

Forgotten
**Backyard
Remedies**

by Amber
Robinson

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

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How To Use The Medicinal Power Of Plants

Amber Robinson

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A NOTE ON PLANT REMEDIES

Plant remedies have been utilized since the dawn of man. Our ancestors relied on indigenous plants to survive. The remedies in this book are nothing new; they have been around for many, many years. While these remedies can be very effective, they are not a cure-all. Benjamin Franklin summed it up nicely in 1736 when he uttered the famous phrase, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Diet and a healthy lifestyle can impact health dramatically, thus reducing the chance you will need plant remedies at all.

It is important for the reader to understand that just because something is natural and comes from the earth, does not mean that it is always completely safe. Plant remedies can be potent, depending on how they are prepared and administered. Respect their power. Never take more than the recommended dosages of any plant, unless you are under the care of an experienced Naturopath, Herbalist, or Physician. If you are pregnant or nursing, always research the safety of a remedy before taking it, as many are not safe during pregnancy.

The remedies in this book span time and the globe. Most of the plants mentioned can be either grown or foraged, depending on your geographic location. Please practice sustainable foraging. Many herbalists go by the “ten percent rule,” which states that you should never take more than ten percent of any plant you come across in the wild. This is especially important to ensure that future generations can benefit from this ancient craft.

Another important aspect of foraging is to learn the rules of plant identification. In the first half of the book, readers can find out where these plants grow, as well as how to grow them. There is also detailed identification information about each plant. When trying to identify a plant, always run through its identification several times. Read through the plant’s unique features more than once, while closely observing the plant. Allow time to pass. Observe it over the course of several seasons to better understand all the stages of the plant’s growth. Only when you have cross referenced, ruled out lookalikes, and know beyond a doubt that you have a positive identification, should you harvest and use a plant. Do not use a plant that you are not sure about.

PLANT REMEDY TERMS

Abortifacient – inducing abortion (tansy might have abortifacient properties).

Adjuvant – aiding the action of a medicinal agent.

Analeptic – restorative or stimulating effect on central nervous system.

Analgesic – relieve pain (examples include the leaves of hoary vervain and great blue lobelia leaves).

Anaphrodisiac – reduces capacity for sexual arousal.

Anesthetic – induces loss of sensation or consciousness due to the depression of nerve function.

Antianemic – preventing or curing anemia.

Antibacterial – destroying or stopping the growth of bacteria (example: wild bergamot and yarrow have antibacterial properties).

Antibilious – easing stomach stress (peppermint and fennel are said to have antibilious properties).

Anticatarrh – reduces inflamed mucous membranes of head and throat.

Antidepressant – therapy that acts to prevent, cure, or alleviate mental depression (St. John's wort is said to help with mild to moderate depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder).

Antidiabetic – preventing or relieving diabetes.

Antidiarrhetic – substances use to prevent or treat diarrhea.

Antiemetic – stopping vomiting.

Antifungal – destroying or inhibiting the growth of fungus (tea tree is an amazing antifungal).

Antihemorrhagic – controlling hemorrhaging or bleeding (yarrow has been used as an antihemorrhagic in the past).

Anti-infectious – counteracting infection (garlic and goldenseal have been used for their anti-infectious properties).

Anti-inflammatory – controlling inflammation, a reaction to injury, or infection (examples of plants with anti-inflammatory properties are turmeric and Solomon's seal).

Antimalarial – preventing or relieving malaria.

Antimicrobial – destructive to microbes (lavender is antimicrobial).

Antioxidant – prevents or inhibits oxidation.

Antipruritic – preventing or relieving itching.

Antipyretic – agent that reduces fever (febrifuge). Examples include yarrow and hoary vervain.

Antirheumatic – easing pain of rheumatism, inflammation of joints and muscles.

Antiseptic – agent used to produce asepsis and to remove pus, blood, etc.

Antispasmodic – calming nervous and muscular spasms or convulsions (skullcap, passionflower, and California poppy all are said to have antispasmodic properties).

Antitussive – controlling or preventing cough (wild cherry bark, mullein leaf, and lobelia are antitussive).

Antiviral – opposing the action of a virus (elderberry, honeysuckle, self-heal, and St. John's wort are examples).

Aperient – a very mild laxative.

Aperitive – stimulating the appetite for food.

Aphrodisiac – substance increasing capacity for sexual arousal.

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Asepsis – sterile; a condition free of germs, infection, and any form of life.

Astringent – agent that constricts and binds by coagulation of proteins a cell surface.

Bitter – stimulates appetite or digestive function (Dandelion greens are considered to be bitter herbs).

Cardiotonic – increases strength and tone (normal tension or response to stimuli) of the heart. (Example – hawthorn berries are said to be cardiotonic).

Carminative – causing the release of stomach or intestinal gas (peppermint, catnip, and fennel are examples).

Catarrhal – pertaining to the inflammation of mucous membranes of the head and throat.

Cathartic – an active purgative, producing bowel movements.

Cholagogue – an agent that increases the flow of bile from gallbladder.

Cicatrizant – aiding formation of scar-tissue and healing wounds.

Counterirritant – agent producing an inflammatory response for affecting an adjacent area.

Demulcent – soothing action on inflammation, especially of mucous membranes.

Dermatitis – inflammation of the skin evidenced by itchiness, redness, and various lesions.

Diaphoretic – increases perspiration.

Diuretic – increases urine flow (examples of this are corn silk and cleavers).

Dysmenorrhea – painful menstruation.

Dyspepsia – imperfect or painful digestion.

Ecbolic – tends to increase contractions of uterus, facilitating childbirth.

Emetic – produces vomiting (trout lily and bloodroot are said to have emetic properties).

Emmenagogue – agent that regulates and induces normal menstruation.

Emollient – softens and soothes the skin.

Errhine – bringing on sneezing, increasing flow of mucus in nasal passages.

Escharotic – a caustic substance that destroys tissue and causes sloughing.

Estrogenic – causes the production of estrogen (red clover is estrogenic, as it contains phytoestrogens).

Euphoriant – produces a sense of bodily comfort, but is a temporary effect and often addictive.

Expectorant – facilitates removal of secretions.

Febrifuge – an agent that reduces fever (yarrow is an excellent example of a febrifuge).

Galactagogue – an agent that promotes the flow of milk (fenugreek has been proven successful as a galactagogue).

Hemagogue – an agent that promotes the flow of blood (Use caution with turmeric, as it can have hemagogic properties).

Hemostatic – controls the flow or stops the flow of blood (yarrow has hemostatic properties).

Hepatic – having to do with the liver.

Herpetic – treating skin eruptions relating to the herpes virus (St. John's wort, lemon balm, and self-heal have been used to treat herpes).

Hypertensive – raises blood pressure.

Hypoglycemant – an agent that lowers blood sugar.

Hypotensive – lowers blood pressure (maitake mushrooms can have hypotensive properties, as can ashwagandha).

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lactifuge – reduces the flow of milk (some say to use caution with peppermint, as it can have lactifuge properties).

Laxative – substance that acts to loosen the bowels contents.

Masticatory – increases flow of saliva upon chewing.

Narcotic – induces drowsiness, sleep, or stupor and lessens pain.

Nervine – a nerve tonic (skullcap is an excellent nervine).

Neuralgia – severe sharp pain along the course of a nerve.

Parturfaciant – induces contractions of labor.

Purgative – laxative causes the evacuation of intestinal contents.

Resorbent – aids reabsorption of blood from bruises.

Rheumatism – a general term for acute or chronic conditions characterized by inflammation of the muscles and joints (includes arthritis, gout, bursitis, myositis, and fibromyositis).

Rubefacient – agent which reddens skin, dilates the vessels, and increases blood supply locally.

Sedative – exerts a soothing, tranquilizing effect on the body (chamomile can have mild sedative properties).

Soporific – inducing sleep (valerian root is often used for its soporific properties).

Stimulant – temporarily increases body or organ function (American ginseng has stimulant properties).

Stomachic – aids the stomach and digestion.

Sudorific – acts to increase perspiration.

Tonic – a substance that increases strength and tone (Ganoderma mushrooms have tonic properties, as do many medicinal mushrooms and herbs).

MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS

Refer back to the preparations below for help creating the various remedies in this book:

Bolus – These can be made by infusing various herbs in Coconut Oil. Because of the consistency of Coconut Oil, it is easier to mold into a ball for vaginal insertion. These are especially handy when trying to cure Bacterial Vaginosis and Yeast Infections.

Capsule – Capsules can be made by purchasing empty capsules and filling them with powdered herbs of your choice. They are available in different sizes and materials.

Compress – These can be hot or cold, depending on the specifics of the situation. Compresses are made by soaking a cloth in herb-infused water (hot or cold) and applying to the site of the injury. Hot herb-infused water is good for treating digestive issues, respiratory issues, colds, and sore throats. Cold water is used for treating skin issues like sunburns and eczema.

Decoction – A decoction is concentrated, herb-infused water. The basic recipe is one tablespoon of herb to one cup of water. It is made by boiling the herb on the stove in water and letting the water boil away for twenty to forty minutes, longer if you want it stronger, in the covered pot. This will last for a few days after making it. Store it in the refrigerator.

Glycerite – This is an alternative to tinctures, especially for those who do not wish to consume alcohol. This is a very popular method of preparation for children as well. Glycerites are made by filling a jar with plant material and then fully covering the plant material with a mix of three parts vegetable glycerin and one-part distilled water. Let it sit in a cool, dark, place and shake the jar daily. After four to six weeks, strain out the plant material and bottle the liquid. Dosages will depend on the plant material used, and are usually taken internally. Storage in the refrigerator is preferred for maximum shelf life. Glycerites usually last anywhere from three to nine months.

Nourishing Infusion – These are made by boiling water (usually enough to almost fill a quart jar) and dumping it over a cup of dried herbs (already in the quart jar) and letting this steep for up to eight hours. These are refrigerated and drank daily. They usually last in the fridge around three days.

Oil Infusion – Oil infusions can be made by first drying the plant material and then putting it in a glass jar. Next, fill the jar with a carrier oil (fill it enough to cover the plant material completely). Some examples of carrier oils are olive oil, sweet almond oil, avocado oil, castor oil, rice bran oil, jojoba oil, and grapeseed oil. Let it sit in a warm place, like the windowsill (in a paper bag to avoid too much sunlight, which can break down the medicinal constituents of the plants) to make a solar infusion. After about two to four weeks, strain it out. The oil is now infused with the plants. This can be used alone, or made into a salve later.

Oil Infusion (Quick Method) – Oils can be infused with plants quicker by putting the plants and oil together in a pot on VERY low heat and letting it slow cook all day. Strain out after six to eight hours. The “warm” setting on some stoves is highly recommended as well. Oils can also be infused in the oven by turning it down as low as it can go and putting the oil and plants in an oven safe dish. Let it bake all day and strain out.

****For oil infusions, a lot of people get confused with the process and do it like they were making a tincture. That is, they use *fresh* plant material. This is never a good idea. Using fresh material means there will be some water content in the infusion. This can lead to mold and spoilage.**

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Oxymel – This is a blend of apple cider vinegar and honey used to create a plant extract. Play around with the amounts of each to get the desired flavor. It doesn't take much honey to get a very sweet flavor. Fill the jar to the top with plant material (for this particular remedy, use wilted or mostly dry plants) and then fill the rest of the jar with the combination of apple cider vinegar and honey. Make sure to use raw honey. Follow the same procedure as tinctures. Let it sit for four to six weeks, shaking daily, and then strain it out.

Poultice – Mashed up fresh plants applied to a wound and held with a cloth (or your hand in emergencies) to keep it in place. Usually used to help with pain, inflammation, and bruising.

Salve – A salve is a type of ointment made with the basic ratio of eight ounces of herb-infused oils, one ounce of beeswax or carnauba wax, and ten to twenty drops of essential oils of your choice.

Syrup – Herbal syrups can be made by boiling down the plant material and water until it is quite concentrated, then adding equal parts (or more) of raw honey to give it a syrup-like consistency.

Tea – Tea can be made by infusing a small amount of plant material into hot water for several minutes. This particular preparation is handy due to the fact that it can be made quickly. However, it is not as potent as other preparations. The best devices for tea infusion are stainless steel "tea balls." There are also disposable, as well as reusable, tea bags you can purchase and fill to make your own tea for the remedies in this book.

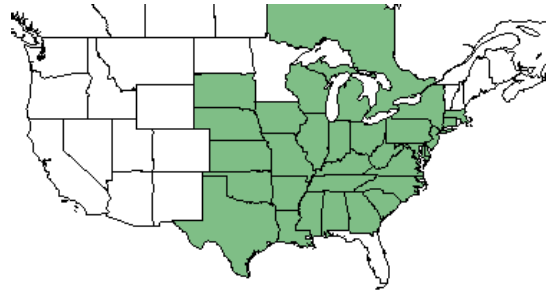
Tincture – An extract made by filling a glass jar with plant material and then filling the jar (to the top of the plant material) with at least 80 proof alcohol. Leave the jar in a cool, dark place for at least 4-6 weeks and shake it daily. Check the liquid levels often, especially the first week, because the plant matter usually soaks up the alcohol and lowers the overall levels. You do not want any plant matter exposed. You may need to top it off with more alcohol as needed. When four to six weeks are up, strain it out. Many people use a cheesecloth to strain out the liquid. Squeeze it tightly to get all the liquid from the plant matter! Tinctures are usually taken internally in small amounts. Many herbalists will ask that tinctures be taken *sublingually*, meaning under the tongue. Tinctures are recommended by many herbalists because they last for years, are more concentrated, and are taken in small amounts. Remember throughout the process to label everything, because it is easy to make a bunch of tinctures and forget what they were.

AGRIMONY, *AGRIMONIA PARVIFLORA*

History: Agrimony has been used medicinally ancient Egyptians, as well as Romans and Greeks.

North American species like *Agrimonia parviflora* were used by Native Americans for the healing of wounds, fevers, diarrhea, parasites, and sore throats.

Where Found/Grown: *Agrimonia parviflora* is common in woodlands, ditches, wet areas like marshes, swamps, and along creeks. It is native to the eastern half of the United States.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=AGPA6>



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Flower Close Up

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Identification: Occasionally, this species of agrimony can grow up to six feet tall, but most of the time it is half that size. Leaves are alternating and odd-pinnate. They are a dark to medium green color and can have up to seventeen toothed leaflets. Small, yellow flowers grow up an elongated inflorescence at the top of the plant.

Leaf: Leaves are alternating, odd-pinnate, dark to medium green, and have up to seventeen toothed leaflets.

Flower: Flowers are growing up an inflorescence at the top of the plant. They are small and yellow.

Root: Roots are long and fibrous.

Lookalikes: There are several species of agrimony that can be found in North America. Although many are used interchangeably for medicinal purposes, *Agrimonia parviflora* can be distinguished from other species by its flowers, which are the smallest of the species.

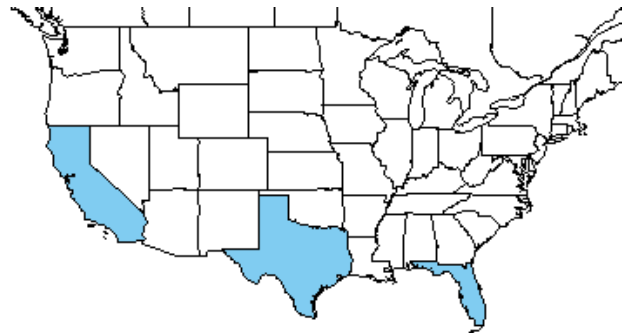
How to Grow: Agrimony is considered a noxious weed in some areas. It is best to forage for this common plant in the summer months, looking for the small yellow flowers on inflorescences from mid to late summer around the wood's edge. If you desire to grow agrimony, plant seeds in early spring. It prefers partial sun and plenty of water. Make sure the soil is well-draining to accommodate the water it needs without flooding the plant. Agrimony grows best in US hardiness zones six through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Diarrhea (245)

ALOE, ALOE VERA

History: This member of the succulent family has been used for centuries in Ayurveda, as well as other modes of medicine. It was documented in early Egyptian writings as early as the sixteenth century B.C. It was also documented by Pliny the Elder in the first century A.D. and Greek writings around 512 A.D.

Where Found/Grown: This plant originated from the Arabian Peninsula, but now grows wild in most tropical climates around the world. In addition, it grows very easily indoors in pots. For this reason, it is common and found around the world



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ALOE>

Identification: As a member of the succulent family, it has the characteristic thick, fleshy, leaves filled with medicinal gel. It is a green to bright green color. Sometimes the leaves have white flecks. Tiny, spiny, serrated edges go up and around the pointed leaves. This plant is stemless, or has very short stems. Aloe can grow from twenty-four to thirty-nine inches tall. The plant produces yellow to reddish-colored flowers on spikes in the right conditions.

Leaf: Green to bright green, fleshy, with spines surrounding it.

Flower: Coming from a spike in the center of the plant, yellow to red in color.

Root: Roots grow wide, but not deep.

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Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Root

Lookalikes: Aloe can look a lot like agave because they grow in similar environments and have fleshy spikes. However, agave tends to be taller. The leaves of aloe are thicker and contain more gel than agave leaves, which are more fibrous. Agave flowers are tubular and come out in spikes from the center of the plant. However, agave only flowers once and dies, unlike aloe which flowers continually.

How to Grow: One of the easiest plants to grow, aloe can easily live indoors in pots, no matter the climate. They require little maintenance, as they are drought tolerant. They are not overly picky about sunlight, but be sure to keep it near a window. Plant aloe in a well-draining potting mix that consists of perlite, lava rock, and coarse sand. It can be grown easily from off-shoots. It prefers temperatures between fifty-five- and eighty-degrees Fahrenheit. If you live in a warm, tropical climate, you will likely have success growing aloe outdoors by planting it in full to partial sun. Aloe grows best outdoors in US hardiness zones nine through eleven.

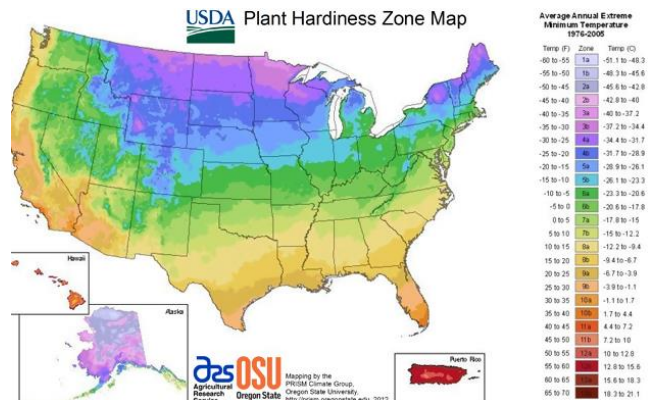
Used in Recipes For: Diabetes (223), Ulcers (247), Hives (298), Insect Bites and Stings (302), Eczema (305) Crohn's Disease (312)

ANDROGRAPHIS, *ANDROGRAPHIS PANICULATA*

History: Andrographis has been used traditionally in India for the treatment of infections. It is also used in Ayurveda for some cancers.

After centuries of use with fighting infection, modern science has indeed shown the plant to be helpful in treating respiratory tract infections.

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to India and Sri Lanka but is also grown in the southeastern and southern regions of Asia.



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Identification: Andrographis plants can grow up to forty-three inches in height. They have lance-shaped and tiny, whitish-purple flowers.

Leaf: Leaves are lance-shaped.

Flower: Flowers are tiny, and range from whitish to purplish in color.

Root: The root system is shallow.

Lookalikes: There are many different Andrographis species. For instance, *Andrographis echioides* grows in the same regions and looks similar to *Andrographis paniculata*. Both are used medicinally.

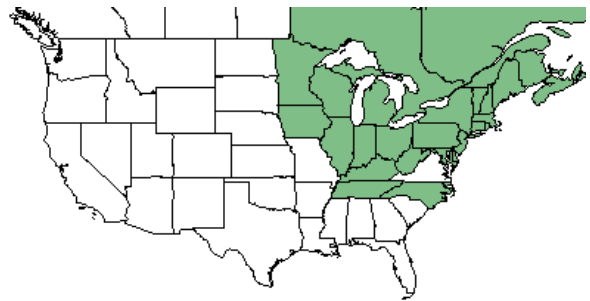
How to Grow: Prepare a bed for sowing seeds in the spring, after any danger of frost is past. Plant the seeds two inches deep and space them out six to twelve inches. It does best in hot, humid locations that mimic its native habitat. Southernmost areas of the United States would be more conducive to growing this plant. Plant the seeds in fertile, well-draining soil and water them often. This plant also prefers full to partial sun. Mulch around the area to prevent weeds and keep things moist. Us hardiness zones eight through ten might be more suitable for growing this plant.

Used in Recipes For: Lyme Disease (309)

ANGELICA, *ANGELICA ATROPURPUREA*

History: This tall North American plant has a history of use with Native Americans, especially in the Arkansas region. These indigenous people were said to have carried angelica with them for a variety of medicinal purposes, in addition to smoking it. Other tribes used the plant for ceremonial purposes, as well as for pain and to help calm people down.

The roots have a pleasant smell, and were burned during ceremonies and prayer. There are many other species of this plant, and some were used to help ward off sickness during times of plague in the Middle Ages.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ANA>

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to many states in the northeastern half of the United States. It is also native to many regions of northeastern Canada. It prefers moist, swampy woodlands and riverbanks.

Identification: This plant is easily noticed, since it grows up to six feet tall. It stands about other foliage with its white flowering tops. You will notice that the strong stem is purple and hollow. In addition, more stems will branch out off the main center stem. The leaves of the plant are segmented and lower leaves can grow up to two feet long. The flowers are in umbels and range in color from white to a green color. Umbels are around eight inches across, and there can be many umbels on one plant. The aromatic root has a pleasant scent.

Leaf: Segmented, with larger lower leaves reaching up to two feet long.

Flower: Green to white in color, in umbels atop various purple stems.

Root: Pleasantly aromatic, with large taproots.



Lookalike: Make sure not to confuse angelica with water hemlock or giant hogweed. Both are very dangerous. Both water hemlock and angelica grow in similar habitats and from far away, you will notice that both have white flowering tops in umbels. They are also both around the same size. A distinguishing factor is that hemlock has purple splotching, especially near the base. This may get confusing, but angelica has more of a solid purple stem. Water hemlock stems are also hairless and hollow. There are usually far more umbels on water hemlock than angelica. Because of the toxic nature of this lookalike, do not take any chances and do not dig up the plant if you even slightly suspect it may be water hemlock.

The leaves of water hemlock look significantly different than angelica. They resemble wild carrot, in that they are triangular, hairless, lacy, and compound. Giant hogweed is also tall with white flowers on top, but gets very tall, even up to fifteen feet tall! In addition, its stalk is much thicker than angelica. The stalk also has reddish-purple bumps and white hairs. Its leaves are large, up to three to five feet wide, and deeply incised. Stay away from this

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

plant, as it is toxic. Both water hemlock and giant hogweed are both dangerous to be around, so if observe from a distance.

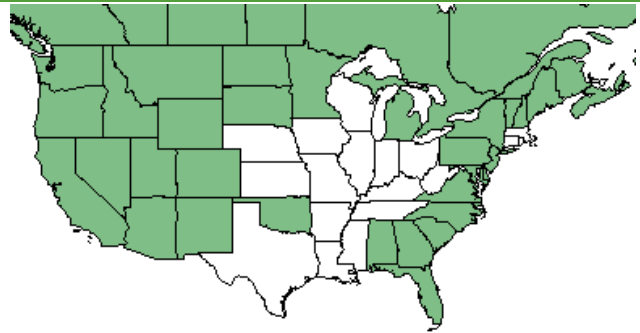
How to Grow: Plant seeds outdoors in moist areas that get plenty of water. These plants tolerate full to partial sun. Plant seeds at least three to four feet apart, as the plants can grow up to six or seven feet tall. Sow seeds in the spring or fall. Keep moist at all times, but try not to overwater. Angelica grows best in US hardiness zones four through seven.

Used in Recipes For: Fibromyalgia (217)

ARNICA, *ARNICA MONTANA*

History: Arnica has been used for healing inflammation and bruises since possibly the Middle Ages. It was first documented for its healing properties in the 1500s. Additionally, Indigenous North Americans used the roots from the plant to treat aches and pains.

Where Found/Grown: Arnica is native to Europe, but many species of arnica grow throughout temperate regions of North America. It can usually be found in upland regions and alpine meadows.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ARNIC>

Identification: Arnica reaches up to two feet tall. Erect stems have large, hairy leaves that are opposite and oblong. Yellow to orange flowers look like flowers typical to plants in the aster family, with long ray and disc florets. The bract under the flower head is hairy.

Leaf: Leaves are hairy, opposite, and oblong.

Flower: Flowers are yellow to orange in color and have long ray and disc florets.

Root: The root system is deep and has rhizomes.

Lookalikes: Arnica can look a lot like other yellow flowers in the aster family that grow in the same region. Look for arnica's hairy leaves and bract to help with identification.

How to Grow: Arnica is best grown in USDA hardiness zones four through nine. Soil should be moist, sandy, slightly alkaline, and well-draining. Arnica prefers full sun, but tolerates some shade as well. Spread seeds after the last frost in spring. Thin the seedlings out to around twelve inches apart when they are beginning to grow.

Used in Recipes For: Bruising and Muscular Injury (285), Back Muscle Pain (288)



ARTICHOKE, *CYNARA CARDUNCULUS* VAR. *SCOLYMUS*

History: Mentions of this plant date back to the ancient writings of Homer. The artichoke is native to the Mediterranean region, as well as southern Europe and northern Africa and although this plant is widely cultivated, can still be found wild in parts of Africa. Artichokes are thought to be one of the oldest cultivated vegetables.

Where Found/Grown: While the majority of artichoke production comes from the Mediterranean basin, it can be grown in areas of North America that have a similar climate, like California and Arizona.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CYSC>

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Identification: This large vegetable can grow over six feet tall. Leaves are silvery green in color, lobed, and arching. The large bud that forms on the plant is the part harvested before flowering and consumed. If allowed to flower, the flower is bright pink to purple and thistle-like.

Leaf: Leaves are silvery-green in color, sometimes purple at the base, lobed, and arching.

Flower: Flowers are a vivid pink to purple color, thistle-like, with numerous hair-like petals.

Root: Artichokes can have vast, deep root systems.

Lookalikes: Because artichoke is mostly cultivated, it is unlikely to come upon it in the wild unless you are exploring certain regions of Africa. Therefore, lookalikes growing in the same area are unlikely.

How to Grow: Growing artichokes will require sandy, well-draining soil with plenty of organic matter. Areas that are cool at night and warm in the daytime are best for growing this plant. These plants must be kept in full sun to thrive. Start seeds indoors eight weeks before the last frost. In eight weeks, place them in the desired area

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of your garden, spacing them around three feet apart. Protect the plants from frost if necessary. Keep artichoke plants well-watered, but take care not to let them sit in standing water. Grow artichoke in US hardiness zones four to seven for best results.

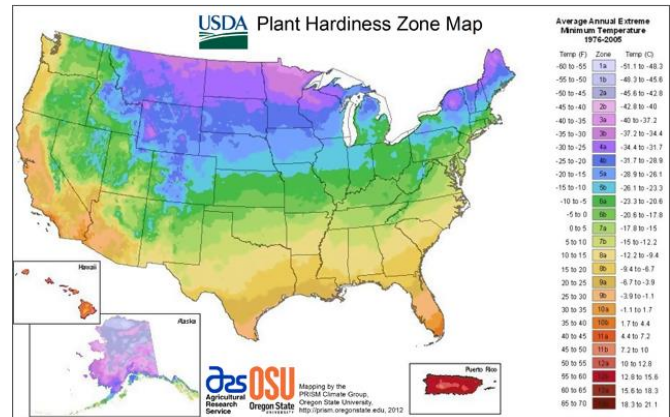
Used in Recipes For: Irritable Bowel Syndrome – IBS (248)

ASHWAGANDHA, *WITHANIA SOMNIFERA*

History: Ashwagandha has been used in Ayurveda for hundreds of years, and possibly longer, in regions of India and Southeast Asia.

The roots of the plant were powdered and used for conditions related to aging and were said to promote longevity. Its name means “smells like a horse” in Sanskrit, referring to the horse-like smell of the roots. Medicinally, it is regarded as an adaptogen.

Where Found/Grown: This plant is mostly cultivated in regions of India where it is native, but is also grown in Nepal, China, and Yemen. It can be grown in the United States in zones three through ten.



Identification: This member of the nightshade family is a short shrub that can grow up to thirty inches tall. Velvet-like branches come from a main stem with light green, elliptic leaves. The flowers produced by the plant can be very small and bell-shaped. They are usually greenish in color and turn to red. Fruit produced by the plant is orange to red in color.

Leaf: Elliptic leaves that are dull green in color.

Flower: Bell-shaped and greenish to red in color.

Root: Smells like horse sweat, thick, with several forks. Cream to dull yellow in color.

Lookalikes: When the plant is fruiting, the fruit pods resemble those of ground cherry, although closer inspection of leaves and stems would show great difference in the rest of the plant. Ground cherry has serrated leaves and ashwagandha does not.

How to Grow: Sow seeds indoors in early spring, keeping them close to the surface. Let them take root and transplant them after the last frost or when they are hardy and ready to plant outdoors (in US zones three through ten). This plant prefers sandy or rocky soil that is well-drained and partial to full sun.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (214), Pituitary Gland Dysfunction (222), Stroke (241), Male Hormonal Imbalance and Erectile Dysfunction (278). Hashimoto's Disease (315)



ASTRAGALUS, *ASTRAGALUS MEMBRANACEUS*

History: Astragalus has long been used in traditional Chinese medicine to tonify the spleen and strengthen the immune system.

The Chinese also use the root of this adaptogenic plant to strengthen many parts of the body and promote stress relief. It is thought to have been used medicinally in china for at least 2,000 years.

Where Found/Grown: Although the most popular medicinal species of astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*) comes from Asia, it was introduced to North America in the 1920s and can be found growing in dry, sandy soils.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ASTRA>



Identification: This plant grows from eighteen to thirty-six inches tall. It has leaves that consist of twelve to eighteen pairs of oblong leaflets. Small, yellow flowers grow in elongated spikes. The stem of the plant is covered in fine hairs.

Leaf: Leaves are in twelve to eighteen pairs of oblong leaflets.

Flower: Flowers are small, yellow, and grow in elongated spikes.

Root: The root system is fibrous and can grow deep.

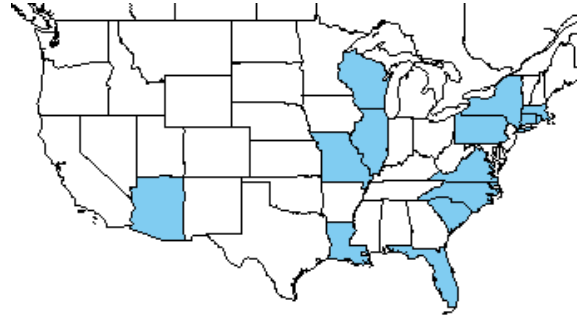
Lookalikes: There are other species of astragalus, or milkvetch, growing throughout North America. Canadian milkvetch is one such species and is quite common. It looks very similar in appearance with its leaflets and yellow flowers. However, Canadian milkvetch tends to have more flowers, in larger clusters.

How to Grow: To grow this plant, stratify the seeds and soak them overnight before sowing. Start them indoors and transfer them outdoors after the last frost. They prefer full sun and sandy, well-drained soil. Water the plants as needed. Astragalus is hardy in US zones six to eleven.

Used in Recipes For: Hepatis (252), Immune System (307), Lyme Disease (309), Lupus (316)

BASIL, *OCCIMOMUM BASILICUM*

History: This member of the mint family has been a popular culinary and medicinal herb since ancient times. Various species of basil have been employed in religious practices around the world as well. In Europe, basil was placed in the hands of deceased persons to ensure a safe journey to the next life. The Greek Orthodox Church used basil to sprinkle holy water, and many other churches used it in similar ways. In the Hindu religion, a species of basil called holy basil has been regarded for centuries as a sacred plant. Ancient Greeks and Egyptians believed that basil would help open the gates of paradise for those who have passed. In Greek mythology, basil appeared after Ocimus was killed by a gladiator. Most ancient Romans and Greeks did not hold basil in as high of esteem as those in other cultures. They regarded the herb as a plant that symbolized misfortune and poverty. It was thought to only grow where bad things happened.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=OCBA>

Where Found/Grown: Basil is thought to be native to Southeast Asia and central Africa. However, like many popular culinary and medicinal garden herbs today, basil has made its way to gardens across the globe. Although it is native to more tropical climates, it has taken well to most areas across North America and can be cultivated rather easily.

Identification: Basil plants can reach up to four-and-a-half feet tall at maturity. Depending on the variety, leaves are usually dark green and ovate. Leaves range in size from around two inches wide and four inches long. Flowers are white, small, and grow on the top of the plant in a central inflorescence. The plant is aromatic and has a sweet smell, with some plant species having a scent reminiscent of anise.

Leaf: The leaves of sweet basil, the most common variety, are dome-shaped, dark green, and ovate. They are very aromatic, having a pleasant, sweet scent.

Flower: Flowers are small and white. They grow at the top of the plant from a central inflorescence.

Root: Root systems consist of a thick taproot.

Lookalikes: Distinguishing between varieties of basil can be difficult. Sweet basil is the most common variety of basil and has larger, smooth, ovate leaves with a domed appearance. Other species like Thai basil have leaves that are smaller, more oblong, spear-like, and smell more of anise. Thai basil also has purple stems. Holy basil has leaves that can be green to purple in color, are slightly toothed, and are petioled.

How to Grow: Seeds can be sown in early spring, after the last frost. Basil doesn't tolerate cold conditions well. Basil grows best outdoors and should be planted in a sunny location. Basil thrives in hot and dry conditions, but will show signs of distress when it does not get enough water. Make sure the soil is well-drained as well. Pinch off flowering tops before they are mature to ensure the plant continues producing foliage. Basil thrives best in US hardiness zones ten and above.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Used in Recipes For: Canker Sores (234), Hypertension (240)

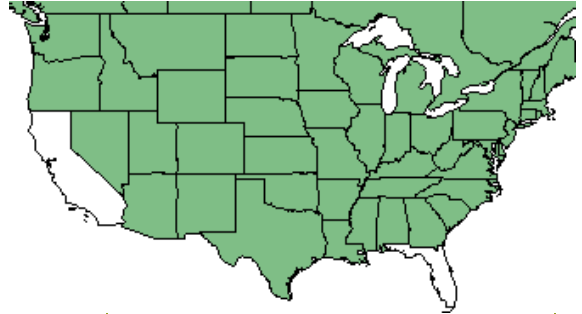


BEE BALM, *MONARDA FISTULOSA*

History: Bee balm, or wild bergamot as it is sometimes called, is a flowering plant native to many regions of North America.

It is no surprise that this aromatic member of the mint family has been used by Native Americans for treating colds. The leaves were often infused in water to make a tea. Modern research has shown the plant to possess strong antimicrobial properties.

Where Found/Grown: This plant can be found in many regions of North America. It is often found in fields, meadows, and roadsides. Its unusual flowers bloom during mid-summer, making it more noticeable.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=MOFI>



Whole Plant



Leaf



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Wild bergamot grows to around three feet in height, but there are many variations of this plant, with some growing much taller. It has strong, square stems characteristic of the mint family. The fragrant leaves are lance-shaped. Flowers have a unique look, with long, tubular petals sticking up all around a thick, purple center.

Leaf: Leaves are lance-shaped and fragrant, having a spicy aroma. They are lightly toothed.

Flower: Flowers are unique, with long, erect, tubular purple petals surrounding a purple center. They are fragrant as well.

Root: The root system consists of rhizomes and strongly branched roots.

Lookalikes: Although it is often called wild bergamot, it is no relation to “bergamot,” which is a member of the citrus family. Not only are both plants completely different species, they do not look alike, with bergamot being a small, green, citrus fruit.

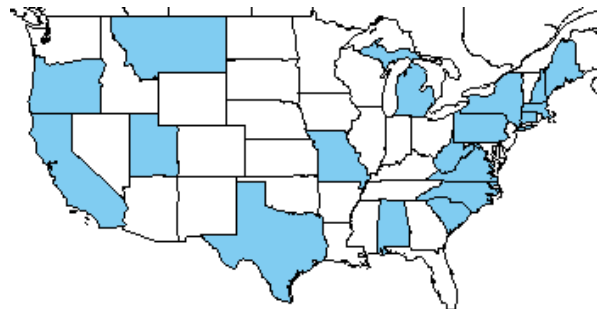
How to Grow: Wild bergamot can be cultivated by sowing seeds in the spring in an area with rich, moist soil with a pH between six and eight. It prefers full sun. Keep the area moist, making sure to avoid overwatering or standing water. This plant grows best in US hardiness zones three through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Ringworm and Athlete’s Foot (302)

BEETROOT, *BETA VULGARIS*

History: Beets have been employed throughout history for food, medicine, and as a dye. The root of the plant has been a source of food for hundreds of years. It was first documented in the 1500s.

In the Middle Ages, beets were used medicinally for illnesses of the blood and digestion. Their bright pink color made them a popular plant to use for dyeing clothing and other objects, and even enhancing the color of wine.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=BEVU2>

Where Found/Grown: Beets are thought to be native to the Mediterranean region. However, their popularity has resulted in their cultivation around the world. From the Mediterranean, they spread to Europe and Asia. Settlers brought them to North America, where they are still grown today.

Identification: The plant that produces beet roots can grow up to one-hundred-twenty centimeters in height. Tall, branched, leafy stems are red to dark pink in color and produce small, green clusters of flowers. The root is what is used for food, medicine, and dye. It is a taproot and ranges in color (depending on the species) from dark pink to white.

Leaf: Leaves grow from reddish to pink stems and are frilly, with pink veining.

Flower: Flowers are small, green, and borne in clusters.

Root: The beet is a taproot.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: Another species of beet that is very popular is the sugar beet. Its thick, fleshy root can contain as much as twenty-two percent sucrose. Sugar beets are responsible for much of the world's supply of sugar. They differ in appearance from the pink and red beets. The root is cream to white in color and longer.

How to Grow: Beets can be easily grown from seed in the garden. Beets prefer acidic and loamy soils. They do not do well when put too close together, so space seed out at least six to eight inches apart. Sow seeds two to three weeks before the last frost in spring. They prefer partial sun or shade. Keep the seeds constantly moist to promote germination. Beets thrive best in US hardiness zones eight through ten.

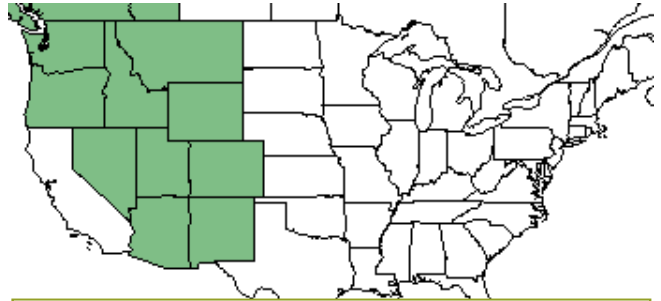
Used in Recipes For: Kidney Injury (262)



BILBERRY, *VACCINIUM MYRTILLUS*

History: Bilberries come from a Eurasian shrub and have been used traditionally for food and medicine. Legend has it that World War II pilots ate these berries to sharpen their night vision. In France and Romania, the berries made a great base for various liqueurs.

Where Found/Grown: Bilberries are native to Europe and there are six different species, depending on the region. They prefer temperate to sub-arctic climates and are found growing in poor, acidic soil on heaths, moors,



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=VAMY2>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

and in the woods. They are common in the wild in Ireland, Iceland, and Sweden. They can also be grown in several regions of North America.

Identification: These tiny shrubs only grow up to one foot tall. Small, ovate leaves are light green and slightly toothed. The berries are dark purple to black in color and have a circular imprint on one end. Bell-shaped flowers usually bloom in the spring and are white and pink in color.

Leaf: Light green, ovate, and finely toothed.

Flower: Bell-shaped, with white and pink colors.

Root: This little shrub has a shallow root system that can tolerate mild wind, but not maritime winds.

Lookalikes: Bilberries and blueberries are often confused. However, they do differ in appearance when inspected a bit closer. Bilberries grow singularly or in a pair. Blueberries grow in clusters. Bilberries are darker in color than blueberries as well. The pulp of bilberries is red to purple in color, whereas blueberries are greenish in color.

How to Grow: Although reportedly hard to grow, these shrubs are best grown in US zones two through six. Bilberry will grow in loamy to sandy soil that is well-drained. Plant this shrub in an area with partial shade. Keep the soil moist, but make sure it drains well.

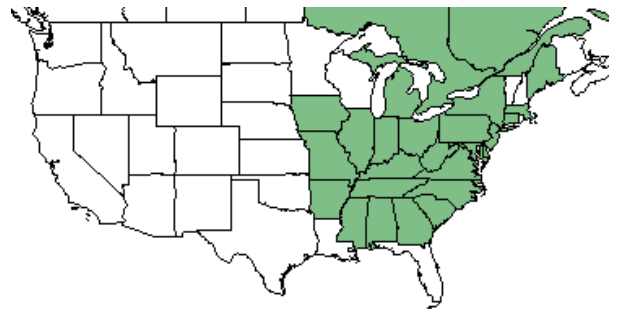
Used in Recipes For: Weak Heart (238)

BLACK COHOSH, *ACTAEA RACEMOSA*

History: Black cohosh has a rich history of use by Native Americans, as it is native to North America. They primarily used it to treat feminine disorders.

Because of this, early settlers also learned of its benefits and began using it in the same ways. Today, this plant is still famous for its healing effects specific to women.

Where Found/Grown: Black cohosh can be found growing wild in the woodlands of Southern and Midwestern United States. Although it can be found in many different types of woodlands, it seems to prefer small woodland openings.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ACRAR>

Identification: Black cohosh begins with a rhizome that grows large, compound leaves. The basal leaves can actually reach over three feet long and have sets of three leaflets with serrated margins. A tall stem shoots up from this basal rosette, revealing white, hair-like clusters of flowers growing along the top. The plant can reach heights of six feet tall.

Leaf: Basal rosette with compound leaves that contain sets of three leaflets with serrated margins.

Flower: Clusters of white, hair-like flower bursts all around the top half of the stalk.

Root: Rhizome, and most popular part of the plant for medicinal use.



Lookalikes: A plant called doll's eyes is often mistaken for black cohosh before it comes into bloom. Both plants grow in the same type of areas and both have similar leaf patterns. To be on the safe side, always wait until the flowers bloom to positively identify them.

Doll's eye plants have flowers growing in a completely different position than black cohosh and the flowers are very different on each plant, with black cohosh having more of a hair-like flower.

How to Grow: Black cohosh can be grown in woodland areas that are shady and have moisture-rich soil. Look for companion plants like goldenseal, ginseng, Solomon's seal, and wild ginger when searching for the right area in the forest. Black cohosh actually grows better from rhizome cuttings. Cut rhizomes into two to three inch sections. Allow any roots attached to remain.

Plant each cutting four to six inches deep and try to space them out leaving two feet between each plant. This plant requires constantly moist soil, so make sure they are in a place that can be watered easily, or is naturally

moist. These plants are notoriously slow growing, so patience is key. They may take over five years to be ready for harvest. Black cohosh grows best in US hardiness zones four through ten.

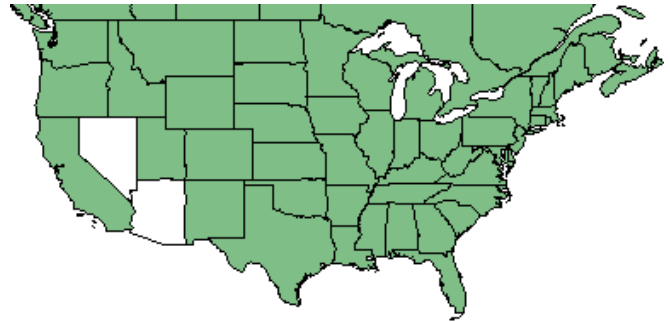
Used in Recipes For: Fibromyalgia (217), Menopause (268)

BLACK-EYED-SUSAN, *RUDBECKIA HIRTA*

History: Native Americans used the roots of this plant much like they did Echinacea. They believed them to help with infections, colds, worms, and wounds.

The flower became the Maryland State Flower in 1918, and also inspired the school colors for the University of Southern Mississippi.

Where Found/Grown: The black-eyed-Susan is native to most of the United States, as well as Canada. It grows in fields, meadows, the wood's edge, and grassy areas throughout this region.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=RUHI2>

Identification: Black-eyed-Susan can grow to thirty-nine inches tall. Its oblong, mostly basal leaves are hairy. The composite flower heads bloom throughout the summer months and have bright yellow petals surrounding a raised, dark brown to black center.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong, basal, and hairy.

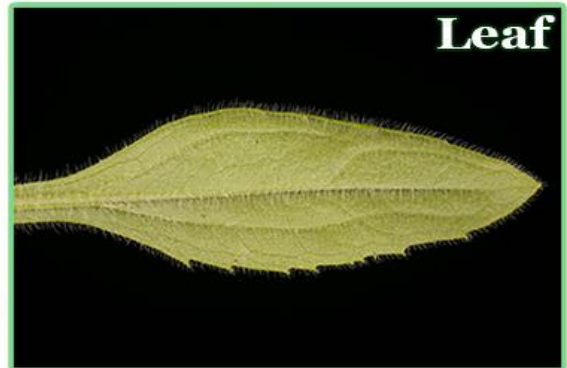
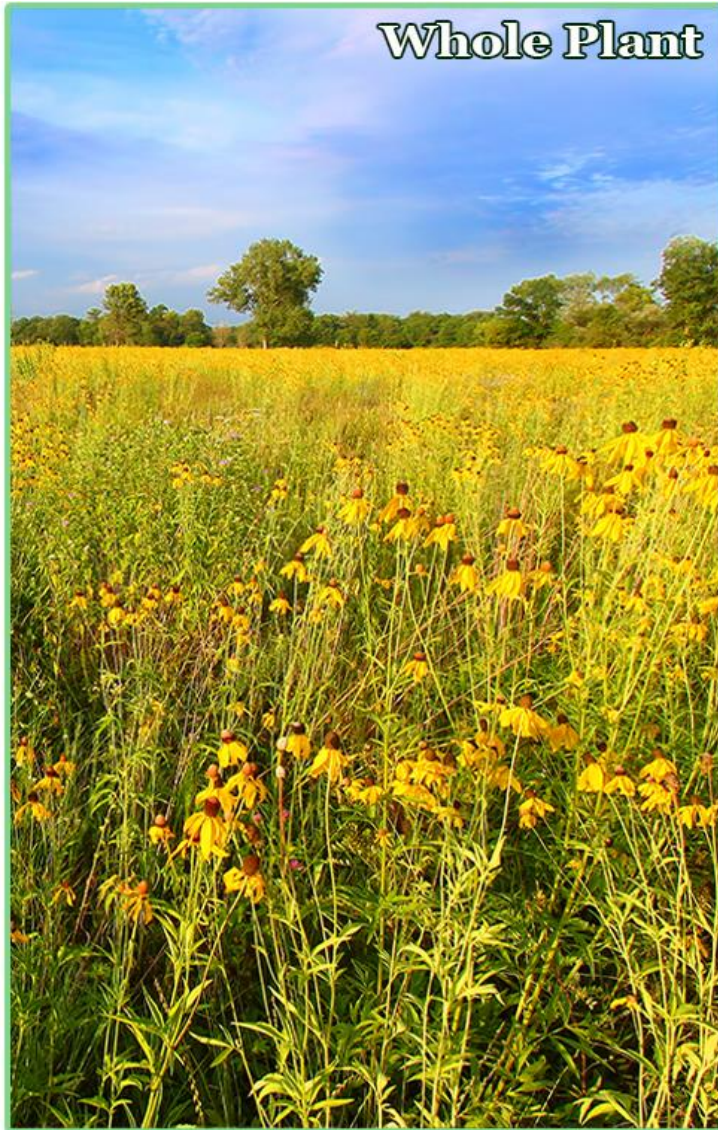
Flower: Flowers have bright yellow petals surrounding a dark brown to black center.

Root: The root system is densely fibrous.

Lookalikes: Black-eyed-Susan can look like another *Rudbeckia* species, *Rudbeckia lanciniata*. Both can grow to similar heights and in the same areas. Both also have yellow petals. However, *Rudbeckia hirta* has a dark center and *Rudbeckia lanciniata* does not.

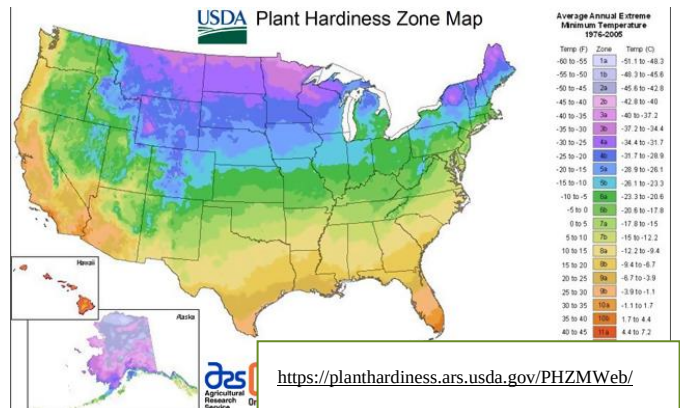
How to Grow: Sow seeds in the spring or fall in an area with full sun. Keep seeds twelve to eighteen inches apart to give plants room to grow. It is not usually picky about soil types, but prefers well-draining, loamy soil. It makes a great addition to landscaping due to its colorful flowers that bloom all summer. US hardiness zones three through nine are best for cultivating this plant.

Used in Recipes For: Immune System (306)



BLACK PEPPER, *PIPER NIGRUM*

History: This popular food flavoring is native to south and Southeast Asia. Indian cultures have used this spice in various dishes for thousands of years. At one time in history, peppercorns were considered “black gold” and highly prized. There are even reports that they were traded as a commodity currency. With a rich history of being carried along trade routes throughout Asia, black pepper became known as a rather expensive spice in its time. Black pepper developed a reputation as a medicine early on, and has been used historically for constipation, toothaches, and eye problems.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Today, Vietnam holds the distinction as being the largest producer and exporter of black pepper. As it grows in tropical locations, black pepper is also cultivated in regions of Southwest India. In the US, it can be grown in hardiness zones ten b to eleven.



Identification: It is actually a flowering vine, having slender stems and wide leaves. The stems are woody, with leaves emerging out of the knots. The fruiting branches start out green, and then turn red, and finally black. It is not uncommon for plants to have both red and green fruit at the same time. Black pepper plants can grow up to thirty-three feet tall.

Leaf: Dark green, petiolate, oval, and alternate. Sometimes they have a leathery look.

Flower: Green to yellow, and arranged in a spiral along the spine. They open from the base to the tip of the spike within a week or more's time.

Root: The root system is considered to be thick and shallow, with only a few lateral roots capable of growing down into the soil.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalike: Throughout history, black pepper was often confused with “long pepper” or *Piper longum*, as the fruits resemble each other. The main difference between the two is long pepper’s conical, elongated shape. In addition, black peppercorns are darker than long pepper.

How to Grow: Black pepper can be grown from seeds, but they must be relatively fresh, as the seeds are not viable long. They can also be grown from cuttings. This is the most popular way to grow black pepper plants. To grow from a cutting, you will need to find an established black pepper plant. Make sure the temperature never drops below 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Place the cutting in a large pot with well-drained soil. It will thrive in full sun.

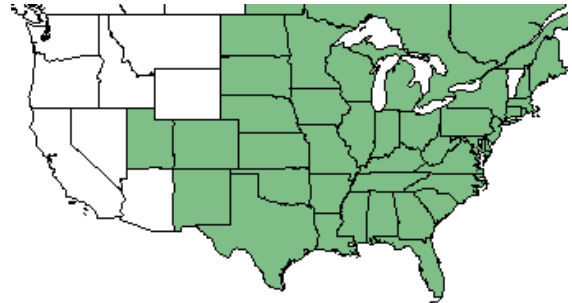
These plants are used to heavy amounts of rainfall, so water it consistently. They also do well in an environment with greater than 50 percent humidity. Feed with 10-10-10 fertilizer every few weeks, except for the winter months. With the right amount of water, light, and warmth, these plants will take root and thrive. However, it will take a few years for peppercorns to appear, as they are slow growing. In the US, zones ten to eleven are optimal for growing black pepper outdoors. You may be able to grow it indoors or in a greenhouse otherwise.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (213), Sciatica (218), Sinus Infection (230), Poor Circulation (239), Stroke (241), Endometriosis (267). Rheumatism (295)

BLACK WALNUT, *JUGLANS NIGRA*

History: Black walnut trees are commonplace in many regions of North America. Native Americans relied on the nuts from these trees as a source of food. In some regions, the hulls were used to treat parasites.

Early settlers also enjoyed black walnut trees. It is said that some early farmers saw black walnut trees as a great sign when buying land to farm. This is because black walnut trees seem to grow in areas with a lot of limestone, indicating fertile soil.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=JUNI>

Where Found/Grown: Black walnut trees are native to North America, and can be found in most of the eastern half of the United States, as well as Canada. They grow in fields, along roadsides, and at the wood’s edge.

Identification: These large trees can grow to upwards of one-hundred-thirty feet tall. The bark is furrowed and contains ridges that almost look to be a diamond shape. Leaves are compound and alternately arranged along the stem. Most leaves are even-pinnate. Leaflets are broader at the base and taper to a point. Flowers of the tree vary between male (catkins) and female (terminal clusters). In the fall, a pungent-smelling green fruit appears. This is the hull. Inside is the walnut. The whole tree has a spicy aroma.

Leaf: Leaves are even-pinnate, compound, and alternately arranged. Leaflets are broad at the base and taper to a point. Leaves are yellow in the fall.

Flower: Male flowers droop in catkins and female flowers are in terminal clusters.

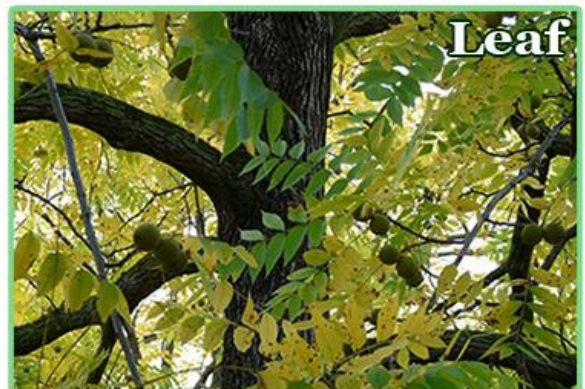
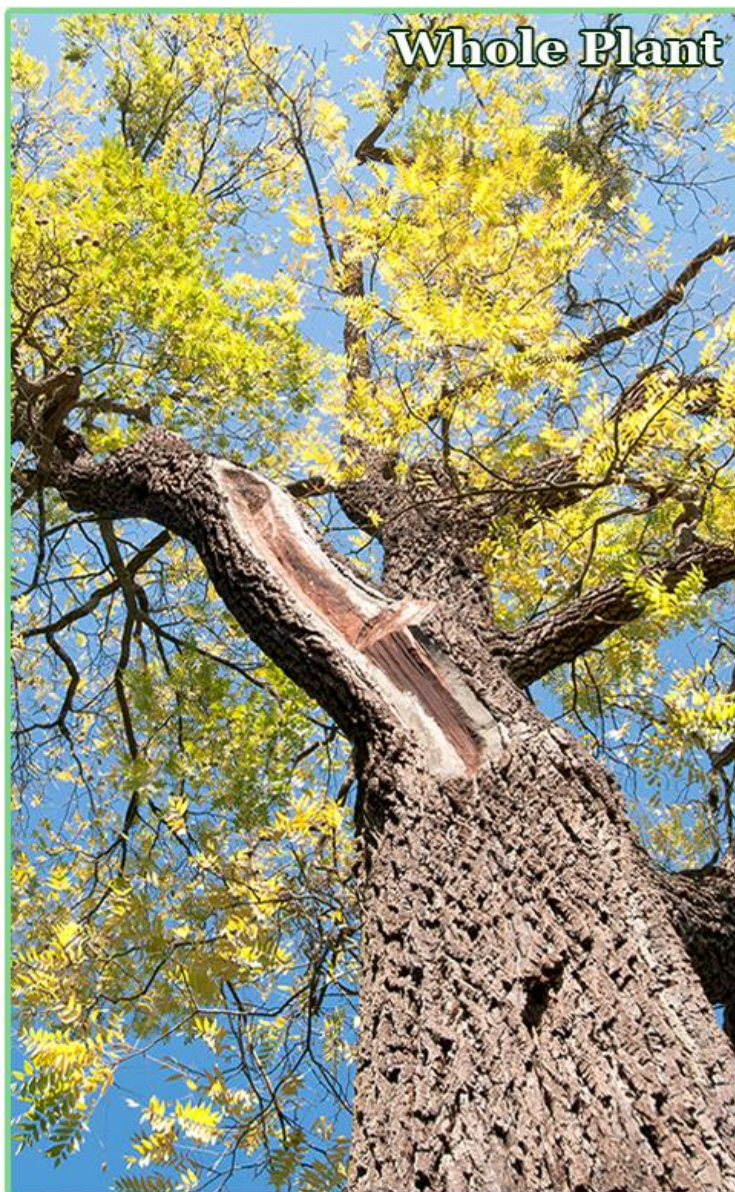
Root: The root system of this large tree is creeping and extensive.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: One tree that looks like the walnut tree is the honey locust. The leaves are especially similar in size and composition. However, a large indicator that it is a honey locust and not a black walnut is that the honey locust is covered in thorns. Inspect the trunk to be sure.

