset, often they are just there to help and learn. They can support the clinic in a number of ways, including contributing medical supplies or helping arrange lab tests for possible contagious vectors. Remember, they have a stake in this too, as any potential illnesses can impact local hospitals and clinics, as well as people in the area. When possible, foster a cooperative spirit, as this benefits all parties involved. There may also be a police presence. This can be difficult, as it may deter some folks from coming in.
3. **Working with local hospitals and clinics.** When people are sick or severely injured and cannot be adequately treated at the first aid station, they may need to be transported to a local health care facility. In rural areas, these may be small, lightly staffed places. It is helpful to develop a rapport with local hospitals and clinics and apprise them of the conditions they may encounter. If one of the first aid staff works in a hospital, they may make a good contact person. If a patient wants to go to a hospital, it is their right, though some people are unaware of how much it may cost. Ask whether they have insurance and give them a realistic breakdown of costs. There may also be a free clinic in the area. It is important not to overtax the resources of the communities one is visiting, and do as much as you can at the first aid station.  
Another consideration is the safe disposal of the infectious waste generated by

the first aid station. Hospitals routinely do this, but they may charge for outside medical waste; ask and try to work with them about this.

## **The Medicines**

While this document will not cover specific medicines to bring, the following are general considerations for supplying medicines to a first aid station.

1. Where will the medicines come from, and who will pay for them?
2. How to organize the medicines so they can be efficiently found and dispensed.
3. Who will be handling the medicines?
  - The more people involved, the more likely that they will disappear or be misplaced (often in someone's pocket).
4. How to transport the medicines to the first aid station? It could weigh a lot.
5. Do you have a 'house-call' (a 'run') bag?
  - This is a way to take some of the medicines from the clinic to those in need elsewhere. It is helpful to have a separate run bag so the medicines won't be missed at the station.
6. If you use potentially dangerous plants such as Belladonna, do you have a way to keep people from finding and using them and harming themselves?
7. When deciding which medicines to bring, think about the circumstances you will be in. For instance, if there will be a lot of pollen, make sure to carry extra antihistamine-type herbs.

## **End Note**

One of my concerns with writing all the above details is that it might intimidate people from ever starting on this venture. But you should know that for most people, working in first aid just means just showing up with your skills and getting to work, not all of the building and other logistics. But after 40 years of helping set up and work at a wilderness first aid station, I wanted to share some of the hands-on experience I have gained.

For many herbalists, the first step is gaining first aid skills and clinical experience. There are many books and online resources to study from, as well as taking first responder courses. Just learning basic first aid skills is an excellent way to begin, as many of the necessary skills are not about medicine (i.e., herbal medicine); they deal with how to approach these situations and cause the least harm to yourself and those with whom you interact.

Consider volunteering at first aid stations at events. Quietly observe what others are doing and, at the same time, help out with the various chores. Start your training by helping with the things you feel most confident in doing and gaining skills and knowledge along the way. See you there.