How to Grow: Black walnuts like to be on their own with little competition. You'll often find them standing alone in a field. Plant a sapling in full sun, with no other trees around. Make sure the soil has a pH between five and seven. To promote optimal growth, the soil should be well-drained and rich. Dig a four-foot-deep hole that is also four feet in diameter for the sapling. Lightly mulch around the area after filling in the hole. Water the tree weekly in the spring and summer months, and monthly in the fall and winter months. Black walnut trees are hardy in US zones four through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Fatty Liver Disease (250)



BLADDERWRACK KELP, *FUCUS VESICULOSUS*

History: Bladderwrack is a type of seaweed called kelp. Ancient Hawaiians grew kelp gardens and used the kelp for a food, medicine, and religious ceremonies. Kelp appeared on earth from five to twenty three million years ago.

In the nineteenth century, kelp was referred to as any seaweed that could be burned to create sodium carbonate, as well as the ashes from this kelp. Because it is a rich source of iodine, kelp has been used for thyroid support. In Japan, it has been a very common food source for centuries.



<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/49/41/4f/49414f5a9f041ea85ab904656c5f7f52.png>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Bladderwrack kelp is an underwater plant that grows in shallow oceans. It requires nutrient-rich seawater with temperatures between forty three and fifty seven degrees Fahrenheit. It has been found growing in the North Sea, the western Baltic Sea, and both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Identification: Anchored to the sea floor by roots called holdfasts, kelp plants have leaf-like blades growing from stems called stipes. Colors can vary from orange to brown to olive. Its branches are forked and brown-green in color. Bladderwrack has air-filled sacs that help it float up to keep growing toward the surface. Most species of kelp are very fast growing and can grow up to two feet in one day! A kelp plant can grow to over one hundred feet tall in the right conditions.

Leaf: Brown leaves called blades are forked in appearance and have air-filled sacs on them.

Flower: There are no flowers on this plant.

Root: Roots called holdfasts help the plants anchor to the ocean floor.

Lookalikes: There are several species of kelp. One difference between kelp species is that Bladderwrack has air-filled sacs, while other species do not.

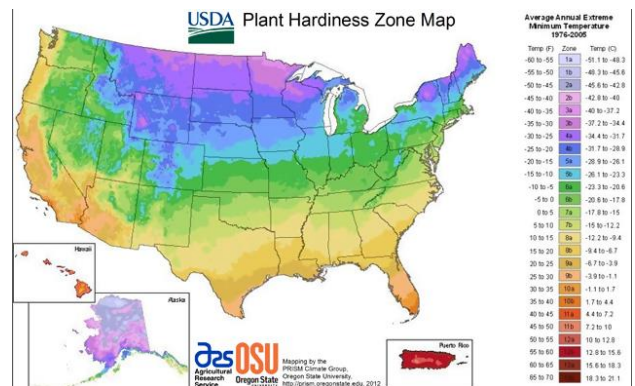
How to Grow: Bladderwrack is harvested from the sea. Bladderwrack harvesting season usually begins in March and ends around October. You will need to locate a spot where it is growing and make sure the water is clean in this area. Kelp can absorb unwanted toxins. It prefers colder waters, so you will want to be prepared when harvesting by wearing a wetsuit. Harvest responsibly by only taking what you will need and leaving most of the plants to continue growing.

Used in Recipes For: Thyroid (223), Overactive Bladder/Incontinence (263)

BOSWELLIA, *BOSWELLIA SACRA*

History: Boswellia, or frankincense as it is more commonly called, has a rich history of use as a fragrant perfume and as medicine. The bible famously mentions bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the newborn Christ. The sap of this tree was used long before Christ, and was first mentioned in 1,500 B.C.

Where Found/Grown: This tree is native to the Arabian Peninsula and regions of Africa. It can be found in dry areas on rocky slopes.



Identification: This tree varies in size from six to twenty-six feet tall. The bark is soft, weak and peels easily. Compound leaves have oblong leaflets that are soft when young. Flowers are small and pale yellow in color. They have five petals and grow in clusters.

Leaf: Leaves are compound, oblong, and soft when young.

Flower: Flowers are small, pale-yellow, have five petals, and grow in clusters.

Root: These trees have buttress roots.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: To tell a *Boswellia sacra* tree apart from other deciduous trees, check to see if fragrant sap emerges when the trunk is scarred.

How to Grow: Seeds have bad germination rates, so it is best to attempt to grow from a sapling or stem/root cuttings. These trees may grow well in USDA hardiness zones ten through twelve. Choose a spot with plenty of room in full sun. Water the tree well when it is in active growth, and sparingly when it is dormant. This tree does not tolerate frost and prefers heat.

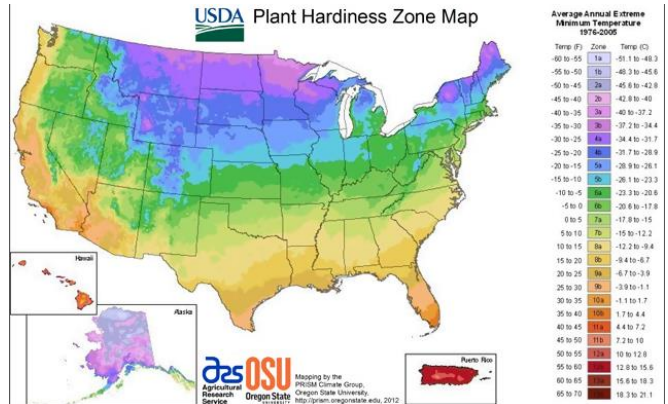
Used in Recipes For: Rheumatism (295)



BUCHU, *AGATHOSMA BETULINA*

History: Indigenous people of South Africa have used buchu for illnesses ranging from coughs, colds, and influenza to treating inflammation and urinary issues. Some indigenous people regarded the plant as a source of youth. Today, overharvesting of the plant is a serious issue and the plant is protected.

Where Found/Grown: Buchu is native to South Africa. It can be found in the lower mountain areas of this region in shrubby habitats.



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Identification: This shrub can grow up to seven feet tall. It is an evergreen, with leaves that are round and opposite. Flowers have five petals and range in color from white to light pink. The fruit produced by the plant consists of a seed-filled capsule.

Leaf: Leaves are round and opposite.

Flower: Flowers have five petals and range in color from light pink to white.

Root: Roots are somewhat fibrous.

Lookalikes: Another very similar plant called *Agathosma crenulata* might be mistaken for buchu. Both are around the same size and have the same color of flowers. One major difference is that it has oval leaves, rather than round like *Agathosma betulina*.

How to Grow: Buchu can be grown from seeds, but finding seeds might be difficult due to the rarity of the plant. Another way to grow buchu is from cuttings obtained when the plant is fruiting. Buchu prefers well-drained, coarse soil. It should not be planted in an area prone to frost or cooler temperatures. It should be planted in a sunny location, preferably a hillside or ridge. US hardiness zones eight to eleven are best for cultivating this plant.

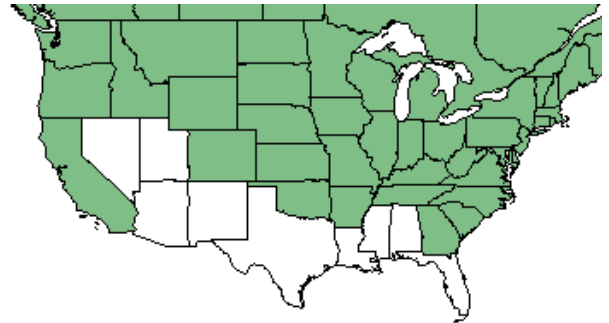
Used in Recipes For: Overactive Bladder/Incontinence (264)

BUGLEWEED, *LYCOPUS UNIFLORUS*

History: Native to North America, bugleweed has a history of use by Native Americans. It is said that they used the roots of this plant as a food source.

Bugleweed is also native to Asia, and was said to be used during the Middle Ages medicinally for its sedative and astringent properties.

Where Found/Grown: Today, bugleweed can be found growing throughout most of North America. It prefers moist, wet areas like marshes.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=LYUN>

Identification: Bugleweed can grow from six to thirty inches tall. A member of the mint family, it has a square stem. It has bright green leaves that are up to three inches long and toothed around the edges. The leaves are pointed at the tip as well. The flowers grow in small, dense clusters around the stem and are white. They are also tubular with four spreading lobes and four purple-tipped stamens.

Leaf: Opposite, toothed, green leaves that are up to three inches long. Leaves are pointed at the tip.

Flower: Flowers are small, white, and in clusters around the stem.

Root: Roots are tubers and white inside.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: Some confuse this species of bugleweed with another plant, *Ajuga reptans*. *Ajuga reptans* also goes by the name “bugleweed.” However, this plant differs from *Lycopus uniflorus* with its larger, bright purple flowers growing up tall stalks

How to Grow: Sow bugleweed seeds in spring or fall. They prefer moist soil that is well-drained. Water often, but do not overwater. They also do well grown in a greenhouse for the first year and then transplanted the next summer when they are better established. Bugleweed grows best in US hardiness zones three through ten.

Used in Recipes For: Thyroid (222), Graves’ Disease (316)



BUTCHER'S BROOM, *RUSCUS ACULEATUS*

History: This little shrub is native to Europe, and has traditionally been referred to as “knee holly.” It got its name due to its use as a broom to sweep off and clean butcher’s blocks.

Butcher’s broom has been used for centuries to treat circulatory issues, as well as for its anti-inflammatory properties, and was cited in manuscripts by ancient Greeks.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to Eurasia and some regions of North Africa. It is often found in old, historic areas because it was likely planted there for its practical uses.

Identification: Butcher's broom only grows up to three feet in height. It has small, ovate leaves with spiny tips. It produces small, greenish-yellow flowers. The female flowers turn into red berries as the shrub matures.

Leaf: Ovate, erect, spiny-tipped leaves are medium green in color.

Flower: Flowers are a yellowish to greenish color and the females produce a red berry.

Root: Butcher's broom spreads by rhizomes.

Lookalikes: Small holly bushes may look similar in appearance to butcher's broom. However, holly leaves are much different due to their deeply toothed edges and darker green color.

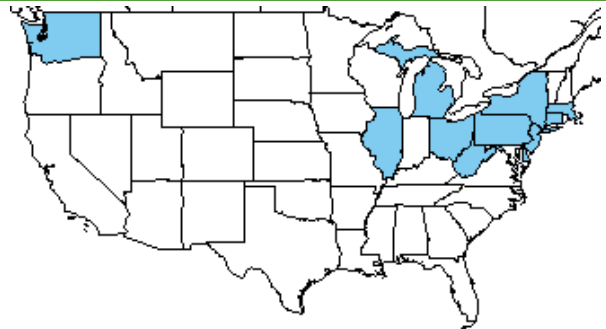
How to Grow: Butcher's broom is hardy from US zones seven through nine. It is a relatively easy plant to grow, and tolerates full to partial shade. Try to choose a place out of full sun for this plant. This shrub is drought-tolerant, but it is best to water this plant as needed and avoid letting it dry out. Butcher's broom is not picky about the soil, and can grow in many soil types.

Used in Recipes For: Weak Heart (239)

BUTTERBUR, *PETASITES HYPRIDUS*

History: Native to Europe and northern Asia, butterbur was used during the Middle Ages to help break fevers and later in the seventeenth century it was documented to help with conditions ranging from coughs and asthma to skin wounds. Today, it is a popular herbal migraine remedy.

Where Found/Grown: The habitat for this plant has spread through Europe to the British Isles, Caucasus, to southern Italy and Scandinavia. They can often be found near wet areas like streams and rivers.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PEHY>

Identification: Flowers actually appear before the leaves on the butterbur plant. Flowers are light pink with multiple inflorescences and are clustered on a stem that can reach from two to eight inches in height. When the leaves appear, they are large, green and growing on tall stems. Leaves are very round in shape with toothed edges with petioles.

Leaf: Leaves can get large, up to twenty-eight inches in diameter. They are green, rounded, with toothed edges and petioles. Leaves appear after the flowers.

Flower: Flowers are light pink with multiple inflorescences and clustered on top of a stem that can reach two to eight inches in height.

Root: Roots spread by rhizomes and can easily take over an area.

Lookalikes: This plant is sometimes referred to as "coltsfoot" which causes a lot of confusion with another medicinal plant called coltsfoot. However, true coltsfoot looks very much like dandelion and has bright yellow flowers on top.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

How to Grow: Because the leaves of this plant can get so big, it is best to plan ahead and space out the plants by several feet. They also spread by rhizomes and can take over if left unattended, so make sure to plant them away from other plants in the garden. They are not picky about soil, but they do need to be kept out of full sun. Plant butterbur in full to partial shade. Water it as needed, keeping the soil moist.

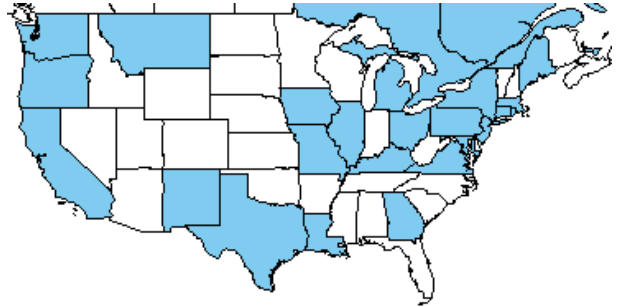
Used in Recipes For: Polyps (233)



CABBAGE, *BRASSICA OLERACEA*

History: *Brassica loeracea* encompasses a wide variety of different species. It is thought that the common cabbage we know today comes from a wild cabbage variety that grows in Europe. The first species to become domestic were cultivated in Europe around 1,000 B.C.

The juices from cabbage plants were used throughout history to soothe burns, pain, inflammation, and even as an antidote for poisoning.



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Where Found/Grown: Cabbage cultivation is now common in many areas of the world, and North America is no exception. It can be found in gardens throughout the United States, especially in regions with temperatures above forty-five degrees and below eighty degrees Fahrenheit.

Identification: Green cabbage is one of the most common varieties of cabbage. It has green heads that are softball to basketball-sized. The heads of this common cabbage feel heavy and dense when lifted. The large leaves wrap around in a ball, thus the reason it is called a “head” of cabbage.

Leaf: Leaves are large, broad, and medium green in color. They form around a central head.

Flower: Flowers are tubular and come from the central core of the plant.

Root: Cabbage has a shallow root system

Lookalike: Aside from green cabbage, there are many other varieties. Savoy cabbage is another popular variety. It can be distinguished by its ruffled leaves. Red cabbage is distinctive because of its dark purple color. Bok choy cabbage has leaves growing from a central stalk.

How to Grow: Cabbage requires nutrient-rich soil. It does not do well in climates that are too hot, but can be grown in zones one through nine. Start cabbage indoors in early spring, around eight weeks before the last frost. Transplant the cabbage seedlings outside two to three weeks before the last frost. Keep the plants out of full sun. Plant seedlings in good soil (with compost and manure mixed in) and space them one to two feet apart. Mulch the area to keep it moist. Water the plants regularly.

Used in Recipes For: Ulcers (247)

CALENDULA, *CALENDULA OFFICINALIS*

History: Calendula has a rich history of use, both as a medicinal and edible flower. The Greeks and Romans enjoyed calendula in ceremonies and rituals.

In India, the flowers are considered sacred. They have been used as folk medicine for treating irritated skin, as well as a source of food for use in salads or to dye with.

Where Found/Grown: Calendula is a popular plant for cultivation in pots and gardens. In fact, it is sometimes referred to as “pot marigold.”

It is grown around the world for its lovely orange blooms, and can be found escaping cultivation and growing in the wild in some areas, especially in the northeast United States.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CAOF>

Identification: Calendula grows to thirty-one inches in height. Its erect stem has hairy, oblong leaves that may be weakly toothed. The flowers are bright orange to yellow in color and have hairy, resinous bracts underneath. Flowers are usually a single ray of florets surrounding the center.

Leaf: Leaves are hairy, oblong, and sometimes weakly toothed.

Flower: Flowers are a bright orange to yellow color with a single ray of florets surrounding the center. Sometimes, depending on the cultivar, there may be more than one ray.

Root: The root system can be shallow and weak.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: Although calendula is called “pot marigold,” it is not the same as the common marigold. Marigolds have a strong scent that can set them apart, as well as multiple layers of petals that vary in color from orange to red. The leaves of marigolds are also different, and usually have several pairs of alternately arranged leaflets instead of one single leaf like calendula has.

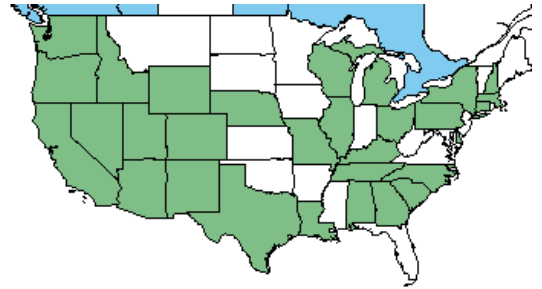
How to Grow: Calendulas are considered a very easy plant to grow, especially in containers. Sow seeds after the last frost in spring and keep your calendulas in an area with full sun and rich, well-draining soil. Water the plants as needed to keep the soil moist and conducive to germination and growth. Calendula thrives best in US hardiness zones six through ten.

Used in Recipes For: Bruising and Muscular Injury (286), Rashes (300), Eczema (305), Chron’s Disease (313), Psoriasis (313)



CALIFORNIA POPPY, *ESCHSCHOLZIA CALIFORNICA*

History: The California poppy was named the California state flower on December 12, 1890. This flower dear to Californians was first documented in 1820 by a naturalist named Adelbert von Chamisso while voyaging on a Russian ship called the Rurik. When the ship arrived in San Francisco, these poppies were blooming. Today, this state flower is pictured on signs as travelers enter California. Although this particular poppy doesn't contain any real opium, its medicinal properties were discovered to be sedative and calming. It is said that Native Americans used sap from the flower to help relieve toothache.



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Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: California poppy is native to the United States and Mexico. It can particularly be found growing throughout California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada, and New Mexico. California poppy is a native plant in many states, but can be cultivated rather easily most places in North America. It has even been introduced to parts of Canada.

Identification: This bright orange flowering plant easily captures the eye. Growing from five to sixty inches tall, its long stems contain solitary orange, orange-yellow, or red flowers with four large petals. The petals close at night to reopen in the morning. The bluish-green leaves are severely lobed and divided into segments. The plant produces a fruit that consists of a long capsule that splits to reveal seeds.

Leaf: Divided into round, lobed segments. Bluish-green.

Flower: Vivid in color, and varies from orange, orange-yellow, to red. It has four petals.

Root: Fibrous root system, very delicate when the plant is young.

Lookalikes: From far away, one might mistake a California poppy with an opium poppy. Both can have a red to orange tint, although the opium poppy comes in several colors. However, the opium poppy has more than four petals and its leaves are not near as deeply divided as California poppy's leaves.

How to Grow: California poppy likes a lot of sunshine and water. It also likes soil that is well-drained and rich. If you do not have this kind of soil, you can add manure or compost to the soil to help make the conditions more favorable. These are plants that don't like to be transplanted or disturbed much, so it is best to sow seeds directly into the soil. Choose an area with plenty of sun and that can easily be watered on a regular basis. Sow seeds in the spring, around six to eight inches apart. Remove dead blossoms to promote continued flowering. California poppy grows best in US hardiness zones three through nine.

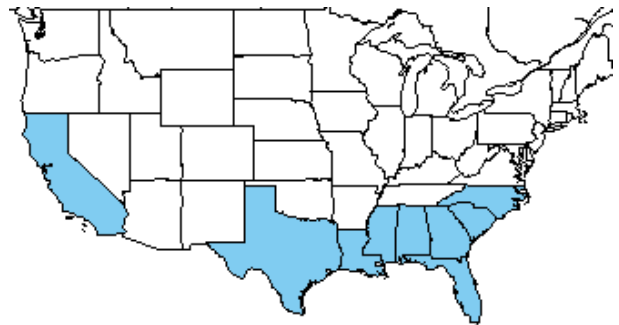
Used in Recipes For: Stress and Depression (215)

CAMPBOR TREE, *CINNAMOMUM CAMPHORA*

History: This tree has been used for the aromatic compounds inside its leaves and wood for many years. Native to China, production of camphor was a major industry during the Japanese colonial period.

Not only was this tree used for its medicinal properties, but it was also used in the production of gunpowder.

Where Found/Grown: The camphor tree is native to China and also grows in Taiwan, Japan, Vietnam, and Korea. The tree has been introduced to North America as well, where it grows well in states like California, Florida, Texas, Alabama, Louisiana, and Georgia.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CICA>

Identification: Growing up to ninety-eight feet tall, this evergreen tree has leaves that are shiny in appearance and have a strong camphor smell when crushed. Flowers are small, grow in masses, and are white. The bark of the tree is rough, with fissures running over it.

Leaf: Leaves are shiny in appearance, lance-shaped, smell of camphor, and are bright green.

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Flower: Small, white flowers grow in masses on the tree.

Root: The root system of this tree is extensive and creeping.



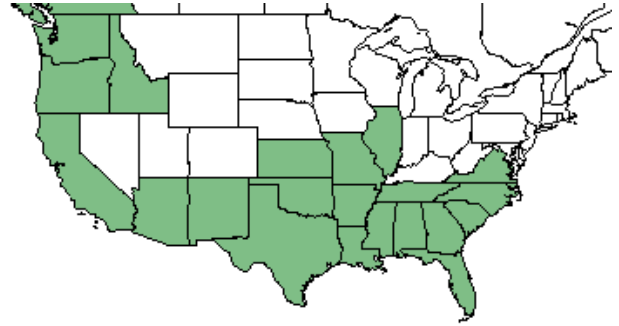
Lookalikes: There are several species of evergreen trees growing in the area where camphor trees grow. While many of them may appear similar to camphor trees, one sure way to tell a camphor tree apart is to crush a leaf. If it smells strongly of camphor, you likely have the right tree.

How to Grow: If you live in the southernmost regions of the United States, or states with plenty of sunshine and warm temperatures, you may be able to grow this tree. You will need to plant the sapling in an area with plenty of space for it to grow. Plant the tree in well-draining soil and water it often until it is firmly established. This tree would thrive best in US hardiness zones nine and above.

Used in Recipes For: Back Muscle Pain (288), Arthritis (290)

CARROT, *DAUCUS CAROTA* SUBSP. *SATIVUS*

History: It is thought that the wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) is one of the original carrot species and other cultivars came from this over the course of centuries. Carrots have been cultivated over the years to include carrots of a wide range of colors (with orange being the most popular), and they have been consumed as a valuable source of food in many areas of the world. They were originally cultivated for their aromatic leaves and seeds. Today, the wild carrot, often called “Queen Anne’s Lace” can still be found all over North America in fields, ditches, and waste spaces.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=DAPU3>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Wild carrots are a widespread, and sometimes invasive, plant that can be found in many central and southern regions of North America. They prefer fields, roadsides, and waste ground. Other cultivars are not usually found growing wild, but they are widely grown by gardeners across the world.

Identification: Carrots can be identified by their fernlike, aromatic, carrot-scented leaves that have a slightly hairy underside. The roots vary in color from white (the wild carrot) to shades of orange and purple. When allowed to flower, the flowers are tiny and white, often growing in a circular bunch. Sometimes there will be a few dark purple flowers in the center. The stalks have small white hairs. The whole plant grows up to four feet in height.

Lookalikes: One famous-and dangerous- lookalike is poison hemlock. If you look closely, you will notice that hemlock has larger, shiny leaves with no hairs. Hemlock also has purple spots on the stalk, whereas carrot does not. Carrots have flat-topped white flower clusters, while hemlock has more rounded umbels.

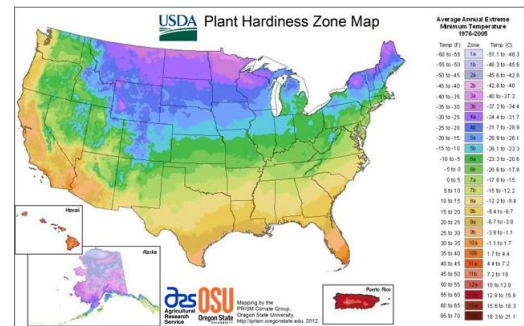
How to Grow: Wild carrots grow anywhere with no cultivation attempt, but domesticated carrots need a little more care. To grow most domesticated carrots, you should find an area to plant seeds that is in full to partial sun. Make sure the soil is loosened and not packed down. Sow carrot seeds three weeks before the last spring frost. The seeds can be small, so you can choose whether you would rather scatter them in an area or plant them in rows. Cover the seeds with a small amount, around ½ inch, of soil. Water the area well and keep it moist at all times. When the seeds begin to sprout, thin them to make room for each carrot.

Used in Recipes For: Vitiligo (319)

CAT'S CLAW, *UNCARIA TOMENTOSA*

History: Because cat's claw is native to the Amazon rainforest, it was traditionally used by indigenous people for ailments that caused pain and inflammation. It was given its common name due to thorns along the vine that look like the claws of a cat.

Where Found/Grown: Cat's claw vine can be found growing in Central and South America. It grows in the jungles of the Amazon rainforest.



Identification: This vine can climb up to one hundred feet. Thorns along the vine resemble the claws of a cat. Elliptic, smooth leaves grow in opposite pairs on the vine. Flowers are yellow and have five petals.

Leaf: Leaves are smooth and elliptic. They grow in opposite pairs on the vine.

Flower: Flowers are yellow, with five petals.

Root: The vines spread through underground tubers.

Lookalikes: Cat's claw can be distinguished from other vining plants in the rainforest by the claw-like thorns growing on it.

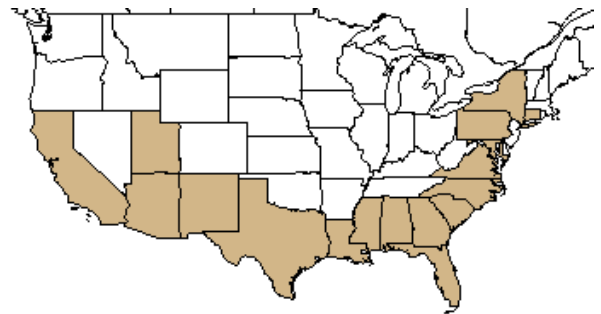
How to Grow: This vining plant can grow and spread rapidly if you live in USDA hardiness zones eight through twelve. Plant starts in a spot that restricts their spread. Make sure the vine has a trellis or other object to climb. Plant cat's claw vine in well-drained soil that does not get too soggy. Mimic its rainforest habitat by planting it in a place with shade.

Used in Recipes For: Arthritis (289), Lyme Disease (309)



CAYENNE, *CAPSICUM ANNUUM*

History: When Christopher Columbus brought back cayenne peppers to show those in Europe, they were deemed “unfit for consumption.” However, it is the spicy, warming qualities of the pepper that made it a famous folk remedy for indigenous people who thought this would help accentuate the medicinal activity of other herbal preparations. Today, herbalists still use this pepper for its warming qualities, as a stimulant, as well as to promote circulation.



<https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CAAN4>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: These peppers are native to South America and a very popular food source in this region. Its popularity as a food source and as medicine helped it spread to other regions of the world and today it is cultivated all across North America in home gardens and nurseries.



Identification: Cayenne pepper plants can grow from one to three feet tall. Identification is made easy by the fruit of the plant, which are bright red, slender, peppers. The peppers usually have crinkly skin and a slightly curved tip and are anywhere from ten to twenty-five centimeters long. They do not grow upright from the bush, but rather hang. Before the peppers arrive, there are small white flowers with five to six petals. Leaves are ovate.

Leaf: Leaves are bright to medium green and ovate.

Flower: Flowers are white with five to six petals.

Root: Cayenne pepper plants have fibrous and spreading root systems.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: Sometimes, jalapeno peppers can turn from green to red, making them appear similar to red cayenne peppers. However, jalapenos are generally shorter peppers and are much thicker than cayenne peppers.

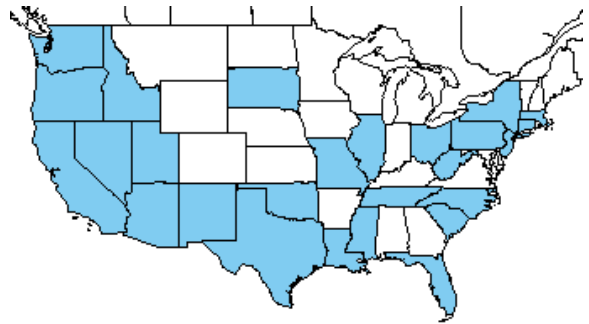
How to Grow: Although many gardeners grow their cayenne plants outdoors, make sure it is warm before sowing seeds. It is best to plant three to four seeds in cells to grow indoors and get established before transplanting to the garden. Cayenne peppers prefer very warm climates and germinated when temperatures are between seventy-five and eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit. Soak pepper seeds in a glass of water overnight before sowing them. Transplant the seedlings to a place with full sun and slightly acidic soil. Dig wide holes for each cell you are transplanting to give roots room to spread and let the plants sit slightly higher in the hole. Lightly cover with mulch and water regularly. Cayenne grows best in US hardiness zone ten.

Used in Recipes For: Sinus Infection (230), Polyps (233), Poor Circulation (239), Immune System (307)

CELERY, *APIUM GRAVEOLENS*

History: Although celery is mostly accredited with being a source of food throughout history, its cultivation also spawned interest in other ways to use this plant. Early on, even as far back as 30 AD, celery seeds were indicated for pain relief. The seeds have also been used medicinally in Ayurveda.

Where Found/Grown: In addition to being cultivated in North America, Europe, and Asia, celery grows wild in some places as well. Wild celery grows in temperate, wet areas of Europe and Western Asia.



<https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=APGR2>

Identification: Celery grows to around eighteen inches in height. It produces bi-pinnate or pinnate leaves that are up to two-and-a-half inches long and one-and-a-half inches wide. Flowers are off-white or white and found in umbels.

Leaf: Bi-pinnate to pinnate leaves are around two-and-a-half inches in height and one-and-a-half inches wide.

Flower: Flowers are off-white to white in color and grow in umbels.

Root: Celery has a shallow and somewhat fibrous root system.

Lookalikes: There are many different varieties of celery. Some include leaf celery (*Apium graveolens* var. *secalinum*), which has thinner stalks and is leafier than *Apium graveolens*. Another type of celery is Celeriac (*Apium graveolens* var. *rapaceum*) which is quite different in appearance and has a large, bulb-like root.

How to Grow: Celery does better in cooler climates. Seeds will germinate faster when soaked in warm water prior to sowing. If you live in the south, you may consider growing celery in the winter. In northern climates, celery can be grown through the summer. In warmer climates, grow seeds indoors ten to twelve weeks before the last frost and transplant to the garden when they are around two inches tall. In northern climates, you can sow seeds directly outdoors. Celery plants need constant water. Celery especially thrives in US hardiness zones five and six.

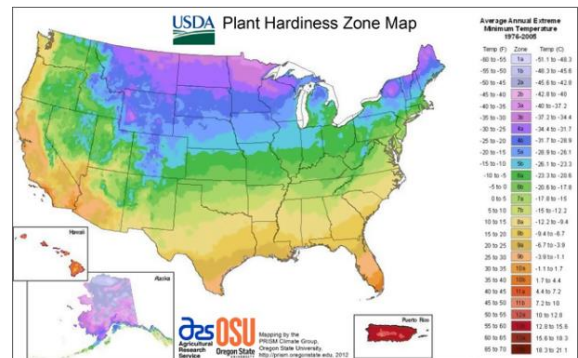
Used in Recipes For: Hypertension (240), Low Testosterone (281)



CEYLON CINNAMON, *CINNAMOMUM VERUM*

History: Ceylon cinnamon, often hailed as “true” cinnamon, is native to Sri Lanka. It is actually a spice made from the bark of an evergreen tree. Cinnamon is a spice with ties to ancient folklore and uses.

It was a pricy and highly prized commodity in ancient times, and used by Egyptians for thousands of years as a part of the embalming process. Given as a gift to monarchs and gods,



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cinnamon was regarded as a sacred spice and its popularity only grew into the Middle Ages, where it was regarded as a mysterious and sought-after spice.



Where Found/Grown: Ceylon cinnamon is native to Sri Lanka, but is also grown in Myanmar, India, and Bangladesh. This type of cinnamon is not to be confused with the most popular form of cinnamon, *Cinnamomum cassia*, which is native to China.

Identification: These evergreen trees can grow from ten to fifteen feet tall. The leaves are somewhat oblong and oval-shaped. Leaves are from three to seven inches long, with vertical veins running down them. The tree produces flowers that are a green color and arranged in panicles. The flowers are reported to have a smell. The fruit consists of a small, purple ball with one seed inside.

Leaf: Three to seven inches long, oval-shaped, and veins running down them vertically.

Flower: Greenish in color, aromatic, and arranged in panicles.

Root: Extensive, but will adjust to growth in pots quite readily.

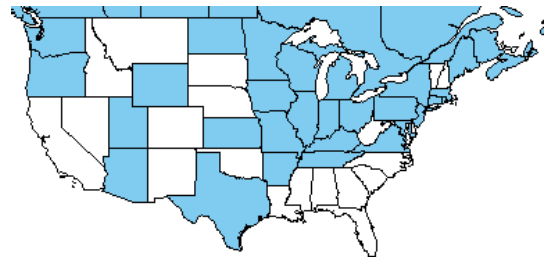
Lookalikes: As previously mentioned, ceylon cinnamon is often confused with cassia cinnamon. Cassia cinnamon is much more popular and is generally the type of cinnamon found in most grocery stores. However, cassia cinnamon contains compounds that can be unsafe, whereas ceylon does not contain these compounds. For this reason, ceylon cinnamon is considered superior for the body. One major difference between the two barks is that cassia cinnamon bark is very hard and smooth compared to ceylon cinnamon. Ceylon cinnamon can be more easily ground into powder than cassia cinnamon sticks. Additionally, cassia cinnamon trees grow almost twice the size of ceylon cinnamon trees at thirty-three to forty-nine feet tall. The leaves of the cassia tree are more elongated than those of the ceylon tree.

How to Grow: These trees grow better in US hardiness zones nine to eleven. If you live where the temperature gets below thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit, you may need to grow your tree in a greenhouse or indoors. Do not be discouraged, as these trees are said to grow well in pots and can be pruned to keep them around three to eight feet tall. Fill pots with good, well-drained soil and add a bit of peat moss in with it if possible. Ceylon cinnamon trees prefer full sun, but will tolerate partial shade as well. They need around fifty percent humidity, as they are used to a more tropical environment. Water consistently and try not to let the soil get too dry.

Used in Recipes For: Sciatica (218), Diabetes (224), Hearing Loss (227), Hypertension (240), Nausea (246), Hemochromatosis (252, 253), Male STD's (282), Immune System (306), Type 1 Diabetes (318)

CHAMOMILE, *MATRICARIA RECUITITA*

History: Chamomile is named for the Greek word chamaimēlon, which means “earth apple.” It may have also gotten this name because it smells faintly of apple. Its Latin name “Matricaria” stems from the word “matrix,” which means a womb. It is thought that chamomile got its Latin name due to its use for feminine complaints like menstrual cramps and premenstrual syndrome. The plant does have antispasmodic properties, making it useful for treating everything from menstrual cramps to intestinal cramping. Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians regarded the plant as magical and used it in various rituals.



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Where Found/ Grown: There are several species of chamomile, but *Matricaria recuitita*, or German Chamomile as it is sometimes called, is a species native to southern and eastern Europe. It is grown in many areas, including Germany, France, Russia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Brazil, and many parts of India. It can also be found growing wild in many parts of the world.

Identification: German chamomile has an alternate leaf arrangement, with fern-like leaves typical to chamomile species. Its flowers have white petals coming from a large, yellow center. The center is often dome-shaped or raised. The flower has a pleasant, apple-like smell. The leaves of German chamomile are more fernlike and feathery, whereas Roman chamomile's leaves are thicker yet flat. It can reach heights of twenty four to thirty six inches.

Leaf: Fernlike, light green, and feathery.

Flower: Daisy-like flowers, high yellow center dome, and white petals.

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Root: German chamomile has a mostly fibrous root system.

Lookalikes: This species of chamomile is often confused with Roman chamomile. They do appear very similar with white petals and yellow centers, but there are some differences as well. First, German chamomile is an annual and Roman chamomile is a perennial. Second, look at the yellow center: German chamomile has a higher and more domed center, while Roman chamomile does not. It is important to know, however, that both species are used interchangeably by herbalists and have very similar medicinal properties.

How to Grow: Most species of chamomile will thrive in USDA zones three through nine. Plant seeds in the spring in partial shade, as they prefer cooler spots. Plant seeds five to six inches apart in drier soil. Do not overwater. Only water the plants in times of prolonged drought. Once it begins to become established, it requires little maintenance. This is not a plant that fares well with fertilizer use. Flowers usually bloom between May and October. Collect the flower buds when the petals are drooping down from the yellow center.

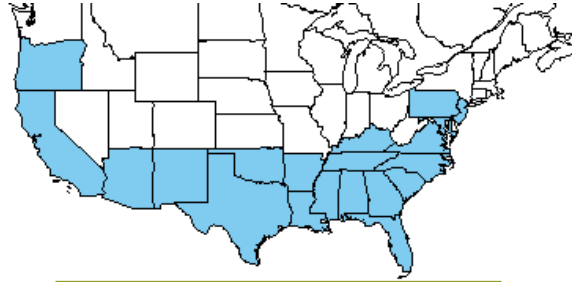
Used in Recipes For: Stress (215), Insomnia (216), Indigestion (245), Lymphomas (255), Endometriosis (267), Menopause (269)



CHASTE TREE, *VITEX AGNUS-CASTUS*

History: According to ancient beliefs, the berries from this small tree were an anaphrodisiac. For this reason, it is said that monks wishing to remain chaste would consume them.

This is also the reason the tree is referred to as “chaste tree.” Throughout the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, the plant was indicated for use by women to suppress lust. Today, it is better known as an adaptogen that helps to balance hormones.



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Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Chaste tree is native to the Mediterranean region, but can easily be cultivated in most warm temperate and subtropical regions. It is especially hardy to US zone six.

Identification: This shrub can reach heights of three to sixteen feet. They can have a spread of ten to fifteen feet. From late spring to early fall, the shrub produces purple, lilac, white, or pink flowers near the top of spiking branches that shoot out. These aromatic flowers are great for attracting butterflies. Its grey-green leaves are palm-shaped. Flowers turn into small fruits that are referred to as “monks pepper.” These are the parts most used medicinally.

Leaf: Grey-green leaves that are palm-shaped.

Flower: Aromatic lilac, pink, white, or purple flowers forming clusters near the top of spiky branches shooting out of the bush.

Root: Fast growing and spreading roots.

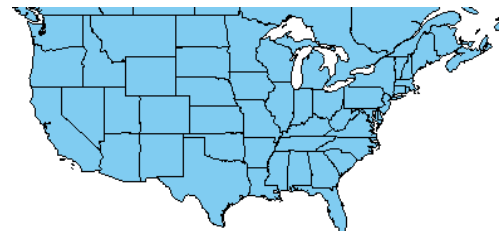
Lookalikes: Chaste tree can look like the popular butterfly bush due to the aromatic purple flowers near the top. However, the leaves of chaste tree bushes are palm-like and the leaves of the butterfly bush are sage green, opposite, and lance-shaped.

How to Grow: Chaste tree prefers full sun, but it will tolerate partial shade. It grows best in hardiness zone six, but will tolerate temperatures as low as negative nine degrees Fahrenheit. In climates that are colder, it may die back to the ground. However, they will grow back in spring. It prefers well-drained soil, and does not do well in cold, constantly wet climates.

Used in Recipes For: Pituitary Gland Dysfunction (221, 222), Hormone Imbalance (265), Male Hormonal Imbalance (278)

CHICKWEED, *STELLARIA MEDIA*

History: Chickweed has a history of use as a folk remedy, as well as use by indigenous people. It was mentioned as a cure for mange by herbalists in the seventeenth century. It has a history of external and internal use. Externally, a poultice of chickweed was used by indigenous people for bruises. It has also been used in folk medicine to calm irritated skin. Chickweed has also been enjoyed as food by the Japanese, as well as other cultures.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=STME2>

Where Found/Grown: This common plant can be found during cooler weather at the wood's edge, along fencerows, in meadows, and in yards throughout virtually all of North America.

Identification: Chickweed grows to about forty centimeters tall, although its height is hard to determine since it slumps over due to a weak stem. Its tiny green leaves are heart or teardrop shaped, forming a point at the end. The flowers it produces are small, white, and star-like.

Leaf: Leaves are small, green, and teardrop to heart-shaped.

Flower: Flowers are small and white.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

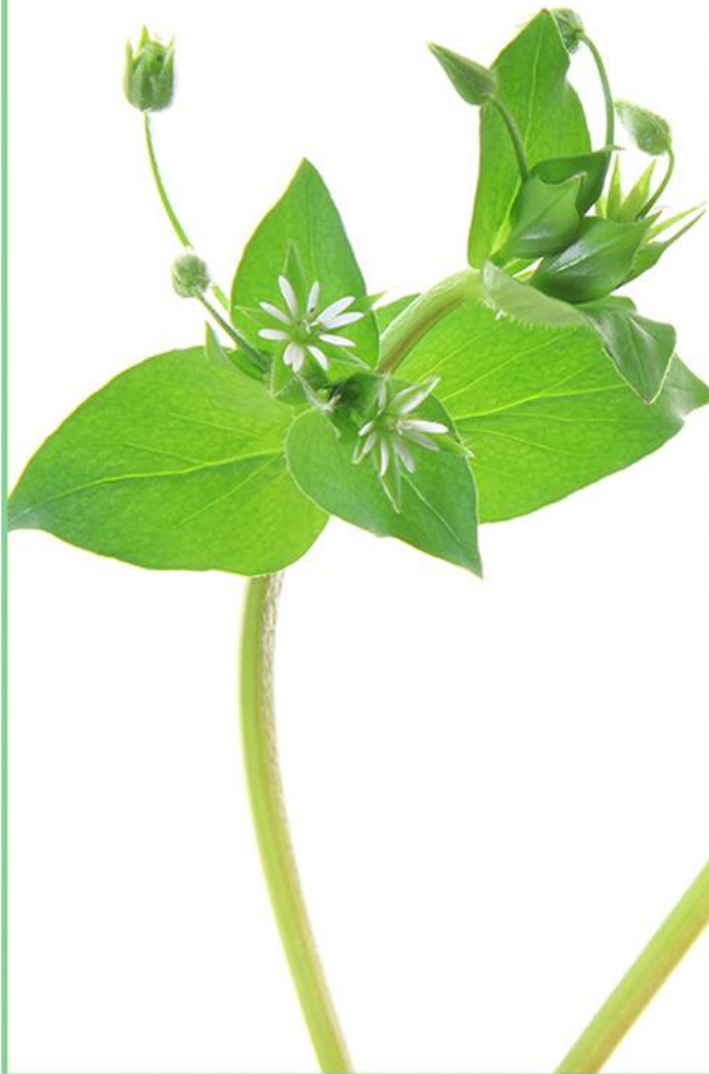
Root: Chickweed has a very shallow root system.

Lookalikes: Chickweed is sometimes confused with cleavers, since the two grow near each other and around the same times of the year. Both also have small white flowers. However, once you are able to inspect each closer, you will notice that chickweed is much more smooth, its leaves are completely different (cleavers have longer, lobed leaves), and cleavers are sticky to touch.

How to Grow: Since chickweed is native to most of North America, it is easy to grow in the right conditions. It prefers cooler, shady areas with plenty of moisture. Choose an area with similar conditions to sow seeds. Sow seeds in autumn. Keep the area moist to promote germination. This plant grows best in US hardiness zones five through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Rashes from Poison Ivy, Oak, Sumac and Other Toxic Plants (299), Cuts, Lacerations and wounds (301), Burns (304), Psoriasis (313, 314)

Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



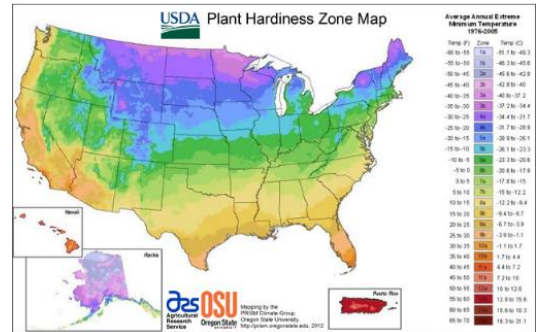
Root



CHINESE SKULLCAP, *SCUTELLARIA BAICALENSIS*

History: This species of skullcap native to China is referred to by the Chinese as huángqín. It has a rich history in Chinese traditional medicine where its roots were used to treat hot conditions and clear the body from toxins. It has especially been employed to treat conditions of the liver.

Where Found/Grown: This particular skullcap species is native to China, as well as Russia, Mongolia, and Korea.



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Root



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Like many species of skullcap, Chinese skullcap also has the hooded purple flowers that are almost tube-like in appearance and grow in clusters at the top of the plant. Its leaves are oblong to lance-shaped and medium to light green in color. The plant can grow from one to three feet in height.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong to lance-shaped and light to medium green.

Flower: The flowers are purple, tubular, and have a hood-like petal on top. They grow in clusters at the top of the plant.

Root: Roots are fibrous.

Lookalikes: Chinese skullcap is not to be confused with North American species of skullcap like *Scutellaria lateriflora*. They are found in two very different regions of the world and have very different medicinal actions. The leaves of Chinese skullcap differ from *Scutellaria lateriflora*'s leaves which are broader and more deeply veined.

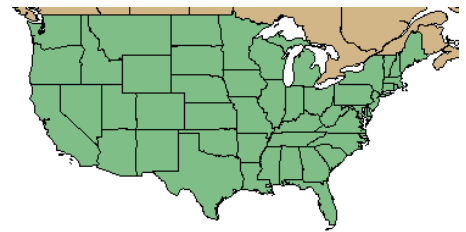
How to Grow: This plant is not native to North America, but is hardy to zone four if you want to try and grow it. Most skullcaps require well-draining soil and full sun, but may also tolerate partial shade well. Start seeds indoors and transplant to the garden after the last frost.

Used in Recipes For: Spleen (255)

CLEAVERS, *GALIUM APARINE*

History: Cleavers have a rich history of both medicinal and practical use. They have been referred to as “bedstraws” and were used as bedding at one time.

Because they could be manipulated and stick together easily, cleavers were made into a type of sieve by some people to filter milk. Cleavers were also used historically for their ability to help soothe external wounds and internally as a diuretic.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=GAAP2>

Where Found/Grown: Cleavers are thought to be native to parts of Europe and Asia. They have also been introduced to many parts of North America. They can be found growing in shady, cool, wet areas like stream banks, the wood's edge, and hedgerows.

Identification: Cleavers can grow up to three feet tall, although they tend to bend over or lean upon other plants. Creeping, square-shaped stems have oblong leaves circling the stem in whorls. The flowers are star-like in appearance and white. They can be found in clusters of two or three. The entire plant clings to almost anything it comes into contact with.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong and grow in a whorl around the stem.

Flower: Small, white to green flowers have a star-like appearance.

Root: Branching, fibrous, and shallow

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Lookalikes: Cleavers can be confused with chickweed, which grows around the same time and has similar white, star-like flowers. However, the leaves of chickweed are much smaller and heart-shaped, unlike cleaver's leaves which are oblong. In addition, chickweed does not stick to things like cleavers do.

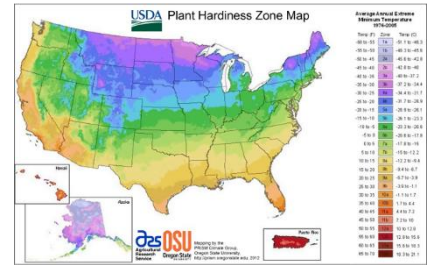
How to Grow: Sow seeds in the fall in an area that is shady and gets plenty of moisture. They tend to spring up during cooler weather. Oftentimes, it is easier to forage for cleavers in the wild than it is to grow them, as they may be considered a noxious weed in some areas. Check with your local conservation agents before planting any seeds. Cleavers will thrive especially well in US hardiness zones three through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Poor Lymphatic Drainage (254), Infections of The Urinary System (261)



CLOVE, *SYZYGIUM AROMATICUM*

History: Flower buds called cloves are harvested from trees native to Indonesia. They have been used throughout history both as a spice and folk medicine. Third century BCE Chinese emperors were said to have chewed cloves to freshen their breath. Later in the first century BCE, Roman philosopher Pliny the Elder mentioned cloves in his writings. Cloves were added to oranges to create Pomanders and given as gifts in Victorian England.



Where Found/Grown: Up until modern times, clove trees were predominately exclusive to the Moluccas islands of Indonesia. Today, they are also grown in similar wet, tropical climates like India, Jamaica, Hawaii, Mexico, Kenya, Sri Lanka, and Brazil.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Clove trees are a type of evergreen that grow up to forty feet tall under the right conditions. The tree's large green leaves are oblong and lance-shaped. Leaves grow up to five inches long. The red flowers grow in terminal clusters. Cloves are harvested from the buds of these flowers. Clove trees have smoot, gray bark.

Leaf: Leaves are five inches long, lance-shaped, and aromatic.

Flower: Red to crimson flowers grow in terminal clusters on the tree.

Root: Clove trees tend to have a fine, hair-like root system.

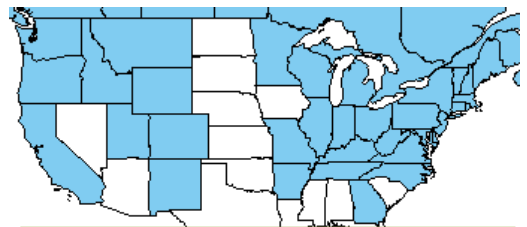
Lookalikes: Though not lookalikes, cinnamon, nutmeg, and star anise have reportedly similar flavor profiles and are used together in many recipes. All grow from evergreen trees and in tropical climates as well. However, each comes from different parts of the tree on which they grow.

How to Grow: Unless you live in a wet, humid, tropical climate, clove trees should not be planted outdoors. They do not generally grow well outdoors in temperate climates. US hardiness zones 11 and above may be sufficient for growing clove trees, and they will need constant humidity. Clove trees can be grown indoors in pots for those living in temperate zones. Since the trees can get rather big, you should opt for a large pot. The temperature must stay above fifty degrees Fahrenheit for clove trees to grow, but try to keep the temperatures between seventy and eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit as much as possible. Plant the seedlings in well-draining potting mix and keep the tree in a partially shady environment. If you can place the tree in a terrarium-style environment, this is optimal. Keep the tree moist at all times.

Used in Recipes For: Canker Sores (235), Hemochromatosis (252, 253), Hormone Imbalance (266), Bacterial Vaginosis (275)

COMFREY, *SYMPHYTUM OFFICINALE*

History: Comfrey has been cultivated over the past few centuries for its medicinal properties. It was especially used to help with pain and inflammation due to broken bones, sprains, and bruises. The plant was traditionally poultice and applied directly to the affected areas.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=SYOF>

Where Found/Grown: Comfrey is native to Asia and Europe but is now common throughout North America. It can be found growing in meadows and other grassy areas.

Identification: Comfrey grows up to three feet tall. It has large, oblong leaves that are soft to the touch due to fine hairs. The flowers droop from the plant in clusters and are bell-shaped. They are often purple to pink in color.

Leaf: Leaves are broad, oblong, and hairy.

Flower: Purple or pink flowers hang in clusters and are bell-shaped.

Root: The root is dark and thick.

Lookalikes: One plant that looks like comfrey is the Virginia bluebell. They look so much like comfrey that early settlers reportedly used them in a similar medicinal fashion. However, the leaves of Virginia bluebell are

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

shorter and not hairy, as opposed to comfrey leaves. Virginia bluebells have flowers that are more blue in color than comfrey flowers, which are typically purple.

How to Grow: Comfrey can be best grown in USDA hardiness zones four through nine. It prefers rich, moist, alkaline soil and shady areas. Plant seeds in the spring after the last frost.

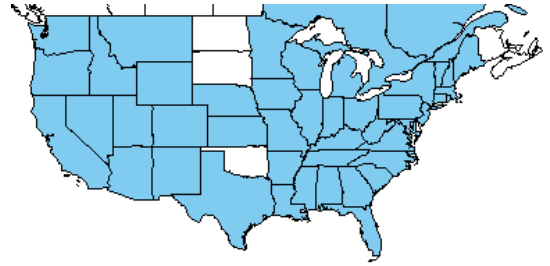
Used in Recipes For: Fractures and Sprains (291)



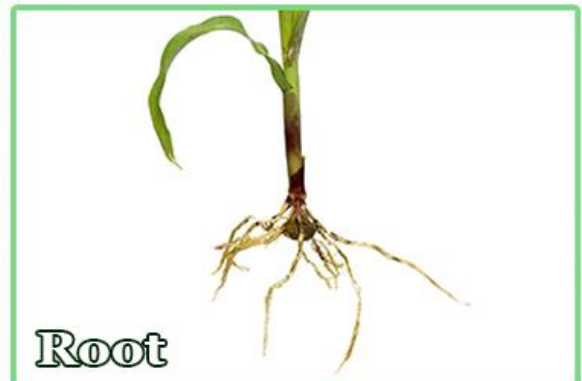
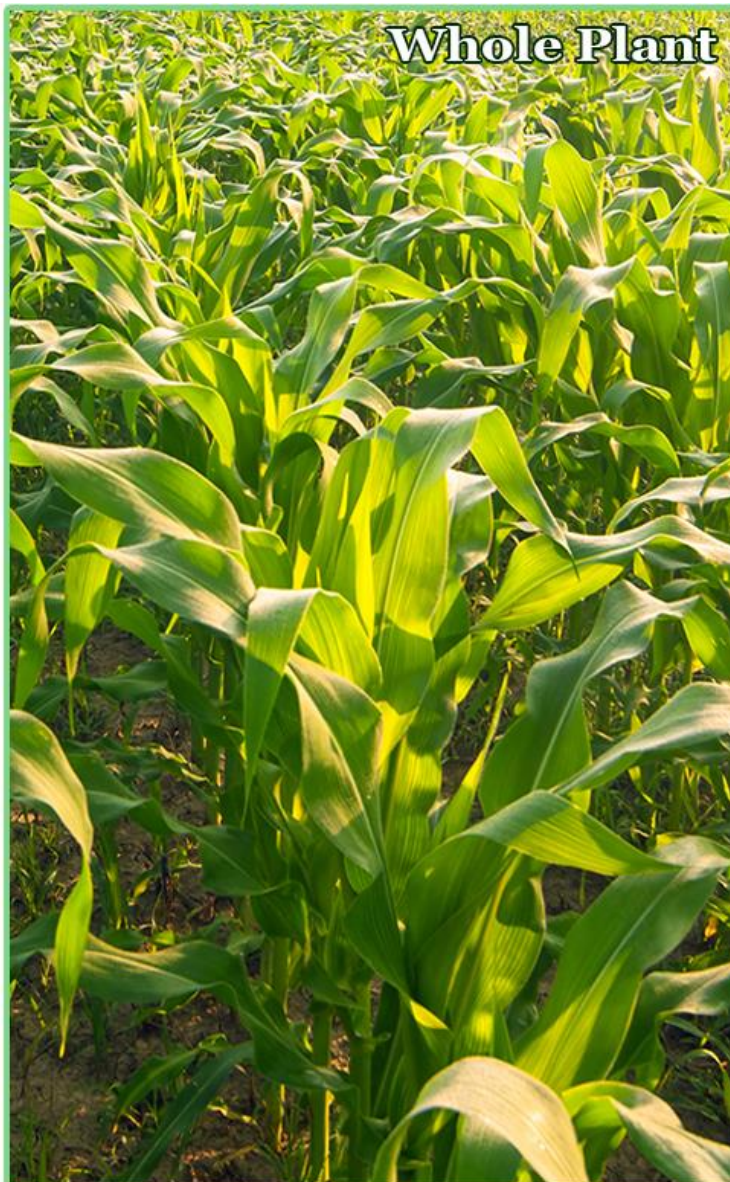
CORN, *ZEA MAYS L.*

History: Corn has been a crop used by indigenous people since prehistoric times. It is thought to have been first cultivated in Central America. Native Americans treasured this crop and introduced it to settlers. Soon, its popularity spread around the world.

The fibers inside the husk are called corn silk. These fibers have been traditionally used as a diuretic for everything from bedwetting to urinary tract, bladder, and kidney infections.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ZEMA>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Corn is now widely cultivated in many regions of the world. It is especially popular in the Midwestern areas of the United States, where farmers grow corn on thousands of acres of land. It can easily be found, especially during the summer months when it is ready to harvest.

Identification: Corn can grow up to an average of eight feet tall. It grows on sturdy stalks that have between sixteen and twenty-two long, broad leaves that wrap around it. Ears of corn grow from the stalk and are covered in a husk and corn silk. Corn can have an average of eight hundred kernels. Flowers are male and female. Male flowers are at the top of the stalk on a tassel. Female flowers are on the stalk and develop into ears of corn.

Leaf: Leaves wrap around the stem and are long and broad.

Flower: Flowers are male and female. The male flowers are on top of the stalk on a tassel and the female flowers are what produce ears of corn on the stalk.

Root: The shallow root system consists of a seminal root system and a nodal root system.

Lookalikes: There are many species of corn, so there are many types of corn that look alike, but may be useful for different things. Some corn is grown as feed for deer and other animals. Other types of corn are grown to create biofuel. Sweet corn is a popular type of corn for consumption. There are even varieties of corn that have very colorful kernels and are used for decoration. Most types of corn have corn silk covering the kernels.

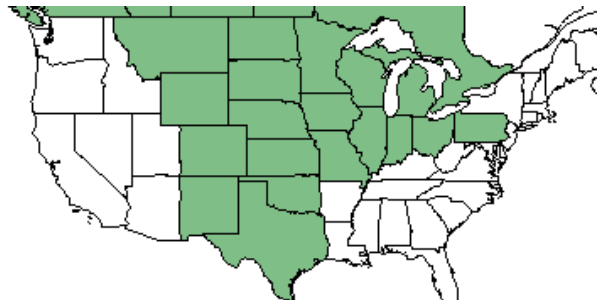
How to Grow: Corn requires good soil with plenty of nutrients. Growing it can be difficult if it is not given the right conditions. Corn does not do well if it is exposed to frost. Only plant seeds when all danger of frost is past. Choose an area that gets plenty of sun for your corn. Make sure that this area is also protected from wind. Some people prepare their corn patch the season before, planting clover, beans, or other crops that might enrich the soil beforehand. The use of plenty of compost in the soil is also a great way to make it nutrient-rich. Try using twenty to thirty pounds of compost per one-hundred square feet of planting area. Sow kernels one inch deep every eight to fourteen inches in three rows, creating a block or square. Make sure you control weeds in this area because they will affect the growth of the corn. In addition, water the corn often. When the corn is around seven inches tall, fertilize the area. Corn is often best cultivated in US hardiness zones five to seven.

Used in Recipes For: Infections of The Urinary System (261)

COTTONWOOD, *POPULUS DELTOIDES*

History: Native Americans used the bark and buds from this tree medicinally. The bark was used to help reduce fevers and relieve pain. It was also used to treat whooping cough, tuberculosis, and parasites. The resinous buds from the tree were used on wounds to help reduce swelling and provide pain relief.

Where Found/Grown: This tree is native to many regions of the United States, as well as Canada. It has even been found growing in northern Mexico. It prefers area along creek and river banks



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PODEM>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies



Identification: This tree grows up to one-hundred-ninety-five feet tall. When young, the bark is smooth. As the tree matures, the bark becomes more fissured and rough. It is usually a silvery-white color. The leaves are triangular in shaped and toothed around the edges. They make a fluttering sound in even mild winds, which is one key identification factor. Male catkins are red-purple in color and female catkins are green in color and produce seeds on a cotton-like substance that can cause quite a mess.

Leaf: Leaves are triangular in shape and toothed around the edges. They make a signature fluttering sound in the wind.

Flower: Catkins can be male or female. Male catkins are red-purple in color and female catkins are green and release cottony seeds.

Root: These trees grow fast and have very creeping and extensive root systems.

Lookalikes: Cottonwoods can look a bit like aspen trees, especially the triangular leaves. However, aspen trees tend to be smaller and their bark is weak, thin, and has black bumpy patches.

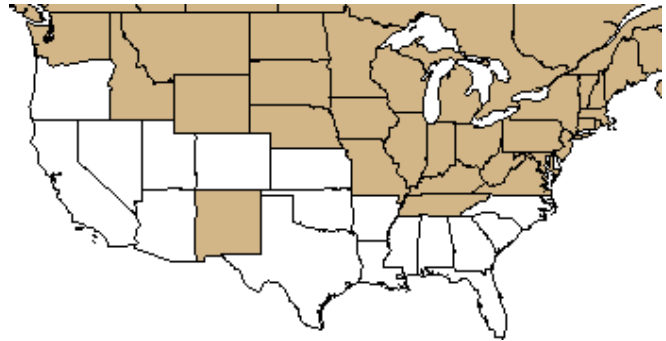
How to Grow: Cottonwoods grow very fast. They do best in neutral soil. Plant the sapling just above ground level and keep it watered well. Place it in a part of your yard with plenty of sunlight. However, make sure to account for rapid growth, and plant away from buildings where the roots can cause damage. Cottonwood trees grow best in US zones two through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Tired and Weak Muscles (284)

CRAMP BARK, *VIBURNUM OPULUS*

History: Bark from *Viburnum opulus* has a long history of medicinal use. It was employed by indigenous people for pain, especially for feminine pain and complaints. It has been used as a folk remedy for many ailments, including cancers, mumps, kidney disease, digestive issues, scurvy, inflammation, pain, and hysteria.

Where Found/Grown: Cramp bark is native to Europe, as well as regions of Africa and Asia. It can also be found throughout North America. Because the tree prefers moist areas, it can be found along streams, rivers, and similar waterways.



<https://www.plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=VIOP>

Identification: This shrub can grow from thirteen to sixteen feet tall. It has wrinkled leaves with three lobes. The flowers are small and white. They are produced in corymbs. Bright red fruit hangs in drupes from the branches.

Leaf: Leaves have three lobes and are wrinkled on top.

Flower: Flowers are small and white and grow in corymbs.

Root: Roots consist of a taproot and additional roots.

Lookalikes: Although the cramp bark tree is sometimes referred to as “cranberry bush,” it is not a type of cranberry. Cranberries grow on much smaller shrubs. In fact, the berries produced by the cramp bark shrub are somewhat edible, but it is not advised to eat them in large amounts because they can make you sick.

How to Grow: Cramp bark prefers slightly alkaline soils but will tolerate many soil conditions. These shrubs prefer moist areas, so keep the area you choose to plant cramp bark watered. Make sure the soil drains well. Cramp bark shrubs are not picky about sunlight, and will tolerate full sun to full shade. Cramp bark shrubs grow best in US hardiness zones three through eight.

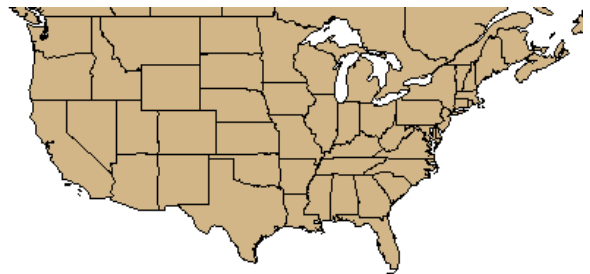
Used in Recipes For: Muscle Cramping and Pain (284)



DANDELION, *TARAXACUM OFFICINALE*

History: One of the most common sights around the world, dandelion fossil records date back to around 15,000 years ago. Dandelions were known and used by many ancient cultures, including the ancient Egyptians, Chinese, Romans, and Greeks.

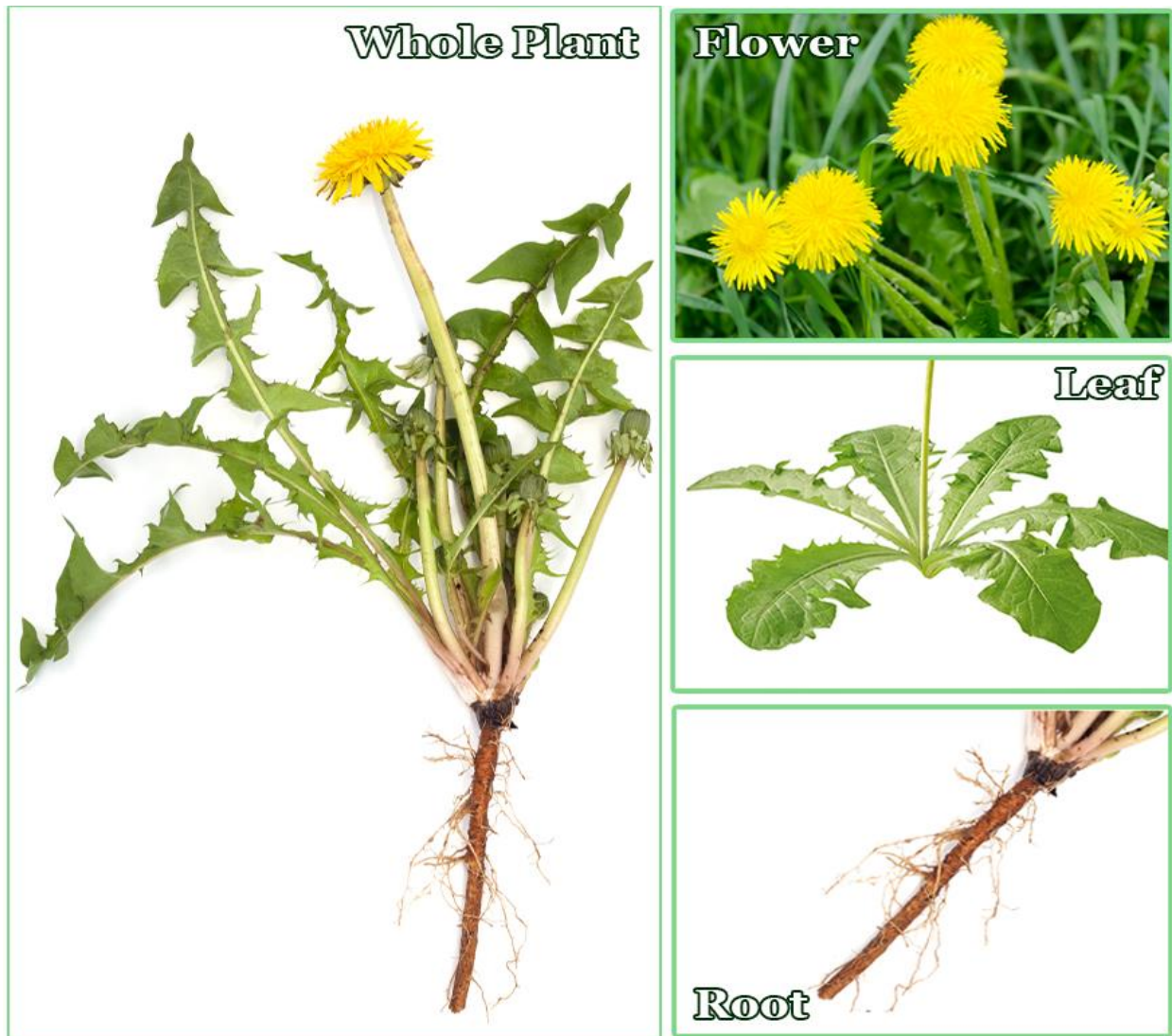
Where Found/Grown: Dandelions can be found in virtually every region of North America. They are famously resilient and indestructible plants that seem to come back after being



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sprayed with weed killer, and grow through cracks in the sidewalks. They are very common in yards, roadsides, meadows, and anywhere plants can grow.



Identification: Dandelion leaves are lobed, oblong, and toothed. The hollow stalks have bright yellow flowers on top that turn into hair-like seeds as the plant matures.

Leaf: Leaves are lobed, oblong, and toothed.

Flower: Flowers are bright yellow in color.

Root: The root is a taproot.

Lookalikes: A plant called cat's ear may appear very similar to dandelion. The flowers are especially similar in appearance. One difference between the two is that the stalks of dandelion are thicker and shorter than cat's ear. In addition, the flowers of cat's ear are slightly orange-yellow in color compared to dandelion. The leaves of cat's ear are not deeply lobed like dandelion.

How to Grow: Dandelion does not need to be cultivated thanks to its widespread natural distribution. Oftentimes, dandelion is wild harvested for medicinal use. Most people need not venture far to come upon

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

enough dandelion plants to fit their needs. Seeds can be harvested from existing plants and spread in yards to promote the growth of more plants. Dandelion is very hardy in US zones three through nine.

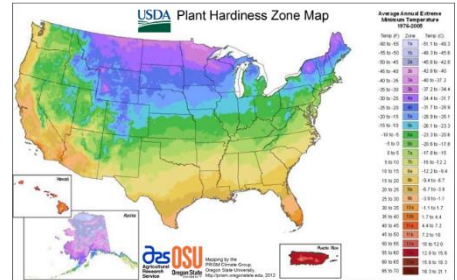
Used in Recipes For: Hepatitis (252), Cholecystitis and Removal (258), Kidney Injury (262), Immune System (310)

DEVIL'S CLAW, *HARPAGOPHYTUM PROCUMBENS*

History: Devil's claw has been a popular folk remedy in its native region of Southern Africa for many years.

It is said to help with pain associated with arthritis, rheumatism, indigestion, back pain, and sore joints.

Where Found/Grown: Devil's claw is found growing in hot, dry, arid, and disturbed sites around Southern Africa.



Whole Plant



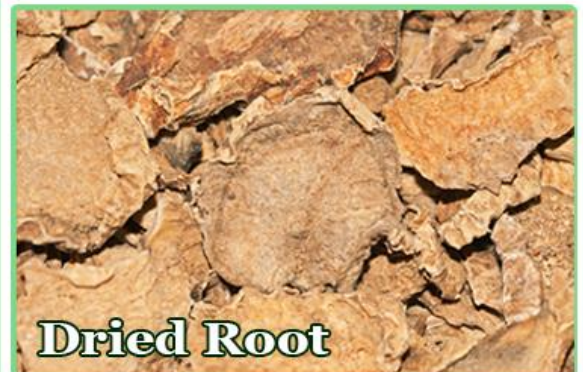
Flower



Leaf



Dried Root



Identification: The leaves of devil's claw are lobed and have white, hairy undersides. The flowers have a trumpet-like appearance and range in color from red to purple. The plant produces seeds that look like claws. These claws attach to animals in hopes of spreading.

Leaf: Slightly lobed, hear-shaped, with a white, hairy underside.

Flower: Flowers are trumpet-like in appearance and range from red to purple in color.

Root: Roots are tuberous and the main part of the plant used medicinally.

Lookalikes: Because of the unique region where this plant is located, its unique appearance, as well as the questionable sustainability of the plant, devil's claw is not likely to be misidentified.

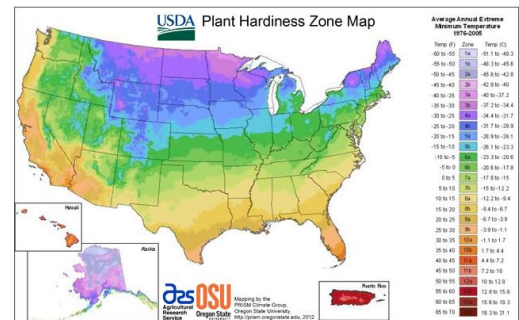
How to Grow: Devil's claw is best grown in climates matching its native habitat. They grow in hot, arid locations like the Kalahari Desert in Namibia. If you live in a desert region where the temperatures closely match those of the Kalahari, you can try sowing the seeds in late spring. The temperature should be above seventy-five degrees Fahrenheit before sowing. US hardiness zones ten and eleven are best for cultivating this plant.

Used in Recipes For: Poor Lymphatic Drainage (254)

DONG QUAI, *ANGELICA SINENSIS*

History: Dong quai, or female ginseng as it is sometimes called, is native to China. It has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for women's health in regards to menopause, hot flashes, osteoarthritis, anemia, inflammation, and sexual health. Dong quai has likely been used medicinally for thousands of years.

Where Found/Grown: This species of angelica is native to Asia. It grows in the higher altitude regions of Korea, China, and Japan.



Identification: Dong quai can grow up to six feet tall. It produces white clusters of flowers in umbels. Its leaves are ovate and toothed around the edges. Leaflets are also alternate and in groups. The thick root is used in Chinese medicine.

Leaf: Leaves consist of alternate groups of ovate, toothed, leaflets.

Flower: Flowers are white and clustered in umbels.

Root: The root is used medicinally. It is thick and cork-like.

Lookalikes: Although both *Angelica* species, dong quai is not the same as its North American relative *Angelica atropurpurea*. The two plants may share many similarities, but identification is rather easy since *Angelica sinensis* is native to Asia and *Angelica atropurpurea* is native to eastern North America on the other side of the world.

How to Grow: *Angelica sinensis* is hardy to zone seven, possibly to zone nine. It will need moist soil and partial shade to thrive. Seeds can be sown in the spring, but can also be planted indoors until they become more established and then planted outside. The plants will need plenty of water, but make sure the soil is well-draining.

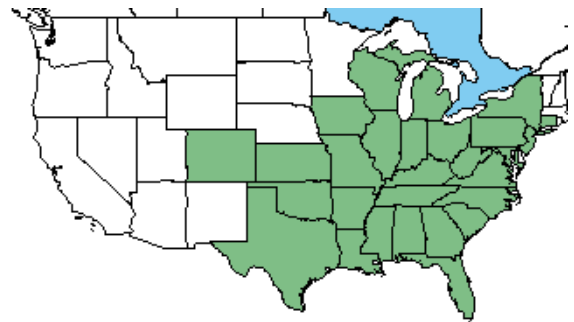
Used in Recipes For: Menopause (269)



ECHINACEA, *ECHINACEA PURPUREA*

History: Native to North America, Echinacea was used by Native Americans as a cure-all for a variety of maladies including external use for burns and swelling, as well as internal use in teas.

It was chewed as a part of some sweat lodge ceremonies and some tribes consider the plant to be sacred. Knowledge of the plant was passed to settlers and Echinacea's popularity has continued to grow.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ECPU>

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Where Found/Grown: Ten species of *Echinacea* exist throughout eastern and central North America. The most popular species used medicinally is *Echinacea purpurea*, but several other species have been used medicinally as well. These perennial plants can be found growing in early to mid-summer along roadsides, in fields, and being cultivated in gardens and landscaping.



Identification: Purple coneflower as it is sometimes called, grows up to four feet tall. The stem is sometimes bristly. Most stems do not branch. Leaves are arranged alternately, with bottom leaves having petioles. Depending on the species, leaves can either be lance-shaped, ovate, or elliptic. The leaves have a rough texture due to fine hairs. The flowers of most *Echinacea* plants are purple in hue, with *Echinacea purpurea* having a bright purple to pink color. Some species, like *Echinacea angustifolia*, have a lighter pink color and the petals droop more. The center of the flower is comprised of a domed cluster of yellowish, spike-like protuberances.

Leaf: Leaves vary amongst species, but *Echinacea purpurea* has leaves that are rough, toothed, and lance-shaped, with petioles at the bottom of the plant.

Flower: The flower has bright pink to purple-colored petals around a yellowish to orange-colored, spiky center.

Root: *Echinacea purpurea* grows from a short caudex with fibrous roots. All other species grow from taproots.

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Lookalikes: Echinacea and Rudbeckia species are cousins that can sometimes be mistakenly misidentified. Both of these plants share the same type of habitats, and both are around the same height. It would be easy to misidentify these plants when they are not in bloom, especially when both plants are used medicinally and their roots harvested in the fall after the flower is gone. However, it is important to take note of each flower when it is in bloom. Rudbeckia, also called black-eyed-Susan, has bright yellow petals and Echinacea, also called purple coneflower, has pink petals. Black-eyed-Susan also has a dark center, whereas purple coneflower has a yellowish, spiky center. If you want to harvest these in the fall after the top is dead, try labeling the plants when they are in bloom so you know the difference later.

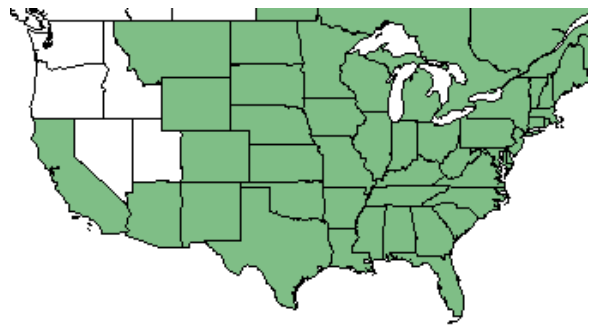
How to Grow: Echinacea is surprisingly tolerant of a variety of soils and will tolerate full or partial sun, as well as shady areas. It prefers open fields, meadows, and will also grow well in landscaping. Sow seeds at least one to three feet apart in the early spring months. You may lightly dig up the dirt with a rake before sowing. Lightly cover the area with mulch and water as needed. Echinacea will do best in US hardiness zones three through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Tooth Decay (236), Sore Throat and Streptococcus Bacteria (237), Immune System (306)

ELDERBERRY, *SAMBUCUS CANADENSIS*

History: Elderberry bushes have been used historically for their berries and flowers, both of which are edible. The berries have also been used in folk medicine to help the body fight viruses. Flowers were used to make fritters with, as well as flavor liquors and tea.

Where Found/Grown: There are several species of elderberry that are used medicinally, with *Sambucus nigra* being the most popular. However, *Sambucus canadensis* (American black elderberry) is native to North America and has the same medicinal benefits as its more popular relative. It can be found in areas with partial sun, at the wood's edge, along fields, and along roadsides, throughout the United States.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=SANIC4>

Identification: Elderberry bushes grow to around three meters tall. They have strong, woody branches with lance-shaped leaves that have five to nine leaflets. The flowers are small, white, and form in large, flat clusters at the top of the plants. These turn into small, dark berries in late summer/early fall.

Leaf: Leaves are lance-shaped and have five to nine leaflets.

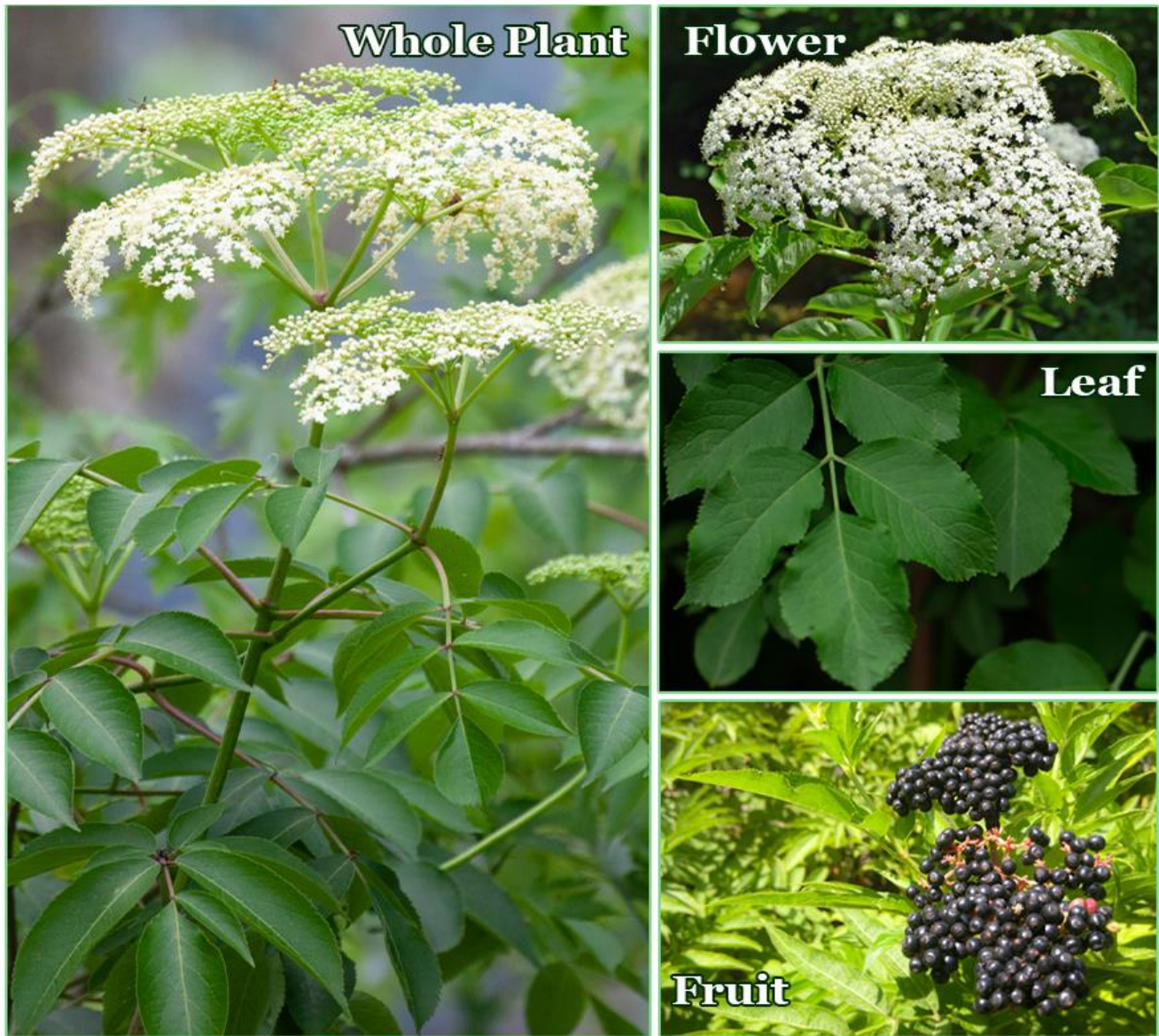
Flower: Flowers are small, white, and grow in flat-topped clusters at the top of the bush.

Root: The root system is shallow, but sometimes creeping.

Lookalikes: Elderberry is sometimes confused with poke berry. Both grow around the same time and in the same areas. However, poke berry looks much different, with berries on pink stems that droop like grapes. Elderberries grow in flat clusters at the top of the plant, although the weight of all the berries may cause it to droop. Poke plants have bright pink stems which are very different from elderberry stems. Poke berries are larger than elderberries as well.

How to Grow: Elderberries are easily grown from starts throughout most of the United States. Choose an area with partial shade to partial sun to plant elderberry, like the wood's edge. Elderberries prefer areas with moist soil, such as along creek banks. Water the plants as needed. US hardiness zones seven through eleven are best for growing elderberry.

Used in Recipes For: Immune System (306), Lyme Disease And Tick Borne Illnesses (309)

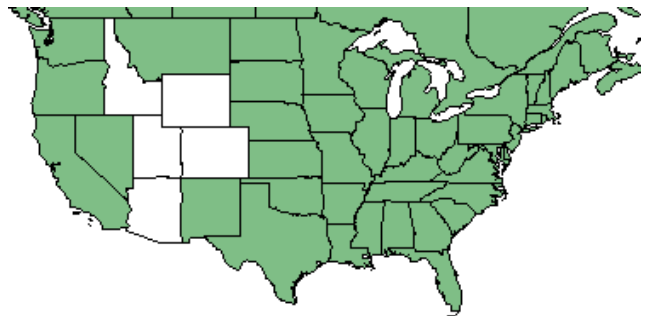


EVENING PRIMROSE, *OENOTHERA BIENNIS*

History: Native Americans used evening primrose both as a source of food and medicine long before European settlers discovered its benefits.

It was an especially useful plant for indigenous people because nearly every part could be used as food or medicine.

Where Found/Grown: Evening primrose is found in most regions of the world, as well as most states within the US.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=OEBI>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

It grows in ditches, waste places, meadows, and the wood's edge. In some places, it is a rather noxious plant during the summer and early fall months.

Where Found/Grown: Evening primrose is found in most regions of the world, as well as most states within the US. It grows in ditches, waste places, meadows, and the wood's edge. In some places, it is a rather noxious plant during the summer and early fall months.



Identification: Evening primrose gets its name because the four-petaled, yellow flowers on top of the plant close during the day and open back up in the evenings. The entire plant can grow up to fifty-nine inches in height. The leaves are lance-shaped and form a rosette the first year. The second year leaves grow in a spiral up the stem.

Leaf: Leaves are broad and lance-shaped. They form a rosette the first year and spring up the stem in a spiral the second year.

Flower: Flowers have four petals and are yellow. They close in the daytime and open back up in the evenings.

Root: The root is a taproot.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: There are many North American plants that grow to a height similar to evening primrose and have yellow flowers on top. However, what makes this plant especially easy to identify is that the flowers can open up quickly before your eyes in the evenings.

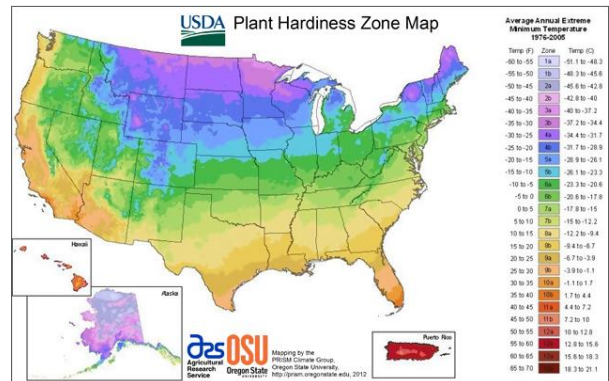
How to Grow: It is likely unnecessary to grow evening primrose, as it is widespread across North America. In fact, it is considered a noxious weed in some areas. Check if it is legal to plant these in your area before sowing seed. If legal to grow in your area, sow seeds in late spring in the desired area. Evening primrose grows in sandy and rocky soil, and is not picky. Water the plants until they are established. Evening primrose is very common in US hardiness zones five through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Irritable Bowel Syndrome – IBS (249), Eczema (305)

EUCALYPTUS, *EUCALYPTUS CINEREA*

History: The first description of this type of eucalyptus came from a botanist named George Benthham in 1867. It was given the Latin name *cinerea*, which means “ash-colored” referring to its silvery colored leaves.

Where Found/Grown: This species of eucalyptus is found in southeastern Australia. However, this tree can be grown outdoors in warm climates or in pots. Some gardeners in cooler climates plant these trees outdoors simply because they grow so fast that they can establish themselves well.



Identification: This tree is small to medium in size and can grow from forty-nine to ninety-eight feet tall. It is known for its cinnamon-brown, peeling bark. There is a swollen portion at the base of the trunk known as a lignotuber. The leaves are opposite, sessile, egg-shaped, and have a greenish-silver color. They are also glaucous and round, growing around three inches long and two inches wide. The leaves have a strongly aromatic and camphorus scent. The leaves gave the tree the nickname “silver dollar tree” because they resemble coins when they are mature.

Leaf: Silvery in appearance, rounded, egg-shaped, and opposite leaves grow on branches. They have a strong camphor-like scent.

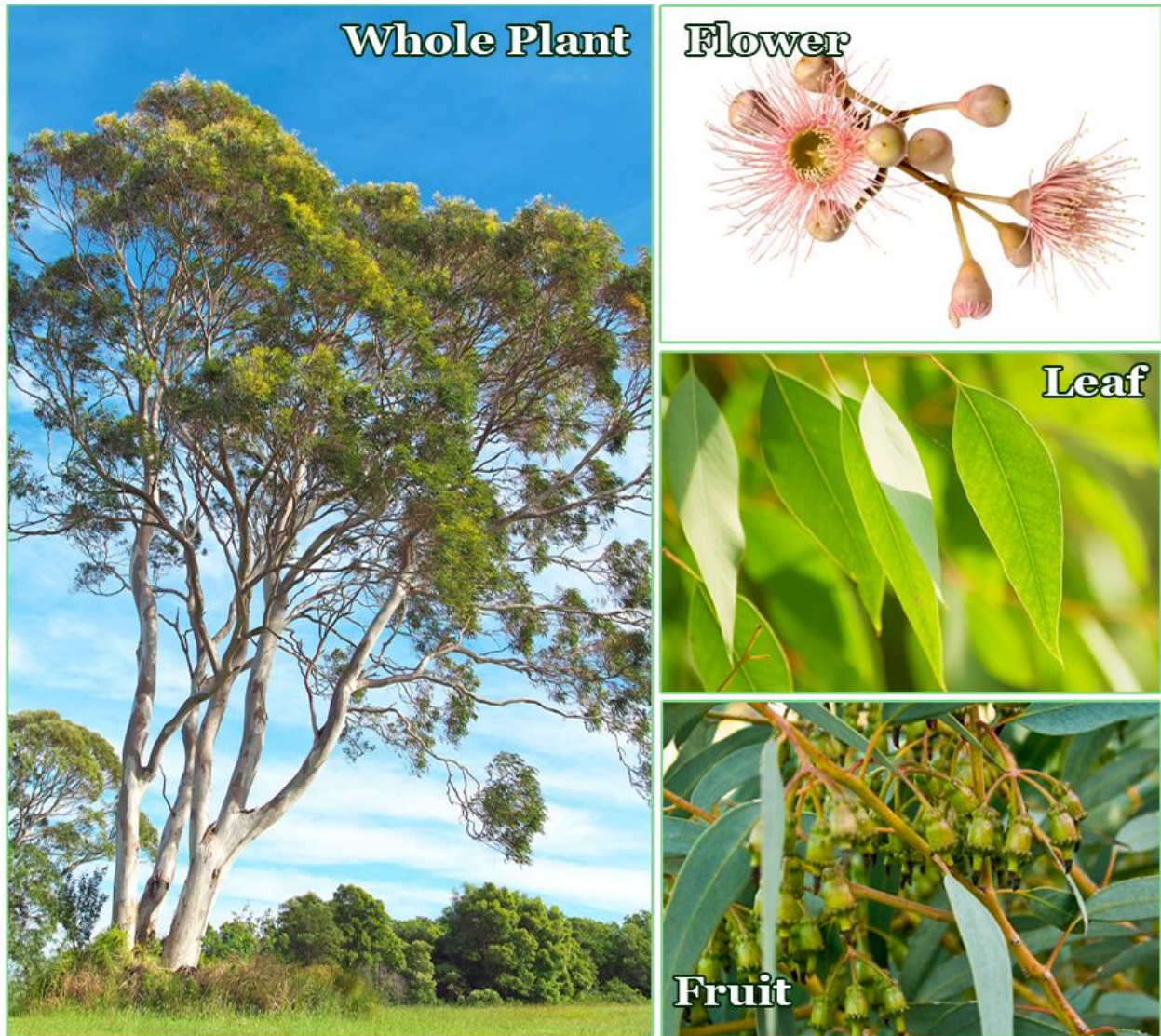
Flower: Grows in groups, white, and hair-like.

Root: Extensive, long-reaching, and shallow, the roots put the tree at risk for blowing over in strong winds.

Lookalikes: There are many other species of eucalyptus that are used interchangeably with *Eucalyptus cinerea*. However, other eucalyptus trees have long, lance-shaped leaves that greatly differ in appearance from this species. Another eucalyptus species called *Eucalyptus polyanthemos* looks very similar, but its leaves end in a point and droop more.

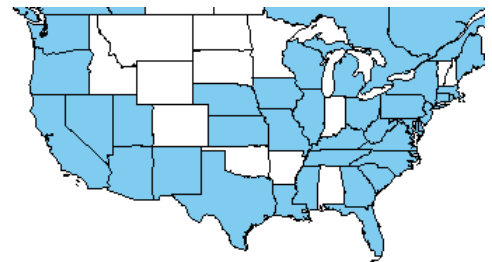
How to Grow: This species tends to grow well in US hardiness zones nine and ten. Plant these trees in areas of full sun with moist, well-drained soil. These trees are somewhat drought tolerant, but they do not fare well in freezing temperatures. If you are not in zones nine and ten, you may want to plant the tree in a pot and bring it inside before frost harms it.

Used in Recipes For: Headache (219), Sinus Infection (230), Asthma (244), Tired and Weak Muscles (284), Back Muscles Pain (288), Arthritis (290)



FENNEL, *FOENICULUM VULGARE*

History: Fennel has an interesting medicinal background and was used as an antidote to poison by the Hindus, Chinese, and Romans. It was even mentioned as an antidote for poison by famous seventeenth century botanist Nicholas Culpeper. The distinctive anise-like flavor of fennel leaves and fruits were traditionally used as a flavoring for a variety of dishes, as well as alcohols.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=FOVU>

Where Found/Grown: Although this member of the carrot family is native to the Mediterranean, it has been widely naturalized around the world.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

It is a common fixture in many North American gardens.



Whole Plant



Flower



Seeds



Bulb

Identification: Fennel can grow up to eight feet tall. The entire plant is very fragrant, with a licorice or anise-like scent. Leaves are frilly and thread-like. They are deeply dissected and much like dill in appearance. Tiny yellow flowers grow on top of the plant in umbels. Flowers turn to pod-like fruit with a seed.

Leaf: Leaves are thin, thread-like, and light green in color. They are anise-scented.

Flower: Flowers are small and yellow and located on top of the plant in umbels.

Root: The root is a bulb.

Lookalikes: Fennel and dill can look very similar in appearance, but the leaves of fennel are thinner. Both dill and fennel also have yellow flowers. However, both plants have their own unique scent, with fennel being more licorice and anise-scented and dill having a warmer, almost pine-like scent

How to Grow: Fennel is relatively easy to grow, and is not overly picky about soil. Sow the seed in early spring. Thin out plants as they get bigger, and keep them spaced nine to twelve inches apart. Choose a place with full

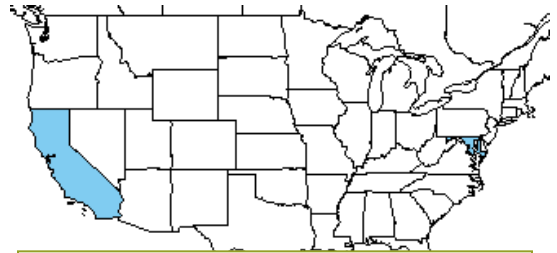
sun to grow fennel. Water the plants regularly, but make sure the soil is well-draining. Fennel thrives best in US hardiness zones seven through ten.

Used in Recipes For: Indigestion (245)

FENUGREEK, *TRIGONELLA FOENUM-GRÆCUM*

History: Fenugreek has long been used by ancient people for food, medicine, and other practical purposes. The Egyptians used fenugreek during the embalming process, and it was used as cattle fodder by the Greeks. It was traditionally thought to heal a variety of diseases including fever, dysentery, tuberculosis, and rickets.

Where Found/Grown: Fenugreek is thought to be native to regions of Western Asia, Turkey, and Egypt. Today, India is one of the top producers of fenugreek.



<https://www.plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=TRFO80>



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Root

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Fenugreek plants can grow up to two feet tall. They have leaves divided into oblong, trifoliate leaflets. Flowers are small, and white to yellow. Seedpods produce ten to twenty fragrant seeds.

Leaf: Leaves are divided into oblong, trifoliate leaflets.

Flower: Flowers are small, and white to yellow.

Root: Fenugreek root systems are shallow.

Lookalikes: Due to the areas where fenugreek is produced, not many lookalikes exist and fenugreek is often cultivated rather than found in the wild.

How to Grow: Fenugreek grows best from seeds and requires full sun to thrive. Sow seeds directly into a chosen spot with well-drained, loamy soil. Optimally, the soil should be slightly acidic as well. Plant seeds in early spring after soaking overnight. Break up the ground well and sprinkle the seeds around. They do not need to be covered heavily. Keep the area watered and moist at all times. Fenugreek thrives in US hardiness zones five through nine.

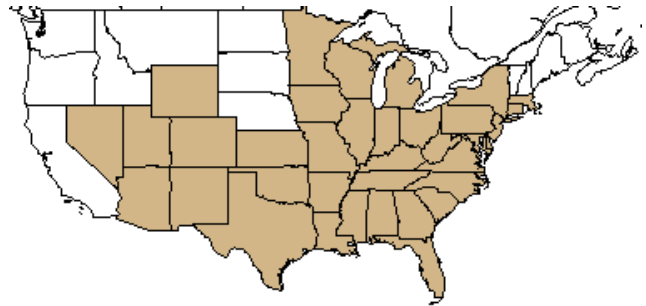
Used in Recipes For: Pneumonia (243)

FEVERFEW, *TANACETUM PARthenium*

History: Greek physician Dioscorides first documented the effects of feverfew as being anti-inflammatory.

Historically, it was also used to reduce fevers, thus the name “feverfew.” It has attained popularity today as a cure for migraine headaches.

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to Eurasia, but can now be found throughout Europe, North America, and Chile. It is an aggressive plant that can quickly become invasive in some regions.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PARTH2>

Identification: Feverfew is a small, bush-like plant that has a pungent odor. It grows up to twenty-eight inches high. It has daisy-like flowers with yellow centers and white petals borne in lax corymbs. The leaves of the plant are a light greenish-yellow and are pinnatifid.

Leaf: Light greenish-yellow leaves that are pinnatifid.

Flower: Daisy-like in appearance with button-like yellow centers and white petals borne in lax corymbs.

Root: The root system consists of a taproot with an abundance of fibrous roots.

Lookalikes: Daisies are similar, but the flowers of daisies are much bigger. Fleabane can be mistaken for feverfew, but the petals are much thinner. In addition, some might mistake feverfew for chamomile, but the yellow center of chamomile is more dome-shaped.

How to Grow: Feverfew is best grown up to US hardiness zone five. This perennial plant should be planted in full sun and spaced about eighteen inches apart. Take care not to plant this outside of its native range, as it spreads easily and can become invasive.

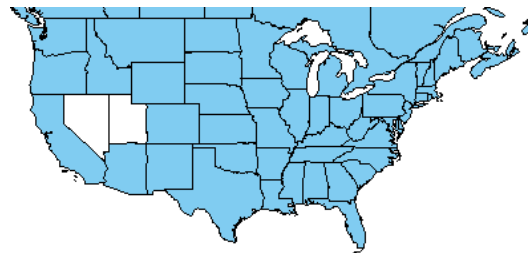
Used in Recipes For: Headache (219)



FLAX, *LINUM USITATISSIMUM*

History: Also known as linseed, flax has been used since prehistoric times. It was first used as a textile and woven into various materials. Ancient Egyptians also used flax to make linens and cultivated the plant on a large scale. Even up until the Middle Ages, flax was cultivated for linen production, as well as for the oil from the seeds, which was considered medicinal.

Where Found/Grown: Aside from cultivated flax, it might be found growing in cool, wet areas and deep loams. Most of the world's flax is produced in Russia



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=LIUS>



Identification: Flax can grow from three to eleven inches tall. It has slender, lance-shaped leaves that are pale bluish or greyish green in color. Flowers having five petals grow on top of the plant and are usually a vivid blue color. Shiny seeds can be found inside the capsule-like fruit of the plant.

Leaf: Slender, lance-shaped leaves are pale bluish or greyish in color.

Flower: Flowers are a vivid blue color and have five petals.

Root: A fibrous root system with a taproot.

Lookalikes: There may be some confusion when it comes to distinguishing flax from another plant called “toadflax.” They share very similar names, and therein lies the confusion. However, toadflax is much taller and widespread than common flax. In addition, it has yellow flowers that differ greatly from the blue flowers of flax.

How to Grow: Flax is best grown in a cooler climate and can tolerate temperatures as low as twenty-eight degrees Fahrenheit. Sow seeds in rich soil under full sun. Place seeds at least six inches apart and down into the soil one

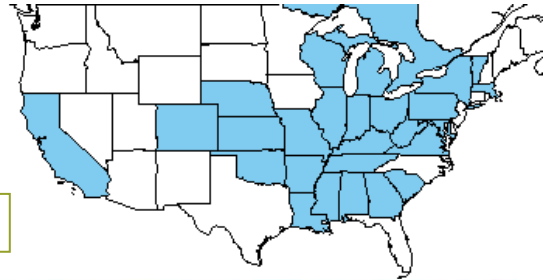
inch. Try to keep the soil moist, but do not overwater. Germination can take up to a month. Flax grows better in US hardiness zones three through five.

Used in Recipes For: Hypertension (240)

GARLIC, *ALLIUM SATIVUM*

History: Garlic has been employed as food flavoring, as well as medicine, for centuries. It was used by ancient Egyptians and Romans as a seasoning. Garlic is an important component of many cultural dishes around the world and still holds its place today as a popular flavoring.

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ALSA2>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: There are hundreds of different garlic species, but one of the most common species (*Allium sativum*) is thought to have originated from Central Asia and northeastern Iran. However, this species of garlic, as well as many other species, grows wild in many areas. An easy-to-grow plant, garlic is cultivated in gardens across the globe, but grows especially well in US hardiness zone eight.

Identification: Garlic grows to around three feet tall. It has a bulbous root and tall green stem that can either be hard or soft depending on the species and variations. At the top of the stem is a spathe with an umbel filled with bulbils and flowers. There are usually around twelve leaves per plant, and size greatly varies among species. The plant is highly pungent with a strongly herbaceous scent.

Leaf: Leaves are green to bright green, with thin, long leaves. Leaf sizes and amounts can vary.

Flower: Pinkish-white flowers from an umbel on top of a central scape.

Root: Roots are bulbs with small roots coming from them.

Lookalikes: False garlic resembles true garlic and can be found growing wild in many areas across the United States. However, there is one sure way to tell the difference: smell it! If you scratch the bulb and other areas on the plant and don't smell the signature garlic scent, avoid the plant.

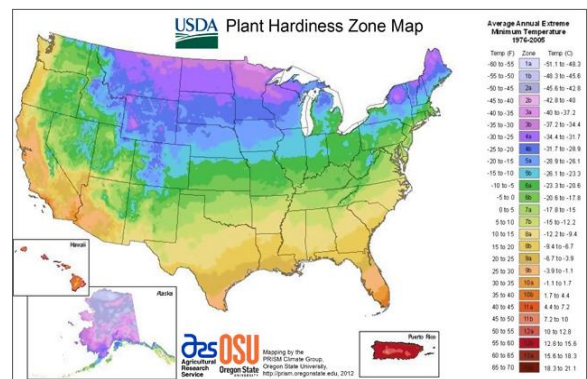
How to Grow: Garlic is easy to grow and requires little maintenance in most climates. Plant the cloves in spring or fall. You can break off cloves from the bulb to plant, just be sure to avoid damaging them at the base. Garlic prefers full or at least partial sun and well-drained soil. The use of compost and manure can really help garlic thrive. Place the cloves about two inches deep and space them out eight inches. Cover the area with a thin layer of mulch and water as needed.

Used in Recipes For: Ear Infection (225), Excess Ear Wax (228), Sinus Infection (231), Tooth Abscess (235), Weak Heart (238), Stroke (241), Cholecystitis and Removal (258), STS's In Women (272), Bacterial Vaginosis (275), Male STD's (282), Immune System (308), Lyme Diseases and Tick Borne Illnesses (309)

GERANIUM, *PELARGONIUM GRAVEOLENS*

History: In the seventeenth century, geraniums were brought to Europe from their native habitat in Africa. It didn't take long for their beauty to captivate. Their arrival in the United States is thanks to Thomas Jefferson, who reportedly brought geraniums back from France.

Where Found/Grown: The geranium is native to regions of Mozambique and Zimbabwe in Africa. They have been cultivated for hundreds of years and are now commonly grown in many regions of the world, including North America.



Identification: The geranium grows up to one-and-a-half meters tall. Its soft leaves are covered in fine hairs and are deeply incised. Flowers vary in color from pink to white-pink. The plants smell strongly of rose, giving it the popular common name "rose geranium."

Leaf: Leaves are covered in fine hairs and are deeply incised. They smell of rose.

Flower: Flowers are light to medium pink in color. They are also fragrant, smelling of rose.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Root: Geraniums have a short-lived primary root system and a secondary root system that grows from crowns.

Lookalikes: There are around three hundred species of geranium. It can be difficult to distinguish between all the species. Most often, *Pelargonium graveolens* is used medicinally. It can be distinguished from other geranium species by the strong rose smell coming from its leaves and flowers.

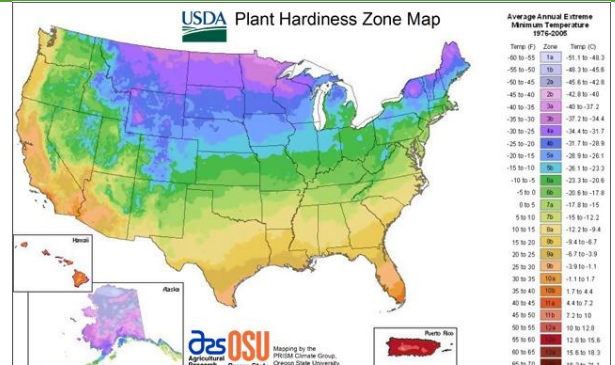
How to Grow: Geraniums can be grown in zones seven and up. Depending on the zone, the geraniums may act as perennials or annuals. Optimal temperatures for geraniums are between fifty-five and seventy degrees Fahrenheit. When temperatures get too hot, it may harm the plant. Geraniums are not winter hardy either, so you may consider growing them in containers and bringing them inside for the winter. Plant geraniums in containers with well-draining soil and make sure they get plenty of sunlight. Water them often, just make sure they aren't sitting in standing water too long.

Used in Recipes For: Bruising and Muscular Injury (286), Psoriasis (313)



GINGER, *ZINGIBER OFFICINALE*

History: Ginger is one of the oldest known cultivated plants. Its cultivation is thought to have started with the Austronesian people in ancient times. Originating from Southeast Asia, ginger root has been used for food flavoring and medicine, but other parts of it were used as well. The large leaves were used to make mats and other related objects. This zesty root also had a place in some Austronesian religious rituals. It was used for protection, healing, and to bless their ships. The Austronesian people are thought to be responsible for introducing it to other areas.



Where Found/Grown: Ginger comes from Southeast Asia, but is cultivated in many tropical regions around the world. Today, India leads in production, followed by Nigeria, China, and Indonesia.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Growing from three to four feet tall, ginger is often identified by its lovely white and pink flowers that turn yellow when in full bloom. The plant is reed-like in appearance, and has leafy stems. The leaves are elongated ovals. The rhizome is the most popular part of the plant, and is dug up when the aerial parts begin withering. Because of ginger's beautiful and tropical appearance, it is used a lot in landscaping for those living in tropical and subtropical climates.

Leaf: Green, elongated, and oval-shaped. Ginger leaves go up reed-like stems.

Flower: Flowers begin as pink and white buds, and then open up to yellow.

Root: Root is a rhizome and yellow in color. It has a very distinct, spice-like smell.

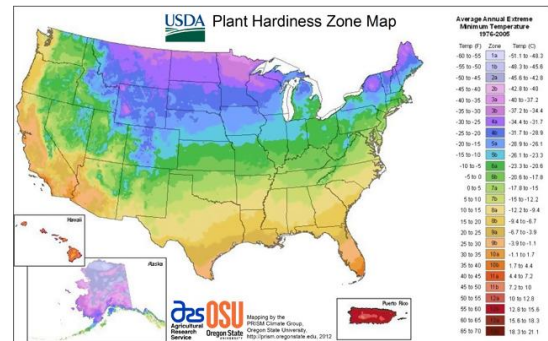
Lookalike: Ginger and turmeric can look a lot alike. They are both members of the same family. However, turmeric is often a larger plant. Turmeric usually has bigger leaves than ginger as well. In addition, ginger flowers are a bright pink and turmeric are usually white to yellow in color. The roots are very different, with ginger being a pale yellow color and turmeric being a bright orange color.

How to Grow: Many people grow ginger from roots they purchase. Some people even buy roots at the grocery store and grow them. The only issue with this is that you need to make sure the roots haven't been sprayed with a growth inhibitor, as many are. A good root to choose is one with green on the tips of the fingers. Before planting, cut your root into one to two inch sections. Make sure the sections have buds on them. Let them sit and dry out for a few days first to keep it from rotting. If you live in zone six or lower, you should probably plant your ginger in a pot. If you live in zone seven or higher, you may get away with planting it in the ground, but depending on the temperatures, the leaves may die. If planting in a pot, make sure it is a large pot, to provide the root with room to grow. A twelve inch deep pot is sufficient. Plant each section in a pot of its own with the bud facing up. Only cover in about an inch of soil. Ginger plants like loose, rich soil.

Used in Recipes For: Fibromyalgia (217), Headache (218, 219), Diabetes (224), Hearing Loss (227), Vertigo (228), Sinus Infection (230), Poor Circulation (239), Bronchitis (242), Pneumonia (243), Indigestion (245), Nausea (246), Lymphomas (255), Endometriosis (267), Male Std's (282), Bruising and Muscular Injury (286), Bursitis (287), Fractures and Sprains (292), Immune System (306, 308), Chron Disease (313), Lupus (317)

GINKGO, *GINKGO BILOBA*

History: Today, the ginkgo tree is the only living member of a long extinct tree family called Ginkgoales. This family of trees dates back to the Cretaceous period, which means these trees existed when dinosaurs roamed the earth. After the mass extinction of dinosaurs, plant life soon followed and the ginkgo trees that were once growing in North America and Europe with the dinosaurs were gone. The tree is widely documented in China, where it is said that Buddhist monks cultivated them for thousands of years. In addition, a tree was discovered in Japan in the 1600s, and from there, seeds were brought to other regions. These trees are sacred and found around temple sites in China and Japan. Medicinal use of the tree goes back thousands of years with mentions for the treatment of head sores and unwanted spots. It was also used as a food source by the Han Dynasty as far back as 206 BC.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: The ginkgo tree is thought to be native to China. It is found growing wild in deciduous forests in this region, as well as valleys. In areas of Asia where it grows wild, it prefers good, well-drained soil. Today, this tree is cultivated in Europe and North America as well. In the US, the best zones for this tree are hardiness zones three through eight.



Identification: This deciduous tree has distinctive fan-like leaves that turn yellow in the fall. When mature, it can reach up to 80 feet tall. The tree has light gray bark with furrows. The female trees produce messy fruit with an unpleasant odor. Sometimes leaves will grow directly from the slender tree trunk.

Leaf: The leaves are fan-shaped and turn a bright yellow in the fall.

Flower: The tree does not produce flowers, but the females do produce a foul-smelling fruit. The seeds are toxic.

Root: Typical large tree root system.

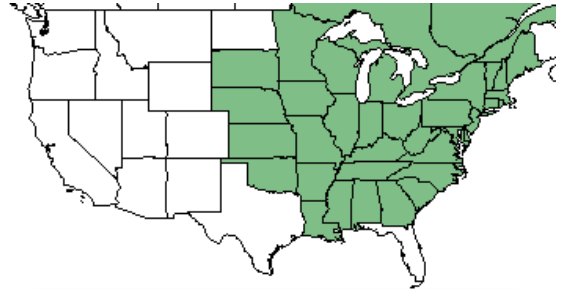
Lookalikes: Since the ginkgo tree has such distinctive fan-like leaves, there are no clear lookalikes.

How to Grow: Growing these trees is said to be relatively easy! Not only are they pest-resistant, but they are not overly picky about soil. Make sure to plant the tree in deep, well-drained soil. They prefer partial shade. Fertilizer is sometimes recommended until the tree is mature, but not absolutely necessary.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (214), Tinnitus (226), Vertigo (228), Vitiligo (319)

GINSENG, *PANAX QUINQUEFOLIS*

History: American ginseng was used by Native Americans as a preventative. They also used it for fevers, headaches, croup, and as a sacred plant that could protect them from evil spirits. It was thought that ginseng could revive those who were dying. Ginseng also has a history of trade and has been imported from America to China since the eighteenth century. This plant is considered an adaptogen. Another ginseng native to China has very similar medicinal properties and a long history of medicinal use, dating back to at least two thousand years ago.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PAQU>



Whole Plant



Fruit



Leaf



Root

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: American ginseng is found in the Ozarks regions of the United States, as well as Appalachian regions. It is usually found growing wild in shady, deciduous forests.

Identification: Ginseng is usually characterized by a single stem with anywhere from one to four leaves. Each leaf contains five leaflets. The top three leaflets are longer than the bottom two, which are short and more rounded. As the plants mature, they may grow more leaflets. Depending on what time of the year it is, there may be a cluster of white flowers growing from the top or a cluster of red berries. They reach heights of eight to twenty-seven inches tall, depending on their age.

Leaf: Leaflets are around five inches long, ovate, and often serrated. The top three are longer than the bottom two.

Flower: A white cluster of flowers emerge from a stem in the middle of the plant in the spring. They may be white to greenish-white.

Root: The root has been described as having a parsnip-like smell. Older roots are more desirable, especially if the forks resemble a person. They are covered in rings.

Lookalikes: One plant that is considered a “companion plant” to ginseng is goldenseal. They are often found growing in the wild near each other. Both have a cluster of red berries or white flowers on top at around the same times. However, ginseng has leaflets on tiny stalks and goldenseal is one leaf with prongs.

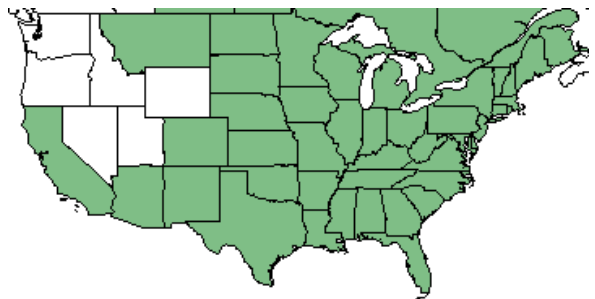
How to Grow: This plant prefers moist, well-drained soil and northwest-facing slopes. It likes shady areas (seventy to eighty percent shade) under hardwood trees. It does best in Appalachian or Ozark regions, in US hardiness zones one through nine. You can plant a bed of ginseng in the forest here by first finding a spot where it will likely grow well. Look for plants like wild ginger, trillium, Solomon’s seal, and goldenseal because they grow where ginseng naturally grows and the soil is usually right for growing ginseng in these places. Remove all undergrowth in an area that is around six feet wide. Give yourself room on either side of the area for walking and trenching to keep too much water from standing there. If you choose a slight slope, this is better for encouraging water runoff. Break up roots in the area and soil down to eight inches deep. Sow seeds in the fall or winter, one and a half inches deep. Spread them out at least fourteen inches between seeds. In times with little rainfall, check your patch and water it if needed.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (214), Stroke (241), Male Hormonal Imbalance (277)

GOLDENROD, *SOLIDAGO ALTISSIMA*

History: Throughout history, goldenrod has been known for its ability to help the urinary system, strengthen kidneys, and tone the tissues. Its astringent and antiseptic actions were used for a variety of other issues, such as wound care and cleaning. It has long been thought to be responsible for allergies, but ironically, has historically been used to help treat allergies.

Where Found/Grown: There are many species of goldenrod, and many are used interchangeably. *Solidago altissima* can be found throughout most of North America. It can be found growing on high ground and disturbed areas.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=SOAL6>



Identification: Growing up to eighty inches tall, *Solidago altissima* has a stem with fine hairs. Lance-shaped, toothed, leaves grow up the stem. Bright yellow flowers grow on a conical array at the top of the plant. It is a popular pollinator, and regularly attracts bees.

Leaf: Leaves are lance-shaped, slightly toothed, and grow up the stem.

Flower: Tiny, bright yellow flowers grow on a conical array at the top of the plant.

Root: Fibrous, with creeping rhizomes.

Lookalike: Another species of goldenrod that looks similar is *Solidago canadensis*. One way to distinguish the two is size. *Solidago altissima* is known as “tall goldenrod” because of its height. *Solidago canadensis* may be a bit smaller. Both are used medicinally.

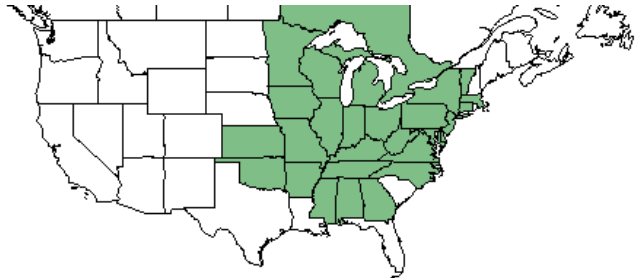
How to Grow: Sow seeds before the last frost and lightly cover them. It may be best to grow these in a raised garden bed or landscaping area where you can control the spread, as they can become invasive. They do well in full to partial sun. They grow in a variety of soils, from moist to dry. Goldenrod is best grown in US hardiness zones three through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Kidney Stones (262), Muscle Cramping and Pain (285)

GOLDENSEAL, *HYDRASTIS CANADENSIS*

History: Native American tribes used goldenseal extensively before settlers discovered its medicinal characteristics.

Various tribes used the bright yellow roots in eyewashes, as a digestive aid, and as a diuretic. Some also used it to treat cancer. Native Americans also used the yellow roots as a dye to color objects.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=HYC>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Goldenseal is native to southeastern Canada and eastern United States. It can be found throughout most of the eastern half of the United States, with the exceptions of Florida, South Carolina, Maine, and New Hampshire. It prefers rich soil in shady, wooded areas. Look for companion plants like ginseng, Solomon's seal, wild ginger, and various ferns when searching for goldenseal.

Identification: Goldenseal grows from six to twelve inches tall. It can have one large, veined, maple-like leaf atop a tall stem, or two. Leaves are toothed, and palmately cut into five to seven lobes. A white flower with hair-like petals grows from the center of stalk, between the leaves. It will turn into a red cluster of seeds in the summer. The red seed ball can hold between ten and thirty seeds. The roots are what make goldenseal famous. They are fibrous and bright yellow in color.

Leaf: One or two, large, maple-like leaves can be found at the top of a central, slender stalk. They are deeply-veined, toothed, and have five to seven lobes.

Flower: In spring, a white flower grows from a central stalk between the leaves. It has hair-like petals. This flower will turn into a bright red seed ball during the summer months.

Root: Goldenseal is known for its bright yellow, fibrous roots.

Lookalikes: Upon first glance, goldenseal can look like many short plants growing on the forest floor. It has been confused with ginseng, but ginseng has five separate leaves, unlike goldenseal, which has one to two large leaves. Goldenseal can be distinguished from other plants by its yellow roots. When in doubt, look at the roots to confirm identification.

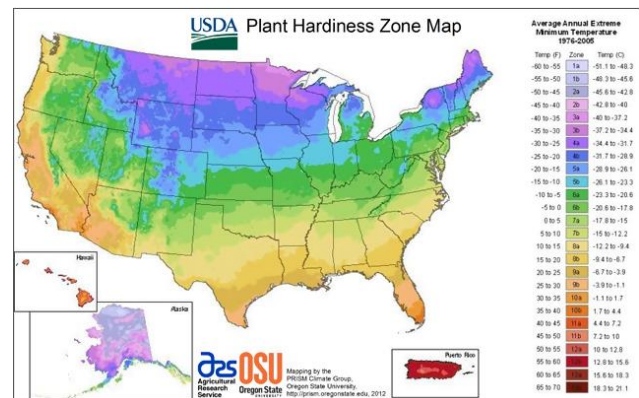
How to Grow: Goldenseal best grows from seeds that are fresh. If you have the luxury of using fresh seeds, you can sow them in late summer or early fall in an area that mimics the natural habitat of the plant, which is a shady, richly wooded area. Look for the companion plants where goldenseal is normally found when choosing an area. Choose rich, moist, loamy soil to sow your seeds. Plant seeds at least eight inches apart, and only one-half inch deep. Cover them with a light amount of soil. Water the area as needed, and keep all weeds away from the plants as they grow, to ensure they get established well. Goldenseal thrives best in US hardiness zones three to eight.

Used in Recipes For: Sore Throat and Streptococcus Bacteria (237), Infections of The Urinary System (260), Lyme Diseases and Tick Borne Illnesses (309), Celiac Diseases (314)

GOTU KOLA, *CENTELLA ASIATICA*

History: Gotu kola has a rich history of medicinal use in India and surrounding countries, where it was used in Ayurveda for stress, as well as for helping with meditation. It is still employed in Ayurveda today. It was also documented in Chinese medicine for use in bodily detoxification. It has also been used historically as a source of food in Asia.

Where Found/Grown: Gotu kola can be found in tropical and subtropical regions of India, Pakistan, Madagascar, South Africa, Eastern Europe, Sri Lanka, and the South



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Pacific. It prefers swampy areas like marshes and river banks. In the US, gotu kola can be grown in zones seven to eleven.



Identification: This groundcover-like plant has slender stems and creeping runners connecting plants. The leaves are green and rounded, with a kidney-bean shape. The root is a rhizome, usually cream in color. This ground cover grows up to twenty inches tall.

Leaf: Medium green, serrated edges, and kidney-bean shaped.

Flower: Clusters of white flowers atop long, slender stems.

Root: Rhizomes, usually cream in color.

Lookalikes: Sometimes, gotu kola is mistakenly called “brahmi,” although the two are not the same plant. Both plants are used for similar ailments, and affect the central nervous system. However, the leaves of brahmi are completely different in shape with a more succulent-like appearance.

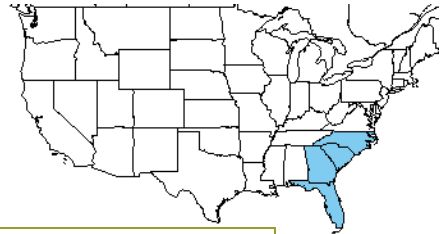
How to Grow: Gotu kola likes wet areas, so plant in an area with well-drained soil and water often. It can be grown from cuttings by placing the cutting in damp soil and watering daily, especially in the summer months or when it is dry weather. It will likely only grow in USDA hardiness zones seven to eleven.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (214), Stroke (241)

GREEN TEA LEAF, *CAMELLIA SINENSIS*

History: The history of *Camellia sinensis* likely began in China over 3,000 years ago. The leaves were first chewed, and later infused in water to create a tea.

Tea made from the unprocessed leaves of the plant is called green tea. This tea has been enjoyed for centuries for its flavor, as well as medicinal benefits.



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Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to parts of Asia, as well as Indian subcontinent. It is cultivated in regions across the world that enjoy a similar sub-tropical or tropical climate. It can also be cultivated in North America, southeastern states.

Identification: This evergreen shrub can grow up to twenty feet tall in the right conditions. The leaves are oblong and vary in shades of green as they mature. Flowers produced by the plant are white to yellow in color, with seven to eight petals.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong, lance shaped, and vary in shade from light green when young, to darker green when older.

Flower: Flowers are white to yellow in color with seven or eight petals.

Root: The root is a sturdy taproot.

Lookalikes: There are an abundance of evergreen shrubs growing in tropical regions that may appear similar to *Camellia sinensis*. However, most *Camellia sinensis* shrubs are cultivated and grown on farms for processing into tea.

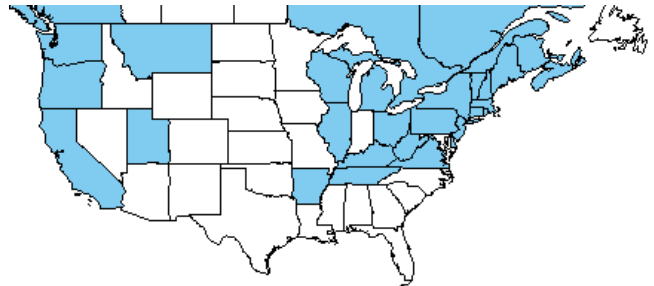
How to Grow: These shrubs grow best in tropical and sub-tropical climates. It is possible to cultivate them in states that have a tropical climate, like Florida. Areas with at least fifty inches of rainfall each year are preferred for growing *Camellia sinensis*. Full to partial sun and good, rich soil are also necessary. Grow this plant in US hardiness zones six through eight for best results.

Used in Recipes For: Pneumonia (243), Fatty Liver Disease (250), Kidney Stones (262), Uterine Fibroids (271)

HAWTHORN, *CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA*

History: This tree has been used as a folk medicine for issues with the circulatory system since ancient times. The berries it produces have also been used as a source of food and to make wine. Native to Europe, one legend surrounding the tree says that the Irish associated the tree with fairies and thought it should not be disturbed.

Where Found/Grown: The tree is native to Europe, as well as western Asia and northwest Africa. It can be an invasive plant in some areas. Today, there are many different species of hawthorn and it can be found in regions all over the world, including North America.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CRMO3>

Identification: The hawthorn tree can grow from fifteen to forty-five feet in height. Orange-colored cracks can be seen on the light brown bark. Young shoots may have thorns. Leaves are slightly teardrop-shaped, long, and deeply lobed. Flowers grow in a corymb inflorescence and have five white petals. They are fragrant and attract pollinators. The red berries produced by the tree are oval-shaped and have a pome that contains a single seed.

Leaf: Leaves are slightly teardrop-shaped, long, and deeply lobed.

Flower: Flowers grow in corymb inflorescences and have five white petals.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Root: The root system is not as extensive as many other trees. It is described as somewhat fibrous.

Lookalikes: This common hawthorn tree can be confused with another species called midland hawthorn, or *Crataegus laevigata*. However, *Crataegus monogyna* is more upright and has leaves that are more deeply lobed.

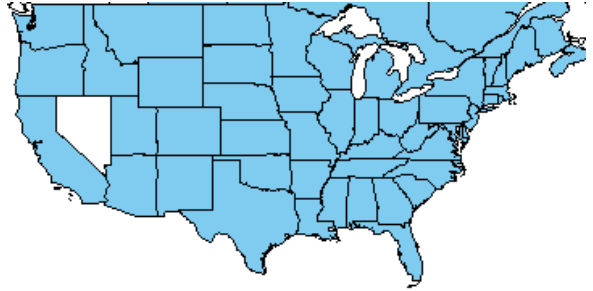
How to Grow: This tree makes a great hedge. It is commonly planted for this reason. These trees are especially hardy throughout New England. Plant saplings in early spring in soil that is well-drained. Locations with full sun are best. Keep the soil around the tree moist as much as possible. Hawthorn thrives best in US hardiness zones three through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Weak Heart (238)

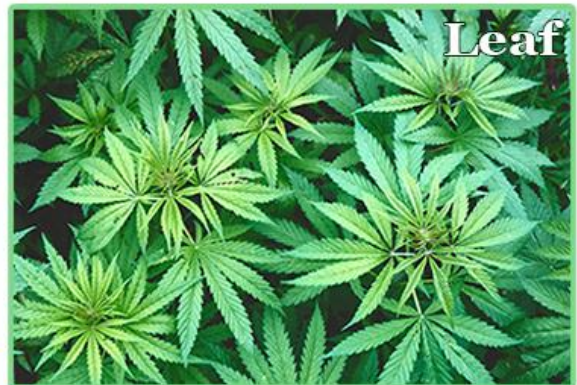


HEMP, *CANNABIS SATIVA*

History: One of the most popular and versatile plants used throughout history and into modern times, hemp has been used to make medicine, in spiritual ceremonies, for food, and to create fiber. Hemp was grown in Virginia, Connecticut and Massachusetts during the seventeenth century. It was a popular textile used to make paper, rope, and clothing. Its use as medicine has exploded in recent years due to more research surrounding its medicinal constituents. Hemp contains tiny, insignificant amounts of the psychoactive component, THC. *Cannabis indica* is related to hemp and is a source of more measurable amounts of THC.



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Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Although hemp is native to eastern Asia, its popularity has caused its distribution to explode. It is commonly grown in many parts of the world, including North America. States that have legalized its cultivation are growing large amounts of hemp to meet various industrial demands.

Identification: *Cannabis sativa* plants can get really tall, with some up to twenty feet in height. It has more narrow leaves compared to its relative *Cannabis indica*. Lower leaves are usually opposite and upper leaves are alternate. Leaves are compound with three to nine leaflets. Leaflets are long, narrow and toothed. Flowers can be male or female. Male flowers have oblong sepals that turn from green to or light yellow as the plant matures. Female flowers are single sepals wrapping around the ovary.

Leaf: Lower leaves are usually opposite and upper leaves are alternate. There are three to nine leaflets and the edges are toothed.

Flower: Flowers can be male or female. Male flowers will have oblong sepals and female flowers will have single sepals wrapped around an ovary.

Root: The root system is dense and extensive.

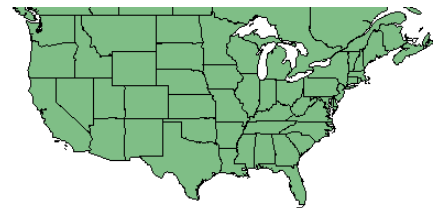
Lookalikes: *Cannabis indica* and *Cannabis sativa* can look similar from a distance. However, *Cannabis sativa* grows to be much taller than *Cannabis indica*. The leaves of *Cannabis sativa* are usually narrower than those of *Cannabis indica* as well.

How to Grow: Make sure that it is legal to grow hemp in your area. Hemp needs to be planted in an area with plenty of sunlight. It needs twelve to thirteen hours of light a day. Soil with a pH of 6.3 to 6.8 is preferred when growing hemp. Water the plants often; making sure the soil is well-draining. Some growers fertilize right before the plants begin to flower. This plant grows best in US hardiness zones nine through twelve.

Used in Recipes For: Back Muscle Pain (288)

HORSETAIL, *EQUISETUM HYEMALE*

History: This plant has several historical uses, both medicinal and practical. Medicinally, Native Americans made an infusion with it to treat venereal diseases and to promote the expulsion of excess water from the body. Practical uses for horsetail have been to shape reeds for reed instruments, as well as to help scrub and clean objects.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=EQHY>

Where Found/Grown: This aggressively spreading plant can be found in temperate to arctic regions of North America, Europe, and Asia.

Identification: Horsetail grows up to three feet tall. It has hollow, segmented stems that are very reminiscent of reeds. Stems have ridges full of silica and are rough to the touch. Leaves are very small, hair-like, and join around the stem. Horsetail can often be found growing in colonies. This plant does not produce flowers.

Leaf: Green leaves are hair-like and grow from segments on the stalk.

Flower: Horsetail plants do not produce flowers.

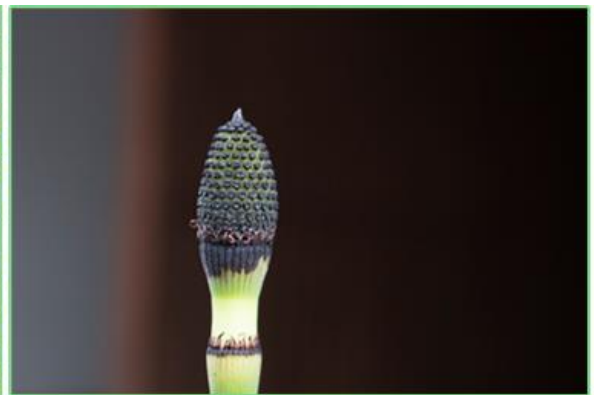
Root: This plant spreads, sometimes aggressively, through underground rhizomes.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: Horsetail might look like other common reeds. Look for color: horsetail is medium to dark green in color. Also, horsetail has bursts of hair-like green leaves coming from segments on the stalk, which may differentiate it from other reeds. It has an oblong protrusion on top with rough spots.

How to Grow: Horsetail has survived millions of years on this earth and can grow easily in most areas. However, caution is advised when growing this plant because it is highly invasive. Check in your area to make sure it is legal to grow. Plant horsetail in an area where you can control its spread, like a container or raised bed. Horsetail especially thrives in USDA zones seven through ten. Start the plants from seed indoors, around six weeks before the last frost. Transplant them outdoors to a bed or container in early spring. They are not picky about soil and you can water them as needed.

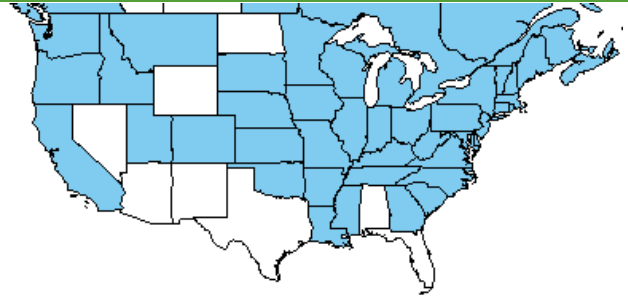
Used in Recipes For: Kidney Stones (261)



JAPANESE KNOTWEED, *REYNOUTRIA JAPONICA*

History: Hailing from Japan, Japanese knotweed has been used as a food and source of medicine by the Japanese people for many years. It was given a nickname meaning “tiger stick” that may have come from its reported pain-relieving abilities. It has since spread from Japan to other regions of the world where it easily takes over.

Where Found/Grown: Japanese knotweed may originate from Japan, but its aggressive and easily spreading root system has made it a noxious weed in many parts of the world. It is a common plant in many areas of North America. It especially seems to colonize areas near water.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=POCU6>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Japanese knotweed can grow up to ten feet tall in the right conditions. The stems resemble bamboo with their sturdy, hollow structure. Leaves are broad and ovate. Small, off-white to white flowers are borne in racemes.

Leaf: Leaves are broad and ovate.

Flower: Flowers are off-white to white in color and borne on racemes.

Root: The root system spreads by rhizomes.

Lookalikes: The stems of Japanese knotweed when fully mature can closely resemble bamboo. However, the leaves of bamboo look quite different from those of Japanese knotweed. Bamboo leaves are tri-pinnate and lance-shaped, whereas Japanese knotweed leaves are broad and ovate.

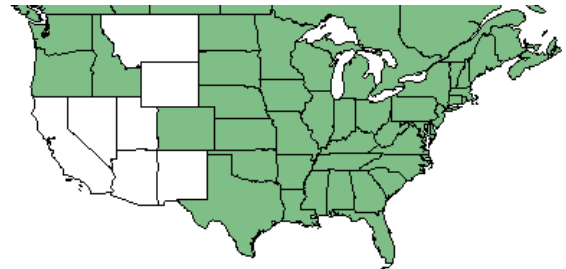
How to Grow: It is not a good idea to attempt to grow Japanese knotweed, since it is likely illegal in many areas due to its aggressive growing tendencies. In fact, the World Conservation Union declared it the World's Worst Invasive Species! This plant is best foraged in the wild rather than cultivated. Foraging will also help control the noxious plant's spread.

Used in Recipes For: Cirrhosis (251), Lyme Diseases and Tick Borne Illnesses (309)

JEWELWEED, *IMPATIENS CAPENSIS*

History: Jewelweed has been a popular folk remedy for poison ivy for many years. It has been said that it grows near poison ivy to help those who may need its healing properties. The plant was poultice when fresh and applied straight to the rash, and in some cases, applied to the skin as a preventative.

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to North America and can be found in many states. It grows in wet areas along creeks, streams, and rivers.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=IMCA>

Identification: Jewelweed can grow up to five feet tall. It has hollow, juicy stems that are thicker at the bottom. Ovate leaves are toothed on the margins. The flowers are unique, orange and red, and hang from the stem like a necklace, giving the plant its name. Seed pods pop when touched, and are the reason the plant is sometimes called "touch-me-not."

Leaf: Leaves are ovate and toothed around the edges.

Flower: Flowers hang from the stem on a smaller stem. They are bright red-orange in color.

Root: Jewelweed has a shallow root system, making them easy to pull up.

Lookalikes: Another less common species of jewelweed called pale touch-me-not can grow in the same areas and looks very much the same. The biggest difference between the two is that pale touch-me-not has solid yellow flowers.

How to Grow: Grow jewelweed from seeds by sowing in the fall in a wet area. They do well in partial shade. Make sure to keep the plants moist, as they thrive in these conditions in the wild. Jewelweed can be best cultivated in US hardiness zones four through eight.

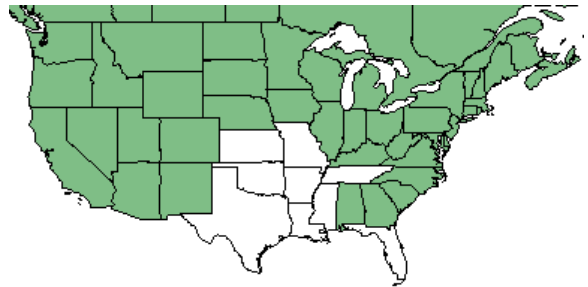
Used in Recipes For: Rashes from Poison Ivy, Oak, Sumac and Other Toxic Plants (298)



JUNIPER, *JUNIPERUS COMMUNIS*

History: The wood, as well as the berries of this evergreen tree have been used historically. In Europe, the wood has been used to create knife handles, and twigs are used in a Polish ceremony on Easter Monday. The berries have been used to flavor meats throughout history, and were infused in tea by some Native American tribes.

Where Found/Grown: Juniper trees can be found in North America, Europe, and Asia. They have also been discovered in a region of Africa.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=JUCO6>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

They cover a wide area around the globe. They grow wild and are cultivated as well. They can be found at the wood's edge, or in dry to moist coniferous forests.



Identification: Juniper trees can grow from thirty-three to fifty-two feet tall. Leaves are needle-like and form in whorls around the branches. The tree doesn't produce flowers, but like an evergreen, male and female cones are produced. The fruit of the tree is what is used medicinally. This consists of small, blue berries produced by the female seed cone.

Leaf: Leaves are needle-like and grow in whorls around the branches.

Flower: The trees produce cones, not flowers. The berries are actually modified cones. They are small and blue in color.

Root: Roots consist of a deep taproot with fibrous roots closer to the surface.

Lookalikes: There are many varieties of juniper. Some have edible berries and others do not. One species that produces toxic berries is *Juniperus Sabina*. This particular species grows at higher altitudes and is much smaller in size than common juniper trees, only reaching up to four meters tall.

How to Grow: Juniper trees prefer sunny locations in the open. Too much shade can actually damage the tree. They also prefer sandy soil that is well-draining. Water the tree as needed. If given the right conditions, it can grow one foot per year. Juniper grows best in US hardiness zones two through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Kidney Injury (262)

LAVENDER, *LAVANDULA ANGUSTIFOLIA*

History: Lavender has been used throughout history, and especially by the Romans. It was the way it was used by the Romans that gave it its name, which comes from the Latin word “lavare” which means “to wash.”

Romans would frequently bathe with it, as well as use it to scent their bedding, clothes and hair. Romans are also credited with discovering the medicinal properties of lavender and used it for its gentle calming properties.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=LAAN81>

Where Found/Grown: Lavender is native to the Mediterranean, Middle East, and India. There are many species of lavender, so locations vary. It can also be found growing in parts of Europe, as well as eastern Africa. Common English lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) is not native to Europe, but rather the Mediterranean.

Identification: This shrub-like plant is highly aromatic, having a pleasant floral odor. They can grow from one to two meters tall, given the right conditions. The leaves are from two to six centimeters long, green, and slender. The plant gets its name from its lavender-colored flowers. They start out as small buds and open up into small, purple flowers.

Leaf: Two to six centimeters long and slender, with an evergreen color.

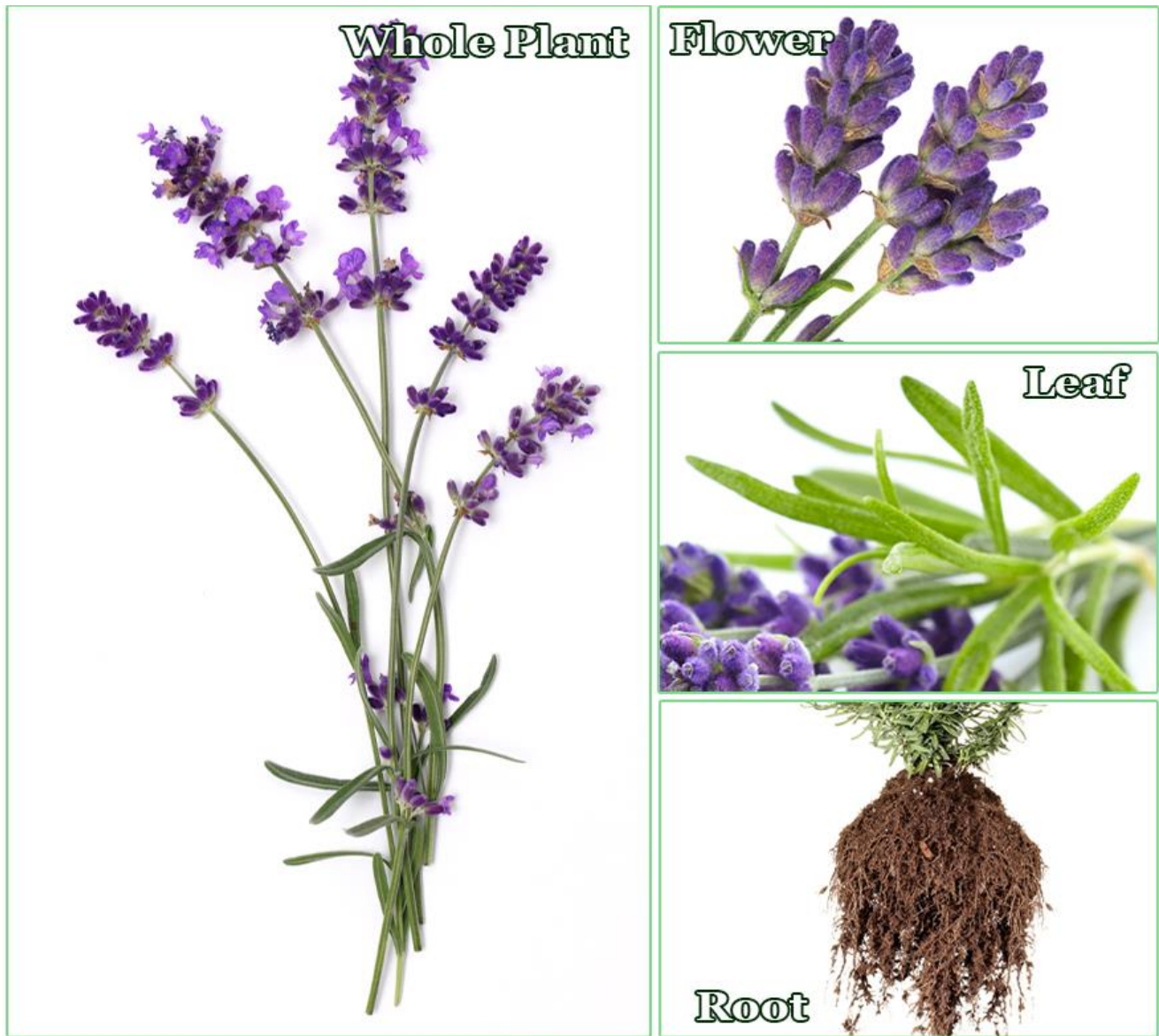
Flower: Purple, with buds opening up to small, aromatic flowers.

Root: Roots are thick and expansive, having a large spreading root system.

Lookalike: Russian sage is often confused with lavender. It has similar purple flowers, as well as similar leaves. Oftentimes, it grows bigger than lavender and it has a very different, yet not unpleasant, scent. Russian sage is much hardier in colder climates than lavender.

How to Grow: Plant lavender in the spring, making sure to sow seeds in well-drained soil in the full sun. Lavender does not like areas that are too wet, so take care to plant in an area that will not have standing water. It prefers chalky or sandy soil, so if you have soil that does not fit this description, you can mix in sand to get it to the proper consistency. Lavender grows well in pots, so this is a great choice for someone who has a wet yard that doesn't drain well. Make sure the pot is large, as the root system is rather large. Lavender grows best in US hardiness zones eight and nine.

Used in Recipes For: Stress (215), Headache (218), Canker Sores (234), Lymphomas (255), Endometriosis (267), Yeast Infection (274), Male STD's (281), Bruising and Muscular Injury (286), Ringworm and Athlete's Foot (302), Insect Bites and Stings (303), Eczema (305)



LEMON, *CITRUS LIMON*

History: Lemon tree seeds were brought to North America in 1492 by Christopher Columbus. The tree itself is native to Asia. From there, trees were planted in warmer climates like Florida and South Carolina. By the mid-eighteenth century, lemons were being grown in California and farmed on a large scale. Today, lemon production is highest in Guatemala and Mexico.

Where Found/Grown: In North America, lemons are grown in the warmer climates of California, Florida, and Arizona. The United States is in the top five countries for lemon production. In addition, Guatemala, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon, Australia and South Africa contribute to the lemon crop each year.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CIL15>



Identification: Lemon trees come in several varieties, but *Citrus limon* trees grow from ten to twenty feet tall. Leaves are alternately arranged, elliptical, and oblong. When they first emerge, they may have a red tinge. However, as they mature, the leaves will become dark green. Leaves will have finely toothed edges and be anywhere from two to four inches long. Red-tinged buds produce flowers that are purple and white with four to five petals. Lemons on each tree variety vary in size, shade of yellow, and tartness.

Leaf: Alternately arranged, elliptical, oblong, with finely toothed edges. Leaves can emerge with a red tint, but will turn green as they mature. Leaves can be from two to four inches long.

Flower: Flowers emerge from red-colored buds and are white and purple. They will have four to five petals.

Root: A woody system of roots develop laterally from the trunk. Roots generally stay within the top twenty-four inches of soil.

Lookalikes: Many fruit trees can look similar due to similarities in size and leaves. To get a positive ID, wait until you have a chance to see fruit appear.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lemons are easily distinguished from other fruits by their bright yellow color and iconic and familiar appearance.

How to Grow: Lemon trees can be grown both outdoors in USDA hardiness zones nine to eleven or indoors in pots. If you live in a zone where you can grow lemon trees outdoors, plant them on the south side of your property. Some say to plant them near your house to help protect them from frost. Lemon trees are very sensitive to cold. They require full sun and well-drained, slightly acidic soil. Dig a shallow hole for lemon tree planting, as it is best to let the tree sit a bit higher than ground level. Add some mulch on top and deeply water the tree weekly. If you are growing a lemon tree in a pot, use slightly acidic soil with some fertilizer. Make sure the pot is big enough to house a tree that can grow up to five feet tall indoors.

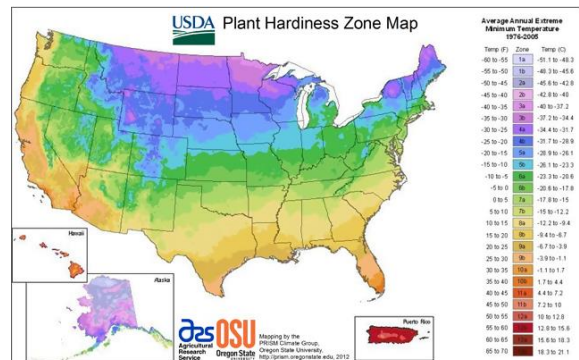
Always keep the top soil moist. Lemon trees do best when the temperatures indoors stay around seventy degrees Fahrenheit, but they can tolerate as low as fifty-five degrees Fahrenheit as well. When the temperatures fall below this range, the tree may be harmed and go dormant.

Used in Recipes For: Vertigo (228), Sinus Infection (230), Nausea (246), Fatty Liver Disease (250), Lymphomas (255), Immune System (308)

LEMON AND CITRONELLA GRASS, *CYMBOPOGON SP.*

History: Both lemongrass and citronella grass are *Cymbopogon* species. Lemongrass has been used traditionally in rituals, as well as a source of food. It has also been used as a folk remedy for pain and inflammation. Citronella grass has a history of use as an insect repellant, due to its strongly aromatic scent.

Where Found/Grown: These grasses are native to Asia, Africa, and Australia. Citronella grass is an invasive species in some of these areas, and can easily take over pastures. Lemongrass grows in more tropical regions of Asia.



Identification: Both grasses grow up to six feet in height, given the right conditions. They consist of tall, slender, lance-shaped blades of grass growing in clumps. They can range in color from medium to bright green.

Leaf: Leaves are long, slender, and lance-shaped. Citronella leaves smell camphorous and lemongrass leaves smell strongly of lemon.

Flower: These plants do not produce flowers.

Root: These grasses can have very deep and extensive root systems

Lookalikes: Because citronella grass and lemongrass look so much alike and are both *Cymbopogon* species, telling them apart can be difficult. The best way to tell them apart is to smell them. Lemongrass will have a strong lemon scent, whereas citronella grass smells more camphorous.

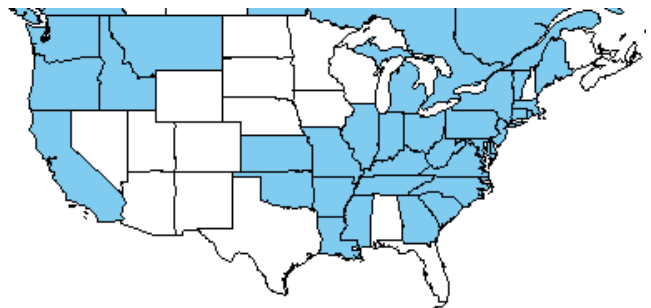
How to Grow: These grasses are native to more tropical regions, but will grow in temperate regions of North America if they are kept out of cold temperatures and frosty conditions. The best way to cultivate them is in containers, but they are also used in landscaping in warmer, southern regions of the United States. They do well in full sun, and the soil should be well-draining and rich. Keep them watered often. Hardiness zones eight and above are best for growing these plants. In lower zones, they will likely not survive the winter.

Used in Recipes For: Insect Bites and Stings (303)



LEMON BALM, *MELISSA OFFICINALIS*

History: Lemon balm has a rich history of use, dating back to at least two thousand years ago with the Romans and Greeks. As early as the seventh century, the plant was introduced to Spain, and from there its popularity spread to Europe. This wonderfully aromatic plant was popular during the Middle Ages, and was even nicknamed “The Elixir of Life.” Colonists brought it to America, and it is rumored that Thomas Jefferson cared for this plant in his gardens.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=MEOF2>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: The delightful member of the mint family is extremely easy to grow in most places. In fact, it may take over if left unchecked. It is naturalized in America, as well as many other countries. However, it is originally native to Iran, the Mediterranean Basin, south-central Europe, as well as Central Asia.



Identification: The slightly minty, yet pleasant lemony smell of this plant is a great way to confirm identification. It is a bright green plant reaching from twenty eight to fifty nine inches in height. Its oval to heart-shaped leaves are serrated and deeply veined on top. They resemble most mints in this aspect, in addition to having a square stem. The underside of the leaf has raised grooves where the veins are. In the summer, small, white tubular flowers grow from leaf axils.

Leaf: Bright to lime green, deeply veined, ovate, and serrated around the edges.

Flower: Tiny, white to yellowish, and tubular.

Root: Rhizomatous, as well as fibrous.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

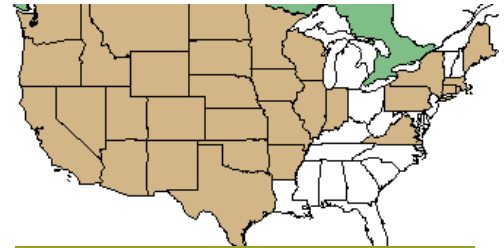
Lookalikes: Lemon balm may resemble other mints like catnip, but catnip is a darker green color. In addition, catnip smells much more mint-like than lemon balm, which has a distinctive lemon scent. The same rule applies for peppermint, which does not have a lemon scent.

How to Grow: Lemon balm is certainly not picky about where it grows and can spread easily once established. The seeds do require temperatures of at least seventy degrees Fahrenheit to germinate. Sow seeds in spring and take care to sow them in a place they won't spread and take over other plants. Water them as needed. In temperate zones, they may die off in the winter, but will come back again in spring. Lemon balm grows best in US hardiness zones four through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Stress (215), Sciatica (218), Headache (220), Thyroid (222), Male STD's (281, 282), Graves' Diseases (316)

LICORICE, *GLYCYRRHIZA GLABRA*

History: Licorice has been used medicinally by the Chinese for centuries, and has also been employed in Ayurveda for the treatment of diseases. Its roots have a long history of use as a flavoring agent due to their distinct and sweet taste. All around the globe, various countries have created candies with using the extract.



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Where found/Grown: Licorice is native to the Middle East, regions of Asia, and southern Europe. Licorice is mainly grown in the Middle East, Italy, and China.

Identification: Growing up to thirty-nine inches tall, licorice has pinnate leaves with nine to seventeen leaflets. Flowers are long, pale purple in color, and are arranged in an inflorescence. Long fruit pods are produced that contain several seeds.

Leaf: Leaves are pinnate with nine to seventeen leaflets.

Flower: Flowers are long, pale purple, and arranged in an inflorescence.

Root: Roots of the licorice plant are runners.

Lookalikes: Traditional licorice can be confused with another licorice species referred to as “wild licorice.” Wild licorice is native to North America, so the two do not grow in the same regions. Unlike common licorice, wild licorice has white, tubular flowers. Both plants do have similar flavors and are used medicinally, but for different issues.

How to Grow: Licorice is best cultivated in well-drained soil. It is usually grown in deep valleys in full sun. This plant takes a while to mature, and is usually harvested after three years of growth. If starting a plant from seeds, make sure you have rich, well-draining soil. You can grow it in a pot as well. Keep the plant in full sun as much as possible. US hardiness zones seven to nine are best for cultivating licorice.

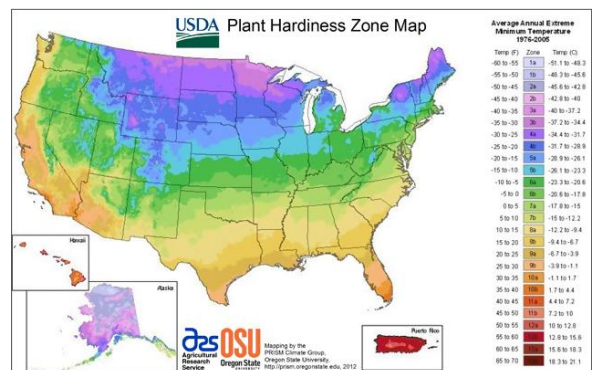
Used in Recipes For: Asthma (244), Hashimoto Diseases (315), Type 1 Diabetes (318)



MACA, *LEPIDIDIUM MEYENII*

History: Native to the Andes Mountains of Peru, maca was used historically by indigenous people as a source of food. The taproot of plant was cooked like a root vegetable. Early explorers to the region gave accounts of the plant in the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Where Found/Grown: Maca grows in a specific region of Peru in the high Andes mountains region. At one time, it was found only in one area of this region near a lake called Lake Junin at the Mesa de Bombon plateau. Today, it is grown as a cash crop in the northern Puna of Peru, as well as Bolivia.





Identification: Similar to a parsnip, radish or turnip, maca has fragrant, leafy tops that form a rosette. Leaves also have a thin, frilly appearance. Plants only grow from around four to seven and-a-half inches tall. Flowers are cream-colored and borne on a central raceme. Small fruits appear from the flower and contain two seeds.

Leaf: Leaves are thin, frilly, aromatic, and form a rosette.

Flower: Cream-colored and borne on a central raceme.

Root: Taproot resembles a parsnip, radish, or turnip.

Lookalikes: Since maca is a plant grown in a very specific region in the Andes, it is unlikely it would be mistaken for something else.

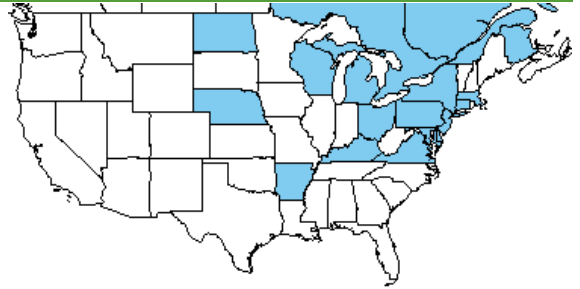
How to Grow: You can grow maca from seeds. They prefer cooler, windy climates, as they are native to higher regions of the Andes. They prefer more acidic soil that is high in minerals and full sun. Seeds are usually sown in the fall. The plants take eight months to form a decent root. Because this plant is accustomed to low water and temperatures during its growing season, and this is important to the root development. Only water the plants

as needed. Fertilize with sheep compost if you have access to this. Northern areas of the US would be more suitable for growing maca. Maca may grow best in US hardiness zones three through seven.

Used in Recipes For: Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (224), Hormone Imbalance (265), Female Sexual Dysfunction (276)

MARSHMALLOW, *ALTHAEA OFFICINALIS*

History: The sticky, sweet marshmallow treat we know today actually has its origins in the marshmallow plant. Ancient Egyptians used the roots to make a sweet treat and from there, it evolved into the popular treat we use to make s'mores with today. The plant has strong mucilage properties, making it ideal for turning in to a fluffy confection. However, today's marshmallow treats are not made with the plant. *Althaea officinalis* may be even better known for its medicinal properties, and has been used throughout history for digestive woes, as well as to reduce inflammation. It was used by ancient romans as a source of medicine and food. It was given the Latin name, *Althaea*, which translates from a Greek word meaning "to cure."



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ALOF2>

Where Found/Grown: Marshmallow is native to Europe, North Africa, and Western Asia. Today, it can be found in some areas of North America too, especially in the Northeastern United States. Just like its name suggests, it can be found in wet, marshy areas.

Identification: Marshmallow can grow up to four feet tall, or even taller, given the right conditions. Lateral branches produce soft leaves that are petioled, toothed, and have three to five lobes. Flowers are white to pale pink in color, with darker pink centers. They bloom up the stem of the plant.

Leaf: The leaves of the marshmallow plant have three to five lobes. They are soft, petioled, and toothed.

Flower: Flowers are white to pale pink in color, and have around five delicate petals with a light pink center. Flowers bloom all the way up the plant.

Root: Marshmallow can have a thick, long, and tapering root system.

Lookalikes: With between six to twelve species of marshmallow, it can get confusing when trying to identify the *Althaea officinalis*. However, most other species have flowers that are much darker pink in color than common marshmallow.

How to Grow: Marshmallow is especially hardy to US zone four. Marshmallow seeds must be cold stratified first to grow properly. This can be achieved by putting the seeds in a moist paper towel and then placing this in a bag in the refrigerator for three to four weeks prior to planting. Do not keep the bag sealed, as the seeds need to vent to avoid getting moldy. If you live in an area with a very cold winter, you can sow the seeds directly into the soil in the spring. If you live in an area with a mild winter, you can sow seeds in late fall. Marshmallow plants prefer areas that are very moist. They can be placed around one foot apart in the moist, well-drained soil. They do fine in partial sun. Make sure the area drains well, as you do not want standing water. Keep the area sufficiently weeded.

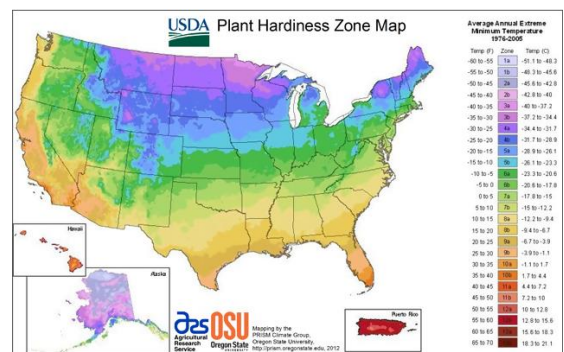
Used in Recipes For: Sore Throat and Streptococcus Bacteria (237), Insect Bites and Stings (303), Chron's Disease (313)



MASTIC GUM TREE, *PISTACIA LENTISCUS*

History: The resin from the mastic tree has been used for thousands of years, dating back to the ancient Greeks. Famous Greek physician Hippocrates discussed the use of mastic tree resin to help with various digestive complaints. Resin from this tree continued to be a popular commodity through the years and was quite pricey for its time.

Where Found/Grown: The mastic tree is native to the Mediterranean region. "Tears" from the trees turn into a hardened sap called mastic gum. These tears are harvested from mastic trees on a Greek island called Chios.





Identification: This small evergreen only gets to about thirteen feet tall. Leaves are alternate, oblong, and have a leathery appearance. Leaves also have five to six pairs of leaflets. Very small, wispy, red to greenish flowers produced by the tree turn into a red fruit. Farmers in Chios harvest the sap from the tree, which drips like tears and hardens.

Leaf: Leaves are leathery, oblong, and alternately arranged with five to six pairs of leaflets.

Flower: Flowers are small, inconspicuous, and red to green in color.

Root: Because the tree thrives in dry environments, the roots may grow somewhat deep.

Lookalikes: This unique tree is mostly grown on the island of Chios, so there are very few, if any lookalikes.

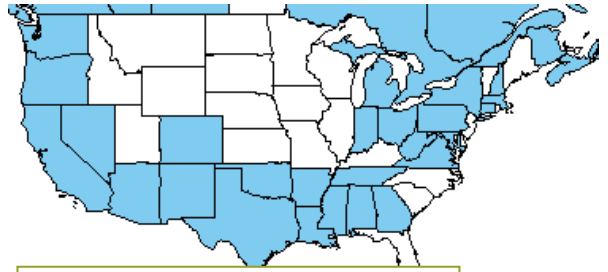
How to Grow: Mastic trees can be cultivated, especially in regions that mimic their native Mediterranean climate. If you live in a hot, dry climate, this tree may be great to consider growing. USDA hardiness zones nine to eleven are said to be suitable for growing this tree. Mastic trees are not picky about soil, and often grow in poor soil. Because they are used to dry climates, the trees do not need constant watering. This tree will not grow well in colder climates.

Used in Recipes For: Ulcers (247)

MILK THISTLE, *SILYBUM MARIANUM*

History: Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder, who lived from twenty-three to seventy-nine A.D., wrote about milk thistle for carrying bile. In the seventeenth century, a famous herbalist named Nicholas Culpeper wrote about milk thistle for healing of the liver and spleen.

Even today, milk thistle is often associated with its effects on bile, the spleen, kidneys, and the liver in particular.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=SIMA3>

Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Root



Where Found/Grown: This plant is originally from Southern Europe and Asia. However, this thistle has spread to regions all over the world and is quite common in many parts of North America. It can be found in fields, meadows, and along roadsides.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Growing up to seventy-nine inches in height, milk thistle has oblong leaves with lobes and white veining. They are surrounded by spines. Flowers are purple in color and hair-like. Large green spines protrude from the base of the flower head.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong, slightly lobed, covered in white veining, and surrounded by spines.

Flower: Flowers are purple and hair-like.

Root: The root system is a taproot with fibrous roots.

Lookalike: There are other types of thistles native to North America that can cause confusion. One common thistle is bull thistle. However, the leaves of bull thistle are deeply lobed and spikes at the top of the plant under the flower are not as long as milk thistle. Burdock is another spiny plant with purple flowers that may resemble milk thistle. However, burdock's flowers are usually smaller and grow in clusters of more than one.

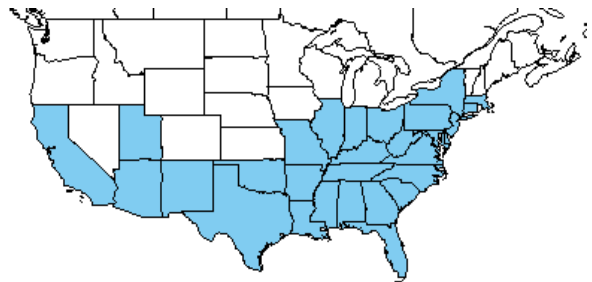
How to Grow: Milk thistle is often considered a noxious weed, so it is easy to grow and can spread fast. Sow seeds in spring in a sunny location. Milk thistle is not picky about soil quality, and will grow in many soil types. It prefers dry places, so watering constantly is not necessary. Milk thistle will grow especially well in US hardiness zones six through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Cirrhosis of the Liver (251), Hepatitis (252)

MIMOSA, ALBIZIA JULIBRISSIN

History: Native to Asia, the mimosa tree has established itself quite well in temperate regions of North America. This alien tree has a rich history in its native homeland of China, where it is known as the "Tree of Happiness." It has been used in Chinese medicine for thousands of years for symptoms of depression, grief, and anxiety.

Where Found/Grown: The mimosa tree is originally from southwestern and eastern Asia. Because of its aggressively spreading nature, when it was introduced to North America, it took off in many areas and is a common sight in just about any temperate zone. While it can grow and spread in almost any zone, mimosa trees really thrive in warmer climates and are more common in the southern portion of the United States.



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Identification: Mimosa tree identification is relatively simple. One telltale identification factor is the furry pink flowers that bloom in the summer. These flowers are wonderfully fragrant and unique. Their long, hair-like blossoms are a light to dark pink in color. This deciduous tree has gray bark that can appear smooth, and as it ages, it may develop vertical lines. This tree can grow anywhere from sixteen to fifty-two feet tall, depending on conditions. Most mimosa trees have multiple branches coming out of the same general area. The leaves of the tree are a dark green color. Leaves are also bipinnate and each pinnae are divided into six to twelve pairs with twenty to thirty pairs of oblong leaflets. Trees will develop a large number of long brown seed pods that fall to the ground in late summer or early fall.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Leaf: Dark green and bipinnate with pinnae divided into six to twelve pairs having twenty to thirty oblong leaflets.

Flower: Pink, wispy, hair-like flowers with a very pleasant odor.

Root: Two to three large main roots with more offshoots. Roots are very invasive and creeping.



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Lookalikes: Due to the unique furry pink flowers associated with mimosa trees, lookalikes are relatively nonexistent. There are many species of mimosa, but some of the other species lack the wispy pink flowers and tree size that this species boasts.

How to Grow: Check with your local conservation department before planting these trees, as they are considered an invasive nuisance in many areas due to their ability to spread fast. You can usually find an abundance of seedlings growing around an established mimosa tree that has not been mowed around. Dig up a small seedling and place it in an area of your yard that you mow around frequently to prevent it from spreading in the future. It likes temperate regions of North America and full to partial sun. It will typically grow fast. Do not plant near

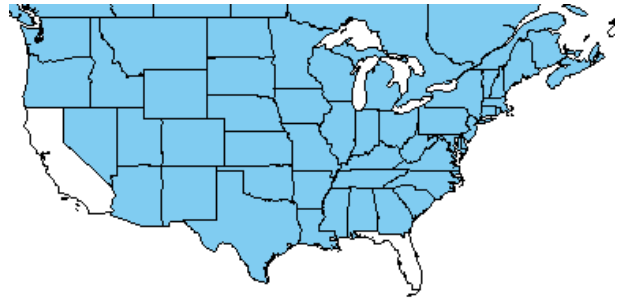
foundations, as the roots have been known to cause cracking and damage to structures. This tree grows best in US hardiness zones six through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Mild To Moderate Depression (215)

MOTHERWORT, *LEONURUS CARDIACA*

History: Although it is thought by many herbalists and herbal historians that motherwort was used by the Greeks, no such record exists in writing. A Chinese version of motherwort has been documented, however, and has been used extensively in Chinese medicine for feminine complaints.

The western version of motherwort that is found throughout North America has been documented by botanists and naturalists since the at least the sixteenth century.



<https://www.plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=LECA2>

Known for its effect on the heart, it was given the name, *cardiaca*. Native Americans used motherwort for stress and anxiety, especially in women.

Where Found/Grown: While motherwort is thought to be originally from Eurasia, they have become quite established as a native plant throughout most of North America. They can be found in waste spaces, hedge banks, and in disturbed sites.

Identification: This perennial member of the mint family is pleasantly aromatic, and has a mint-like smell. It can grow from two to four feet tall. The square stem is very characteristic of a mint and contains ridges as well. Leaves are opposite and have three to five lobes. They have many veins and are deeply toothed. Flowers usually bloom in the summer and circle the stalks where the leaf meets the stem. Flowers are tubular, small, and have a light purple hue.

Leaf: Opposite, with three to five lobes. Leaves are also deeply toothed and have many veins.

Flower: Very small, tubular, fuzzy, and light purple in hue. They circle the stem where the leaves meet.

Root: Easily spreading rhizomatous root system.

Lookalike: A plant called bugleweed can be mistaken for motherwort due to its small flowers that circle the stem, much like those of motherwort. However, the difference is in the leaves. Bugleweed has single leaves that are oblong and opposite, without lobes like motherwort has.

How to Grow: Make sure that you are aware of noxious plant laws in your area, as motherwort is considered a noxious weed in some places. Motherwort grows best in US hardiness zones four through eight. First, stratify seeds for several weeks to promote germination. Sow seeds directly into the soil. Motherwort is not picky about soil, and will grow almost anywhere. In addition, it is not overly picky about sunlight. You may need to cut some back when it starts growing to give room, as plants can get up to four feet tall and take up some room. Water the plants as needed.

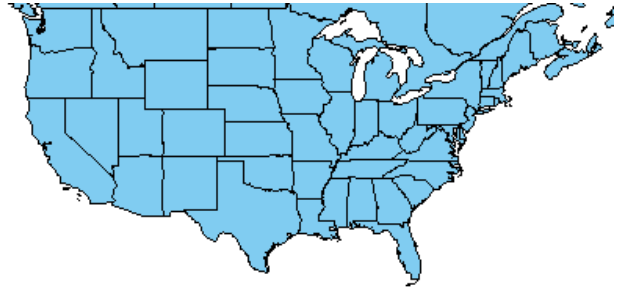
Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Used in Recipes For: Sciatica (218), Thyroid (222), Weak Heart (238), Issues with Menstrual Period (270)



MULLEIN, *VERBASCUM THAPSUS*

History: Mullein seeds have been found in fossil beds, proving this plant has been around for many thousands of years. This plant's reputation as a pulmonary tonic has been around for a while as well. It was recorded as a pulmonary disease remedy by Dioscorides two thousand years ago. Indigenous peoples in North American were said to have smoked the leaves for respiratory issues. In addition, some tribes used poultices of the root to treat wounds. Today, it still lives up to its reputation for helping lung ailments, pain, swelling, and wounds.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=VERBA>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Although mullein is actually native to Europe, northern Africa, and Asia, it was introduced to North America by early settlers and has taken off nicely. It is well-established in many areas of North America today. It has also been introduced to Australia. It can be found growing in pastures, roadsides, and waste spaces throughout the United States.

Identification: Mullen plants can grow up to ten feet tall. Mullein leaves are notoriously fuzzy and thick. They grow from a basal rosette their first year of growth and can be rather large. The leaves can move up a thick stalk, but are usually much smaller as they go up. At the top of the stalk are a number of small yellow flowers. These flowers are found coming out of green capsules.

Leaf: Light green, fuzzy, oblong, and large. The leaves form a basal rosette the first year.

Flower: Small, bright yellow, coming out of green capsules. Flowers are found nearer to the top of the stalk.

Root: Extensive and fibrous taproot system.

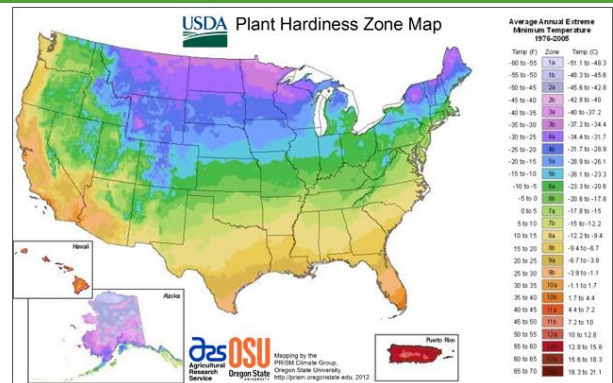
How to Grow: Mullein is not picky about soil and will grow in just about any soil. For best results though, sow seeds in sandy, well-drained soil in the fall. Cover seeds with a thin layer of soil. Mullein prefers to grow in places with full sun and soil on the dry side. However, during the germination phase, make sure the soil remains moist. Mullein grows best in US hardiness zones three through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Fibromyalgia (217), Ear Infection (225), Excess Mucus (232), Bronchitis (242), Fractures and Sprains (292), Rheumatism (294)

NUTMEG, *MYRISTICA FRAGRANS*

History: This popular spice has been used for thousands of years both as food flavoring and medicine. Up until the nineteenth century, nutmeg was solely produced in a group of “spice islands” called the Banda Islands in Eastern Indonesia. During the medieval ages in Europe, nutmeg was a prized and expensive food flavoring and remedy. When nutmeg began being used to ward off the plague, its popularity and demand grew even greater. Bloody battles were fought in an effort to get control of the spice trade for nutmeg.

Where Found/Grown: Nutmeg was mostly found growing on the Banda Islands until the nineteenth century. However, its popularity made it a profitable tree to grow elsewhere. Today, it is grown mostly in Indonesia, Grenada, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and the Caribbean islands.



Identification: Nutmeg is actually a seed from a species of evergreen tree. The outer coating of this seed is scraped off to create mace, another popular spice. This tree can grow from sixteen to forty-nine feet tall. Its leaves are dark green and alternately arranged with petioles. There are male and female species of this tree. Both trees can produce flowers that are waxy, fleshy, and a pale yellow color. They are usually bell-shaped. The pear-shaped fruits produced are what contain nutmeg. The trunk of the tree is gray-brown.

Leaf: Dark green, glossy, and alternately arranged with petioles.

Flower: Light yellow, bell-shaped and waxy.

Root: One main tap root, and spreading lateral feeder roots.



Lookalikes: Nutmeg is easily distinguished from other nuts by its unique, veiny red coating on the outside of the seed when the outer fruit shell is removed.

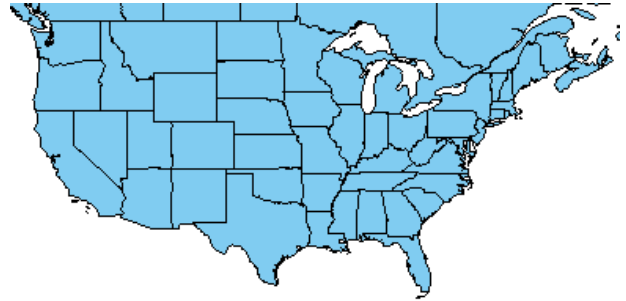
How to Grow: Generally, only fresh and moist nutmeg seeds will germinate. The aril needs to be removed from the seed before planting as well. It is important to try and plant a nutmeg seed as soon as possible, since fresh seeds germinate best. The day before planting the seed, soak it in water overnight to promote germination. Place the nutmeg seed one inch below the soil in a large pot that drains well. Keep temperatures consistently between seventy seven degrees and eighty six degrees Fahrenheit. Water often, but do not flood the pot. Soil will need to remain moist at all times. It usually takes around one month for the seed to start sprouting. If you live in a colder climate, it is important to keep your nutmeg tree in a greenhouse to allow the proper temperatures for growth. The trees prefer at least four hours of sunlight each day.

Used in Recipes For: Insomnia (216)

OATS, *AVENA SATIVA*

History: While oats have been cultivated as a source of food for both humans and livestock for nearly three thousand years, they have also been utilized as medicine throughout history.

It was discovered that milky oats (oats that are harvested when young and filled with white latex) helped to calm and soothe a nervous disposition. They have been traditionally used by herbalists for anxiety, frazzled nerves, and digestive woes.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=AVSA>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: It is thought that oats may have originated somewhere in the near east. Cultivation of oats is now widespread in temperate regions. The highest yearly oat production is in the European Union, followed by Russia and Canada. Oats are also grown in the United States.

Identification: Oats can grow from two to five feet tall. Leaves are blades that are around fifty millimeters long and twenty-five millimeters wide. Flowers emerge from sheaths that are attached to branches. Spikelets contain more than one floret.

Leaf: Leaves are blade-like, fifty millimeters long, and twenty-five millimeters wide.

Flower: Small flowers come from sheaths that are attached to branches on the plant.

Root: Oats typically have branched, fibrous roots.

Lookalikes: Sometimes *Avena sativa* is confused with *Avena fatua*. However, *Avena fatua* has brown hairs and *Avena sativa* does not.

How to Grow: You can grow oats by choosing a spot with well-draining soil and rake it up. Spread oat seed liberally around the area. Gently rake the area again to cover the seeds. Keep the area watered. Milky oats are ready to harvest when the oat produces a milky white substance when cut open. US hardiness zones four through nine are best for cultivating oats.

Used in Recipes For: Endometriosis (267), Female Sexual Disfunction (276)

OLIVE, *OLEA EUROPAEA*

History: While the history of the olive tree is extensive, most of the historical use of this tree has to do with the olives it produces, as well as the oil made with the olives. However, olive leaves are another component of the tree that have been used medicinally as a folk remedy, and are even mentioned in the Bible as a source of medicine.

Where Found/Grown: Although originally native to the Mediterranean basin, olive trees can be found growing in China, Portugal, Argentina, Java, Bermuda, and the Arabian Peninsula. They are even grown in North America, in states like California.



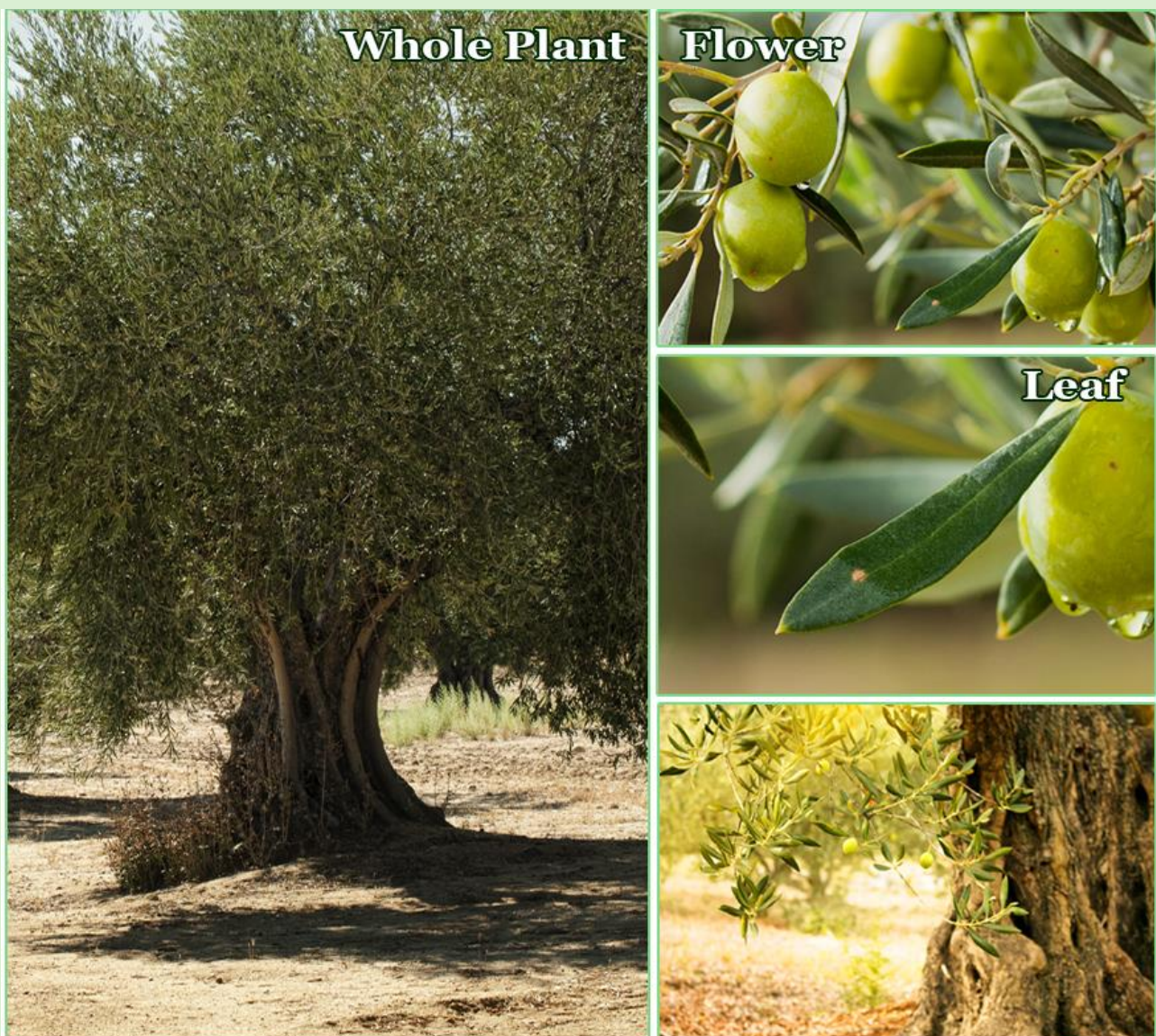
<https://www.plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=OLEU>

Identification: The olive tree is said to be rather short for a tree, and will not usually grow taller than forty-nine feet. Its trunk is usually twisted. The leaves of the tree are oblong, silvery-green, and around three inches in length. Flowers produced by the tree are small, white and feathery in appearance. The olives produced by the tree range in color from green to purple.

Leaf: Oblong, silvery-green leaves are over three inches long and one inch wide.

Flower: Small, white, feathery flowers.

Root: Olive trees have extensive and creeping root systems.



Lookalikes: Olive trees have a very unique appearance and habitat, thus making lookalikes hard to find. Olives are a widely-known fruit. The gnarled appearance of the tree's trunk, in addition to its short stature, makes it distinctive.

How to Grow: An easy way to grow an olive tree is by harvesting the pit from an olive. There are many species of trees, so make sure you are able to identify the species of olive you are using. Also, it is important to purchase raw, uncooked olives when harvesting pits. Soak the olives in water and use something to gently smash the skin away from the seed. After leaving them overnight, scrub the rest of the skin off with sandpaper or a brush. Cut off the end of the pit (the blunt end) with a knife, but do not harm the rest of the pit. Soak overnight again. Place the seed one inch deep in a pot with well-draining soil. Keep the soil moist and the temperature warm for the seed to germinate. As the tree grows, you may need to transplant to a bigger pot. It can be kept indoors, or transplanted outdoors if you live in a climate suitable to grow olive trees. USDA hardiness zones nine through eleven are best for outdoor growing.

Used in Recipes For: Ear Infection (225), Hearing Loss (227), Excess Ear Wax (228), Poor Circulation (239), Pneumonia (243), STD's In Women (272), Male STD's (281, 282), Lyme Diseases and Tick Borne Illnesses (309), Psoriasis (314), Celiac Disease (315)

OREGANO, *ORIGANUM VULGARE*

History: Oregano is one of the most popular and widely-used culinary herbs on the globe. With use dating back to ancient Greece, this plant was said to have been invented by the goddess Aphrodite to bring happiness to man. Throughout history, this herb has been used by a variety of cultures for treating ailments, flavoring food, and enhancing religious ceremonies.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ORVU>

Where Found/Grown: Oregano is native to the temperate regions of Western and Southwestern Eurasia, as well as Mediterranean region. Its popularity as a culinary and medicinal herb make it common in most areas of the world, as it has been introduced over time and can be grown in gardens easily.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: Growing from seven to thirty-one inches tall, this herb has opposite leaves growing up the stem that are somewhat ovate and small. The flowers of the herb are purple to white in color and grow on erect spikes. The plant is highly aromatic, having a strong, herbaceous smell.

Leaf: Small, slightly ovate, light green, and aromatic.

Flower: Pink in color, and growing on erect spikes.

Root: Oregano root systems are spreading and can deepen when aerial parts are pruned from time to time.

Lookalikes: There is a plant found growing wild in North America called “wild oregano” that has many similar properties to common oregano. In fact, both plants have similar constituents and medicinal properties. They smell and taste very much the same as well. Wild oregano is also called American dittany. It has leaves that are more pointed and a darker color of green than common oregano. In addition, dittany has a woodier stem. They can be used interchangeably.

How to Grow: Sow oregano seeds in early spring. Oregano prefers full sun, but will tolerate partial shade as well. It is not picky about soil, and fertilizer and compost are not needed when growing it. It is easy to grow and will thrive best in US hardiness zones five through ten. Harvest before flowering for best flavor. Water the plants as needed.

Used in Recipes For: Ear Infection (225), Hearing Loss (227), Sinus Infection (230, 231), Tooth Abscess (235), Emphysema (244), STD’s in Women (272), Male STD’s (282), Immune System (307)

OREGON GRAPE, *MAHONIA NERVOSA*

History: Famous explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark collected and wrote about Oregon grape root during their explorations around 1813. Before this time, however, the plant was well known by Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest. They used the plant for digestive issues and as a blood tonic.

Where Found/Grown: Oregon grape root is mostly found in the Pacific Northwest, in thickets and pastures. It has also been found growing in the Rocky Mountains region.



<https://www.plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=MANE2>

Identification: This species of Oregon grape root (*Mahonia nervosa*) grows up to two feet tall. Other species can be taller or shorter. It is an evergreen shrub with toothed, compound leaves. Leaves usually consist of anywhere from nine to nineteen leaflets and can have a purple-tint to them. Yellow flowers grow in eight-inch-long racemes, followed by blue berries.

Leaf: Leaves are toothed, compound, and consist of nine to nineteen leaflets. They can sometimes develop a purple tint.

Flower: Flowers are pale yellow in color and grow in racemes, around eight inches long.

Root: The root is the desired part of the plant for medicinal preparations. It is described as having a shallow root system comprised of a taproot with additional roots.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: When the flowers and fruit are not present, Oregon grape root can closely resemble holly, due to its similar leaves. The best thing to do is wait until the plant fruits or flowers to be sure. Oregon grape root will usually bloom in the spring.

How to Grow: Oregon grape root is hardy to USDA zone five. This plant prefers partial to full shade. It also needs plenty of moisture to thrive. The best way to plant seed is when the seeds are fresh. They do not tend to do well when they are allowed to dry out. Collect seeds from an existing plant and sow them while fresh in an area with partial shade. Water the plant very well and try not to let it dry out.

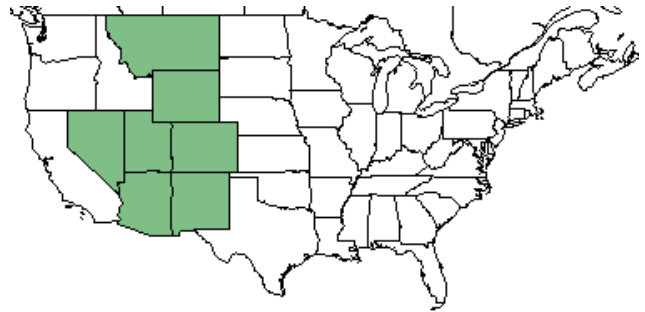
Used in Recipes For: Tooth Decay (236)



OSHA, *LIGUSTICUM PORTERI*

History: Native Americans referred to the root of this plant as “bear medicine.” According to a Navajo legend, a bear who loved the plant led humans to its medicine. It was used by indigenous people for pain, fever, as well as for a sore throat.

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to Southwest United States. It can be found in the Rocky Mountains, as well as northern Mexico. It grows in moist, rich soils in higher elevations.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=LPO>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: This plant is native to Southwest United States. It can be found in the Rocky Mountains, as well as northern Mexico. It grows in moist, rich soils in higher elevations.

Identification: With leaves similar to parsley, osha also produces umbels of white flowers and grows up to seven feet tall. The bases of the leaves are red in color. The roots have a distinctive hair-like matter on the crown. Roots are dark brown on the outside and pale yellow on the inside. The whole plant has a spicy smell.

Leaf: Leaves closely resemble parsley, being deeply lobed.

Flower: Flowers are white and in umbels.

Root: The root has hair-like matter on the crown, is brown on the outside, and pale yellow on the inside. It is also fragrant

Lookalikes: One plant that can look very similar to osha is poison hemlock. It grows as tall as osha and has white umbels of flowers on top. However, look for the red tint at the base of the leaves and hair-like matter on the root crown to confirm osha. In addition, osha will have a spicy fragrance.

How to Grow: This plant will be near-impossible to grow in conditions not resembling its natural habitat. It prefers higher altitudes and very moist soil. If trying to grow from seeds, sprinkle seeds in an area very close to the natural habitat of osha. Seeds can be planted close together. Make sure the area is in full shade and you can water it regularly. US hardiness zones five and six are best for growing this plant.

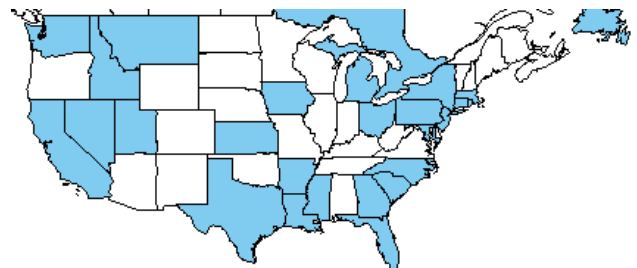
Used in Recipes For: Emphysema (243)

PARSLEY, *PETROSELINUM CRISPUM*

History: Parsley is thought to be native to the Mediterranean region. Folklore surrounding this popular herb is rich and shrouded in intrigue.

The Greeks thought that parsley was a symbol of death because of a myth stating that it sprang from the blood of Archemorus. In some cultures, the plant was thought to ward off evil.

Where Found/Grown: In temperate climates, parsley is a biennial plant. In sub-tropical and tropical climates, parsley can grow as an annual. Parsley is a very common sight in herb gardens across North America.



<https://www.plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PECR2>

Identification: Parsley plants usually grow from about one to three feet tall. The first-year plants form a rosette with tripinnate leaves and multiple leaflets. Parsley bolts the second year, forming yellow flowers in umbels at the top of the plant.

Leaf: Leaves are tripinnate and form a rosette the first year.

Flower: Flowers are pale yellow and grow in umbels.

Root: Parsley's root is a taproot.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Lookalikes: Parsley's leaves can closely resemble cilantro, and many people have left the grocery store with a bundle of one when they meant to buy the other. The leaves of both plants are very similar, but they each have distinctive smells, with cilantro being much more strongly fragrant.

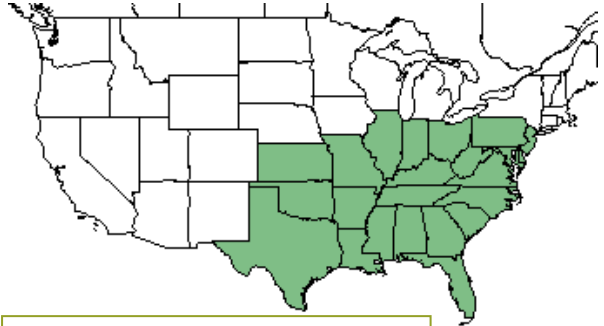
How to Grow: Parsley prefers to grow in full sun in temperatures between seventy-two and eighty-six degrees Fahrenheit. Sow seeds in spring (after the last frost) in moist, well-drained soil. Keep parsley moist as it germinates. This herb thrives best in US hardiness zones five through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Constipation (248), Issues with Menstrual Periods (270)



PASSIONFLOWER, *PASSIFLORA INCARNATA*

History: Passionflower was discovered in Peru in 1569. Thirty-nine years later, Spanish Jesuits introduced this beautiful flower to Pope Paul V. The flower became a symbol of Christ, especially to those of the Catholic faith. Many parts of the flower were used as symbols in faith-based teaching. For instance, the five petals and five sepals represented the ten faithful apostles. The tips of the leaves represented the point of the centurion's spear. The corona filaments represented the crown of thorns, and the tendrils symbolized the whips used to beat Christ before crucifixion. The very name of the flower



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PAIN6>



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

represents the Passion of the Christ, or crucifixion. The missionaries may have used the flower to teach these things to natives in Peru.

Where Found/Grown: This lovely and intricate flower is actually native to the southeastern United States. It can also be found growing in Central and South America, as well as Mexico.

Identification: There are many species of passionflower, but *Passiflora incarnata* is one of the most intricate and colorful. It is a vining plant that can climb to great heights and become rather invasive if left to its devices. In fact, it can reach heights of twenty feet in a single growing season! Leaves are alternate. Sometimes they are three-lobed and sometimes they are five lobed. Flowers have petals that are usually white and purplish-blue. Between the petals and stamen, you will notice a purple and white corona going all the way around. Fruits produced by this plant are oval, and around the size of an egg. They range in color from greenish to yellowish.

Leaf: Three lobed or five lobed.

Flower: White and purplish petals, with a purple corona on top of the petals. Showy, greenish pistils and stamens.

Root: Taproot, with other fibrous roots.

Lookalikes: Due to the uniqueness of passionflower's appearance, there are very few flowers that resemble this species. The only confusion lies in telling the difference between the various *Passiflora* species. *Passiflora edulis* looks similar at first glance, but upon closer inspection, you may notice that the corona is white and the fruit is a dark purple with white specks.

How to Grow: Passionflower seeds may not do so well if taken straight from the pulp in the fruit. This is because the fruit contains natural growth inhibitors. If you are using seeds from an existing plant like this, make sure to ferment them in some water for three to five days in a mason jar covered with a cloth. Take them out and rinse them off when the fermentation process is over. These seeds may also require scarification, which is the process of rubbing them with something (like sandpaper) to lessen the thickness of the seed coating. You can plant seeds in small pots in the spring and transplant when they begin to get leaves. It requires temperatures of at least seventy degrees to germinate. Passionflower likes full sun and a place to climb, so make sure you give it a trellis or something similar. Deeply water once or twice a week. Passionflower grows best in US hardiness zones five through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Anxiety (215), Menopause (269)

PEONY, *PAEONIA LACTIFLORA*

History: In traditional Chinese medicine, the root of white peony has been used for thousands of years for purification, as well as to heal the liver, arthritis, and muscle cramps. Peony seeds have also been used medicinally since the Middle Ages.

Where Found/Grown: White peonies are native to central and eastern Asia. They are now cultivated in many similar climates across the world, including regions of northeastern United States and Canada.

Identification: This shrub-like plant grows up to twenty-eight inches in height. Leaves are large and have nine lobes. The flowers are cup-shaped and large. They can be pink, white, or red, with yellow stamens. They are also very fragrant.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PALA2>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Leaf: Leaves are large and usually have nine lobes.

Flower: Flowers are cup-shaped and large. They range in color but include red, pink, and white variations with yellow stamens. Flowers are also very fragrant.

Root: The root of the plant is used medicinally. It is thick and tube-like.



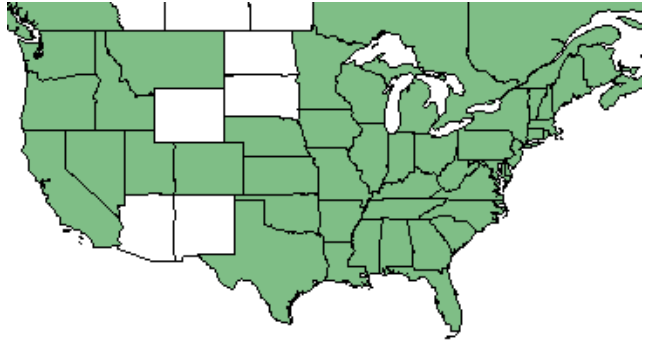
Lookalikes: Another species of peony used medicinally in Chinese medicine is the red peony, or *Paeoniae rubra*. These two species are used for different issues. Red peony is generally used for “hot” conditions, while white peony is used for spasms.

How to Grow: White peonies grow best in USDA zones three through eight. Plant starts in well-drained, neutral soil, in an area with partial shade. Make sure to plant them in an area with little other competition and keep the area around them weeded. Water them often.

Used in Recipes For: Uterine Fibroids (271)

PEPPERMINT, *MENTHA PIPERITA*

History: Peppermint is actually thought to be a cross between water mint and spearmint. There is some confusion as to when peppermint as we know it was first used because it has been referred to as spearmint and “mint,” giving historians little insight as to whether or not the plant was indeed peppermint. Peppermint has been used in cooking and folk medicine since at least 1500 B.C. Mint was valued by the Egyptians and used as currency. It is even mentioned in the Bible. Greek mythology discusses the origins of peppermint in a story where Hades seduces Minthe and his wife Persephone turns her into the peppermint plant out of jealousy.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=MEPI>

Whole Plant



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Peppermint is thought to have originated in Europe and the Middle East. However, it is an aggressive-growing plant and has made its way to regions all over the world today. It is a popular herb garden plant and is commonly cultivated across North America.

Identification: Peppermint can be identified first by its signature minty scent. It has a square stem and green leaves coming up the stem that are opposite, crinkly, and have toothed edges. Flowers are white to purple in color and grow on a whorled terminal. Peppermint plants grow from two to three feet tall.

Leaf: Sharply toothed, crinkly, opposite leaves with a highly aromatic scent of mint.

Flower: White to purple colored, and growing on a whorled terminal.

Root: Peppermint plants expand underground via rhizomes.

Lookalikes: Peppermint and spearmint are sometimes confused. One difference is the scent. Peppermint and spearmint have a slightly different scent, with spearmint being described as more sweet. Leaves also differ slightly. The leaves of spearmint are oblong and lanced, as opposed to the sharply toothed leaves of peppermint. Spearmint flowers grow on a tapered terminal cluster, whereas peppermint flowers grow on a whorled terminal.

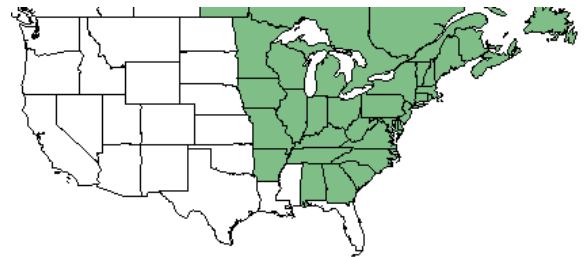
How to Grow: Peppermint prefers shaded areas and plenty of water. An aggressive growing plant, be ready to pull up a number of plants if you plant them outdoors in your garden. They can quickly spread and take over other plants. For this reason, many people opt to plant peppermint in containers. Sow seeds in well-draining soil in early spring and lightly cover. Water sufficiently and keep the pot in a shaded area. Peppermint grows best in US hardiness zones three through eleven.

Used in Recipes For: Headache (219), Sinus Infection (231), Tooth decay (236), Pneumonia (243), Asthma (244), Indigestion (245), Nausea (246), Fatty Liver Disease (250), Gallstone and Sludge (258), Endometriosis (267), Tired and Weak Muscles (283), Back Muscle Pain (288), Arthritis (290), Insect Bites and Stings (303)

PINE, *PINUS SP.*

History: Pine trees are thought to have evolved from older coniferous tree species around ninety-five million years ago. They have been used throughout history in construction, as a source of food, and as medicine. It has been said that sailors would drink a tea from the needles to prevent and treat scurvy.

The sap has been used to create salves for wounds and oil derived from the needles has been used to treat various respiratory issues. Pollen collected from the tree has been used to cook with, as well as for medicine to promote virility.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=pist> (map for eastern white pine)

Where Found/Grown: There are many species of pine, and many can easily be found throughout North America. One common species is the eastern white pine. Other common species include the loblolly pine, western white pine, sugar pine, red pine, jack pine, pitch pine, longleaf pine, ponderosa pine, and the shortleaf pine. Pines can be found in coniferous forests, yards, roadsides, and in large areas where they are cultivated for timber.

Identification: Most pine trees have rough bark that is thick, deeply furrowed, and scaly. The leaves are what set pines apart. They are long, green needles bundled in clusters. Most pine trees produce hard cones rather than flowers. When the bark is injured, pine trees produce a thick, resinous sap.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Leaf: Leaves are long, slender, green needles. They are usually clustered around the branches.

Flower: Pine trees produce cones.

Root: The root system is extensive and creeping.



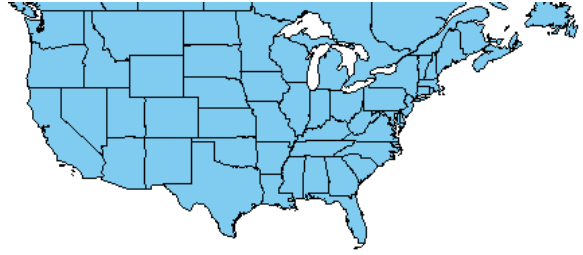
Lookalikes: Because they are evergreen trees, pines and cedars are sometimes misidentified for one another. However, pines generally grow much bigger than cedars. Needles of cedar trees are usually shorter and darker green than those of pine trees. The bark of a cedar tree is not as scaly and hard as a pine, but more fibrous.

How to Grow: Before planting a pine tree, research which species is best for your climate. When you have found the right species, it is best to plant a sapling. Choose a spot in your yard with little other competition. Make sure the soil is well-draining and has a neutral to acidic pH. Water the tree well until it is more established and hardy. When it is more established, you need not water it as often. Pines grow best in US hardiness zones one through eleven, depending on the species.

Used in Recipes For: Low Testosterone (280), Immune System (307, 310)

PLANTAIN, *PLANTAGO MAJOR*

History: This common yard weed has been used both as food and medicine for centuries. It was commonly poulticed for cuts, scrapes, and other wounds. It was also placed on stings and bites to help with inflammation and healing. Broadleaf plantain, or *Plantago major*, was said to have been brought to Europe by Alexander the Great in 327 B.C. From here, it spread quickly and grew to be a beloved medicinal plant by many.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PLMA2>

Where Found/Grown: Plantain is thought to be originally native northern and central Asia, as well as Europe. Due to its aggressive and hardy constitution, plantain now grows in many regions of the world. It is certainly not hard to find in many regions of North America.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

It can be found growing out of cracks in the sidewalk, waste spaces, yards, fields, and just about anywhere grass grows.

Identification: Growing from six to twelve inches in diameter, broadleaf plantain can be identified by its dark green, somewhat shiny, oval leaves. Five to nine veins run vertically down the leaves. The leaves range in size from two to eight inches long and one to three-and-a-half inches wide, forming a rosette. In the center of the rosette, green stalks grow with tiny green flowers. These spike-like flower stalks can grow from five to six inches in height.

Leaf: Broadleaf plantain has leaves that are somewhat shiny, dark to medium green, and oval. Five to nine veins run down each leaf. They range in size from two to eight inches long and one to three-and-a-half inches wide.

Flower: Tiny greenish flowers grow up spike-like stalks that can be five to six inches in height.

Root: Broadleaf plantain's dense mass of roots are favorable for helping with erosion.

Lookalikes: Broadleaf plantain is often referred to as "plantain" which may cause some confusion, since "plantains" are also small, tropical, banana-like fruits. However, broadleaf plantain is just a small green that grows in temperate regions, unlike the tropical plantain. Broadleaf plantain can also be confused with another species of plantain growing in the same area called narrowleaf plantain, or *Plantago lanceolata*. Narrowleaf plantain has longer, more slender leaves and the central stalk has a brown flower-like appendage on top. Both species are used interchangeably.

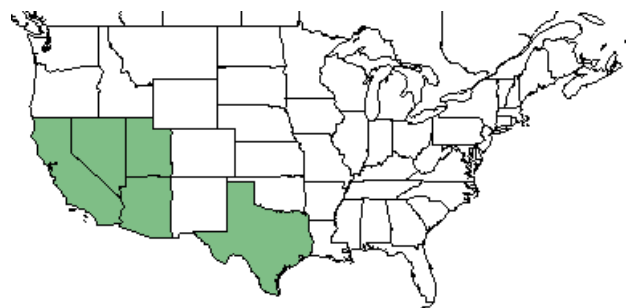
How to Grow: Chances are, you do not need to grow broadleaf plantain! You will likely have luck taking some time out to look for this plant in your yard. It is a very common, almost noxious weed in some places and can grow just about anywhere (and through many seasons). In fact, just one plantain plant can produce as many as 20,000 seeds! It especially thrives in disturbed areas. If you decide to grow this plant, make sure it is legal to do so in your area, as it can spread and take over relatively fast. Sow seeds in an area you can control. They do not require great care and will likely thrive. Plantain is very common in US hardiness zones three through nine, and should grow especially easily in these areas.

Used in Recipes For: Tooth Decay (236), Rashes from Poison Ivy, Oak, Sumac and Other Toxic Plants (299), Insect Bites and Stings (303)

PSYLLIUM HUSK, *PLANTAGO OVATA*

History: The husk from *Plantago ovata* has long been used to treat digestive issues. These husks are rich in dietary fiber and help to treat constipation. Historically, the plant has been called Isabgol or blond plantago.

Where Found/Grown: *Plantago ovata* is native to western and southern Asia, but can also be found growing in states comprising the southwest portion of the United States. This plant is also cultivated in countries like France, Spain, and India.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PLOV>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: *Plantago ovata* is native to western and southern Asia, but can also be found growing in states comprising the southwest portion of the United States. This plant is also cultivated in countries like France, Spain, and India.



Identification: This annual plant grows up to eighteen inches in height. It has narrow, alternately opposite, basal leaves that are green. The flowers bloom in spring on terminal spikes. They are cream to off-white in color.

Leaf: Leaves are narrow, alternately opposite, and green in color. They grow basally.

Flower: Flowers grow on terminal spikes. They are off-white to cream in color.

Root: Tap root with additional fibrous roots.

Lookalikes: The species *Plantago* also comprises common plantain, or *Plantago major*. However, *Plantago ovata* grows in an entirely different region and is much less widespread. In addition, the leaves of *Plantago major* are much more glossy and broad.

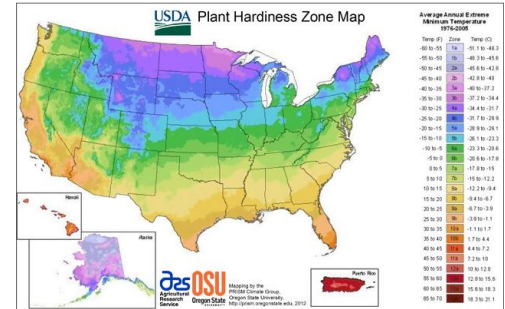
How to Grow: *Plantago ovata* grows like a weed, and loves arid climates. Sow seeds in loamy, well-draining soil. The plant will grow better in soils with a pH between seven and eight. Make sure the soil drains well, as the plant does not tolerate standing water. This plant grows best in US hardiness zones two through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Gallstones and Sludge (257)

PUMPKIN, *CUCURBITA* SP.

History: When most people think of the history of the pumpkin, they probably think of the popular Halloween tradition of carving a Jack-O-Lantern or early colonists making the first pumpkin pie. However, pumpkin seeds have been used medicinally throughout history as well. They were known for their ability to help with urinary issues, as well as to help rid the body of parasites.

Where Found/Grown: Pumpkins are one of the oldest cultivated plants in North America. They are also native to northeastern Mexico.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

They are cultivated all around the world, in almost every region except Antarctica. Pumpkins have a relatively long growing season, and are usually found growing in farmer's patches in the fall.

Identification: There are many species of pumpkins. Most pumpkins have thick, spiny vines with various branches coming off of them. Leaves are large and lobed. The flowers produced by the plant are orange to yellow in color and large. From these flowers comes the pumpkin. A mature pumpkin is usually orange in color, although some varieties are white or multicolored.

Leaf: Leaves are large, broad, and lobed.

Flower: Flowers are large and orange to yellow in color.

Root: Pumpkin roots are fibrous.

Lookalikes: Pumpkin and squash come from the same family and can look a lot alike in early stages. Both have lobed leaves, but the mature leaves of the pumpkin vine are often larger. Both also have very similar flowers. Identification confirmation is best made when the fruits are produced. Pumpkins are large and round, whereas squash are oblong and come in various shapes.

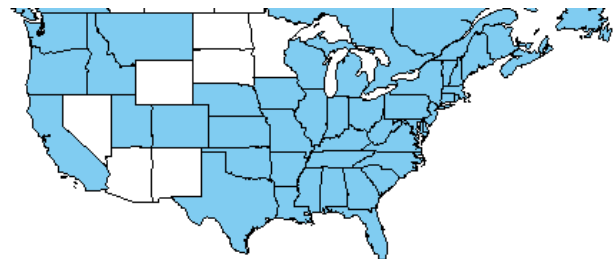
How to Grow: Plant pumpkin seeds in mounds, spacing them at least ten feet apart, as the vines can spread and cover a lot of area. The best time to plant is early spring. They grow best in warm weather and plenty of sun. Most pumpkins take anywhere from seventy-five to one-hundred days to mature. Try to keep weeds at bay to eliminate competition. Mulching the area is recommended. Water the plants thoroughly and often. Pumpkins grow best in US hardiness zones four through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Overactive Bladder/ Incontinence (263)

PURPLE DEADNETTLE, *LAMIUM PURPUREUM*

History: Purple deadnettle likely made its way to North America from Europe and Asia.

Famous English physician Nicholas Culpeper mentioned the plant in his writings in the seventeenth century and it has been used historically as a folk medicine for a variety of ailments such as minor wounds and taken internally for its diuretic properties. It was given the name "dead nettle" because although it is a nettle, it does not sting at all.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=LAPU2>

Where Found/Grown: This small member of the mint family can be found all over North America, especially the western regions, during early spring. It is in fact an aggressively spreading plant that can easily take advantage when there is little other competition in the area. It can be found in yards, meadows, roadside ditches, and forests.

Identification: Purple deadnettle is a small, square-stemmed plant growing from four to twelve inches in height. Most often, it stays rather short. Leaves begin at the bottom with a green color, but turn to purple near the top. Leaves also have fine hairs, making them soft to touch. Flowers have a hood-like petal on top and are light purple

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

to pink in color. Oftentimes, the stalk is bare most of the way up and leaves and flowers are found near the top few inches of the plant.

Leaf: Leaves are soft due to fine hairs, toothed, green at the bottom, and purple near the top.

Flower: Flowers are pink to light purple in color and have a hooded petal on top.

Root: Roots are typically shallow and fibrous.



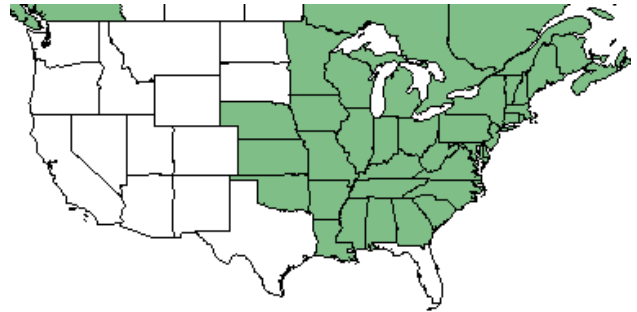
Lookalikes: Henbit and purple deadnettle are often confused. They are two separate plants and not the same plant, although they can appear very similar. They also emerge at the same time and near each other. One major difference between the two plants is that henbit has unstalked leaves going up the stem, while deadnettle has stalked leaves. Another difference is that leaves seem to be separated in sections going up the stalk on henbit, but more clustered near the top of the plant with deadnettle. Purple leaves at the top are also indicative of purple deadnettle. Mistaking these plants doesn't usually cause harm since both are edible.

How to Grow: Before growing this plant, check to make sure it is lawful to do so in your area, as this plant is highly aggressive and can take over an area quickly. It is best to forage these in the wild since they are so abundant, especially in early spring. You can purchase seeds and sow them in fall. However, they will likely spread rapidly, so make sure you are planting only a few and in a place you can control where they spread. They are not picky about soil. Deadnettle grows best in US hardiness zones three through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Allergies (232)

RABBIT TOBACCO, *LOBELIA INFLATA*

History: *Lobelia inflata* was used by Native Americans for respiratory ailments, as well as to induce vomiting, giving it the nickname “puke weed.” In addition to medicinal use by various Native American tribes, this plant was burned to ward off insects. This *Lobelia* species was commonly used as a substitute to tobacco and smoked by Native Americans, as well as those in rural areas, giving it the names “rabbit tobacco” and “Indian tobacco.” Some Native American tribes would make a tea with the leaves to help with sinus issues. Other tribes used the plant for its sedative and antispasmodic properties. Today, it still stands as a popular folk remedy for spasmodic coughing, croup, and other respiratory issues.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=LOIN>

Where Found/Grown: Native to eastern North America and southeastern Canada, the plant can be found as far west as Kansas. It seems to prefer areas with moist soil and full sun to partial shade.

Identification: *Lobelia inflata* can grow from four to thirty-nine inches in height. Stems are covered in tiny hairs and can branch out into more stems. Alternately arranged, ovate, toothed leaves can grow up to three inches long. White to light purple flowers are small and emerge from pod-like buds.

Leaf: Alternately arranged, ovate, toothed and up to three inches long.

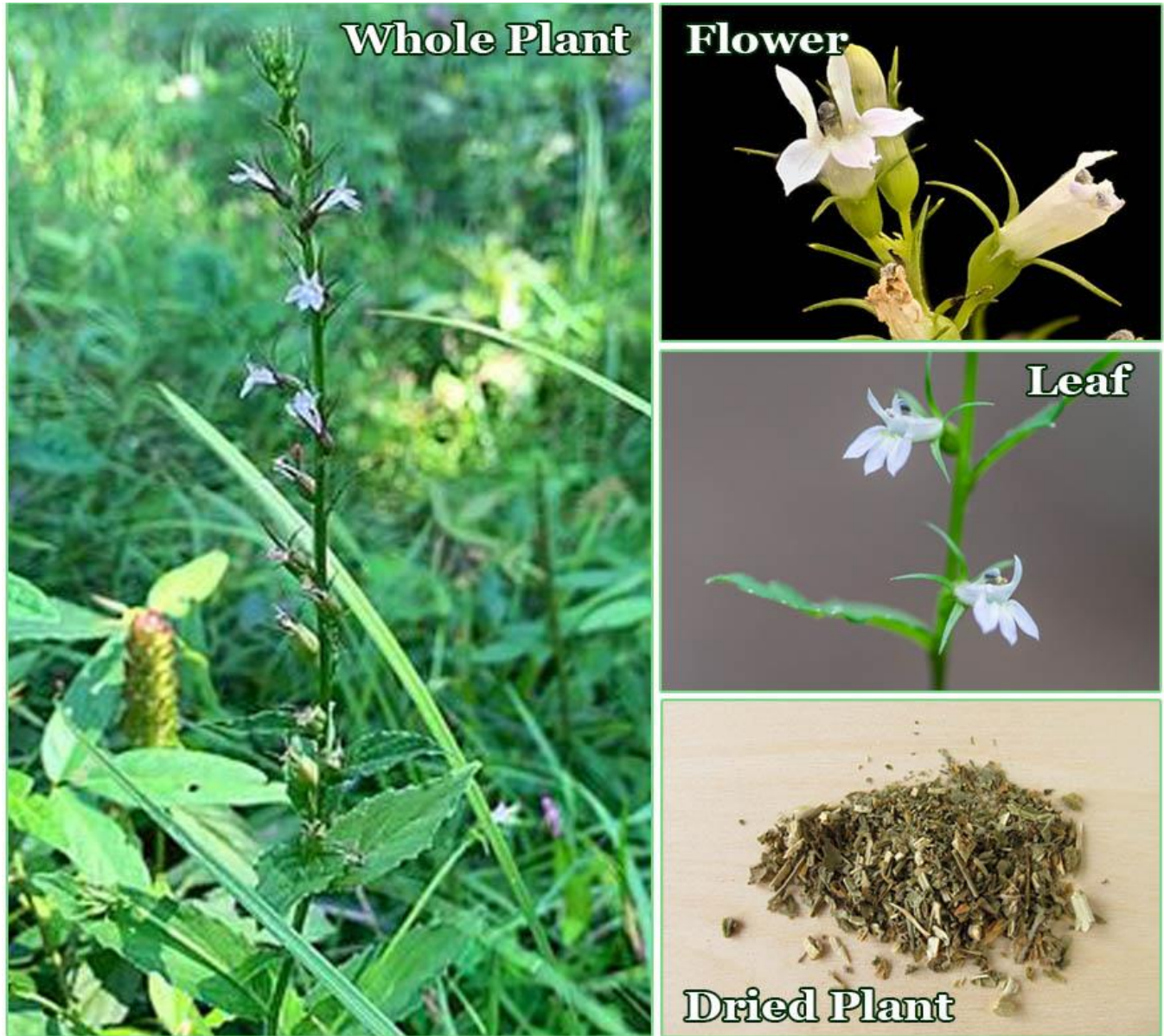
Flower: White to light purple and coming from pod-like buds.

Root: *Lobelia inflata* has a shallow taproot system.

Lookalikes: Although they do not look similar, the name “*Lobelia*” also encompasses other medicinal plants in the same family. Sometimes growing in the same area is *Lobelia siphilitica*, or great blue lobelia. This plant gets much taller and has lovely purple to blue flowers which are much larger than the flowers of *Lobelia inflata*. Although both *Lobelia* species are medicinal, they have different uses.

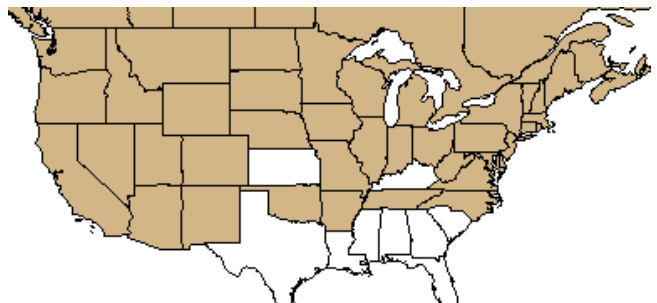
How to Grow: Sow seeds in containers in mid spring or fall. They prefer full sun but will tolerate partial shade. Seeds can also be sown directly in the garden ten to twelve weeks before the last frost. Keep in mind that when ingested in higher than recommended amounts, this plant can be toxic, so keep away from children and pets. This plant grows best in US hardiness zones six through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Excess Mucus (232)



RASPBERRY, *RUBUS IDAEUS*

History: Many parts of the raspberry bush were used medicinally by various indigenous tribes. The Algonquin tribes used the root for diarrhea and the Cherokee used it to treat coughs and toothaches. The leaves are a famous tonic for females and were used by early midwives to promote a healthy uterus and pregnancy. The leaves were also used to cleanse and wash wounds. The berries were a tasty food source, as well as dye.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=RUID>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Raspberry can be found in many regions of North America. It is both cultivated and grows wild. A closely related species called black raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*) also flourishes wild throughout North America at the wood's edge, in fields, along streams, and in meadows. Both species are used interchangeably for



medicinal reasons.

Identification: Red raspberry has an unbranched stem with leaves consisting of compound, pinnate leaflets in groups of three to five. Flowers are borne on racemes and are white, with five petals. The fruit is red to pink in color with multiple seeds inside. When plucked, the fruit separates from the core, making it somewhat hollow.

Leaf: Leaves are compound, pinnate, toothed, and in groups of three to five. They are whitish underneath and green on top.

Flower: Flowers are borne on racemes and are white. They have five petals.

Root: The root system is somewhat shallow and fibrous.

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Lookalikes: One easy way to distinguish red or black raspberry from blackberries is that when plucking the fruit, the core stays on the vine, making the raspberry hollow. This is not the case for blackberries, which retain their shape when plucked and are not hollow. Another difference is that the leaves of the raspberry plants are whitish underneath. Blackberries leaves are green.

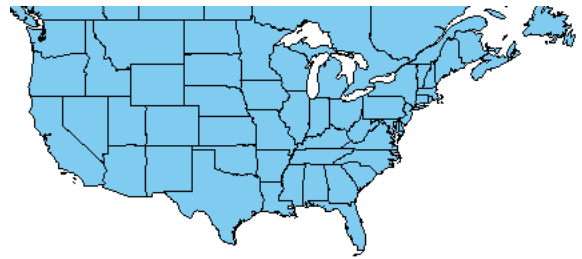
How to Grow: Raspberries grow best in full sun, with little wind. Make sure the soil is well-drained as well. The best way to grow raspberries is from starts. In early spring, dig twelve-inch-deep holes that are also twelve inches wide. Water the plants often and put mulch or straw around the area to deter weeds. Raspberry plants thrive best in US hardiness zones four through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Hormone Imbalance (266), Bone Loss (293), Immune System (310)

RED CLOVER, *TRIFOLIUM PRATENSE*

History: Early medicinal uses of red clover were as a blood cleanser and purifier. In India, it was used as an antispasmodic and anti-inflammatory. Because it is sweet, it has traditionally flavored some herbal teas.

It is also popular in farming as a way to increase soil fertility. It wasn't until later that phytoestrogens were discovered in the plant, making it popular for menopause and other female conditions.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=TRPR2>

Where Found/Grown: Native to Europe and regions of Africa and Asia, red clover has since spread to many other regions of the world and is a common plant in virtually all of North America. It grows in fields, meadows, and other grassy areas.

Identification: Red clover can grow from eight to thirty-one inches in height. Trifoliate leaves contain three leaflets. Leaves are rounded to oblong (typical of clover) have white markings on them. The flower is bright pink and growing in a thick inflorescence.

Leaf: Leaves are trifoliate and oblong to round with a white mark on top.

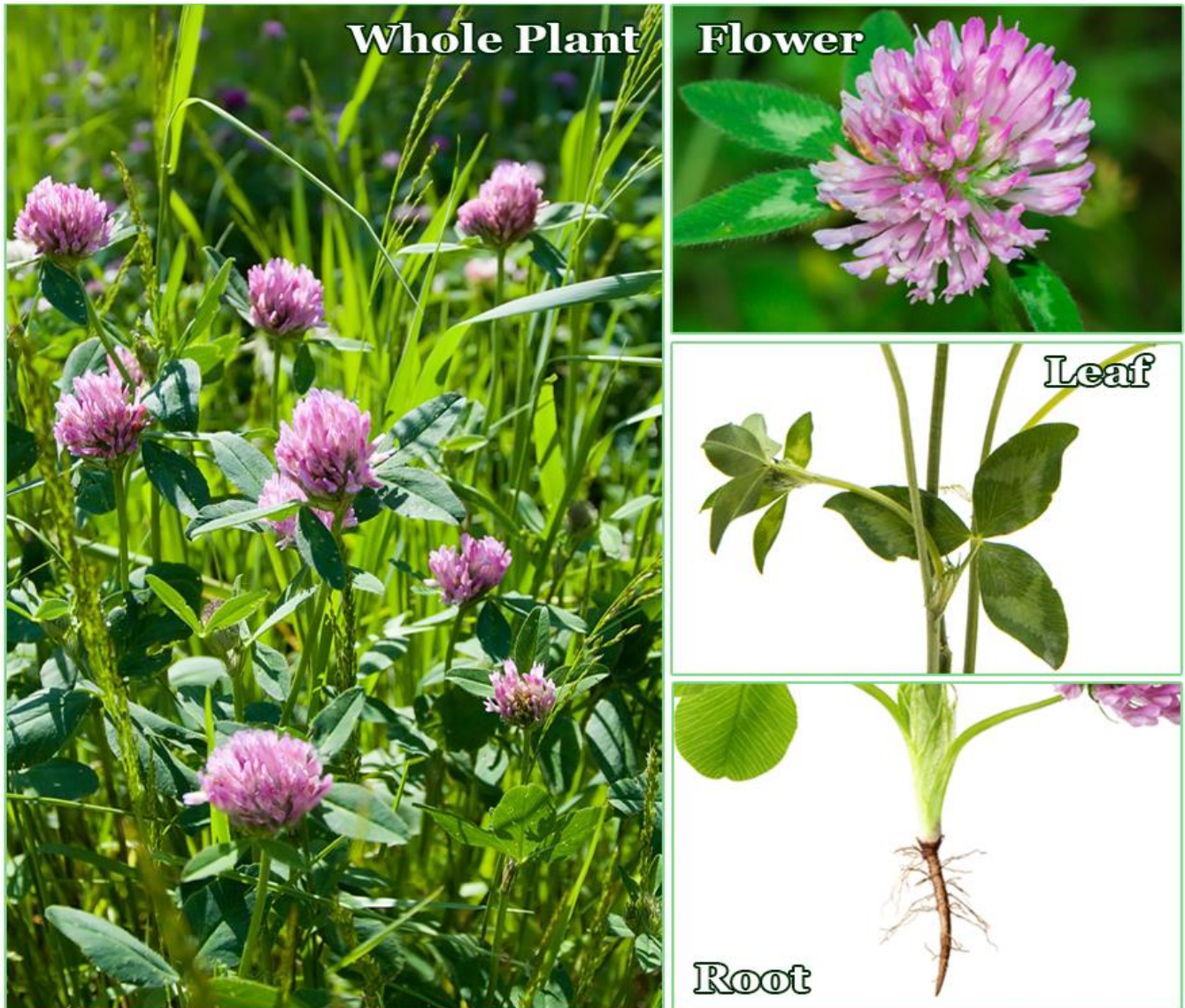
Flower: Flowers are pink with a thick inflorescence.

Root: The root is a deep taproot.

Lookalikes: Red clover is not to be mistaken with crimson clover. Both are very different species. Although its name would suggest that "red" clover is red, it is actually pink. Crimson clover is more of a bright to dark red color. This is where the confusion lies

How to Grow: Red clover is very easy to grow as an ornamental plant or crop to help soil. It prefers slightly acidic soil, but will also grow in poor soil. Red clover also does better in partial shade. Water this plant as needed, but more often when it is first germinating. Sow seed in the spring. Red clover can produce several harvests per year. Red clover grows best in US hardiness zones six and above.

Used in Recipes For: Hormone Imbalance (266), Menopause (268), Bone Loss (293)



REISHI, *GANODERMA LUCIDUM*, *APPLANATUM*, *TSUGAE*, *CURTISII*, *SESSILE*

History: This mushroom has been famous for centuries in Asia and goes by the name Lingzhi. Used in Traditional Chinese Medicine for the nourishment of the body and spirit, this adaptogenic mushroom has been called the “mushroom of immortality.” The species of *Ganoderma* native to China is *Ganoderma lucidum*. Today, multiple scientific studies can back up medicinal claims made about this mushroom.

Where Found/Grown: Various species of *Ganoderma* can be found growing in many regions of the world. In the United States, one common species is *Ganoderma applanatum*. It can



(For US *Ganoderma* species, *Ganoderma applanatum*)
<https://www.ediblewildfood.com/images/artists-conk-pictures/artist-conk-distribution-map.jpg>

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be found growing around dead stumps. Another common species in the United States is *Ganoderma sessile*, which has been found growing in almost every state. It is also commonly found growing at the base of trees, both living and dead.



Identification: *Ganoderma* mushrooms have several things in common. Most are bracket-like in shape. They are varying shades of brown, depending on their age. They may get lighter near the edges, where they are sometimes white. They have a leathery texture when they are fresh. If you come across one that is all white and hard, it is dead and no good medicinally. *Ganoderma applanatum* appears brown on top but is white underneath. When you scratch the white part, it is brown underneath. It has been called “artist’s conk” because people like to draw pictures on them. *Ganoderma sessile* is not as thick as *applanatum* and tends to have more vivid brown colors.

Lookalikes: *Fistulina hepatica* is a bracket-like fungus that can look very similar to *Ganoderma* mushrooms. They are brown on top and white underneath and usually grow on trees. Some say this species looks like a slab

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of raw meat. These are generally thicker than most *Ganoderma* species. The good news is that they are edible, so no chance of toxicity. *Ganoderma* has no poisonous lookalikes.

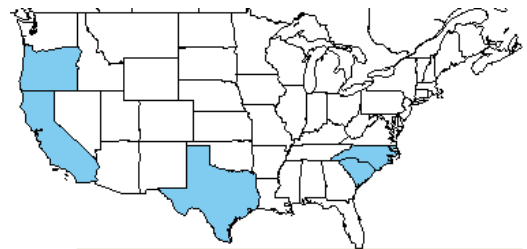
How to Grow: These mushrooms can be cultivated with the right conditions. Purchase mushroom spawn dowel rods to begin. You will need to find a log that is three to four feet long and one foot in diameter. After cutting this log, let it sit for at least two to three months. Some popular types of wood to grow *Ganoderma* on include oak, hemlock, and elm. Next, drill a hole two inches from the end of the log on one end. Make sure the hole will fit whatever size dowel rod you purchased. Continue drilling holes at least four inches apart. Insert the dowel rods into the holes and thoroughly water the log for up to three minutes. The log will need to be stored in a cool, shady area with temperatures steady between 65 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit. Cover the log with a tarp and check it every few days. Water it again if it appears to be drying out. Mushrooms should start sprouting and be ready in six months to a year.

Used in Recipes For: Rheumatoid Arthritis (311)

ROSEMARY, *ROSMARINUS OFFICINALIS*

History: This plant dates back to ancient times and was used in Egyptian burial rituals. It was used by Greeks and Romans and documented as early as 23 to 90 AD.

From there, it spread throughout the world as a popular medicinal and culinary herb. It was also mentioned in the Shakespearean play *Hamlet*, as being for “remembrance.”



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ROOF>

Where Found/Grown: Although this plant is grown easily throughout many regions of the world today, it is native to the Mediterranean region. It especially likes areas near the sea.

Identification: This shrubby plant has needle-like leaves and woody stems. Leaves are around two to four centimeters long and slender. It is highly aromatic. Some plants can reach over five feet tall. Flowers range in color and are usually white, pink, purple, or blue.

Leaf: Leaves are dark green, slender and around two to four centimeters long. They have a very herbaceous fragrance.

Flower: Flowers are small and range in color and can be white, pink, purple, or blue. They have a camphorous odor that is often described as pleasant.

Root: Rosemary has a very fibrous root system with multiple roots and the absence of one main root, or taproot.

Lookalikes: Sometimes rosemary is confused with another common herb called thyme. They both have woody stems, but the leaves of thyme are usually much shorter than those of rosemary. In addition, each has their own distinctive scent. If you are confused, simply smell the plant to see if it smells like rosemary.

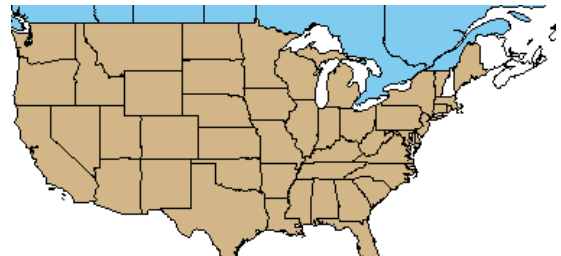
How to Grow: While it is said that rosemary thrives in Mediterranean climates near the sea, it will grow just about anywhere. Not only is it pest-resistant, but it is drought-resistant as well, making it a very hardy plant. It does not like to be overwatered. Plant rosemary in well-drained soil where it can get plenty of sun. Rosemary can also be grown in pots rather easily. Just make sure not to overwater and keep in mostly sunny areas. Prune frequently to promote growth. US hardiness zones five through nine are ideal for growing rosemary.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (214), Tinnitus (226), Tired and Weak Muscles (284), Muscle Cramping and Pain (285), Bursitis (287), Back Muscle Pain (288), Immune System (308)



SAGE, *SALVIA OFFICINALIS*

History: When it comes to plants with a history, sage definitely makes the top of the list! Since ancient times, sage has been hailed as a powerful plant, both medicinally and spiritually. It also has a rich history of culinary use. Greek and Roman cultures regarded sage as a great healing aid for digestion. During the Middle Ages, sage grew even more in popularity when it was used for a variety of ailments ranging from blood circulation to the promotion of overall bodily health. Of course, it was a major ingredient in remedies to ward off the plague during these times as well.



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In addition to medicinal use, sage is famous in the culinary world and has a rich history of use in flavoring meats, especially in Europe. Native Americans burned sage to purify and ward off evil, making it an important plant for spiritual ceremonies.



Where Found/Grown: Many species of sage exist, but common sage is originally native to the Mediterranean region. Cultivation of sage has since spread across the world over the past few centuries. Sage is now a common addition to many herb gardens across North America and Europe.

Identification: Sage can be identified by its distinctive, herbaceous scent. Most sage plants can grow up to two feet tall. Leaves are another great indicator of a true sage plant, because they are soft due to fine hairs called trichomes. Oblong leaves can measure over two inches long and one inch wide. The color of the leaves vary, but are generally a silvery-green color. The underside is usually lighter. Flowers are small, violet in color, and somewhat tubular.

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Leaf: Sage leaves are oblong in shape. They are usually over two inches long and one inch wide. Leaves are very soft, and have tiny hairs on them. They are silvery-green in color and lighter underneath.

Flower: Tubular flowers are often violet or lavender in color, but can also be pink, depending on the cultivar.

Root: Sage has a strongly branched and fibrous root system.

Lookalikes: To help distinguish between other similar aromatic garden herbs, look for the soft, silvery-green leaves of sage. In addition, smell the plant to see if you can detect the distinctive smell sage has. Other garden herbs like basil, thyme, and oregano do not have soft, hairy leaves like sage and are generally darker in color as well.

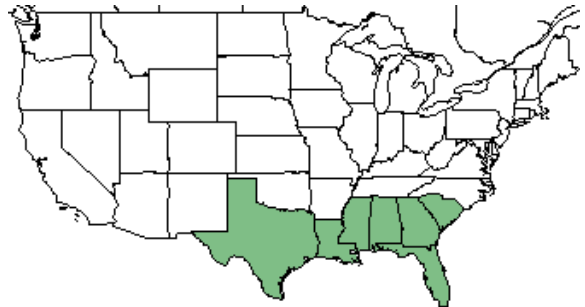
How to Grow: Plant seeds in spring in an area with plenty of sunlight. Sage does well when planted in raised garden beds or containers. They do not do well with overwatering, so water lightly until they have germinated and are more established. Sage attracts plenty of pests, so keep an eye out and be ready to take action if you notice anything nibbling on your plants. Prune your sage plants in the spring. Sage grows best in US hardiness zones five to eight.

Used in Recipes For: Hearing Loss (227), Canker Sores (234), Sore Throat and Streptococcus Bacteria (237, Immune System (310)

SAW PALMETTO, *SERENOA REPENS*

History: Centuries ago, saw palmetto berries were likely in the pouches of medicine men indigenous to the Southeastern United States.

Native Americans used the berries of this small palm for impotence, enlarged prostate and low libido in men. The berries may have also been used to treat infertility in women. These slow-growing plants can live a long time, even hundreds of years!



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=SERE2>

Where Found/Grown: Saw palmetto palms are native to the Southeastern US. It can be found growing in clumps along sand hills along the South Atlantic and Gulf Coastal plains. It is a common sight along the roadsides in Florida and other similar regions of the US.

Identification: Saw palmetto is a type of small palm. It has distinct, fan-shaped tops consisting of a bare petiole with around twenty leaves coming out in a fan shape. Leaves range in color from light green to silvery green. Spines around the leaves make them very sharp. They can easily cut the skin. Leaves can range from one to two meters long. The plant grows from seven to ten feet tall. The flowers of saw palmetto palms are yellow in color and are found in dense compound panicles. The fruit is red to black in color and grows in drupes.

Leaf: One to two meters long, leaves are sharp around the edges and fan out. There are around twenty leaves coming from a bare petiole.

Flower: Flowers are yellow in color and grow in dense compound petioles. Fruit is red to black in color and grows in drupes.

Root: Root system consists of a short, bulbous underground stem surrounded by smaller dense roots.

Lookalikes: The Bismarck palm tree can look a lot like the saw palmetto. Both are small. However, when given time to grow, Bismarck palms will develop hard, distinctive trunks, which saw palmettos do not have.

How to Grow: This palm is relatively easy to grow in the right climate, which is considered hardiness zones eight through ten. It is native to the Southeastern United States, so if you live here, try planting one outdoors in partial sun. Water this palm sparingly, as they are drought tolerant and used to little water. These palms are often used in tropical landscaping under taller palm trees.

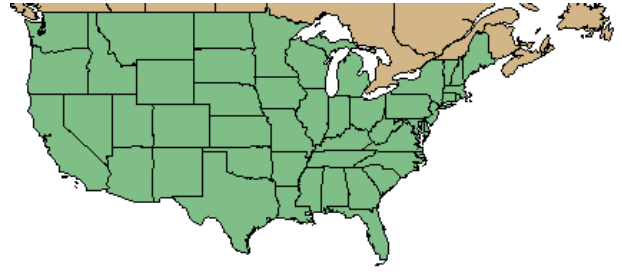
Used in Recipes For: Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (224), Prostate Issues (279)



SELF-HEAL, *PRUNELLA VULGARIS*

History: This common member of the mint family has had many different names over the course of history, depending on the region and culture. Some know it as self-heal or heal-all, while others call it woundwort.

The Chinese call it Xia Ku Cao, and a drink made with it has been enjoyed in this culture for generations, since the days of the Qing Dynasty. It has historically been enjoyed as a pot herb, as well as a source of folk medicine for wound healing.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=PRVU>



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Where Found/Grown: Self-heal can be found in many regions of the world, including much of North America, England, Ireland, and Asia. This widespread mint thrives in temperate climates, and can be found growing during spring and summer months along roadsides, in fields and meadows, in yards, and along woodland edges.

Identification: Self-heal can grow from two to twelve inches in height. It has a green, square stem that sometimes have a reddish appearance. The stems branch at the leaf axils and leaves are often serrated, as well as lance-shaped. Vivid purple flowers grow around the top of the plant. These flowers are tubular in appearance, with a distinctive hood-like top petal.

Leaf: Leaves are lance-shaped and up to one-and-a-half inches long. They are sometimes serrated, but not always.

Flower: Flowers are bright purple to blue in color and tubular. The top petal is hood-like in appearance. Flowers form a circle around the top of the plant.

Root: Self-heal has a fibrous root system that can spread aggressively.

How to Grow: Because self-heal is an aggressively spreading plant in many areas, check with your local conservation office to make sure it isn't considered a noxious weed in your area before planting. If it is native to your area, you may want to consider foraging for this common plant instead. To grow self-heal, choose a spot in either full or partial sun. Sow seeds in early spring and lightly cover the area. Water the plants regularly. They can be dead-headed to promote more blooms. Self-heal makes a great addition to a rock garden. Self-heal grows best in US hardiness zones four through eight.

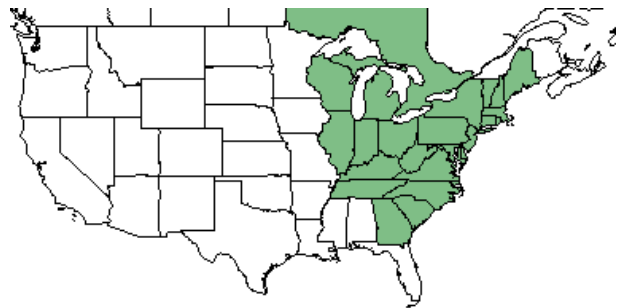
Used in Recipes For: Canker Sores (234), Male STD's (281, 282), Rashes (300), Psoriasis (314)

SENNA, *SENNA HEBECARPA*

History: This wild North American species of senna was used by Native Americans for fevers, as well as aches and pains.

It was also used externally in a poultice for wounds and sores. Infusions were also taken by various Native American tribes for parasites and as a laxative.

Where Found/Grown: This species of senna is commonly found in open woodlands throughout the eastern half of the United States.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=SEHE3>

Identification: This legume can grow up to seven feet tall, with a spread of up to five feet. Leaves are compound. Yellow flowers emerge in clusters at the top of the plant from July to August.

Leaf: Leaves are compound.

Flower: Flowers are yellow and in clusters near the top of the plant.

Root: Rhizomes help senna plants spread underground.

Lookalikes: There is another species of North American senna called *Senna pendula*. This plant can be found in a different region than *Senna hebecarpa*, and is mostly found in the southern part of the United States. *Senna*

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pendula tends to grow in a sprawling manner, creeping over things around it, whereas *Senna hebecarpa* grows upright.

How to Grow: Plant scarified seeds in the fall. Seeds need not be placed deep in the ground, with a depth of three millimeters being acceptable. Keep seeds three feet apart. Senna tends to grow best in sunny areas, and tolerates poor soil well. Watering is fine, but these plants do not need constant water. Senna grows best in US hardiness zones five through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Constipation (248)

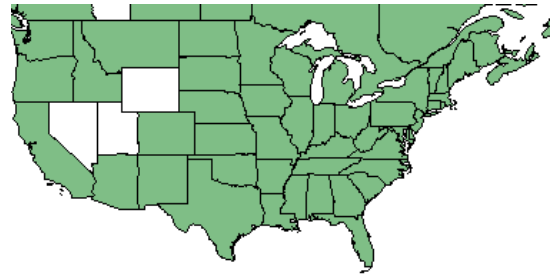


SKULLCAP, *SCUTELLARIA LATERIFLORA*

History: The most common species of skullcap used medicinally is *Scutellaria lateriflora*. This plant has been used traditionally to calm the nerves and promote sleep.

However, it was used by indigenous people to treat conditions such as rabies and schizophrenia, giving it the nickname “mad dog skullcap.” It was also used ceremonially to promote visions.

Where Found/Grown: This member of the mint family is native to North America and can be found growing wild in areas that are wet, like along streams or in marshes.



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Identification: There are many species of skullcap, but *Scutellaria lateriflora* can be identified by its flowers, which grow along the side instead of the top. They are small, purple in color, tubular, and have a snapdragon-like appearance. This plant has been nicknamed “side flowering skullcap” because the flowers often bloom along one side. The stems are square and the leaves are ovate. Skullcap stands about sixty to eighty centimeters tall.

Leaf: Green, serrated, ovate leaves with veins on the upper surface.

Flower: Tubular, snapdragon-like, and purple.

Root: Taproot and rhizomes.

Lookalikes: This species of skullcap is often confused with other species of skullcap. Many varieties have the purple tubular flowers, but *Scutellaria lateriflora* has flowers along one side and none are usually on top of the plant. This plant is also confused with germander. This confusion can prove to be deadly, so take care not to misidentify! Germander is lighter green, has longer leaves, and pinkish flowers as opposed to purple.

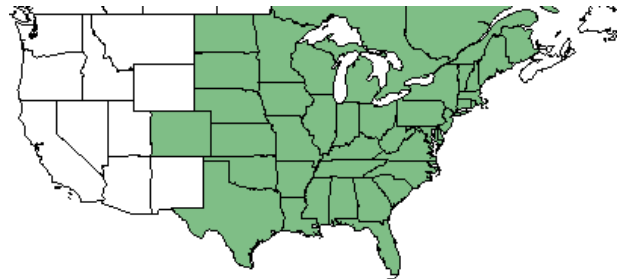
How to Grow: This plant can be grown more easily throughout its native habitat in North America. Many gardeners advise stratifying the seeds first by placing them in a plastic bag with moistened sand or a moist paper towel and refrigerating it one week before sowing. Place seeds in small pots and let them germinate indoors and take root before transplanting them outdoors at least twelve inches apart. Make sure to transplant after the first frost. Water them well if you live in a dry climate. This plant is especially hardy in US zones two through seven.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (214), Stress and Nerves (220), Menopause (269)

SLIPPERY ELM, *ULMUS RUBRA*

History: The inner bark of slippery elm is mucilaginous and creates a soothing coating over affected areas it is applied to. This action gave the tree its common name.

Native to North America, this tree has long been used to treat a variety of issues that cause pain and inflammation. Native Americans applied the bark to wounds to help them heal, as well as soothe the inflamed area. The inner bark was also taken internally to help with digestive woes.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ULRU>

Where Found/Grown: Slippery elm can be found growing in the eastern United States. It may also be found in parts of Canada. The tree is becoming rarer in the wild, but can be found in many states comprising the eastern half of the US.

Identification: This elm species grows up to sixty-two feet tall. The insides of the woody areas on the tree have a red color, and sometimes the tree is referred to as “red elm.” The inner bark is not only red-tinged, but slimy. Twigs and brown buds from the tree are soft because they are covered in fine hairs. Oblong leaves are rough on top, but soft on the bottom. Flowers form in clusters in the spring before the leaves. They are red and yellow tinged with hair-like appendages. The fruit is oval-shaped and dark brown to red in color.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong, broad, asymmetrical, and emerge red, but turn green. They are rough on top and soft on the bottom.

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Flower: Flowers are red and yellow tinged. They have hair-like appendages emerging from them. They grow in clusters.

Root: The root system is extensive and creeping.

Lookalikes: This species may closely resemble the American Elm, but can be easily distinguished upon closer inspection by looking at the inner bark, which should have a red tint and be slimy in texture.

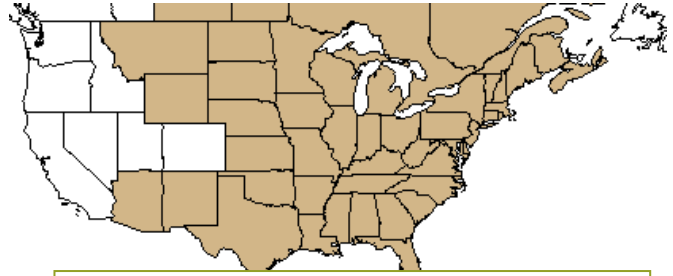
How to Grow: Growing slippery elm is a great idea, since the tree is endangered in some areas! Plant the tree in partial shade. It also prefers well-draining limestone soil. Make sure and plant it in an area with little competition, and keep weeds at bay until it becomes more established. Keep the tree well-watered, but do not overwater. Grow slippery elm in US hardiness zones three to nine for best results.

Used in Recipes For: Diarrhea (245), Burns (304), Crohn's Disease (312)

SOLOMON'S SEAL, *POLYGONATUM MULTIFLORUM*

History: Solomon's seal has been used as a medicinal plant for thousands of years. It is said that King Solomon especially loved this plant and that is why it was named after him. It has been traditionally used in folk medicine for its anti-inflammatory properties.

Where Found/Grown: There are several species of Solomon's seal. Various species can be found across the world, including China and North America. It can be found growing in rich, moist woods and shady areas.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=POLYG2>



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Root

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Identification: Solomon's seal grows up to thirty-five inches tall. Alternate leaves grow up its slightly-arching stem. Small, white, bell-like flowers grow from the bottom of the stem. The root is what is used medicinally. It is a rhizome with a "seal" indentation on it.

Leaf: Ovate leaves are alternately arranged on an arching stem.

Flower: Small, white, bell-like flowers hang in pairs from the bottom of the stem.

Root: The root is a rhizome with an indentation or "seal" on top. It is cream in color.

Lookalikes: Solomon's seal is often confused with a plant called false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*). In their early stages, identification can be tricky. However, it is best to wait until the plants flower in late spring or early summer to make a positive identification. The flowers of false Solomon's seal spring up from the top of the plant and the flowers of true Solomon's seal drop in bell-like pairs from the bottom of the arching stem.

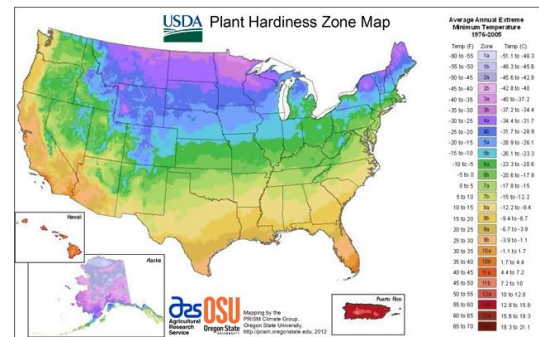
How to Grow: Solomon's seal is best grown in areas that closely match its natural habitat. Look for shady, wooded areas, with moist, rich soil. Look for companion plants that normally grow where Solomon's seal grows, like trillium or wild ginger. Rhizomes can be placed a few inches into the soil in the fall. Make sure weeds are cleared from the area. Keep the area moist. Solomon's seal grows best in US hardiness zones three through seven.

Used in Recipes For: Fractures and Sprains (292), Rheumatoid Arthritis (312)

STAR ANISE, *ILLICIUM VERUM*

History: Because the tree that star anise comes from is native to Vietnam, it is no surprise that it has been an important ingredient in a traditional Vietnam dish called Pho. It is also a spice used in traditional Indian dishes such as biryani and masala chai.

Not only is star anise a popular spice in Asian cuisine, it has a history of medicinal use in these regions. It was thought to be a stimulant in traditional Chinese medicine. It was also used medicinally in Ayurveda.



Where Found/Grown: This evergreen tree is native to northeast Vietnam and southwest China. It is popular in many Asian regions, but due to its use in modern medicine, it is becoming scarcer and is not as sustainable as other plants.

Identification: This medium-sized tree can grow from eight to fifteen meters tall. Its green, glabrous branches are somewhat different in hue than the white to grey colored trunk. Leaves are clustered at the end of branches. They are alternate and have a leathery feel. Large flowers produced by the tree can come in a variety of shades including light pink, red, or green-yellow. The fruit that results is boat-shaped and woody.

Leaf: The lance-shaped leaves are clustered at the ends of branches. They are leathery and alternately arranged.

Flower: Flowers come in shades of light-pink, red, or greenish-yellow. They are large and produce boat-shaped fruit.

Root: The root system of this tree is extensive.

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Lookalikes: Star anise is not the same thing as “anise.” Star anise was given the name because it smells like anise. Anise is an herbaceous plant native to Europe and the Mediterranean region. Additionally, star anise (*Illicium verum*) should not be confused with the highly toxic Japanese *Illicium anisatum*, although the two plants are members of the same family.

How to Grow: Star anise trees can be grown in USDA hardiness zones eight through ten. This tree requires full to partial sun. It prefers slightly acidic soil. It should always be kept moist and well-watered. This tree will not tolerate frost or cooler temperatures, and is better suited for southernmost regions of the United States.

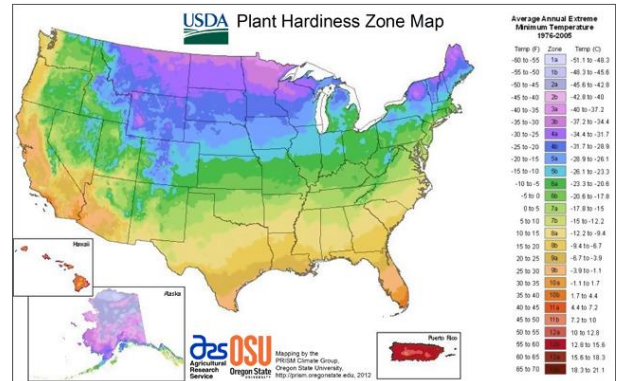
Used in Recipes For: Male STD's (282), Immune System (307)



STEPHANIA, *STEPHANIA TETRANDRA*

History: Stephania has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for centuries. It is referred to as Fen fang ji in traditional Chinese medicine. It has traditionally been employed to help relieve pain, as well as clear heat and dry dampness.

Where Found/Grown: Stephania is native to south, central, and eastern China. It is usually found in fields, roadsides, and waste areas in these regions.



Whole Plant



Leaf



Dried Root

Identification: The stephania vine grows up to three meters in height. Peltate leaves spiral up the stem. Tiny flowers are greenish in color. The stem grows from a woody caudex at the base of the plant.

Leaf: Leaves are peltate, and spiral up the stem.

Flower: Flowers are tiny and greenish in color.

Root: Roots are large and cylindrical.

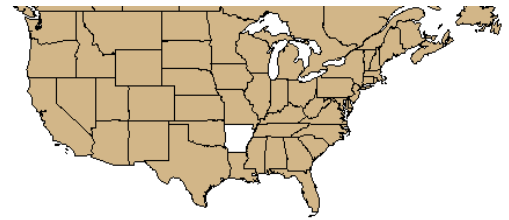
Lookalikes: Sometimes *Aristolochia fanchi* is substituted for stephania in Chinese medicine. However, this plant is toxic. If taken in too large of a dose, it can cause kidney failure or death. It is important to make sure you are indeed getting *Stephania tetrandra* when purchasing stephania. *Aristolochia fanchi* looks somewhat similar to stephania, but has very unique, white and brown-spotted flowers.

How to Grow: Stephania is especially easy to grow in tropical and sub-tropical regions of the United States. It requires slightly acidic to neutral soil, moderate amounts of water, and partial sun. You will want to give this vine something to climb up as well. US hardiness zones ten and eleven are best suited for growing this plant.

Used in Recipes For: Rheumatism (295)

STINGING NETTLE, *URTICA DIOICA*

History: Native to Europe, it is no surprise this common plant was mentioned in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. It was also a central figure in one of Aesop's fables, *The Boy and the Nettle*. This nettle has a long history of folk use ranging from medicinal use for urinary issues to use as a pot herb.



Where Found/Grown: Although stinging nettle is native to Europe, temperate Asia, and western North Africa, it has become naturalized throughout almost all of North America and Canada. It can be found along streams, in ditches, open spaces, or in open forests.

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=URDI>

Identification: Stinging nettle grows from three to seven feet tall. It has soft green leaves that are up to six inches long. Leaves are opposite, and growing out of a tough green stem. Stinging nettle leaves are also toothed. Small, dense axillary inflorescences show off greenish to brown flowers. Some species have hairs that can come off when touched and cause quite a bit of irritation to the skin. It is best to handle these with care and wear gloves.

Leaf: Stinging nettle leaves are toothed, opposite, soft, green, and up to six inches long.

Flower: Flowers are greenish in color and grow from small, dense, axillary inflorescences.

Root: The root of stinging nettle is a rhizome.

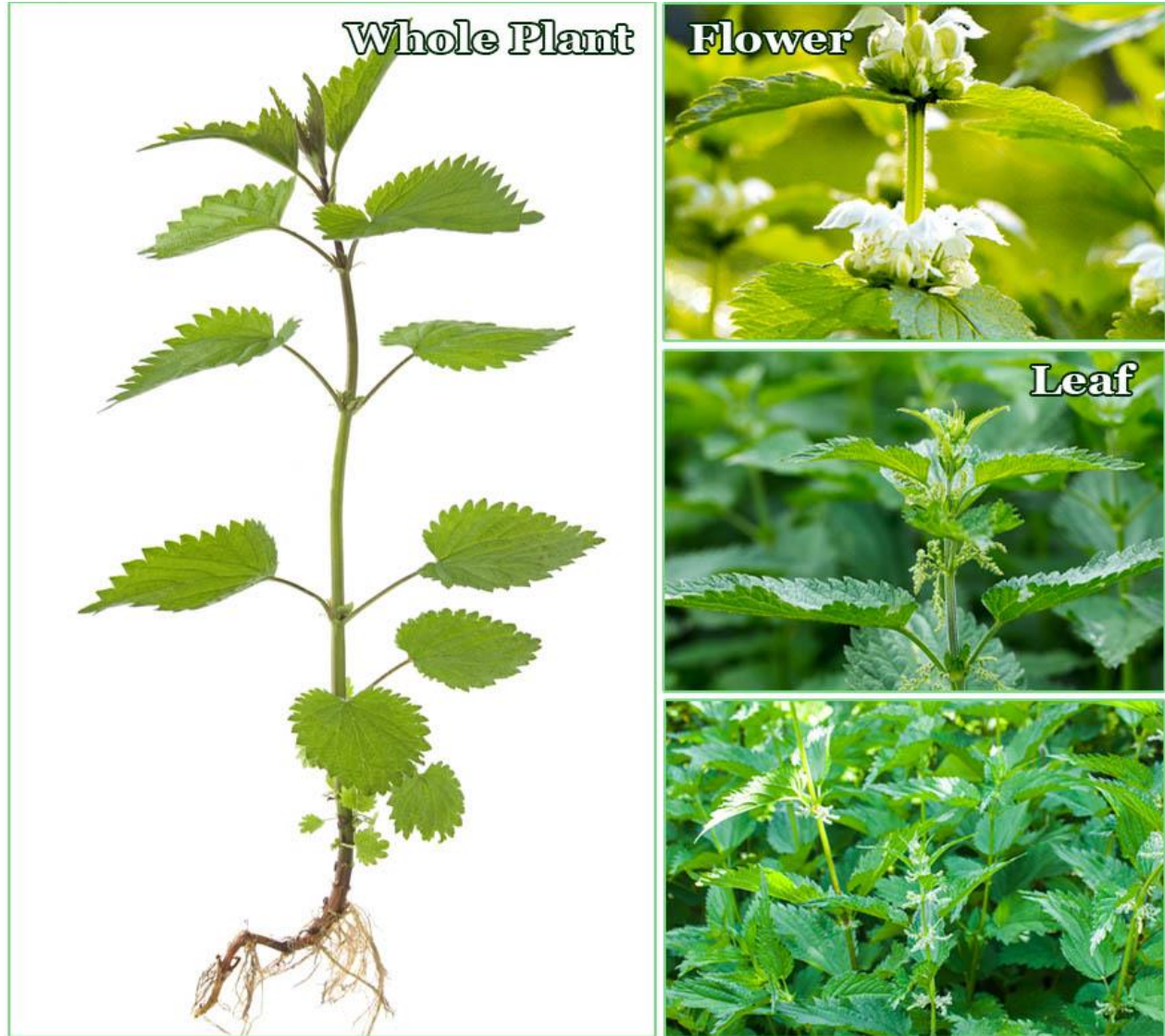
Lookalikes: One type of nettle that looks quite a bit like stinging nettle when young is Canadian wood nettle. However, as the plants grow, you will notice that the leaves of Canadian wood nettle are much broader and oval-shaped. In addition, Canadian wood nettle has alternate leaves, unlike stinging nettle. Canadian wood nettle doesn't have as many stinging hairs, and does not tend to cause the irritation that stinging nettle causes to skin.

How to Grow: Since stinging nettle can irritate the skin if touched, choose a place away from where people gather. It prefers full sun, but will do okay in partial sun as well. Soil must be fertile and moist to grow stinging

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nettle. In early spring, spread seeds in your chosen patch. Gently rake the area and cover it with a small layer of mulch. Stinging nettle grows best in US hardiness zones three through ten.

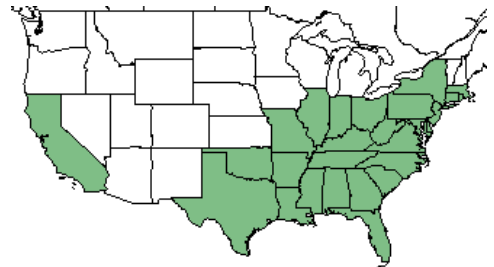
Used in Recipes For: Vertigo (228), Allergies (231), Cholecystitis and Removal (258), Prostate Issues (279), Bone Loss (294), Hives (297), Hashimoto's Disease (315)



SWEET GUM TREE, *LIQUIDAMBAR STYRACIFLUA*

History: Sweet gum has been written about for hundreds of years and is one of the most common hardwood trees in the Southeastern United States.

It was used by indigenous people for its amber-colored sap that had a pleasant aroma and flavor. It was chewed like gum, thus giving it the name “sweet gum.”



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Where Found/Grown: Sweet gum trees are very common in Southeastern regions of the United States, and are also found in California. They can be found growing in the lowlands of these regions.

Identification: One easy way to identify this tree is by looking for its unique, star-shaped leaves. They usually have five points, but sometimes can have from three to seven. In the fall, they turn bright shades including red, yellow, purple, and orange. The tree grows up to seventy feet tall. Its bark is deeply fissured. The trees can be a nuisance in some areas because they produce hard, spiny seed balls that fall off and can hurt if stepped on with bare feet.

Leaf: Leaves are star-shaped and usually have five points, although they can sometimes have from three to seven. They turn an array of bright colors in the fall.

Flower: The tree produces seed pods that start out green and then turn brown. They are hard, spherical, and very spiny.

Root: The root system can be extensive and creeping. Plant this tree away from buildings and other structures.

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Lookalikes: Some maples also have leaves that are somewhat star-shaped, but one difference is that sweet gum's leaves are not toothed and they are usually larger in size. In addition, look for the green to brown colored spiny balls on the sweet gum tree to confirm identification.

How to Grow: Sweet gum trees can grow better in their native range, which is the Southeastern United States. They prefer full sun and little competition. They need occasional watering, especially when they are first planted. US hardiness zones six through ten are best for growing this tree.

Used in Recipes For: Immune System (307)

TEA TREE, *MELALEUCA ALTERNIFOLIA*

History: In 1732, an explorer named Captain James Cook discovered the tea tree when he visited Australia. He named the tree "tea tree" after making a tea from the leaves. However, the tree had been used for centuries by the Aboriginal bush people living in this region as an antiseptic for wounds, a remedy for sore throats, and as a fever reducer.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=MELAL>

Where Found/Grown: The tea tree is native to the warmer regions of Australia, where they can be found growing in the wild. They prefer swampy areas that are in tropical and subtropical areas of Australia. There are several different types of tea trees and they vary in appearance.

Identification: Growing anywhere from seven to twenty feet tall, this shrub-like tree can be identified by its white, papery bark. The fragrant leaves of the tea tree can either be alternate, whorled, or scattered. They are linear, slender, smooth, and up to one inch long. The tree does produce white to off-white colored flowers growing in wispy masses during early spring or summer. The fruit produced by the tea tree is small, woody, and shaped like a cup.

Leaf: Needle-like, fragrant, slender, and up to one inch long. They can be in whorls around the branch, scattered, or alternate.

Flower: White to off-white, wispy, and growing in masses for a short period.

Root: Root systems can be extensive and spread easily with adequate watering.

Lookalikes: The tea tree may look like several species of evergreens due to the needle-like leaves adorning the branches. However, the tea tree can be distinguished by its papery white bark.

How to Grow: If you live in US hardiness zones eight and above, you will likely be able to grow a tea tree in your yard. If you do not live in a warm climate, you can still grow it in a pot; just make sure the pot is large, as the tree can grow fast with the right conditions. These trees prefer full sun, so avoid planting them in a shady area. The colder the area, the less the tree will grow, so bring your potted tree inside during cooler weather. These trees will need well-draining soil. If you are growing in a pot, make sure to keep the tree irrigated at all times, as it does not like drying out. If growing outdoors, make sure to water regularly as well.

Used in Recipes For: Hearing Loss (227), Sinus Infection (231), Yeast Infection (274), Bacterial Vaginosis (275), Ringworm and Athlete's Foot (302), Eczema (305)

Whole Plant



Tea Tree Oil



Leaf



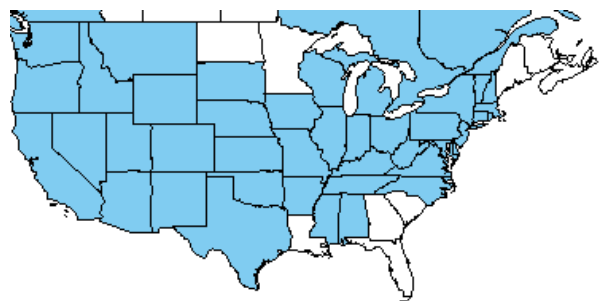
Seeds



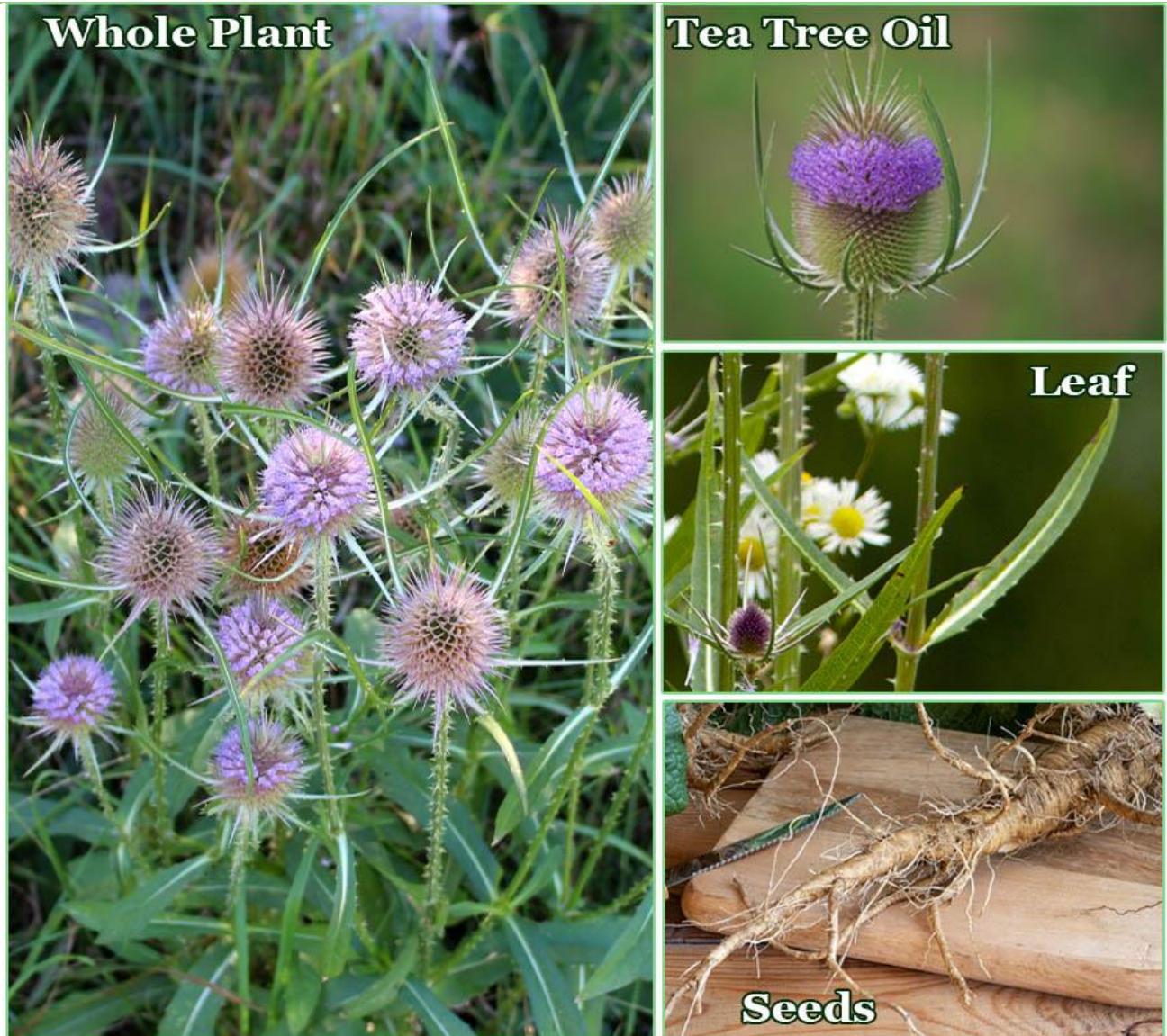
TEASEL, *DIPSACUS FULLONUM*

History: Teasel was once used in the textile industry because its flower heads made excellent combs for processing wool. Teasel was also used for medicinal purposes, with the root being employed to reduce swelling. In modern times, it has been discovered to help the body fight bacteria and infection due to certain tick borne illnesses.

Where Found/Grown: Teasel is often considered an invasive weed throughout most of North America. It can be found in ditches and along roadsides.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=DIFU2>



Identification: Teasel can get rather tall, with some growing over six feet tall. There are small spines going up the sturdy stem. It has oblong to lance-shaped leaves with a row of spines underneath. The flower head is spiny, with tiny, light purple flowers growing around it.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong to lance-shaped and have a row of spines underneath.

Flower: The flowers are light purple in color and grow around a spiny head.

Root: Teasel roots are thick and fibrous.

Lookalikes: Teasel can look like other thistles because they are both very spiny in appearance. However, teasel does not have the hair-like flowers that most thistles have.

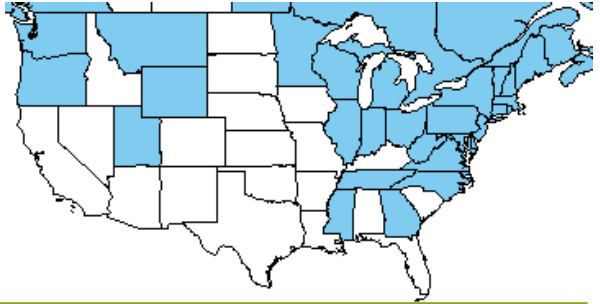
How to Grow: Check to make sure it is legal to grow teasel in your area, as it is a noxious weed in many regions. It can quickly spread and take over an area. Teasel is not picky about sun, shade, or soil, and grows in many areas. Sow seeds in the desired spot in late spring or early summer. Teasel grows best in US hardiness zones three through five.

Used in Recipes For: Lyme's Diseases and Tick Borne Illnesses (309)

THYME, *THYMUS VULGARIS*

History: This highly aromatic plant was used by ancient Egyptians in the embalming process. Steeped in lore, this popular garden perennial was also placed under pillows to ward off bad dreams during the Middle Ages and ancient Greeks burned it to bring courage.

The placing of thyme on coffins was thought to help with passage to the next life in some cultures. It has been used as



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=THYMU>

Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



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both a culinary herb to flavor a myriad of foods and a source of folk medicine for cleansing wounds due to its highly antibacterial properties.

Where Found/Grown: Although thyme is native to Europe, North Africa, and Asia, it is one of the most popular culinary herbs in the world and can be found growing in gardens all over the world. It can tolerate very cold climates, so it can be cultivated easily in most regions of North America.

Identification: Thyme grows in thick bunches on woody stems. It is a short plant, only growing from six to twelve inches in height. Small, oval, green leaves grow up the stems. Flowers grow in clusters at the top of the plant and are white to light purple in color. Thyme is highly aromatic due to the presence of various essential oils within the plant.

Leaf: Thyme leaves are very small and oval. They are medium green in color and growing up the woody stem. Leaves are highly aromatic.

Flower: The flowers range in color from white to a light purple. They grow in clusters at the top of the plant.

Root: Thyme is said to have a full, fine root system that is somewhat shallow

Lookalikes: Thyme is quite ordinary-looking and can look a lot like many common weeds. To distinguish from other plants, first check for a highly aromatic scent. Thyme will have a smell that is described as a mixture of mint and clove scents. It will also have woody, wiry stems that make breaking sprigs off hard.

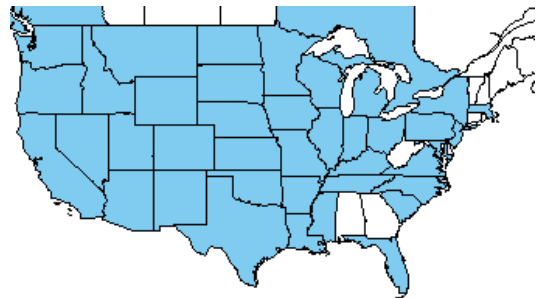
How to Grow: Thyme prefers full sun and well-draining soil. Sow seeds in the spring and water as needed. Thyme is a perennial, so it will keep coming back each year. Thyme does very well in dry conditions, so no need to water often. This garden herb is very hardy, and able to withstand hard freezes. Thyme grows best in US hardiness zones five through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Tooth Abscess (235), Emphysema (244), Immune System (308)

TRIBULUS, *TRIBULUS TERRESTRIS*

History: Tribulus has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for male health, vitality, and virility. It was also said to help increase the male libido, as well as sexual function. In recent years, these claims have resulted in the creation and subsequent popularity of tribulus supplements.

Where Found/Grown: Tribulus is actually a weedy plant and its range is quite widespread. It is said to come from the temperate regions of Eurasia, Australia, Africa, and North America. It can be found growing in the summer months in fields, roadsides, ditches, and wherever weeds grow.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=TRTE>

Identification: Tribulus grows up to sixty centimeters tall. Leaves are opposite, pinnately compound, and hairy. The flowers are yellow, with five petals. Fruit develops after the flowers and turns into spines that can be very sharp and stick to many objects that may pass by.

Leaf: Leaves are opposite, pinnately compound, and densely hairy.

Flower: Flowers are yellow and have five petals.

Root: The main root is a taproot.



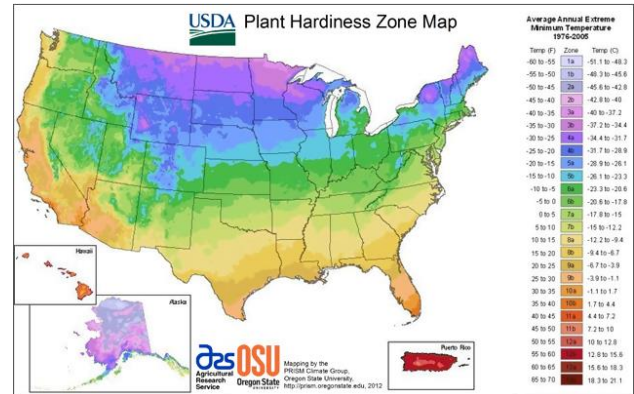
Lookalike: Tribulus has a small resemblance to another plant with similar flowers and leaves called partridge pea. However, one major difference is that partridge pea stands more erect and is taller than the lower-lying tribulus plant.

How to Grow: In many areas, tribulus is considered a noxious and invasive weed. Before attempting to grow this plant, you should check with your local conservation department. Tribulus grows naturally in slightly sandy soil, so before planting it, prepare a bed with this type of soil. It prefers warmer climates, but will grow in a variety of climates. Spread seeds into the desired area and water well until they germinate. This plant is hardy to US zone ten.

Used in Recipes For: Male Hormonal Imbalance and Erectile Dysfunction (277)

TURMERIC, *CURCUMA LONGA*

History: Native to Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent, turmeric is a root that has been used for centuries to flavor dishes, as well as add a lovely yellow/orange color. Curry, a popular Indian dish, is one such cuisine that employs turmeric as an integral ingredient. It has been referred to as “The Spice of Life” and “Golden Spice” by some in India. Medicinally, this root has been used as a healing agent in Ayurveda, which is an ancient Indian system of medicine. It was also used historically in Chinese medicine. It was made into a paste to apply topically to wounds for inflammation, as well as taken internally for pain. In addition, turmeric has a history of use in ceremonial practices, such as to worship the Sun God or for purification. Because of its bright orange color, it has also been used to dye fabrics.



Where Found/Grown: As turmeric is native to Southeast Asia and India, this is where a majority of it is grown. These climates provide perfect growing conditions for turmeric with plenty of rainfall and temperatures between twenty and thirty degrees Celsius. It has been grown successfully in climates around the world that are similar, such as South Florida, United States and Australia. In the US, it has a better chance of thriving in USDA zones ten b through eleven, but can be grown indoors in pots provided it has the correct temperatures and watering.

Identification: This member of the ginger family can be identified by its long, broad, bright green leaves that shoot up from the rhizome. Sometimes, the stem is not easy to detect, as the plant is primarily leaves. However, there should be a short stem at the bottom of the leaf. This plant does produce flowers, which are yellow, and seem to grow out of pockets in a larger green stalk. On top of this, a larger white flower will grow. They are very tropical in appearance. These plants range in height from two to seven feet tall at maturity.

Leaf: Large, broad, and bright green with small stems below.

Flower: Small yellow flowers growing from pockets and a large white flower on top.

Root: The root is a rhizome, orange in color.

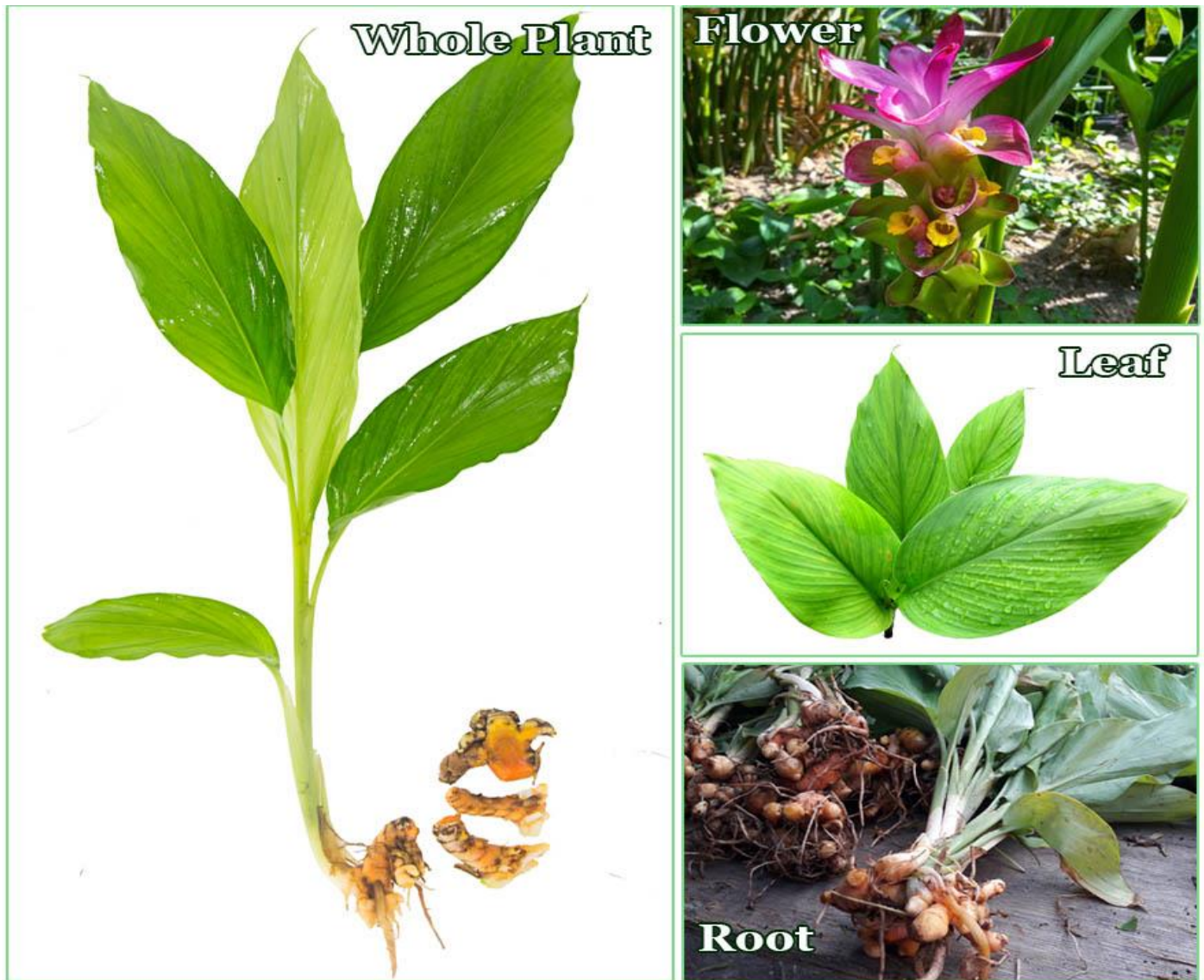
Lookalike: Because turmeric is in the same family as ginger, it shares many physical characteristics with its cousin. However, ginger is typically smaller in size and its flowers are a lovely and vivid red/pink color. The leaves of ginger are often slimmer than those of turmeric.

How to Grow: If you don't live in turmeric's native climate, you can still grow it in pots. You will likely have to grow it indoors. Turmeric will tolerate slightly acidic to slightly alkaline soil. The best way to grow it in pots is to purchase the rhizomes fresh. Make sure they have not been sprayed with a growth inhibitor, which is generally sprayed on ginger and turmeric to keep them from sprouting in grocery stores. If you do not live in a warm climate, plant your turmeric in the spring when the temperatures are staying above fifty-five degrees. If you live in a warm climate, you can plant it any time. You will need a large pot because some plants get rather big. A good pot size is at least one foot deep and one foot wide. Plant only one or two rhizomes per pot. Rhizomes used should have several buds on them before planting. Break large rhizomes into pieces, and place them, bud-up, about two inches down into the soil. Make sure the soil is well drained and keep the plant out of the wind. Keep the soil moist at all times, as it likes water. In cooler climates, it will do well in full sun. However, if you are in a warm climate, it may do well with

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partial sun and shade at times. Never let the temperature drop below fifty degrees. In the US, this plant grows best outdoors in zones ten and above.

Used in Recipes For: Brain Fog (213), Insomnia (216), Sciatica (218), Sinus Infection (230), Stroke (241), Emphysema (243), Hemochromatosis (252), Endometriosis (267), Male Hormonal Imbalance and Erectile Dysfunction (277), Bursitis (287), Rheumatism (295), Immune System (308), Lupus (317), Type 1 Diabetes (318)

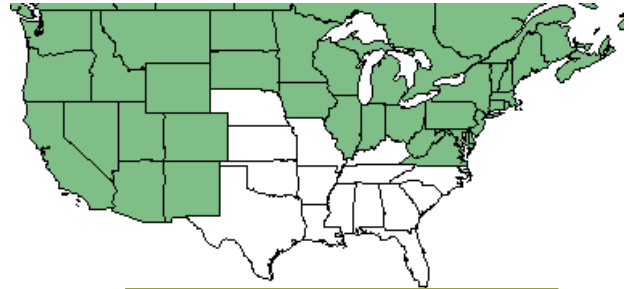


UVA URSI, *ARCTOSTAPHYLOS* UVA-URSI

History: Uva ursi, or bearberry as it is sometimes called, has been used historically by Native Americans for smoking.

It was part of a mix of other herbs, predominately smoked by the First Nations of North America. This blend of smoking herbs was referred to as kinnikinnick.

Where Found/Grown: Uva ursi is native to much of North America, Europe, and Asia. It prefers cooler climates and is often employed in landscaping in these areas due to being a good ground cover.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ARUV>



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Identification: This small shrub grows from two to twelve inches in height. Its oblong, teardrop-shaped leaves are shiny, small, and thick. Leaves are alternately arranged on branches. Leaves are evergreen and stay green for years before falling from the shrub. Bell-like pink and white flowers droop in clusters. The fruit is bright red and spherical.

Leaf: Leaves are oblong and teardrop-shaped. They are leathery and alternately arranged.

Flower: Flowers are bell-shaped and pink to white in color.

Root: Spreads by rhizomes to form a mat-like ground cover.

Lookalikes: Partridgeberry can look very similar to uva ursi from a distance. Both plants are low lying and produce red berries. However, the leaves of uva ursi are much more oblong compared to the leaves of partridgeberry, which are more circular in shape.

How to Grow: Uva ursi is hardy to USDA zones two through six and is a great plant to consider for controlling erosion. This little shrub does well in dry soil and full to partial sun. Propagate by planting cuttings in summer or autumn. Although the plant can tolerate dry soil, it is best to keep it watered to promote growth. It may spread fast via rhizomes and cover an area, so it is a great option for rock.

Used in Recipes For: Infections of the Urinary System (260)

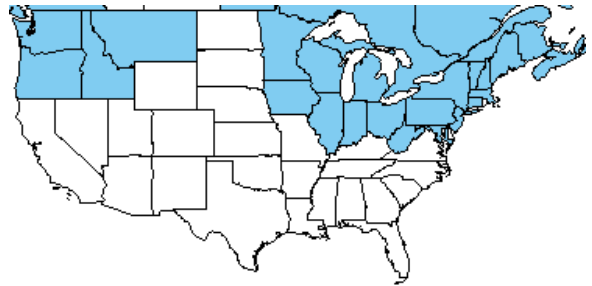
VALERIAN, *VALERIANA OFFICINALIS*

History: Valerian has been employed for its medicinal benefits for thousands of years. It is said that it was described by Hippocrates, as well as other famous ancient physicians. Its primary use was, and still is, for insomnia.

Famous seventeenth century botanist Nicholas Culpeper also described the plant and used the roots, as well as the aerial parts, for coughs. This plant was also used in times of plague for pain.

Where Found/Grown: Although this plant is native to Europe and Asia, it is a well-established native in many parts of North America.

In fact, it is banned in Connecticut due to being invasive. Although it is native to northern regions, it can flourish in most other regions as well.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=VAOF>

Identification: This flower has aromatic aerial parts, as well as roots. In fact, one of the most decisive indicators for this plant is the “dirty feet” smell of the roots. Valerian can grow from three to five feet tall and has slender stems with very little leaves going up them. On top, you can find white to pale pink flowers in the summer. Leaves consist of seven to ten toothed and lance-shaped pairs. The leaves are aromatic when bruised.

Leaf: Green, odd-pinnate, and lance-shaped, with seven to ten pairs of leaflets.

Flower: Salverform and pale pink to white flowers in branched panicles. Flowers can be very fragrant.

Root: Spreads by rhizomes, and also has medium-sized fibrous roots that omit a pungent odor.

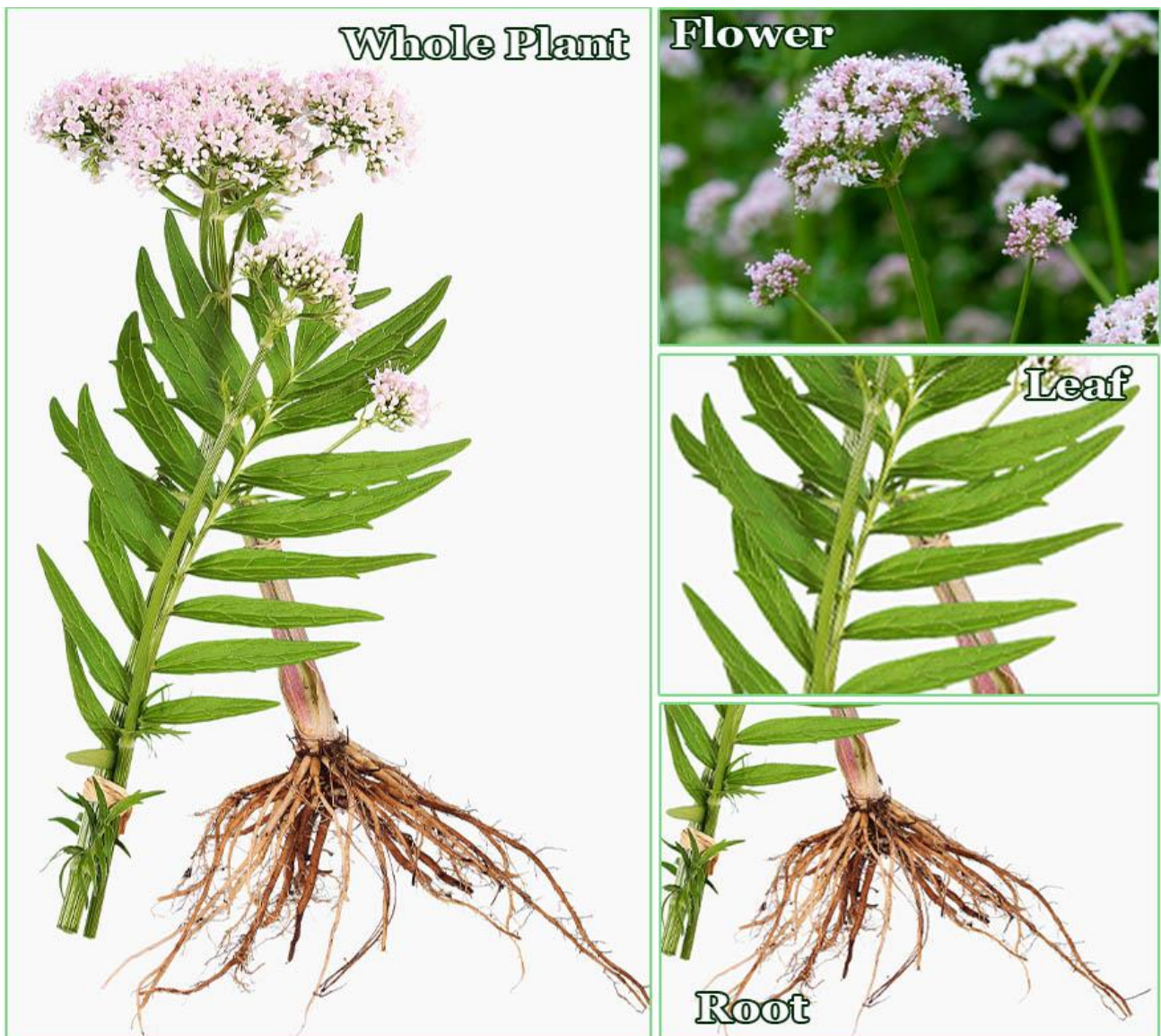
Lookalikes: Due to the white flowers on top, as well as the plant size, they might be confused with other plant species growing at this time such as yarrow or Queen Anne’s lace. One difference is that valerian may have

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more pale pink flowers than the vivid white of common yarrow or Queen Anne's lace. Yarrow has a more antiseptic smell and Queen Anne's lace has a more carrot-like smell. When in doubt, dig up the roots and smell them. Valerian root has a pungent aroma that many deem unpleasant and reminiscent of "sweaty feet" or "dirty socks."

How to Grow: Check with your local conservation department to make sure it is legal to plant valerian where you live, as it may be considered a noxious weed or banned. Valerian prefers full to partial sun and well-drained soil, but is not overly picky either way. Sow seeds in spring and make sure they are in an area where they cannot spread and become invasive or take over other plants. Water them as needed. Valerian grows best in US hardiness zones four through nine.

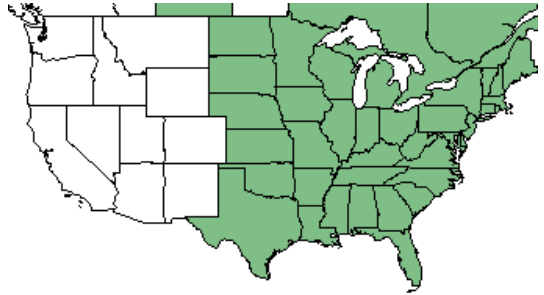
Used in Recipes For: Insomnia (216), Menopause (269)



VIOLET, *VIOLA SORORIA*

History: Violets were used as food and medicine by Native Americans. All parts of the plant except the roots have been used. The nutrient-rich leaves were eaten raw or added to a broth to thicken it. The flowers were eaten raw or used to flavor sweet treats. Aerial parts of this common plant were used medicinally to treat coughs and sore throats.

Where Found/Grown: Common blue violets, as they are sometimes called, are native to the eastern United States. They can be found all over yards and meadows and bloom in the spring. However, their leaves are still present throughout the summer months as well.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=VISO>



Whole Plant



Flower



Leaf



Identification: Violets can be identified by their unique, bright blue to purple flowers that seem to hang from an arch at the top of the stem. The flowers have five rounded petals with two on the bottom, two on top, and one lower petal that helps insects pollinate. They only grow to around six inches in height. The leaves are heart-shaped and dark to medium green in color.

Leaf: Leaves are dark to medium green and heart-shaped.

Flower: Flowers are blue to purple in color and have five petals.

Root: The roots are shallow and somewhat fibrous. They are not edible or medicinal.

Lookalikes: There are many species of violet, and many are used interchangeably for food and medicine. However, it is best to stay away from violets that are yellow or white, as they are said to contain more saponins that might cause stomach upset.

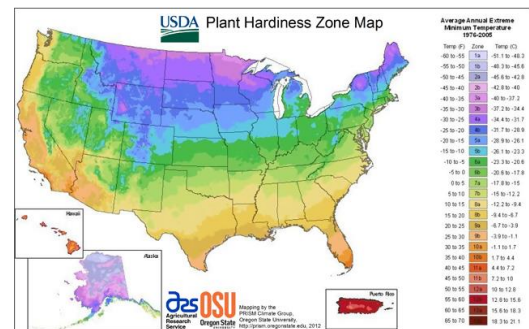
How to Grow: Violets are a noxious weed in some areas and can spread quite readily. If you want to grow violets, research a species that is native to your region. Sow seeds in the fall or early spring. Space them out at least ten inches. Keep them well-watered and make sure the soil is well-draining. They will grow in sunny areas, but prefer partial shade. Violets thrive best in US hardiness zones four through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Vitamin C and the Immune System (310)

WHITE ATRACTYLODES, *ATRACTYLODIS MACROCEPHALA*

History: White atractylodes is the rhizome of a plant that comes from the atractylodes plant in China. This plant has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for centuries for tonifying the spleen, calming, helping digestive issues, and as an overall tonic. In Chinese medicine, it is called Bai Zhu and is as highly regarded as ginseng.

Where Found/Grown: This plant is primarily cultivated in the Chinese province of Zhejiang. It can be cultivated in similar tropical regions around the world.



Identification: White atractylodes grows up to sixty centimeters in height. It has leaves that are three-parted, lobed, and alternate. Flowers are bell-shaped, and purple to red in color. The root of the plant is used medicinally and consists of a fleshy rhizome.

Leaf: Leaves are three-parted, lobed, and alternate up the stem.

Flower: Flowers are bell-shaped and purple to red in color.

Root: The root is a fleshy rhizome.

Lookalikes: *Atractylodes lancea* is sometimes confused with *Atractylodis macrocephala*, but each plant has a different medicinal function in traditional Chinese medicine. *Atractylodes lancea* is considered to be less potent than *Atractylodes macrocephala* and is used less often.

How to Grow: This perennial can be grown in tropical climates like Zhejiang. Areas with a lot of rainfall and plenty of sunlight are preferred. Rich, well-drained soil is necessary for the plant to thrive. US hardiness zones five to eight are best for cultivating this plant.

Used in Recipes For: Spleen (256)



Whole Plant



Flower



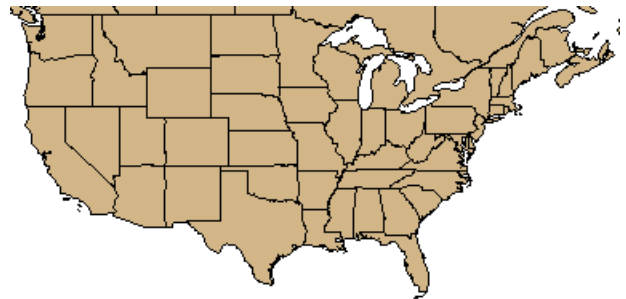
Leaf



WHITE WILLOW, *SALIX ALBA*

History: It has been known since the time of Hippocrates and Pliny the Elder that white willow bark has medicinal uses and has analgesic effect.

All around the world, from China to Egypt to England, early botanists and physicians would use the bark for fevers and pain. A constituent from the bark called Salicin was later turned into Salicylic Acid and used to create what we know today as aspirin.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=SALIX>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Where Found/Grown: Although native to the United Kingdom and Europe, white willow trees are found in Western and Central Asia. This tree is widely naturalized throughout the United States and is hardy through zone two.



Identification: Growing up to thirty meters tall, the white willow tree has dark, grey-brown bark with fissures that deepen as it ages. Shoots off the trunk produce white-green leaves that are pale, almost hairy feeling, and are long and skinny. They are especially white on the underside. Leaves usually measure five to ten centimeters long and around one centimeter wide. Flowers emerge in the spring on catkins. Male and female catkins will be on separate trees, with male catkins being longer.

Leaf: Pale, greenish white. Leaves are long and lance-shaped, with hairy texture and white undersides.

Flower: Grey-white flowers appear in the spring on catkins, with female and male catkins on separate trees.

Root: An extensive and creeping root system.

Lookalikes: There are many species of willow that are confused with white willow. However, one way to tell the difference is that white willow has leaves that are paler than other species of willow.

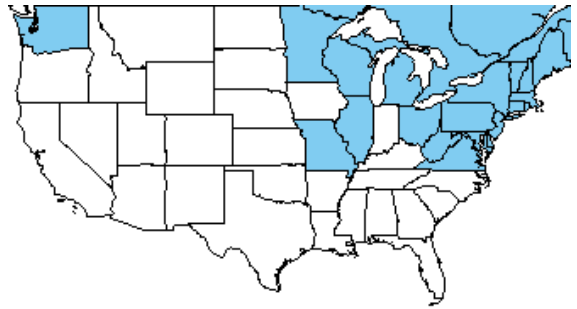
How to Grow: Plant this fast-growing tree somewhere away from buildings and structures, as the root system is creeping and may cause damage. Although it is fast-growing, white willow trees can be short-lived because they are especially susceptible to diseases. They do best in hardiness zones two through eight. Plant the tree in full or partial sun. Because the trees adapt to a variety of soil types, they can be planted in most soils. If sowing seeds, sow fresh seeds only. They need to be placed into a moist medium. Germination can be extremely fast, with germination happening in one day for some! Prune lightly in the spring and keep an eye out for pests that could harm the tree.

Used in Recipes For: Headache (219), Arthritis (290)

WILD ROSE, *ROSA RUGOSA*

History: Roses may be one of the most popular flowers in history. They have been a symbol of beauty and love for thousands of years. In the Middle Ages, they were a symbol of power as well.

In addition to their symbolism, roses have had many other uses throughout history. An infusion of the petals was used in women's beauty routines to tone the skin and promote beauty. The fruit of the rose (rose hips) have been used to create tasty syrup that is rich in vitamin C.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=RORU>

Where Found/Grown: Wild roses are native to eastern Asia. They have since spread in distribution to other parts of the world, including the eastern half of North America. They are common in meadows, roadsides, and fields across this region.

Identification: Wild roses do not look quite like cultivated roses. They grow to around three feet in height, although many are smaller. Leaves are pinnate, with five to nine leaflets. Leaflets are elliptical-shaped. The flower is usually pale to dark pink in color, with five soft petals and a yellow center. Thorns cover the stem. The fruit is large, spherical, and dark red in color.

Lookalikes: For whatever reason, the fruit of wild roses have been called “beach plum,” which leads to some confusion. Beach plums are actually a completely different species of plant with the Latin name *Prunus maritima*. The fruit of wild rose can grow larger than that of other rose species, but most rose hips are used interchangeably for medicinal purposes.

How to Grow: Break up soil in a spot with full sun. Add fertilizer to make the soil more nutrient-rich. The soil will also need to be well-draining because these plants do not tolerate standing water well. Plant bushes several feet apart and keep the area weeded well. Water occasionally until the plants become well-established. Once they are more mature, they will be able to tolerate drier conditions. This plant grows best in US hardiness zones two through five.

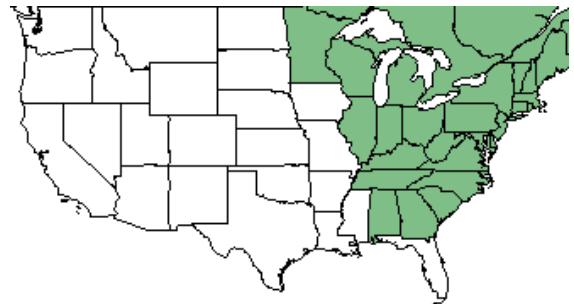
Used in Recipes For: STD's In Women (273)



WINTERGREEN, *GAULTHERIA PROCUMBENS*

History: Native Americans historically used this aromatic plant to treat fever, headache, back pain, rheumatism, and sore throats. They would usually prepare the leaves in a tea. Today, wintergreen is distilled to capture its essential oil, which is used medicinally for sore muscles. This oil is very strong and aromatic.

Where Found/Grown: The species of wintergreen native to North America is *Gaultheria procumbens*. It can be found in the northeastern half of the United States, as well as parts of Canada. It grows in moist, shaded soil.



<https://www.plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=GAPR2>

Forgotten Backyard Remedies



Identification: Wintergreen is a low-lying shrub, only growing to six inches tall. Its ovate leaves are evergreen. They smell strongly of wintergreen. Flowers are bell-shaped and droop downward. They range in color from white to light pink. The plant produces a bright red fruit which looks like a berry, but is actually a seed capsule.

Leaf: Leaves smell strongly of wintergreen. They are ovate and evergreen.

Flower: Flowers are white to light pink in color. They are bell-shaped and droop downward.

Root: The root system is a shallow rhizome.

Lookalikes: There are many plants on the forest floor that are low lying and produce similar fruit. However, one sure way to tell the difference is to smell the leaves. The leaves of the wintergreen plant will smell strongly of wintergreen.

How to Grow: One way to grow this native northwestern plant is to find a similar habitat and plant seeds. If you live in the northeastern United States, wintergreen will likely grow easily in your region. Find a shady area with

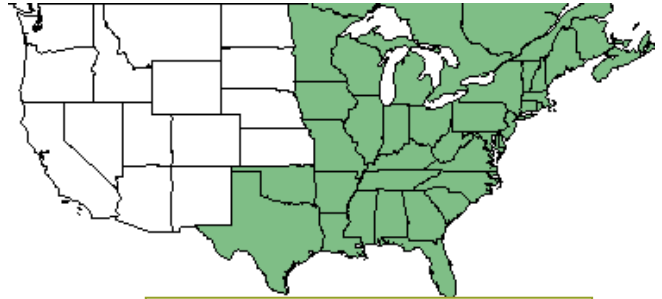
moist, peaty soil. Make sure it is an area that doesn't have standing water at any times of the year. This plant grows best in US hardiness zones three through eight.

Used in Recipes For: Tired and Weak Muscles (284), Back Muscle Pain (288)

WITCH HAZEL, *HAMAMELIS VIRGINIANA*

History: Native Americans made a medicinal extract from witch hazel for external swelling, inflammation, and wounds. Early settlers learned of the benefits of this tree from indigenous people and used it in the same way for its astringent properties.

Where Found/Grown: This witch hazel tree is native to North America, with a distribution throughout most of the eastern half of the United States. It can be found growing in the understory of the woods.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=HAV14>

Identification: Witch hazel is a smaller tree, not usually exceeding ten meters in height. It has a trunk with pale brown bark that is purple underneath. The leaves are ovate and deeply veined. They turn yellow in the fall. Flowers are unique, hair-like, and yellow. They usually grow in clusters on the branches.

Leaf: Leaves are ovate and deeply veined.

Flower: Flowers are yellow and have unique, ribbon-like petals.

Root: The root system is extensive and creeping.

Lookalikes: Because of the unique, ribbon-like, yellow flowers that grow in the fall, there are no close lookalikes for witch hazel trees.

How to Grow: Witch hazel trees are often understory trees, so they do well in partial shade. However, they also grow well in full sun. They like moisture, so try mulching around the base of the tree when you have planted it to trap in moisture. Water the tree frequently. A witch hazel tree grows best in US hardiness zones three through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Hives (297), Eczema (305)

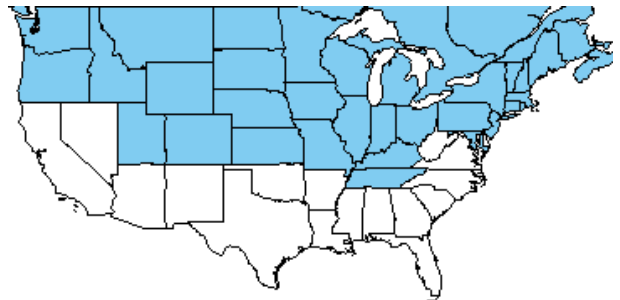


WORMWOOD, *ARTEMISIA ABSINTHUM*

History: Wormwood is native to Eurasia and parts of Africa. It has a rich history of use. It was thought to help with digestion, as it is very bitter.

It was also used to help rid the body of parasites, giving it its common name “wormwood.” Another famous use for the plant is in popular green liquor called absinthe.

Where Found/Grown: Although wormwood is native to Eurasia, it is now a common plant found in the United States and Canada. It can be found growing on rocky slopes and in fields, at the wood’s edge.



<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=arab3>



Identification: Wormwood grows to a height of almost four feet tall when fully mature. It has leaves that are silver-green in color. Leaves are even lighter in color on the bottoms. They spiral up the stem, with basal leaves being bipinnate to tripinnate. Its flowers are pale yellow in color and tube-shaped.

Leaf: Leaves are silver-green, with the bottoms of the leaves being lighter. They spiral up the stem, and have basal leaves that are bipinnate to tripinnate.

Flower: Flowers are pale yellow in color and tube-shaped.

Root: Wormwood roots are fibrous.

Lookalikes: Wormwood can look like mugwort because both are members of the same family. Both also have the same silvery-green leaf color. However, the leaves of mugwort are different than those of wormwood because they have pointed tips. Also, mugwort's stems have a purple color.

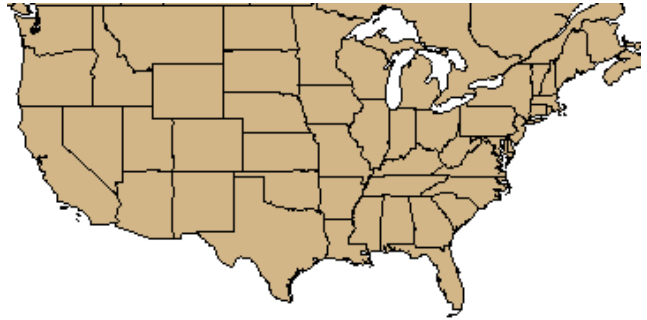
How to Grow: Wormwood can be grown in most temperate regions. It usually grows in dry, arid soil. Plant seeds in the spring, in soil that is nitrogen-rich and fertile. Make sure the plants are in a place with plenty of sun.

Water the plants often when they are beginning to germinate, but once they are more established, only water them as needed. Wormwood is best grown in US hardiness zones four through nine.

Used in Recipes For: Insect Bites and Stings (303),

YARROW, *ACHILLEA MILLEFOLIUM*

History: Yarrow is steeped in history. One of the most famous stories about yarrow is that it was used by Greek hero Achilles during the Trojan War to treat wounds sustained. This story gave yarrow its Latin name. It has long been known for its wound healing and blood staunching abilities.



Where Found/Grown: Native to Eurasia, yarrow's distribution has spread throughout temperate parts of the globe. It is now very common to most of North America. It can be found growing in fields, roadsides, and meadows in the spring and summer months.

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Identification: Yarrow can grow up to three feet in height. It has an erect stem with fern-like leaves spiraling up it. The white flowers on top are small and clustered together in an inflorescence. The whole plant has a strongly herbaceous, antiseptic, and spicy smell.

Leaf: Leaves are dark to medium green, fern-like, and aromatic.

Flower: Small, white flowers are clustered at the top. Flowers are also fragrant and have an herbaceous smell.

Root: The root system is spreading and extensive.

Lookalikes: Yarrow is often confused with wild carrot, or Queen Anne's lace. This is because both plants grow around the same time, in the same places, and both have white flowers on top. One way to tell them apart is the flowering tops. Often, wild carrot has a more rounded, circular top which differs from yarrow, which is clustered in an uneven shape. Oftentimes, wild carrot will also have a small, deep purple flower or cluster of flowers in the center. The leaves are another indicator. Wild carrot's leaves are very much like common carrot leaves and have a carrot smell. Yarrow's are fern-like.

How to Grow: Yarrow can be cultivated by sowing seeds in early spring. Space the seeds apart by one to two feet. They prefer well-drained soil and full sun; however, they grow easily in a variety of conditions. Yarrow is surprisingly drought-tolerant, but does well with regular to occasional watering. Yarrow grows best in US hardiness zones three through nine.

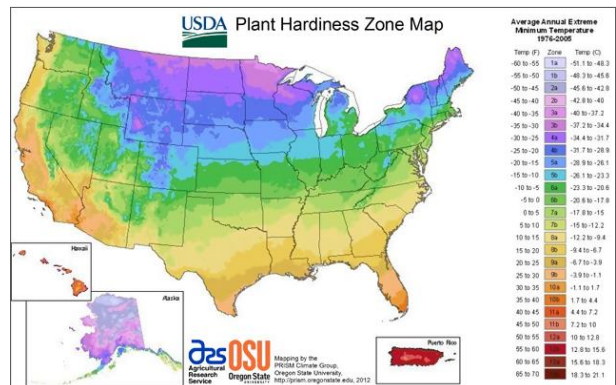
Used in Recipes For: Issues With Menstrual Periods (270), Cuts, Lacerations, and Wounds (301), Insect Bites and Stings (303)



YOHIMBE, *PAUSINYSTALIA JOHIMBE*

History: In traditional African folk medicine, the bark from the yohimbe tree has been used as an aphrodisiac and tonic. Even though it has been used for centuries by those in western Africa, its popularity has only recently caught on in North America. Today, it is marketed as a popular supplement for erectile dysfunction.

Where Found/Grown: This tree is native to west and central Africa. It is usually found in lowland forest regions. Due to the popularity of this tree as a medicinal remedy, it is now considered an endangered species.



Forgotten Backyard Remedies

Identification: The yohimbe tree can grow up to thirty meters tall. It has fissured bark that is gray to red-brown in color. The bark is easy to remove from the tree. The area underneath the bark is pink in color. Oval-shaped leaves grow in groups of three from petioles.

Lookalikes: Due to the specific geographical regions where yohimbe trees grow, as well as the endangered status of the tree, there are no known lookalikes.

How to Grow: This tree requires a loamy soil to thrive. Because it is native to Africa, it does well in warm climates. Southern areas of North America may be sufficient to grow the tree, but make sure and keep it away from frost or freezing temperatures. Plant seeds indoors in a loamy soil. Keep the soil moist at all times, but not wet. When the seedlings are more established, transplant them outdoors in similar soil. Choose a sunny or partly sunny location of your yard. Fertilize the tree in the spring. Yohimbe may be best cultivated in US hardiness zones ten and above.

Used in Recipes For: Male Hormonal Imbalance and Erectile Dysfunction (278)



PLANT REMEDIES & RECIPES

BRAIN/NERVOUS SYSTEM

Modern medicine is still trying to figure out the mysteries of the human brain. It is such a complex organ. We know that the brain sends messages to the rest of the body via the spinal cord. From there, messages can go through several avenues. Neurons carry various messages throughout the nervous system. These messages range from telling muscles to move, to making sure our internal organs are working properly. Needless to say, brain health is very important to ensure we are living our best and healthiest lives!

BRAIN FOG

Unfortunately, our hardworking brain and nervous system can become overloaded and bogged down by the stresses of life. Have you ever felt like you weren't thinking straight? Or perhaps you have felt like you couldn't focus properly, despite your best efforts. Some describe this feeling as "brain fog." Other symptoms of brain fog include trouble with memory and loss of mental clarity.

Brain fog can be caused by inflammation, stress, lack of nourishment, and many other factors. Were you bitten by a tick recently? Tick-borne illnesses can cause brain fog. It is important to stay hydrated, eat well, and try to find ways to lower your stress level if you are experiencing brain fog. Below are some plant remedies for brain fog, depending on the cause:

REMEDY #1: TURMERIC AND BLACK PEPPER TINCTURE FOR INFLAMMATION

This first remedy is for brain fog caused by inflammation. Many times, inflammation is to blame for a multitude of bodily issues. One of the most potent and successful remedies for inflammation is turmeric. Turmeric is a lovely orange root containing the constituent curcumin. Curcumin has been widely studied for its ability to reduce inflammation.

When making anything with turmeric, it is always best to add its counterpart, black pepper. Constituents in black pepper have been scientifically proven to help the body absorb curcumin better. Create a tincture with turmeric and black pepper by finely chopping organic turmeric roots. You can even macerate them in a food processor. The more finely chopped your turmeric is, the more surface area available for the solvent to absorb. Fill a glass jar with chopped turmeric. Depending on how much you are making, add black peppercorns. You may choose to grind them up first as well.

RECIPE: For each cup of chopped turmeric, add a tablespoon of black pepper. Once your jar is full of chopped turmeric and black pepper, top it off with alcohol that is at least 80 proof. Make sure you fill the jar all the way to the top, covering your plant material completely. Store this jar in a cool, dark, place for four to six weeks. Shake the mixture daily to agitate and help the alcohol absorb the plant matter further. Once four to six weeks are up, strain out the mixture. Bottle the liquid. It is best to put it in small dropper bottles.

DOSAGE: Take the tincture sublingually, or under the tongue. Dosages vary, but start out taking thirty drops, two times a day and go up from there. If you aren't noticing much difference after a week, you may up the dose to thirty drops, three times a day. It is important to note that this tincture is beneficial for a variety of other medical issues, and will be discussed further in this book. Keep in mind that all tincture recipes in this book can be substituted with a glycerite, for those wanting to avoid alcohol.

REMEDY #2: MEMORY, MENTAL CLARITY, AND ENERGY TINCTURE

If you are feeling like you can't think straight and find that you are having trouble focusing, or having difficulty remembering things, this tincture blend might help. This blend is also amazing for providing energy and stamina. Loss of energy is common among those complaining of brain fog.

RECIPE: It is comprised of five plants: **ginkgo biloba, gotu kola, American ginseng, rosemary, and ashwagandha.** It is no surprise that four of these plants are adaptogens, meaning they are known for helping the body adapt to stress, as well as providing a stabilizing and balancing effect. Fill a jar using equal parts of each plant. Make sure the plants are finely chopped. They do not need to be dried first, but it is fine to use dried plants if this is all you have on hand. If you are using fresh and dry plants together in this tincture, keep in mind that dried plant material takes up less space than fresh, so use less. Cover the chopped plants in at least eighty proof alcohol (vodka is preferred) and let the mixture sit for four to six weeks in a cool, dry place. Shake daily. When four to six weeks are up, strain the liquid out and bottle it for use.

DOSAGE: Take this mixture sublingually. Start with 30 drops once a day, preferably in the morning. You may up the dose to twice a day after giving the tincture a week or two to analyze its effects on your body. Gotu kola can affect the liver and can raise blood glucose, so don't use this plant if you have liver disease, high cholesterol, or diabetes.

REMEDY #3: SKULLCAP FOR STRESS REDUCTION AND MENTAL FATIGUE

Living each day with constant agitation, anxiety, nervousness, and frustration can easily result in brain fog, as well as negatively impact health. Skullcap is a plant that is highly prized for its nervine qualities. It seems to work in our bodies by easing mental fatigue and reducing nervousness and anxiety. It is especially helpful for those who suffer from constant agitation and frustration, to the point where they are feeling mentally drained. To create a tincture using skullcap, fill a jar with the aerial parts of the plant. There are many species of skullcap, but the most studied is *Scutellaria lateriflora*.

RECIPE AND DOSAGE: Completely cover the chopped plant matter with alcohol and follow the same tincture making procedures as previously discussed. Skullcap tincture will turn a beautiful color of green as it sits and infuses into the alcohol solvent. When six weeks are up and it is time to strain out the liquid, bottle it and take a dropper-full of the tincture three to four times a day as needed.

STRESS, ANXIETY, AND MILD TO MODERATE DEPRESSION

Millions of people are affected by stress, anxiety, and depression. It is important to know that there are many plant remedies that can help. Skullcap tincture, which was previously mentioned, is one great way to battle stress accompanied with frustration and agitation. However, below are more remedies for various types of stress, anxiety, and depression:

REMEDY #1: LAVENDER AND CHAMOMILE EPSOM BATH SOAK

Sometimes stress is not a daily struggle, but rather something people deal with on occasion. This plant remedy is great for those who have had a long day full of stress and want to relax. Lavender and chamomile both have mild sedative properties. Both are fragrant, and smelling them alone can provide a sense of calmness and relaxation. It is for this reason that adding them to a bath and creating a “bath tea” of sorts can be very relaxing. The magnesium in Epsom salts can add to the stress relief by relaxing and soothing sore, tired muscles.

RECIPE: To create this remedy, simply add 1/3 cup of lavender with 1/3 cup of chamomile to one cup of Epsom salts. If you do not have any chamomile, you can substitute pineapple weed, which is closely related. Mix well and put in a muslin sack or any other type of porous sack that can sit in the bath water without making a mess.

DOSAGE: If you aren’t afraid to have plant matter all over your bath tub, go ahead and toss the mixture into the bath water without the sack. Make the water as warm as you can to help the lavender and chamomile infuse easier. Try to soak as long as you can. Take time to practice breathing techniques and meditation as you soak. Inhale the aromas and try not to let your mind wonder.

REMEDY #2: PASSIONFLOWER, CALIFORNIA POPPY, AND LEMON BALM TINCTURE

Each of the ingredients in this tincture blend helps to promote relaxation and ease nerve-related stress. California poppy is said to cause sleepiness in some, so leave this out if you are worried that it might make you tired during the daytime. California poppy is a wonderful nervine for those suffering from mental fatigue, mild depression, and even nerve pain. Passionflower is a beautiful vining plant with unique purple flowers. It is said to have anti-anxiety properties. Lemon balm is a member of the mint family that can positively affect the nervous system by lowering anxiety.

RECIPE: Combine equal parts of each plant in a jar and fill with alcohol. Follow the tincture protocol.

DOSAGE: When ready, strain into bottles and take a dropper full one to two times a day. If this blend makes you feel drowsy, only take at bedtime.

REMEDY #3: ST. JOHN’S WORT OR MIMOSA TINCTURE

St. John’s wort is perhaps the most widely-studied plant for treating mild to moderate depression. This plant is a native of Europe, but found its way to America where it flourishes in the wild during mid-June. When crushed, the bright yellow flowers will stain your fingers red. This is due to the constituent Hypericin. Hypericin is what gives St. John’s wort its medicinal qualities. All aerial parts of this plant can be used when making a plant remedy, although the flowers are preferred.

RECIPE: Finely chop the fresh plant and fill a glass jar. Cover with alcohol and follow the tincture-making protocol. The tincture will turn a lovely red/magenta color after soaking for a while. Strain out when ready and bottle the red liquid into dropper bottles.

DOSAGE: Take fifteen to twenty drops up to three times a day.

If your depression is specifically the result of grief and loss, you may consider substituting mimosa instead of St. John's wort. Mimosa is known as the "Tree of Happiness" in China. It has been used for thousands of years for helping with grief and loss. Use flowers, bark, and leaves for a more synergistic tincture. Take one dropper-full twice a day.

INSOMNIA

Insomnia can be very frustrating. Getting at least seven to eight hours of sleep is very important to your health, so when you are deprived of sleep, everything from your immune system to your weight is negatively impacted. The following plant remedies are tried and true remedies for getting a full night's rest:

REMEDY #1: VALERIAN ROOT TINCTURE

Valerian roots are highly aromatic. It is said that one either loves or hates the smell. That said, they are proven to have sedative properties and work directly on the Central Nervous System. Valerian root has a deeply calming effect on the Central Nervous System, and acts as a mild Central Nervous System depressant. In addition to the sedative properties, valerian root can help with anxiety and stress.

RECIPE: Create your own tincture using fresh or dried roots, although fresh are preferred. Fill a jar with the finely chopped roots and cover with alcohol. Follow tincture-making protocol and pour the liquid into dropper bottles when it is ready.

DOSAGE: The recommended dosage for valerian tincture is ½ teaspoon in one cup of warm water. Take this mixture thirty minutes to one hour prior to bedtime. Do not operate heavy machinery or drive while taking this tincture, as it can cause slow muscle reaction. The effects of valerian root can be felt for up to six hours after taking it, so plan accordingly.

REMEDY #2: CHAMOMILE TEA

Chamomile tea is a great way to calm the nerves and provide the body with a relaxing, yet gentle plant sedative prior to bedtime. As always, if you do not have access to chamomile, you may substitute the buds of pineapple weed. Pineapple weed is a very common plant found in many regions. It prefers rocky soil and is a close relative to chamomile. For any tea, using a stainless steel tea infuser is preferred. It is so much easier to measure and make tea using one. Simply fill the tea infuser with chamomile or pineapple weed buds. Let this infuse in the hot water for at least ten minutes before consuming. This tea is best taken thirty minutes to one hour before bedtime. Avoid using sugar. Raw honey is best when wanting to sweeten tea, but be aware that it still has sugar content and sugar is counterproductive to the medicinal effects of the tea.

PLANT REMEDY #3: WARM GOLDEN MILK

RECIPE: Nutmeg is a pleasant tasting spice, but it is also known for its ability to help with insomnia. An old insomnia remedy is to take ½ teaspoon of powdered nutmeg in a cup of warm milk. To add an interesting and beneficial flavor to this bedtime drink, try adding a ½ teaspoon of powdered turmeric as well. Stir the mixture well and make sure that everything is blended before consuming. You can cook this on the stovetop (use a very low heat setting to avoid damaging the medicinal properties of the plants).

DOSAGE: Consume this golden milk one hour prior to bedtime. If you wish to avoid dairy, simply substitute almond or coconut milk.

FIBROMYALGIA

Fibromyalgia is a disease that is still surrounded in uncertainty and mystery. Scientists think that it is caused by an issue with the way the brain processes pain signals. This amplifies the pain felt throughout the body, resulting in symptoms of musculoskeletal pain, fatigue, mood swings, and more. The first step to beating this condition is to watch your diet. Make sure you are eliminating inflammatory foods. There are several plant remedies that might help as well.

FIBROMYALGIA REMEDY #1: MULLEIN, GINGER, AND ST. JOHN'S WORT TINCTURE

Mullein flowers have long been used for pain. They also have anti-inflammatory properties. They make a wonderful addition to a blend for fibromyalgia for this reason. Mullein root is also a wonderful addition. This particular part of the mullein plant is underrated, yet full of surprises. The root is said to be helpful for a variety of conditions, but specifically for spine pain. If pain from fibromyalgia affects the spine, mullein root is something you definitely want to add to this remedy. Ginger is another pain relieving and anti-inflammatory root that also adds a nice flavor to the mixture. St. John's wort has already been noted for its ability to help with mild to moderate depression, but it is also very useful when it comes to helping shooting nerve pain. It works on the nerves, helping to soothe and calm them.

RECIPE: Fill an eight ounce jar about halfway with chopped mullein root and flowers. Next, fill the jar almost to the top with chopped St. John's wort flowers and leaves. Finally, add about two tablespoons of chopped ginger, preferably fresh. If possible, always try to use fresh plant material in your tinctures. Just make sure the alcohol content is high enough to prevent spoilage. As previously stated, alcohol higher than 80 proof is best. Fill the jar with alcohol, taking care to cover the plant material. Follow tincture making protocol and strain out after the allotted time has passed.

DOSAGE: Take ten drops sublingually, two to three times a day.

FIBROMYALGIA REMEDY #2: BLACK COHOSH AND ANGELICA TINCTURE

Black cohosh is widely known as a plant for women, specifically in regards to treating symptoms of menopause and triggering labor. However, the root is also very effective as an analgesic, or pain reliever. The root targets pain associated with nerve pain, inflammation, and is calming to the nervous system. Angelica is a widely known antispasmodic and tonic. This is particularly helpful with nerve issues.

RECIPE: To create a tincture using these two plants, it is best to use more angelica, due to the strength of black cohosh. Fill the jar $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way with chopped angelica and the last $\frac{1}{4}$ can be filled with chopped black cohosh root. Follow the tincture making protocol and strain out into dropper bottles when the allotted time has passed. Dosages can vary, but it is best to start with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon two times a day.

DOSAGE: You can go up to three times a day if needed. Both plants have abortifacient properties, so avoid during pregnancy. Use caution when working with fresh angelica, as it can trigger dermatitis. Because black cohosh contains phytoestrogens, avoid using if you are on hormonal birth control or have an estrogen-positive tumor.

SCIATICA

Sciatica can be described as pain in the back caused by the sciatic nerve. This nerve runs from the lower back and down each leg. When the sciatic nerve is injured, or pressure is put upon the nerve, problems can arise. Symptoms of sciatica include pain in the lower back, shooting down to the buttocks, hips, and legs. Below are plant remedies that may help with this condition:

REMEDY #1: TURMERIC AND CINNAMON TEA

Many people suffering from sciatica rely on over-the-counter pain relievers to help with the pain and inflammation associated with sciatica. This can lead to many additional problems. Turmeric has wonderful anti-inflammatory properties, and is perfect for sciatica due to inflammation causing problems with the sciatic nerve. Earlier, a turmeric and black pepper tincture was discussed to help with brain fog. This same tincture would be very helpful for sciatica as well. However, there are other ways to take turmeric. One way is in tea form. A great addition to this tea is cinnamon. Cinnamon has many medicinal properties. It is anti-inflammatory, in addition to being studied for its effects on neurodegenerative diseases. Make sure that any cinnamon you use is the Ceylon variety. This is the true medicinal cinnamon. Most commercial cinnamon is actually the Cassia variety. Fill a tea infuser with fresh chopped turmeric. Add a few small shavings of Ceylon cinnamon. Let this infuse in hot water for ten minutes. You may add a small amount of raw honey to this tea as well. Drink this tea in the morning and evening.

REMEDY #2: ST. JOHN'S WORT, MOTHERWORT, AND LEMON BALM TINCTURE

RECIPE: For sciatica pain that consists of constant, shooting, nerve pain, this tincture is a blend of antispasmodic and nervine plants. St. John's wort will work to relieve the shooting pain, while motherwort and lemon balm will calm the nerve and relieve tension. The aerial parts of each plant in this blend can be used. Use equal parts of each plant, finely chopped, to fill a jar. Cover the plant material with alcohol and follow the tincture-making protocol. When the four to six weeks have passed, strain out the contents and bottle it.

DOSAGE: The recommended dosage for this tincture is one dropper full (or 20-30 drops), three to four times a day. It is always a good idea to give your body a break from any tincture you are using after using it for a few months. This can help ensure that your body does not get desensitized to any particular remedy. It would be beneficial to rotate remedies and switch every few months. For example, you might want to start taking the turmeric and cinnamon tea daily for a few months, and then switch to this recipe for a few months, and so on.

HEADACHE

Just as there are many types of headaches, there are many herbal remedies to help with them. From plants that target headaches caused by inflammation, to plants that target headaches due to tension, there are many options to choose from.

REMEDY #1: TENSION HEADACHE SALVE

Tension headaches are one of the most common headaches. They are characterized by a dull, constant ache or pain on one or both sides of the head. Sometimes, a tension headache might cause sensitivity to light and sound or tenderness in the face, head, shoulders, or neck. Many tension headaches are caused by eye strain, dehydration, lack of sleep, and poor posture. Make sure you are stepping away from screens after too long, getting plenty of water and sleep, and watching your posture. It might be helpful to use a tension-relieving salve to massage into the temples and pressure points on the face, base of the neck, and forehead.

RECIPE: To create a salve for tension headaches you will need pepper mint-infused oil, lavender-infused oil, eucalyptus-infused oil, and powdered ginger. The great thing about using oil infusions is that you can easily make them yourself. However, they are not as aromatic as essential oils. The more aromatic, the better, when it comes to relieving a tension headache. Combine two ounces of lavender-infused oil, two ounces of eucalyptus-infused oil, and four ounces of peppermint-infused oil in a double boiler. Add one ounce of grated beeswax. If you have essential oils on hand, wait to add them until after the beeswax is melted and you are almost ready to pour into jars.

Great essential oils to use for this are the same as the oil-infusions you are already using: peppermint, eucalyptus, and lavender. Add no more than five drops each. Add one teaspoon of powdered ginger and pour into jars or tins to cool. At the onset of a tension headache, apply the salve to the areas where your headache seems to be the worst. Rub in circular motions. Try to find a dark, quiet place to relax. Take care not to get this into your eyes or in open wounds, as the menthol in peppermint and eucalyptus can burn.

REMEDY #2: FEVERFEW MIGRAINE TINCTURE

Feverfew is a very common little plant with daisy-like flowers. It can grow rather prolifically in some regions. The good news is that this little plant packs a big punch when it comes to headaches. As its name suggests, it is also a good remedy for reducing fevers.

Feverfew is known to help control migraines, especially when taken at the very first sign. Some people who suffer from migraines say that they will get an aura before the migraine starts. In other words, they know it is going to happen. If you are one of those people, take this feverfew tincture as soon as possible. The earlier it is taken, the better. Some people also take feverfew for the prevention of migraines. Sometimes migraines can cause an upset stomach and nausea. Feverfew also helps to alleviate these symptoms! It is a potent anti-inflammatory plant as well.

RECIPE: To create a tincture from feverfew, pluck the flowers and leaves. Using both parts of the plant will create a more synergistic remedy. Fill a small jar with equal parts flowers and leaves. Cover the plant material with alcohol or the solvent of your choice. Let the mixture sit for four to six weeks, shaking as often as you remember. Strain the liquid out after the allotted time and bottle.

DOSAGE: Start with a dosage of sixty drops, twice a day. Remember to take the tincture as soon as you suspect a migraine coming on for best results.

REMEDY #3: WHITE WILLOW BARK AND GINGER TEA

The Bark of white willow contains the constituent Salicin, which is very chemically similar to Aspirin. In fact, white willow bark is often referred to as “nature’s Aspirin.” Ginger is a wonderful analgesic with anti-inflammatory properties, so combining them in a tea is a wonderful plant remedy for a headache! Fill your tea ball or bag 2/3 full

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with white willow bark, and the rest with shavings from fresh ginger. Let this infuse in hot water for at least ten minutes before consuming. Drink this tea at the first sign of a headache. You may drink two to three cups of this tea throughout the day to combat a headache. Avoid using blood-thinning plant remedies like white willow bark if you are on blood thinners.

REMEDY #4: NERVINE TEA

For headaches caused by stress and nerves, a tea made with nervine plants is a great remedy to relax and calm nerves that are constricted and tense. One of the most effective and delicious nervine tea remedies is a combination of lemon balm and skullcap. Both plants are wonderful for helping calm frazzled nerves and ease nerve tension. Lemon balm's fragrant leaves taste as good as they smell. A ratio of 2/3 Lemon Balm and 1/3 skullcap will suffice. You may use fresh or dried plant material for this tea. Let the plants infuse in the hot water for at least ten minutes before consuming. Drink this tea two to three times throughout the day.

ENDOCRINE SYSTEM

The endocrine system is very crucial to the health of our body, as the various glands that comprise it do everything from regulating hormones to regulating growth, sleep, and mood! Some of the glands that make up the endocrine system include the pituitary gland, thyroid gland, hypothalamus, pineal gland, parathyroid, thymus, adrenals, pancreas, ovaries, and testes. Without these glands functioning properly, the body can suffer greatly. Unfortunately, there are several diseases that can affect various glands of the endocrine system. Below are several common diseases and remedies to help:

PITUITARY GLAND DYSFUNCTION: TUMORS

The pituitary gland is considered the endocrine system's master gland. It is vitally important to keep this gland healthy. It is responsible for telling all other glands what to do. It makes the hormone prolactin, which is responsible for lactation after the birth of a child. It also produces luteinizing hormone, which is responsible for regulating estrogen in women and testosterone in men. There are several things that can affect how the pituitary works. One in particular is a pituitary tumor. These tumors are usually benign, but this does not mean they aren't problematic. Men and women alike can have a pituitary tumor. Depending on where it is located, symptoms like unexpected lactation (in men as well as women), lack of a menstrual period (also referred to as amenorrhea), vision issues, erectile dysfunction, infertility, and mood changes can abound. Because the pituitary is located behind the eyes and so close to the optic nerves, some people with pituitary tumors experience loss of peripheral vision. If you ever suspect this is the case, seek medical attention immediately. If the tumor is positioned in such a way that it causes an overproduction of the hormone prolactin, you might notice the absence of a menstrual period. This is because the body is tricked into thinking you are lactating when you are not. The hormone prolactin is taking over and interfering with estrogen and progesterone, causing a major imbalance. This can lead to an inability to get pregnant because the absence of a period also means the absence of ovulation. Below are some remedies for an overproduction of prolactin, causing a hormone imbalance:

REMEDY #1: CHASTE TREE BERRY (VITEX) TINCTURE

It is said that the chaste tree got its name due to monks who took the plant to help keep themselves pure and chaste. Whether or not this really happened is unknown. What is known is that this amazing plant is an adaptogen. Adaptogens help bring balance to the body. When there is an overproduction of a certain hormone, one thing the body desperately needs is balance. Chaste tree berry can provide this. It is known as a great hormone regulator. People who take it, especially women, report that it restores fertility, balances hormones, and brings back menstrual periods. It is important to understand that chaste tree berry does not lower or raise hormones, but rather balances them and restores them to their proper levels.

RECIPE: To make a tincture with this plant, use the berries. First, it is important to grind the berries as finely as possible using a coffee grinder or anything similar. Grinding them provides more surface area for better infusion in the solvent. Next, fill a glass jar with the ground berries. Cover everything with alcohol. Put the lid on tight and store it in a cool, dark place for four to six weeks, taking care to shake the mixture as often as you can. After the allotted time, strain out the mixture with a cheesecloth and bottle it.

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DOSAGE: Take 35 to 40 drops, three times a day. Some say that although chaste tree berry is very effective, it takes a while to see results. Give this tincture several months before trying anything different. Be advised: this tincture has what many would consider an unpleasant taste.

REMEDY #2: ASHWAGANDHA TINCTURE

Ashwagandha is another plant adaptogen. While chaste tree is preferred by women, ashwagandha is strongly preferred by men. Ashwagandha offers adaptogenic benefits, as well as reducing the stress hormone cortisol, reducing symptoms of depression, increasing testosterone levels, and increasing muscle mass and strength! It is also reported to help lower inflammation, increase brain function, and lower blood sugar levels. It is no wonder so many men find this plant appealing. The word “ashwagandha” is Sanskrit for “smell of a horse,” alluding to the fact that this plant has the power to awaken the stallion inside.

RECIPE: To prepare a tincture, the roots of this plant are preferred. Finely chop the roots if you are using fresh, and make sure the roots are ground finely (but not powdered) if you are using dried. A common measurement for making ashwagandha tincture is ½ cup ashwagandha root to two cups of alcohol. Allow this mixture to sit in a cool, dark place for anywhere from four to six weeks, with six weeks being optimal. Strain out the mixture when it is ready and bottle it for later use.

DOSAGE: The standard dosage for this tincture is 40 to 50 drops, up to three times a day. You might want to add the drops to a bottle of water to make it easier to consume. You can also take it sublingually.

THYROID

The Thyroid gland is responsible for releasing hormones into the body that perform tasks such as regulating the body’s metabolic rate, bone maintenance, heart function, digestion, muscle control, brain development, and mood. It takes iodine from the foods we eat and uses it to create hormones that help the rest of the body function properly. Therefore, making sure you are getting enough iodine in your diet is crucial to thyroid health. Two diseases of the thyroid that affect millions of people are hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism. Below are remedies to help with each condition:

REMEDY #1: HYPERTHYROID DECOCTION WITH LEMON BALM, MOTHERWORT, AND BUGLEWEED

Hyperthyroidism is characterized by an overactive thyroid. Symptoms of hyperthyroidism include insomnia, appetite changes, frequent bowel movements, fatigue, heart palpitations, irritability, profuse sweating, and intolerance to heat. The three plant in this decoction recipe work to help regulate the thyroid in different ways. Lemon balm has been proven to inhibit Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) from attaching to receptors. Because it helps to block the synthesis of T4, this prevents its conversion to T3, resulting in a dilution of the effects of T4. As a result of all this, antibodies are prevented from accelerating the functioning of the thyroid. Lemon balm pairs well with bugleweed. Bugleweed helps an overactive thyroid by eliminating the first stages of Graves’ disease, which is the leading cause of hyperthyroidism. It can actually help to decelerate the metabolism of iodine, thus decreasing the hormone created by the diseased gland. Because bugleweed contains the constituent lithospermic acid, it can also help to reduce thyroxine levels, resulting in symptom relief. Motherwort is another plant that can be beneficial to an overactive thyroid. It works by gently slowing heart rate, strengthening the heart, and decreasing restlessness. This is especially beneficial for those with hyperthyroidism that causes heart palpitations.

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RECIPE: To create this decoction, fill a pot with three cups of water. Add two tablespoons of lemon balm, one tablespoon of motherwort, and one tablespoon of bugleweed. Bring it to a boil and let it simmer until the liquid is reduced by half. Strain out the liquid and let it cool. Double the recipe if you would like to make enough for two days. Make sure to refrigerate what you don't drink.

DOSAGE: Drink one to one and a half cups of this decoction each day.

REMEDY #2: HYPOTHYROIDISM DECOCTION WITH KELP AND BLADDERWRACK

Hypothyroidism is the opposite of hyperthyroidism. While individuals with hyperthyroidism have an overactive thyroid, those with hypothyroidism have an underactive thyroid. Symptoms of hypothyroidism include constipation, extreme fatigue and exhaustion, depression, pale skin, unexplained weight gain, feeling cold when others do not, and joint pain. Hypothyroidism is thought to be caused by the body's inability to produce enough thyroid hormone. This inability to produce the necessary hormones results in a slowing down of the body's metabolism and the aforementioned symptoms. Because the thyroid relies on iodine intake to function, a good remedy is to make sure you are getting enough iodine in your diet. Kelp and bladderwrack are types of seaweed. They are both great sources of iodine.

RECIPE: You can create a decoction with these to help supply your body with iodine to support the thyroid. Combine one ounce of bladderwrack and one ounce of kelp to 32 ounces of water. Gently heat this mixture in a pot on the stovetop for one to three hours. Strain it out and let it cool.

DOSAGE: Refrigerate it and drink four to eight ounces of this decoction one to four times daily.

DIABETES

Diabetes is a disease in which the body's blood glucose levels are too high. There are two types of Diabetes. With Type One Diabetes, the body does not make the hormone insulin, which is necessary for helping glucose get to cells to provide energy. Type Two Diabetes is a condition that causes the body to use insulin improperly, thus resulting in blood glucose levels that rise higher than they should. The remedies below may help with blood sugar control. If you are diabetic, use the remedies only under the direct supervision of a medical professional.

REMEDY #1: ALOE VERA GEL PROTOCOL

Aloe Vera is famous for being ridiculously easy to grow and maintain. It is a thick, green plant in the succulent family. The gel from this plant has been used for thousands of years for a variety of issues. One of the most famous uses for aloe vera is treating sunburn, but this plant has so much more to offer! The gel is said to help improve blood sugar control, as well as lowering fasting plasma glucose in those with Type Two Diabetes.

RECIPE: A great way to enjoy this plant is to extract the gel and take it internally. To extract the gel, simply cut the ends of each stem you pluck. Then, slice open the outer layer to reveal the gel inside. Scoop out the gel and store it in a container in the refrigerator. Add two teaspoons to citrus juice and enjoy.

DOSAGE: Drink this gel and juice combination twice a day.

REMEDY #2: WARM SPICED GINGER AND CINNAMON MILK

Both cinnamon and ginger are known for their effect on blood sugar levels. Cinnamon is thought to lower blood sugar by lowering insulin resistance. Ginger has been shown to reduce blood sugar levels and help regulate insulin response as well. These two also have pleasant, spicy flavors and pair well in a warm milk drink. If you are lactose intolerant or wish to avoid dairy, simply substitute almond or coconut milk in the recipe. To get started, gently heat one cup of milk on the stove with one teaspoon of ground cinnamon and one teaspoon of ground ginger. Drink this daily. It also makes a good pre-bedtime drink to help relax the body and mind.

POLYCYSTIC OVARIAN SYNDROME (PCOS)

PCOS is a hormonal disorder affecting women of childbearing age. PCOS is considered an endocrine issue because the ovaries are part of the endocrine system. Symptoms of PCOS include irregular periods, polycystic ovaries, and excess androgen production. Excess androgen can cause many unwanted symptoms in women suffering from PCOS, such as excess facial/body hair, male-pattern baldness, and severe acne. One of the most difficult symptoms of PCOS is infertility. This is due to improper ovarian function and absence of ovulation. Herbs that are adaptogenic and help control hormone levels are beneficial for those with PCOS.

REMEDY #1: MACA ROOT TINCTURE

Maca is an adaptogen, so this is great for helping the body balance hormones and any other issues. In addition to this, it can help reduce stress and calm the nerves. It is known to be restorative to the adrenal glands and has antioxidant properties. It is a tuber native to Peru and a member of the Radish family.

RECIPE: To make a tincture from this, avoid the powdered root. Instead, opt for the finely chopped root. Fill a jar with the chopped root and cover it with alcohol. If you wish to make something a bit more palatable, you can add a mixture of alcohol and vegetable glycerin to fill the jar. Close the lid tight and shake this mixture daily for four to six weeks before straining it out to consume medicinally.

DOSAGE: The recommended dose is anywhere from six to twelve drops sublingually, up to three times a day.

REMEDY #2: SAW PALMETTO TINCTURE

In some women with PCOS, the effects of producing too much androgen can be discouraging. Saw Palmetto is great for women who wish to attempt to lower androgen levels. It may also help lower prolactin levels. This plant is a small palm that can be found growing prolifically throughout the subtropical United States and other similar regions.

RECIPE: The ripe berries are used to create a tincture. Make sure to chop or grind the berries to get more surface area coverage in your tincture. Fill a jar with the berries and cover them with alcohol, vegetable glycerin, or a mix of both! As long as the berries are fully covered, each will work fine as a solvent to extract the medicinal properties from the berries. Store the covered jar in a cool, dry place (you can even store it in the refrigerator if you wish). Shake the mixture daily for four to six weeks. Strain it out when you are ready to begin consuming it.

DOSAGE: The recommended dosage for this tincture is 25 to 30 drops, once a day.

EARS

Our ears comprise how we take in the everyday world. Our sense of hearing plays an important role in our lives, along with our other senses. The main job of the ear is to detect, transmit, and transduce the sounds around us. The inner ear is vitally important. If you have ever had severe congestion in your inner ear, you'll understand this because you were likely disoriented and dizzy as a result! Our ears are one of our most sensitive organs. Below are remedies for various issues that can arise with our ears:

EAR INFECTION

Ear infections can be painful and can cause damage to the ear that might interfere with hearing if they are constantly occurring. There are many causes of ear infections, but a very common cause is a buildup of mucus in the inner ear that causes obstruction and infection. This is why so many children seem to get ear infections after or during the presence of a cold or virus. **Another** cause of ear infections is swimming in unclean water. Make sure the water you are bathing or swimming in is clean, or try to keep your head above water if you are prone to ear infections. Symptoms of an ear infection can include fever, redness around the ear, drainage or pus coming from the ear, a foul smell, or severe pain in the ear. There are several remedies to try that might help with the infection, inflammation, and pain that comes with ear infections:

REMEDY #1: MULLEIN FLOWER AND GARLIC EAR OIL

This is a popular remedy for adults and children alike. Mullein flower is both anti-inflammatory and analgesic, so it makes a wonderful addition to the blend. Garlic is famous for having antibiotic properties, making it ideal for tackling the infection head-on. This oil is safe to put in the ears.

RECIPE: To create this beneficial ear oil, you will need extra virgin olive oil to start. In a pan away from heat, combine four tablespoons of olive oil, one tablespoon of wilted or dry mullein flowers, and one garlic clove (peeled and chopped very finely). Avoid turning up the heat too high. You do not want to burn it. Turn the heat up enough to gently warm the mixture. Stir gently and wait for the fragrance of the garlic to hit your nose. When you smell garlic strongly, you may remove the mixture from the heat. Strain out the infused-oil and bottle it. To administer the drops, have the afflicted person lay on their side with the afflicted ear facing up. Place three drops of the oil (warmed) into the ear. Place the remainder of the oil in the fridge for maximum shelf life. Try to use the oil within three days of making it.

DOSAGE AND CAUTION: Before each use, make sure to run the bottle under warm water to warm the drops before they go into the ear. You can also soak a cotton ball in the oil and place it in the ear. This way, the oils will seep down into the ear canal and reach the affected area.

REMEDY #2: OREGANO-INFUSED OIL

Oregano is a common garden herb, but it may surprise you to know that it has powerful antibiotic properties. This makes it a great choice for treating an ear infection. Because oregano is so potent and strong, it is advised that this particular treatment be used externally, as opposed to internally.

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RECIPE: To make an oil infusion with oregano (also referred to as oil of oregano), simply harvest oregano and let it dry. To dry herbs, you can hang them somewhere away from any moisture or place them on drying racks. Crumble up the dried oregano and fill a small jar with it. Cover the dried oregano with extra virgin olive oil. Make sure everything is submerged fully. Let the mixture sit in a warm area for four weeks. Some herbalists believe that sunlight damages the medicinal components of the plants and that it is a bad idea to sit the oil infusion in the windowsill or outside in the sun to infuse. If you are worried about this, simply put the jar in a brown paper bag or something similar and then place it in the windowsill or outside in the sun. This will block some of the harmful rays from damaging anything. After the four weeks are up, strain out the oil and bottle it for later use. Oil infusions made with dried plant matter last longer than infusions made with moist plant matter. For this reason, this particular infusion will last several months.

DOSAGE: For ear infections, this infused oil is great for massaging around the ear. Do not get it inside the ear canal. Massage it around the ear several times a day.

TINNITUS

Tinnitus can be described as a ringing or buzzing sound in the ears. It can be quite maddening because it can be constant and unrelenting for some people. The cause of this malady is said to be ear hair cell damage. Our ears have tiny, delicate hairs that move in relation to pressure or sound waves. When they move, this triggers cells to release an electrical signal through the auditory nerve to the brain. When the inner hairs get injured in some way, they can react by leaking random electrical signals to the brain, thus causing tinnitus. The good news is that while annoying, tinnitus is not usually an indication of anything more serious.

REMEDY #1: GINKGO LEAF TINCTURE

Ginkgo biloba has been proven to help with circulation, specifically in the brain. Other claims state that this unassuming leaf helps protect the brain and other parts from neuronal damage. Because of this, it is a promising alternative treatment for Alzheimer's as well. The leaves from this tree contains powerful antioxidants, is anti-inflammatory, supports eye health, helps with anxiety, and even helps relieve some headaches. You might be able to see how damage to the inner ear could possibly be repaired since this plant works the way it does. Some arborists say that the ginkgo biloba tree is one of the oldest species of trees on the planet!

RECIPE: You can create a tincture from the leaves by collecting enough to fill a jar and covering it with the solvent of your choice. You'd be surprised at how many ginkgo trees are around. Their leaves are very distinctive, so keep your eyes open for detecting them as you are out and about each day. After your mixture has infused for the allotted time, press out the liquid, taking care to squeeze the leaves and get all the solvent out.

DOSAGE: The recommended dosage for ginkgo tincture is 5 ml, twice a day.

REMEDY #2: ROSEMARY TEA

This common and aromatic harden herb is especially useful for tinnitus, particularly tinnitus that is triggered by blood pressure and circulatory issues. Rosemary is invigorating, uplifting, and helps with fatigue, depression, and stress. One easy way to get the benefits from this herb is to drink it infused in hot tea. Its lovely and energizing aroma, as well as its flavor, actually makes a very pleasant tea. Fill an empty tea bag or stainless steel tea infuser

with fresh or dried rosemary leaves. Let it infuse in your teacup of hot water for at least ten minutes before enjoying. Add raw honey for additional flavor and benefits.

HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss can be caused by a multitude of issues such as blockages, infections, tissue damage, injury, and more. There are a few remedies that have been used for many years by those seeking to restore hearing, as well as prevent further hearing loss. These remedies can be found below:

REMEDY #1: GINGER AND HERB TEA

Ginger is highly anti-inflammatory, making it a great remedy for hearing loss associated with inflammation. It is also somewhat analgesic, so if you're having ear pain, it may be helpful for that as well. The other herbs in this tea compliment the medicinal action of ginger and can help with the causes and symptoms of hearing loss. They consist of cilantro, cinnamon, sage, and oregano. Use fresh, organic ginger for the recipe. This recipe is somewhere in between a tea and a decoction. On the stove, boil four cups of water and add all the aforementioned ingredients. Let them boil with the water for fifteen minutes before straining out the liquid and letting it cool. It is advised to drink three cups of this mixture each day for three weeks to see if you are noticing any differences.

REMEDY #2: TEA TREE EAR OIL

Most people have heard about the wonders of tea tree essential oil, but you can also create an oil infusion with the leaves of this plant. This infusion will not be as strong as tea tree essential oil, but it can go in the ear, unlike the essential oil. Never put any essential oil in your ear! Tea tree has many benefits, including being antibacterial and antifungal.

RECIPE: Infuse the dried leaves in olive oil to make an ear oil to help alleviate any infection, as well as unclog blockages. Follow the oil-infusion method by filling a jar with dried tea tree leaves and covering them with olive oil. Let this mixture sit in a warm place for four weeks, taking care not to keep it in direct sunlight unless it is covered with something first. Strain it out when it is ready and make sure you press the leaves good to get all the oil out of them before discarding!

DOSAGE: Apply a few drops in your ears once a day. Let the drops stay in your ear for at least ten minutes before getting up to resume activity.

VERTIGO

Vertigo can be quite bothersome. It is an inner ear condition that causes one to feel like the room is spinning, even when they are not moving. Of course, this condition causes nausea and dizziness. If you experience vertigo, sit down immediately to avoid hurting yourself or falling. This condition is usually a sign of an underlying issue such as a virus, or buildup of deposits in the inner ear. Symptoms may come and go, and may last for a few minutes or a few hours. There are several herbal treatments to combat the symptoms of vertigo:

REMEDY: #1: GINGER AND LEMON OXYMEL

Because apple cider vinegar and honey both contain medicinal properties that are said to relieve blood flow to the brain, an oxymel is an excellent remedy for vertigo. Ginger can provide relief from upset stomach and nausea that vertigo often triggers. Lemon can be grounding and uplifting, as well as antimicrobial.

RECIPE: Using raw honey and apple cider vinegar as a solvent, mix a ratio that you are comfortable with. Some people like to use more honey than apple cider vinegar due to the vinegar's strong flavor. Fill a small jar (around eight ounces) with a few slices of fresh lemon, as well as a few slices of fresh ginger. Cover the lemon and ginger slices with the mixture of raw honey and apple cider vinegar. Allow this to sit for four to six weeks in the refrigerator, making sure to shake it as often as you can. Strain it out when you are ready to begin taking it.

DOSAGE: Take a tablespoon of this mixture at the onset of symptoms, or daily if you are prone to vertigo on a regular basis.

REMEDY #2: GINKGO AND STINGING NETTLE TEA

The benefits of ginkgo when it comes to brain, eye, and ear health are amazing. This is why a tea from the leaves is so beneficial for vertigo. Because Nettles are such an amazing source of vitamins and minerals, they make a nourishing addition to this tea. Fill a tea infuser or empty tea bag with equal parts ginkgo leaves and equal parts nettle leaves. Let this beneficial blend infuse in a teacup of hot water for ten minutes. You may add raw honey for sweetness. Enjoy this blend daily, up to twice a day.

EXCESS EAR WAX

Many people are plagued with an overabundance of ear wax. When our ears produce too much wax, this can lead to many problems. Muffled hearing, trapped fluid, and infections are common with an overabundance of ear wax. These problems might cause pain and pressure in the ear. There are several ways to address impacted ear wax. One is to take a squirt bottle and fill it with warm distilled water. Squirt a concentrated stream of warm water into the ear over and over until you feel the wax begin to break up and come out. You may want to do this over a sink or tub. Another method for breaking up impacted ear wax is to soften the wax. Below is a remedy to help soften impacted wax in the ear canal.

REMEDY: WARMED COCONUT/OLIVE OIL AND GARLIC DROPS

Coconut oil in itself is a powerful and beneficial remedy for everything from fungal infections to eczema. Always buy organic and unrefined coconut oil and never fractionated.

RECIPE: Fractionated coconut oil has been processed in a way that makes it liquid. Garlic is a powerful antibiotic, and is known for its healing ability in the ears. The melting point of coconut oil is rather low, so simply put a half cup of coconut oil in an oven safe dish and into the oven on a very low heat setting (150 degrees is sufficient). It will only take a few minutes for it to fully melt. Carefully remove the dish from the oven and add one clove of garlic that has been finely chopped. Stir until it is evenly dispersed. Place the dish back in the oven and let it infuse under low heat for up to four hours. Check it often to ensure it is not boiling or burning. Take it out of the oven when the allotted time has passed and strain out the garlic pieces. Bottle the oil. Store it in the fridge.

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DOSAGE: When you want to use it, simply place the bottle (with the lid tightly closed) under hot tap water until it melts enough to place a few drops in your ear. It is important to let the oil be as warm as possible *without* burning your inner ear, so test the oil's temperature before putting it in your ear. Let the warmed oil infusion sit in your ear canal for ten minutes. It helps to place a warm sachet over the ear as you are lying with the oil inside. This will keep everything warm and go further to promote breakage and softening of the wax. Do this daily until you see results. Substitute olive oil in this recipe if you do not see a difference using coconut oil after a week.

NASAL/SINUS

The nasal and sinus passages can become irritated for many reasons. Some of the reasons include allergies and viruses that produce large amounts of mucus. This can result in pressure, pain, and infection in the nasal and sinus areas. There are several specific conditions that plague the nasal and sinus area. These include sinus infections, allergies, excess mucus, and various blockages.

SINUS INFECTION

Sinus infections cause major pain and pressure. They are often accompanied by severe sinus headaches. They can be caused by many factors, but some common causes are allergies and viruses that cause an overproduction of mucus. Mucus can become trapped in the sinuses and cause the issues resulting in infection. Irrigation of the sinuses using a “neti pot” is a great way to help clear out excess mucous. Also, steam is very beneficial in breaking up the blockages. Proper Chiropractic care can help align the sinus passages and open blockages. Try to drink plenty of water and stay hydrated as well. If you continue to suffer, try one or more of the remedies below:

REMEDY #1: EUCALYPTUS STEAM TREATMENT

Eucalyptus is one of the most effective remedies for sinus congestion. Even the smell of this plant is powerful enough to aid in healing and open up the sinuses. Eucalyptus contains constituents that are analgesic and antiseptic. There are several simple ways to take advantage of this plant when you are suffering from a sinus infection.

RECOMMENDATION: One way is to hang fresh eucalyptus from your shower head and take a hot shower. The more steam the better, so shut your shower curtain or door and make sure the bathroom door is shut to trap in as much steam as possible. After a few minutes, the room will begin to smell strongly of eucalyptus. The aroma contains the medicinal constituents of the plant. These constituents are released via heating and steam. Inhalation of this can both alleviate sinus pressure and open up the airways, resulting in relief. The antiseptic properties in the plant help to fight infection. Take your time and practice deep breathing to get the fullness of the benefits. If you prefer taking a bath instead, you can fill a sachet or porous bag with eucalyptus leaves and let it infuse in your bath water as you sit in the bath (as hot as you can stand it). Shut the curtain to trap in steam. You can enjoy the benefits of eucalyptus steam even if you aren’t up for a bath or shower by heating a pot of water on the stove and infusing it with eucalyptus leaves. Carefully inhale the steam put off by the boiling eucalyptus-infused water.

REMEDY #2: SINUS RELIEF TEA BLEND

This tea blend is a mixture of plants that open up the sinuses, fight infection, and relieve inflammation. Inflammation of the mucous membranes can be a problem when you have a sinus infection. A tea is a great idea when you have a sinus infection because the hot water can really help to further open up the sinuses! The recipe calls for a half cup of water, one-fourth cup of apple cider vinegar, and one-fourth cup of fresh-squeezed lemon juice. Heat these liquids as the base for the herbs you’ll be infusing. You may gently heat these on the stovetop and then transfer to a teacup. Herbs to use include one teaspoon of freshly grated ginger root, one teaspoon of fresh turmeric root, one-fourth teaspoon of ground black pepper, one-fourth teaspoon of dried cayenne pepper, and one-half teaspoon of dried oregano leaves. Put the aforementioned herbs into an empty tea bag or tea infuser and let it infuse in the hot liquid mixture for ten minutes before consuming. You may choose to add raw honey to sweeten the tea. Drink the tea two to three times a day.

REMEDY #3: ANTIBIOTIC HERB-INFUSED OILS FOR FACIAL MASSAGE

Creating an antibiotic and aromatic blend of herb-infused oils for facial massage can help by fighting infection and opening the sinuses. Take care not to get this mixture in your eyes!

Gently massage into the upper cheeks, forehead, temples, and any other region affected by sinus pressure. Some great plants to infuse into carrier oil include oregano (known for its antibiotic properties) and garlic (also containing strong antibiotic qualities). Some great aromatic herbs to infuse in oil include peppermint (peppermint is aromatic and analgesic) and tea tree leaves (tea tree is antibacterial, in addition to being aromatic). Remember that oil infusions can be created in several ways, either by filling a jar with plant material and covering with carrier oil to infuse for four to six weeks, or by gently heating on the stovetop for several hours. Infuse each plant separately and then mix the infused oils before applying to the face.

ALLERGIES

Allergies affect millions of people. Some suffer from season allergies, while others are allergic to various foods, pets, mold, insect stings, or medications. Symptoms of allergies include sneezing, nasal congestion, a constant runny nose, hives, itchy eyes, itchiness in the mouth or throat, wheezing, coughing, or difficulty breathing. Sometimes an allergy can develop into something very serious. Wheezing, swelling, and difficulty breathing are indicators of anaphylaxis, which is a life-threatening allergic reaction. Seek immediate medical attention if you think you are having a severe allergic reaction to something. For mild to moderate allergies, you might be able to find relief by trying one of the remedies below:

REMEDY #1: STINGING NETTLE DECOCTION/INFUSION

Stinging nettle is a very popular remedy for allergies. This wonderfully nourishing plant contains nutrients such as vitamins A, B, C and K. It also contains beneficial minerals, fats, and amino acids. Constituents in the plant aid in inflammation, which makes this plant beneficial for reducing inflammation associated with allergy symptoms. Possibly the most beneficial aspect of nettle for allergies is that it contains flavonoids that can help suppress histamine production. The production of histamines in the body is how the body reacts to various allergens. Suppression of these can be highly beneficial and curb allergies.

RECIPE: Create a decoction by boiling eight cups of water on the stove with two cups of dried stinging nettle leaves. Let this boil until the liquid is reduced by almost half. Strain out the leaves, taking care to squeeze them through a cheesecloth well. Refrigerate the liquid. Drink two cups a day. Decoctions only keep for three to five days, so make sure you make only what you know you'll use in that amount of time. Another option is to create a nourishing infusion with stinging nettle. To do this, simply put a cup of stinging nettle into a quart mason jar. Fill the jar with boiling water, place a lid on it, and let this sit and infuse for four to eight hours.

DOSAGE: Drink two cups a day. This also needs refrigeration, and lasts as long as a decoction.

REMEDY #2: PURPLE DEADNETTLE GLYCERITE OR TINCTURE

Purple deadnettle is another allergy remedy for those who cannot find stinging nettle and happen to live where this common yard plant can be found. Like stinging nettle, purple deadnettle also contains flavonoids that suppress histamine production. This plant can be found in yards in early to mid-spring. It is often overlooked due to its small size, common appearance, and abundance.

RECIPE: Create a tincture or glycerite with this by filling a jar with the fresh plant (aerial parts only) and covering it with alcohol, vegetable glycerin, or a mixture of both. Some people even infuse it in apple cider vinegar. Either solvent mentioned is fine to use, just make sure to fully cover the plant! Place a lid on the mixture and let it sit in a cool, dark place for four to six weeks, shaking it daily to further promote infusion.

DOSAGE: Strain it out after the correct amount of time has passed and take one teaspoon two to three times a day as needed for allergies.

EXCESS MUCUS

When the sinuses produce too much mucus, problems may arise such as infection, pressure, pain, and dizziness. An overproduction of mucus can be caused by many factors, such as allergies or viruses. Below are several plant remedies that might help dry up the extra mucus and restore balance to the sinuses. Although the plants in both remedies have traditionally been smoked to help with respiratory issues, it is never safe to inhale smoke and might make things worse. Tinctures are more beneficial and safer than smoking.

REMEDY #1: LOBELIA TINCTURE

Sometimes referred to as Indian tobacco, *Lobelia inflata* is the particular species used to treat respiratory issues. This plant has been used throughout history as a remedy for cough, asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, and other respiratory conditions. It may also expel excess mucus. Use caution when taking it internally, as too much can have an emetic effect. This plant is not to be used if you are pregnant or nursing.

RECIPE: When creating a tincture with lobelia, all aerial parts can be used, but keep in mind that the seed are very potent and will increase the strength of your tincture. This can be good if you don't use many. It can also be bad if you take too much of the tincture because it may cause nausea or vomiting. Preparing this tincture means being careful with your plant-to-solvent ratio. Unlike many tinctures made using the folk method, you do not have to fill the jar to the top with the plant material. A good ratio to start is twice as much solvent as you have plant material. Let this mixture sit for four to six weeks before straining out to use.

DOSAGE: Dosages vary, but a good dosage to start with is twenty drops, twice a day. For easier ingestion, you may opt to take it in water or juice. If you are experiencing no nausea with this dosage, but still continue to have issues with mucus and congestion, you can up your dose to twenty drops, three or four times a day.

REMEDY #2: MULLEIN LEAF TINCTURE

Mullein leaves are known for their usefulness when it comes to clearing the airways. They are said to open up the bronchial tubes and aid in expelling mucus. Mullein leaves are especially helpful for bronchitis, pneumonia, and other similar respiratory conditions. Because of their expectorant properties, be advised that you may experience extra coughing after taking this tincture. This is just a result of the mullein helping your body get rid of the mucus.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

RECIPE: To create a tincture from mullein leaves, fill a jar about half full with chopped and dried leaves. Fill the jar to the top with a solvent (alcohol, vegetable glycerin, or a combination of both). Let this sit for four to six weeks before straining out to use.

DOSAGE: A good dosage for mullein leaf tincture is sixty drops, twice a day as needed for the expulsion of mucus.

POLYPS

Polyps are a rather common occurrence in the sinus cavities. The cause of polyps is unknown. They can have been linked to allergic rhinitis, asthma, aspirin allergy, sinus infections, chronic infections, nasal blockages, and cystic fibrosis. Prevention can go a long way with polyps. If you are prone to these, you might consider avoiding allergy triggers, using a humidifier to keep your sinus passages moist, and rinsing your nasal passages with a saline rinse on occasion (especially when you know you have been exposed to allergens that might irritate your sinuses). Below are remedies to help with the symptoms caused by polyps.

REMEDY #1: CAYENNE PEPPER TEA

It is widely known that cayenne is a rather hot pepper. However, it also packs a medicinal punch. Cayenne contains the constituent capsaicin. Capsaicin is a natural pain reliever, helping to block pain receptors in the nerves. It is also naturally anti-inflammatory. Perhaps the most beneficial property it has is the fact that it helps break up mucus and expel it from the body. Cayenne can help prevent, as well as ease the symptoms, of polyps in the nasal and sinus area. To get the full benefits from this pepper, you can add it to your diet as often as possible. If you are not crazy about cayenne, it might be best to drink it once a day in tea. To prepare a cayenne tea, simply add one to two teaspoons of ground cayenne pepper to one cup of hot water. You may choose to sweeten this tea with raw honey if you like. The combination of hot water and cayenne is sure to get the mucus flowing and clear out the sinuses.

REMEDY #2: BUTTERBUR TEA

Butterbur is known for its ability to help with allergies, migraines, infections, asthma, and headaches associated with the sinuses. To get the benefits from this plant, you can drink it in tea. To make a butterbur tea for sinus health, soak a teaspoon of dried butterbur root in 250 milliliters of cold water for approximately twelve hours. Next, boil the liquid. When it comes to a boil, turn down the heat and let it simmer for five minutes. Finally, strain out the liquid. Refrigerate what you are not using right away. You may drink up to three cups of this liquid a day. Adding raw honey is fine if you prefer a sweetener in your tea. Butterbur contains a constituent that might affect the liver if taken too much. It is best to drink butterbur tea for only a few weeks to avoid overexposure to this constituent.

MOUTH/THROAT

The mouth is the first stop in our digestive system. It is a very important part of the body, as we use it so often. When we have a sore throat or an issue with our teeth, it can be very unpleasant and bothersome. Below are several common maladies of the mouth and throat and remedies to help promote healing.

CANKER SORES

Canker sores are very common. Most people will experience them at some point in their lives. A lot of times when one has a canker sore in their mouth, it will protrude further and cause extra pain, especially when one accidentally bites down on it when chewing! There are many causes of these sores. One common cause is trauma to that area, whether it is biting your cheek when eating or being hit in that area. Another cause is a burn, possibly from eating food when it is too hot. Another cause is a reaction to a food or drink your body doesn't accept well. Mouth sores can be caused by brushing your teeth too hard. Other causes include the herpes virus or chewing tobacco. Below are remedies to take care of the sores and promote healing of the affected tissue.

REMEDY #1: BASIL, SELF-HEAL, AND LAVENDER RINSE

Basil and Lavender are antimicrobial, making them a great addition to a remedy for canker sores. The mouth if full of bacteria, so rinsing with antimicrobial plants helps to cleanse the wound. Self-Heal is a very powerful little plant that is aptly named. This member of the mint family helps with everything from boosting the immune system to use as an antiseptic. Its astringent properties make it useful for loosening phlegm and tightening tissues that need healing. Infuse one teaspoon of each plant into one cup of hot water. If you are working with the fresh plants, double this to two teaspoons each. Stir this mixture and let it infuse for twenty minutes. When the allotted time has passed, strain out the plants. Before swishing, make sure that the infusion is warm, but not too hot. Add a pinch of salt to further aid in healing. Take a liberal dose of the mixture and swish it around in your mouth for at least ten minutes and then spit it out. If you have any left over, you can refrigerate it and gently heat it again for another treatment. Do this twice a day for best results.

REMEDY #2: APPLE CIDER VINEGAR AND SAGE TREATMENT

Sometimes, the body's pH can become too acidic and cause canker sores.

RECIPE: Apple cider vinegar is a good way to help alkalize the body. It can help get rid of the bad bacteria in the mouth, while promoting the healthy bacteria. Add it to your diet as much as possible by mixing it in cooking and even making salad dressing with it. You can drink it, but it might hurt your teeth enamel. For this reason, it is best to dilute it in water before drinking. In this treatment, you will be infusing sage into apple cider vinegar, much like you would when making a tincture. Sage is a great addition to this remedy because it is antiseptic and a wonderful antioxidant. Sage is also good for the immune system, helping your body heal faster. Fill a jar half full of dry sage or to the top if you are using fresh. Cover the sage with apple cider vinegar. Make sure you are using organic and unprocessed apple cider vinegar. Unfiltered is best to use as well. Shut the lid tight and shake this daily. Keep an eye on the levels because you may need to top it off when you see the plant material sticking out of the liquid.

DOSAGE: After four to six weeks, strain it out and bottle the liquid. To use this remedy, add one tablespoon to a cup of water and rinse with it for five to ten minutes. You can either spit it out or swallow for added benefits. This

remedy is excellent for a variety of other conditions: These conditions include sore throats, strep throat, sinus drainage, and viruses like colds and influenza. To treat these conditions with this remedy, simply drink two tablespoons of this in warm water.

TOOTH ABSCESS

A tooth abscess is a very painful condition that is caused when bacteria or a foreign object enter the tooth or gums. The result is a painful infection. While somewhat common, a tooth abscess left untreated can have fatal results. If you suspect you have a severe tooth abscess and are in severe pain, seek medical assistance immediately. There have been cases when the infection has spread to the brain, causing death. If you have a minor tooth abscess, there are several remedies you can try to help heal the infection before it gets too serious. It is also a good idea to begin rinsing several times a day with salt water to promote healing.

REMEDY #1: OREGANO AND CLOVE TINCTURE

Both oregano and clove have strong antibiotic and antibacterial properties, making them a wise choice when seeking to heal an infection.

RECIPE: To create a tincture with these, fill a jar with one part clove and two parts oregano. Cover the plant material with alcohol and let it infuse for four to six weeks. Shake the mixture daily, making sure the lid is on tight. Strain out after the allotted time has passed and bottle the liquid.

DOSAGE: To treat an abscess, fill a one ounce shot glass not quite full of water and add 40 drops of the tincture. Swish this around for at least five minutes, taking care to focus on the area of the mouth where the abscess is. Spit this out when you are finished. You can do this up to three times a day as needed.

REMEDY #2: GARLIC AND THYME OIL PULLING

Oil pulling is an ancient oral practice in which a person swishes oil (many times this oil is infused with medicinal plants) around in the mouth to pull out the toxins and then spits it out. Swishing vigorously for twenty minutes is recommended. Again, never swallow the oil when oil pulling, as you are drawing out the toxins in your mouth. Spit into the garbage to avoid clogging your pipes.

RECIPE: Create an oil infusion by adding a chopped clove of garlic and a tablespoon of thyme to a half cup of coconut oil. You can help them infuse faster by letting the mixture sit in the oven at a very low temperature (150 degrees is fine) for three hours and then straining it out. Halfway through the infusion, take the oil out of the oven and stir it to mix the plant material in the coconut oil well. Strain out the garlic and thyme and when the mixture cools, place it in the refrigerator. This will last in the refrigerator for a few weeks.

DOSAGE: When you are ready to begin treatment, simply spoon out a tablespoon of the oil and vigorously swish it around in your mouth for twenty minutes. Do this once a day for best results.

TOOTH DECAY

Tooth decay, if left untreated, can lead to a variety of problems. Some of the issues that can arise as a result of tooth decay include pain, infection, tooth loss, and much more serious issues such as infection spreading to other bones in your body. Taking care of your teeth is essential to overall bodily health. There are several plants that help to nourish your teeth and even build enamel and strengthen teeth. Remedies for taking care of your teeth are listed below:

REMEDY #1: NOURISHING HERBAL MOUTHWASH WITH ECHINACEA, OREGON GRAPE ROOT, PLANTAIN, AND PEPPERMINT

You can make your own nourishing mouthwash that far exceeds what you can buy in stores.

The first ingredient is Echinacea. This plant is often thought of as an immune-booster.

RECIPE: While it is correct that Echinacea is an excellent immune-boosting plant, it has other medicinal properties that can help with tooth decay! It can help draw out any infection because it is anti-microbial. Its immune-stimulating properties also help the body attack any lurking infection before it gets too far out-of-hand. The next ingredient is Oregon grape root. Its astringent and antimicrobial properties make it useful for clearing out bacteria and healing tissues in the mouth. The final ingredient is peppermint. This plant does more than help bad breath. Peppermint is naturally anti-inflammatory and antibacterial. It contains many essential vitamins and minerals, helping to promote tooth and gum strength. Creating separate tinctures with each of these plants is the best way to start. Remember that to create a tincture you must fill a jar with the plant and cover with alcohol. Strain out the tincture after four to six weeks and bottle each. A good recipe using each plant listed is to combine a half ounce of Echinacea tincture, a fourth ounce of Oregon grape root tincture, an eighth ounce of plantain tincture, and a fourth ounce of peppermint tincture in another bottle labeled “herbal mouthwash.”

DOSAGE: Add forty drops of this to a half ounce of water and swish for one minute before spitting it out.

REMEDY #2: REMINERALIZING HERBAL TOOTHPASTE

Sometimes your teeth need extra care that calls for nourishing toothpaste that can help reconstruct the worn enamel that might lead to tooth decay. This recipe is a combination of materials that provide calcium (essential to enamel rebuilding) and nourishing plants to help fight bacteria and promote oral health.

RECIPE: The base of this recipe is coconut oil. It is good for oral health because it has been shown to attack the bad bacteria in your mouth. You will need a half cup of coconut oil to start. If at any time you feel like you need to add more oil to the recipe that is fine. The next ingredient is three tablespoons of calcium carbonate. This is a great ingredient for promoting the restoration of enamel. Other essential ingredients include one third cup baking soda, two tablespoons of bentonite clay, one fourth tablespoon of pink Himalayan salt (finely ground), and sixty drops of the tincture recipe listed above (Nourishing Herbal Mouthwash with Echinacea, Oregon Grape Root, Plantain, and Peppermint). Add all these ingredients to a food processor or whip them together with a mixer until well blended.

DOSAGE: Put them all together in a jar and use a small amount twice a day to brush your teeth.

SORE THROAT AND STREPTOCOCCUS BACTERIA

A sore throat can be caused by drainage, especially when you are experiencing allergies, colds, or other viral illnesses. Symptoms include pain when swallowing or speaking, inflammation, and redness in the throat area. Streptococcus is another common cause of pain in the throat. It is characterized by an infection of the throat and there are usually tell-tale signs of the infection, such as white spots in the mouth and throat area. There are several herbal remedies that can both address the infection, inflammation, as well as the pain associated with a sore throat.

REMEDY #1: ECHINACEA, GOLDENSEAL, AND HONEY THROAT SPRAY

Echinacea is a great remedy for a sore throat because it helps to attack any bacteria causing infection. It can also boost the immune-system, helping your body to better fight the infection. Goldenseal is an invaluable plant to have in your medicine cabinet. It has proven antibiotic properties and is especially helpful in fighting upper respiratory tract infections, colds, and many stomach issues as well. Raw honey is highly antimicrobial, and has been used to treat infections for thousands of years.

RECIPE: A recipe to make your own sore throat spray is to add one tablespoon of Echinacea tincture and one tablespoon of goldenseal tincture to a two-ounce spray bottle. This should take up roughly half of the bottle. Add one half of a tablespoon of raw, unfiltered honey (preferable local honey) to the bottle. Finally, fill the rest of the bottle to the top with distilled water. Shake very well to mix all of the ingredients.

DOSAGE: Spray this mixture in your throat two to three times a day when you are experiencing a sore throat. If you suspect streptococcus, use the spray at three to four times a day. Make sure to spray into the back of your throat to reach the infection well. You can also gargle the mixture to further treat the issue.

REMEDY #2: MARSHMALLOW ROOT, SAGE, AND APPLE CIDER VINEGAR RINSE

Marshmallow root has been used for thousands of years to treat a sore throat because it acts as an analgesic, mucilage, as well as an anti-inflammatory. Sage is a great addition to any recipe for a sore throat because of its antimicrobial properties. It can help to attack the bacteria causing issues. It is also mildly analgesic, as well as anti-inflammatory. Apple cider vinegar is a great base for a sore throat remedy because it helps fight bacteria.

RECIPE: To create an effective sore throat wash, fill a small jar with part sage and part marshmallow root (roughly half and half). Next, cover the plants with raw, unfiltered apple cider vinegar. Allow this mixture to sit for at least four weeks before straining it out and bottling.

DOSAGE: When you feel a sore throat coming on, swish a mouthful of this rinse in your mouth. You may also try to gargle the rinse and allow it to sit in the back of your mouth/throat for several minutes before spitting it out. Adding raw honey to this mixture can also help with a sore throat.

HEART AND CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

Our heart is a muscle in our body that is constantly working. There are various reasons why the heart may have trouble from time to time. First and foremost, our diets play a huge role in the health of our heart. Avoiding fatty foods, as well as processed foods, and significantly improve the chances of developing heart disease. In addition, a diet rich in vegetables can be nourishing and provide the vitamins and minerals necessary for healthy bodily function. Our circulatory system is comprised of a large network of vessels and organs that are responsible for getting blood, nutrients, oxygen, and hormones where they need to go in the body. There are various plants that are known to promote strength to the heart, as well as good circulation.

WEAK HEART

For anyone suffering from a weak heart, the remedies below have been used for thousands of years to help strengthen the heart, relieve stress, as well as promote circulation in the body.

REMEDY #1: HEART STRENGTHENING TEA WITH HAWTHORN AND MOTHERWORT

For many years, Hawthorn berries have been associated with the heart. First of all, they are an amazing source of antioxidants. Antioxidants are vitally important for getting rid of free radicals in the body that can cause harm. Antioxidants have been associated with heart health. Second, Hawthorn berries are thought to help lower blood pressure, which can be very beneficial for heart health. Third, Hawthorn berries can help reduce anxiety, which can wreak havoc on many systems of the body, including the heart. These common berries have been studied for their effects on treating heart failure, with positive results. They have been shown to help decrease triglycerides and cholesterol in studies on animals. As you can see, Hawthorn berries are an essential plant for heart and circulatory health! Motherwort is also a promising plant when it comes to heart health. Like Hawthorn berries, Motherwort is said to help lower stress and anxiety. This plant also contains a compound called leonurine, which has been studied for its ability to promote the relaxation of blood vessel walls. It has long been used for its heart-protecting abilities and may even help to prevent blood clots in the heart. Its anti-inflammatory properties also promote heart and circulatory health. It is no wonder these two plants combined make an outstanding remedy for heart and circulation health! Drink them in a tea by adding roughly 2 parts dried Hawthorn berries and one part dried motherwort to an empty tea bag or stainless steel infusion ball. Let this nourishing remedy infuse in a cup of hot water for at least ten minutes before enjoying. Drink this up to two times a day for best results.

For a more concentrated recipe using these two plants, create a tincture with half Hawthorn and half motherwort and take twenty to thirty drops three times daily.

REMEDY #2: BILBERRY AND GARLIC TINCTURE

Bilberry is associated with heart health because of its anti-inflammatory properties, as well as its ability to lower lipids. It is also a source of antioxidants. Garlic is a wonderful heart strengthening plant because of its effects on blood pressure, high cholesterol, and hardening of the arteries. It is said to help in cases of coronary artery disease, as well as with heart attacks. These two combined work together to promote heart health and strength.

Forgotten Backyard Remedies

RECIPE: To create a tincture with these, finely chop one to two cloves of garlic and put it in a four ounce jar. Add dried bilberries to the jar, filling it 2/3 of the way full. Fill the jar entirely with alcohol to the top. Cover the mixture and let it sit in a cool, dark place for four to six weeks before straining it out and bottling it.

DOSAGE: Take twenty drops twice a day. Discontinue any remedy if you are experiencing negative side effects.

POOR CIRCULATION

Poor circulation means that your body is having a difficult time moving blood. Symptoms include numbness and tingling in extremities, blue skin tone, and other bodily issues such as dry skin and brittle hair and nails. Poor circulation can be a symptom of a more serious issue, so be sure to seek medical attention if you think you have poor circulation and are unsure why. Below are remedies proven to promote circulation, especially in the arms and legs, where many symptoms of poor circulation are experienced.

REMEDY #1: CAYENNE AND GINGER SALVE TO PROMOTE CIRCULATION

Cayenne is known to help promote circulation because it is a warming herb. Cayenne is also an effective pain remedy because it contains the constituent capsaicin, which helps relieve nerve pain. Ginger pairs well with cayenne in this salve recipe because it is anti-inflammatory and analgesic as well. Both plants are stimulating and warming, making them perfect for the promotion of circulation. Using these in a salve is a good remedy for circulation because you can massage it into the affected areas. Massage also promotes circulation, thus further improving symptoms.

RECIPE: For this recipe, add one teaspoon of ground cayenne pepper and one teaspoon of ground ginger to eight ounces of carrier oil such as olive, grapeseed, or coconut oil. Cook this mixture under low heat and let it sit for a while. Add one to one-and-a-half ounces of beeswax and allow it to melt completely into the oil mixture. When the beeswax is completely melted, pour into tins or bottles to cool.

DOSAGE: Apply a liberal amount to extremities that are experiencing symptoms of poor circulation. Gently massage it in, taking time to let it soak into the skin. Be aware that it might sting if you have any open wounds, so avoid using it near one. Also, make sure you wash your hands well after using the salve because it can cause irritation to the eyes if you happen to touch them while using it.

REMEDY #2: BLACK PEPPER AND BUTCHER'S BROOM CIRCULATION TEA

Black pepper is known for its ability to stimulate circulation. Butcher's broom is also known for its circulatory stimulating properties, as well as the ability to treat varicose veins and chronic venous insufficiency. This shrub's roots also have compounds that help veins to contract better and get blood where it needs to go. The root of this shrub is what is used in most herbal preparations. In an empty tea bag, use three parts butcher's broom and one part black pepper. Infuse it in a teacup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes before consuming. Drink this tea up to twice a day for best results.

HYPERTENSION

Hypertension is high blood pressure. There are several causes of hypertension, including smoking, obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, excess salt in the diet, stress, and old age. If left untreated, hypertension can lead to serious health issues. Some issues that are a result of hypertension left untreated include stroke, heart attack, kidney issues, eyesight loss, dementia, and death. Below are remedies to help with hypertension. However, always seek medical advice for this condition first, as it can lead to serious issues.

REMEDY #1: CELERY SEED AND CINNAMON TEA

Celery seed has been used to lower blood pressure for years. It contains a compound that helps to lower blood pressure and has been studied in trials that confirm this. Cinnamon also helps to lower blood pressure, specifically, systolic blood pressure. Both are water soluble and can be enjoyed together in a tea to help lower blood pressure. In an empty bag or infusion ball, combine two parts celery seed with one part cinnamon bark. Let this infuse in a teacup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes before consuming. Drink this up to twice a day for best results.

REMEDY #2: BASIL AND FLAX SEED TINCTURE

Basil is a common garden herb with benefits that far exceed culinary use. It contains the compound eugenol. This compound is thought to work by blocking certain substances that tighten blood vessels. Flax Seed is also beneficial for lowering blood pressure. This seed is rich in fatty acids. It has been said to have antioxidant properties that help protect the heart, as well as reduce serum cholesterol and improve glucose tolerance.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with these common plants by filling a jar with four parts fresh basil and one part flax seed. Cover the material completely with alcohol and follow normal tincture-making protocol.

DOSAGE: When ready, strain out into a bottle and take twenty to thirty drops twice a day.

STROKE

Just like your heart can experience a heart attack, your brain can experience a “brain attack.” A stroke can happen when blood flow to any area of the brain is cut off. The absence of blood flow results in the death of brain cells that need oxygen from the blood. Depending on the area of the brain that experienced the brain cell loss, those who suffer might experience memory problems or problems with muscle control. Some strokes can be minor and recover after temporary weakness in an extremity. However, some strokes can be serious and even deadly. Severe strokes can paralyze, or cause someone to lose the ability to speak.

Many who suffer from strokes have issues for years, or the rest of their lives. You might be at risk for stroke if you smoke, frequently drink alcohol, use drugs, or have an unhealthy weight. Other factors that increase the risk for stroke include high blood pressure, diabetes, unhealthy cholesterol levels, a family history of stroke, or high stress levels. The remedies below are for those who feel like they are at risk for stroke, or have suffered a minor stroke and want help regaining muscle control or memory. Keep in mind that the remedies below may interact with certain medications, especially blood thinners, so make sure any remedy you try is safe for use with your specific medications.

REMEDY #1: PLANTS THAT PROMOTE BLOOD CIRCULATION IN THE BRAIN

A good way to prevent stroke starts with diet, exercise, and living your healthiest life. However, some people look for additional ways to make sure strokes do not happen. Having good circulation of blood means oxygen is getting where it needs to go and brain cells are thriving. There are several plants that have positive effects on blood circulation, specifically in the brain. One such plant is Turmeric. It has been proven to be an effective anti-inflammatory, as well as lowering cholesterol and preventing blockages in arteries. It pairs well with black pepper in a tincture. Take twenty drops, twice a day to start. Another helpful plant for blood circulation is Garlic. Garlic is said to help prevent blood clotting, as well as destroy plaque, which are two very beneficial qualities when it comes to preventing stroke. Use as much garlic as possible in your diet. Fresh is always best! A tincture of ashwagandha root might also be effective for stroke prevention. Ashwagandha has been said to contain high amounts of antioxidants, making it great for brain health. Take twenty to sixty drops of this tincture, twice a day.

REMEDY #2: PLANTS THAT PROMOTE MEMORY AND BRAIN FUNCTION

Those who have experienced mild strokes often get frustrated when they experience memory issues and the feeling like they are losing cognitive function. One plant that is said to help with memory loss is Asian Ginseng. It has been used for thousands of years for this very purpose. Create a tincture with Asian Ginseng by filling a jar with the chopped roots and covering them with alcohol. Close the lid tightly, and allow your tincture to sit for anywhere from four to six weeks in a cool, dark place. After the time has passed, strain it out and bottle the liquid extract. You can take anywhere from one to nine droppers-full a day. Gotu kola is another plant with positive effects on cognitive function. This plant is not only said to be effective in helping with cognitive function, but it is said to help with stress and Alzheimer's, by protecting cells from toxicity. It is no wonder that this plant is utilized for stroke prevention and healing. Gotu kola can be taken in tincture form as well. A good dosage for stroke prevention is a dropper full, twice a day.

LUNGS AND RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

Our respiratory system is comprised of various organs that help us take in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide. The lungs are the major organ in this system responsible for this task. When problems arise with how our respiratory system works, the results could range from painful to deadly. Below are several common ailments of the respiratory system, as well as remedies to treat each:

BRONCHITIS

Bronchitis can develop when the airways that carry air to your lungs become inflamed. This results in weakness of breath, wheezing, chest tightness, a cough with mucus, and possibly a low fever. There are several plants that can help open the airways, as well as help the body expel mucus.

REMEDY #1: MULLEIN LEAF TEA

Perhaps one of the most popular plants when it comes to opening up the airways is mullein. Each part of the plant has a specific use. The flowers are used for their analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties, the fuzzy leaves are used for their airway-opening properties, and the roots are used for nerve pain. The large leaves of this plant form a basal rosette and can be harvested and dried for use in tea or tinctures. When suffering from bronchitis, it is helpful to consume a hot beverage like tea to further aid in opening up airways. If you harvest this plant from the wild to dry, do not be alarmed if it seems to always have a “damp” consistency. Due to the thickness and fuzzy nature of the leaves, they do not dry to the point of breaking easily. Lay them out to dry until most of the moisture is gone. You will probably need to break them apart before using, rather than crumbling. Fill a tea bag with the leaves and let it infuse in a cup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes before consuming. Consume up to three times a day. Sometimes these leaves have a bitter taste, so feel free to add raw honey to sweeten your tea. You may feel the urge to cough more after taking mullein, as it has expectorant properties. This is a good thing, as your body is trying to get rid of the mucus causing issues in the lungs.

REMEDY #2: PINEAPPLE AND GINGER TEA

This tropical tea is not only tasty, but beneficial! Ginger is naturally anti-inflammatory, as well as beneficial when it comes to pain. Pineapple juice contains the powerful constituent Bromelain, which has been proven to help with inflammation, as well as with coughing up phlegm. The liquid base of this tea should consist of half water and half pineapple juice. Gently heat enough of this liquid to fill a teacup. Get the liquid hot enough to infuse ginger, but not too hot. When sufficiently heated, pour into a teacup and fill a teabag with raw ginger to infuse for ten minutes. Add raw honey if desired. Enjoy this tea twice a day for best results. An important thing to remember for this recipe is to avoid using canned pineapple juice that may contain added sugars. It is always best to use fresh-squeezed pineapple juice.

PNEUMONIA

Pneumonia is an infection of one or both lungs. There are several causes, including viral or bacterial infections. Pneumonia can cause inflammation in the air sacs around the lungs, making it difficult to breathe. When this condition is left untreated, it can result in death. Depending on what type of pneumonia you have, it may go away on its own. However, some types of pneumonia require antibiotics. It is important to get the proper medical diagnosis before going forward with treatment for this condition.

REMEDY #1: FENUGREEK AND PEPPERMINT TEA

For cases of pneumonia that are less serious, drinking fenugreek and peppermint tea might aid in recovery. For many who suffer from pneumonia, fever is common. Fenugreek has been shown to aid in the reduction of fevers by inducing sweating. Peppermint is a common garden herb that has many uses. It is especially known for its ability to ease respiratory issues. Combined in a hot tea, these two plants can help on two fronts. Fill a tea bag half full with fenugreek seeds and half with peppermint leaves. Let this infuse in a teacup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes. Add raw honey for additional benefits. Drink this tea twice a day for best results.

REMEDY #2: OLIVE LEAF AND GINGER TEA

Olive leaf has been shown to have antibiotic properties, and contains more antioxidants than green tea. It is also antimicrobial, antibacterial, and anti-inflammatory. Ginger is a great addition to this tea to boost the anti-inflammatory effects of the preparation. Fill a tea bag with half dried olive leaf and half chopped ginger. Let it infuse in a teacup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes and enjoy. Raw honey is always a good addition to tea for pneumonia for its antimicrobial properties. Drink up to twice a day as long as symptoms persist.

EMPHYSEMA

Emphysema can result when there is damage to the air sacs around the lungs. This can cause the body to be unable to get the oxygen it needs to thrive. Those with emphysema may find it hard to catch their breath. They may have a persistent and chronic cough, made worse by activity or exercise. The most common cause of emphysema is smoking. The best way to help with this condition is to quit smoking as soon as possible if you are still smoking. As always, a healthy diet and lifestyle can significantly impact your ability to heal. Below are several remedies to help with the symptoms of emphysema:

REMEDY #1: OSHA AND TURMERIC TEA

Osha root is a very popular remedy for lung health and support. It has been used as a lung remedy for thousands of years, beginning with indigenous peoples. It is still used today for sore throat, cough, pneumonia, colds, and viruses. Turmeric is highly anti-inflammatory and can help with the inflammation that causes problems for those with emphysema. To make a tea with these two plants, bring two cups of water to a boil. Add one teaspoon of osha root and one tablespoon of fresh chopped turmeric. Turn the heat down and let this simmer, covered, for twenty-five minutes. Next, strain out the liquid and drink one cup twice a day for best results.

REMEDY #2: OREGANO AND THYME TEA

Both common garden herbs are known for their antimicrobial properties, but they also have additional benefits for those with emphysema. Oregano contains the constituents carvacrol and rosmarinic acid, which have been shown to help with congestion. These constituents are also effective histamine reducers. Thyme has traditionally been used for years to help with respiratory ailments. Combine half dried oregano and half dried thyme to a tea ball or tea bag and let it infuse in a cup of hot water for at least fifteen minutes before drinking it. Raw honey is a great addition to this tea.

ASTHMA

Asthma has been referred to as one of the most dangerous lung ailments. Asthma is characterized by a narrowing of the airways, accompanied by swelling and excess mucus. This can easily lead to breathing difficulty, wheezing, shortness of breath, coughing, and death. Asthma is definitely a disease you should seek medical help with to help control symptoms, as they can come on quickly and without warning. For some people, asthma is a minor issue, but for others, it can be deadly. Below are remedies to help with common triggers of asthma.

REMEDY #1: LICORICE ROOT TEA

Licorice root has been used for thousands of years for a variety of lung ailments. It is said to work by helping reduce the swelling that affects airways. It may also have minor histamine blocking abilities. It can help with coughing and congestion. It may also be effective for minor pain. Prolonged use of licorice root should be avoided if you have high blood pressure. However, prolonged use with any herb can have side effects. To make a tea from licorice root, boil four to eight ounces of water in a pan. Add one teaspoon of the dried root to each four ounces of water you use. Remove this mixture from heat and let it steep for at least five minutes before straining it out and enjoying. Avoid using honey in any tea if you are allergic, as this can trigger an asthma attack.

REMEDY #2: EUCALYPTUS AND PEPPERMINT SHOWER STEAM TREATMENT

This simple remedy combines two plants that aid in opening the airways. Eucalyptus produces a strong, yet pleasant aroma that can help reduce congestion and make breathing easier. Peppermint is also great for opening up the airways. Steam is always a good way to help further open up airways and calm spasmodic lungs, especially during coughing spells. To enjoy the benefits of these plants, simply hang them under your showerhead when you take a shower. Make sure the water is hot enough to produce steam, yet comfortable to shower under. Shut the curtain and the door to the bathroom and let the steam release the medicinal oils in the plants. Meditate and focus on breathing easy. Close your eyes and try not to think about anything but the steam and the pleasant and medicinal aromas coming from the plants. Enjoy this as often as you wish to help with symptoms.

STOMACH AND DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

The digestive system consists of a series of organs. It begins with the mouth and ends with the anus. It turns the food we eat into nutrients that the body uses for everything from energy to growth to cell repair. Many diseases can affect the way the digestive system works. Below are common ailments of the stomach and digestive system and remedies to help ease their symptoms.

DIARRHEA

Diarrhea is a common ailment of the digestive system, and usually a symptom of something else going on in the body, whether it be a virus or food poisoning. People with diarrhea have loose, watery stools three or more times a day. This can lead to dehydration or other serious issues if left to persist. Below are remedies that have historically been used to treat diarrhea:

REMEDY #1: SLIPPERY ELM TEA

Slippery elm has been used by indigenous peoples for digestive issues for many years. It can help calm intestinal irritation by reducing inflammation. It is said to add bulk to stools, thus easing diarrhea. Drink slippery elm in a tea to help with diarrhea. To create a tea from this plant, boil two cups of water with two tablespoon of ground slippery elm. Remove from heat and let it steep for five minutes before straining it out and consuming. Consume twice a day as needed for diarrhea.

REMEDY #2: AGRIMONY TEA

Agrimony is known for its gentleness with adults and children alike. It is especially popular for the treatment of digestive ailments like diarrhea. To create a tea using the plant, add two tablespoons of the dried plant (leaves and flowers), to one cup of water. Bring this to a boil and then immediately remove it from heat. Let it steep for five minutes and consume it when it is not too hot to drink. Consume one to two cups a day for best results.

INDIGESTION

Indigestion can be defined as a recurring or persistent pain or discomfort in the upper abdomen (stomach area). It is usually a sign of another issue, such as an ulcer, gallbladder disease, or gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). It can be bothersome, as well as painful, but the good news is that there are a myriad of plants that have been used for years to help with this condition!

REMEDY #1: FENNEL, CHAMOMILE, PEPPERMINT, AND GINGER GLYCERITE

The plants in this recipe are all known for their stomach-soothing properties. Combined, they can act fast to help with the discomfort indigestion brings. Fennel seeds are aid in healthy digestion, as well as help with bloating and gas. They can work to help relax the muscles in the digestive system, easing symptoms of indigestion. Chamomile is known for its calming properties, but it can also calm the stomach. It has been used traditionally to treat a number of digestive disorders. Peppermint is arguably the most famous remedy for stomach complaints. For many, it is a go-to plant for digestive disorders ranging from irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) to nausea. Ginger is famous for its

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ability to ease stomach issues. It helps with nausea as well. Another plant referred to as “wild ginger” is also effective for these purposes and can be substituted for common ginger if available.

RECIPE: Fill a glass jar with one part fennel seed, two parts chamomile flowers, two parts peppermint leaves, and one part chopped ginger. Pour vegetable glycerin in the jar, but only about three fourths of the way. Next, fill the jar to the top with distilled water. Refrigerate this mixture and shake it daily. Leave it to sit for about four to six weeks. After the allotted time has passed, strain it out through a cheesecloth and bottle the liquid.

DOSAGE: Take a teaspoon of this glycerite at the first sign of indigestion. Take this up to three times a day as needed.

REMEDY #2: CATNIP TEA

Some people are surprised to find out the catnip, although a stimulant for cats, is actually calming to humans. Catnip is a common plant that has been documented for its use in the treatment of gastrointestinal issues like indigestion. It is said to be helpful for intestinal cramps that may lead to all kinds of digestive woes. Enjoy this tasty member of the mint family in tea by filling a tea ball or tea bag with the dried leaves and allowing it to sit in a cup of hot water for ten minutes before drinking. Drink up to three times a day as needed for indigestion, upset stomach, gas, and other digestive complaints.

NAUSEA

Vomiting, or just feeling like you want to vomit, are characteristics of nausea. Oftentimes, this feeling is caused by an underlying issue, such as morning sickness in pregnancy, or stomach flu. Sometimes, however, nausea can come on with no apparent explanation. This unpleasant feeling can be abetted by the following remedies:

REMEDY #1: LEMON AND GINGER NAUSEA LOZENGES

The smell of lemon alone is said to curb nausea. Combining lemon with ginger, another popular nausea cure, can result in an effective remedy. Creating these delicious lozenges is a lot like making candy. You will need a candy thermometer.

RECIPE: The basic ingredients are a half cup of raw honey, two tablespoons of fresh lemon juice, and a teaspoon of fresh grated ginger. Start by combining the three ingredients in a deep saucepan and heating them on medium until they begin to boil. This is where you will need a candy thermometer: heat the ingredients until they reach approximately 300-310 degrees Fahrenheit. This is referred to as the “crack stage” because it hardens. This mixture will foam up during this process, so remove from heat to let it go back down as this happens. Once the desired temperature is reached, remove the pan from heat and let it sit for a few minutes to thicken. Have parchment paper ready and begin to drop a teaspoon-full at a time onto the paper to fully harden.

DOSAGE: Once the drops are hard, dust them with ground cinnamon or arrowroot flour to keep them from sticking together when you transfer them to a container. Take as often as needed when experiencing bouts of nausea.

REMEDY #2: AROMATIC PEPPERMINT BATH SOAK

This simple remedy works on several fronts. First, the smell of peppermint is said to be as effective as ginger and lemon when it comes to curbing nausea. Second, taking a moment to relax in the bath and employ deep breathing

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techniques can help nausea. Third, relaxation of the muscles can also help with nausea. A bath is a great way to foster muscle relaxation. To create this bath soak, combine one third cup of dried peppermint leaves with two cups of Epsom salt. Stir this mixture together thoroughly and then add it to warm bath water. Stir it in the water and allow the Epsom salt to dissolve. Sit in the bath with the curtain closed, allowing yourself to better inhale the steam containing the peppermint vapors. Practice taking slow, deep breaths. Breathe in through your mouth and exhale through your nose. Soak for as long as you wish, making sure to relax and meditate upon your breathing technique.

ULCERS

The lining of the stomach can develop sores called ulcers. These sores can also develop in the upper portion of the small intestine. Symptoms of an ulcer include abdominal pain accompanied by a burning or gnawing sensation. The pain can be felt above the navel and may even radiate through to the back. One of the most common causes of ulcers are over-the-counter anti-inflammatory drugs. Another common cause is bacteria. A healthy diet that encompasses foods rich in antioxidants is one way to prevent ulcers. Below are remedies that have been used to heal and treat the symptoms of ulcers:

REMEDY #1: MASTIC GUM

Not actually a gum, but more of a tree resin, mastic gum was arguably the world's first "chewing gum." This evergreen tree can be found growing along the coasts of the eastern basin of the Mediterranean Sea. When scratched, the trees release sap that dries and hardens. This sap was discovered to have medicinal properties that can help heal ulcers, specifically ulcers caused by H. Pylori bacteria. The resin from this tree can be purchased in raw form and ground into powder for use as needed. You can also chew or suck on the resin for benefits.

DOSAGE: Dosages vary, but up to one gram of the resin has been used each day to help heal ulcers.

REMEDY #2: CABBAGE, HONEY, AND ALOE VERA JUICE

Cabbage juice contains high amounts of Vitamin C, which is said to be effective in combating the bacteria that causes ulcers, H. Pylori. It also has antioxidant properties. Raw honey is extremely beneficial in the healing of wounds and makes a great addition to juice for ulcers. It is also antimicrobial and can help fight bacteria that cause ulcers. Aloe vera juice has been shown to reduce stomach acid, resulting in less irritation to an ulcer.

RECIPE: To make a remedy with these, drink a glass of fresh cabbage juice with two tablespoons of raw honey and one third cup of aloe vera gel/juice. Make sure all ingredients are mixed well.

DOSAGE: A glass of this mixture can be consumed up to four times daily for the treatment of ulcers.

CONSTIPATION

Those with constipation may experience fewer bowel movements than they normally have and hard stools. It may take much longer to have a bowel movement than usual as well. Oftentimes, constipation is a symptom of something else. Going longer than three days without a bowel movement is usually too long. If you think you are constipated, there are several plant remedies that can help evacuate the bowels below:

REMEDY #1: SENNA TEA

Senna leaves help constipation by stimulating nerves endings in the walls of the colon and rectum. It is a very popular remedy for constipation and is even used as an ingredient in some over-the-counter constipation drugs. It has been said that senna is slow to act, and that is because it must reach the bowels to begin working.

Because it may produce a bowel movement in six to twelve hours, you can take it at bedtime and have a bowel movement in the morning. To make senna tea, boil two cups of water in a pot. Add a fourth teaspoon of dried senna leaves. Cover the pot and remove from heat, letting it steep for ten minutes. Strain out and drink at bedtime. You may choose to add honey or another sweetener to taste.

REMEDY #2: PARSLEY SEED AND LEAF TEA

This herbal garnish has also been used to help with mild constipation. It has been used in the past as a remedy for gas, indigestion, and a variety of other digestive issues. To make tea with this plant, fill a bag or infusion ball with half seed and half dried leaves. Let it sit in a teacup of hot water for ten minutes to infuse.

DOSAGE: Drink this up to twice daily for constipation.

IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME (IBS)

Unfortunately, IBS is now a rather common disorder. More and more individuals suffer from IBS each year. Diet and a healthy lifestyle can greatly contribute to healing and relief of IBS symptoms. This disorder of the large intestine is characterized by abdominal pain, cramping, bloating, gas, diarrhea, constipation, or both. Certain foods can trigger IBS, such as too much fiber, chocolate, alcohol, caffeine, sorbitol, and fructose. Other triggers can include soda, fried or fatty foods, and large meals. It may help to keep a food journal to keep track of what may be triggering your IBS. Below are two remedies to help with symptoms of IBS:

REMEDY #1: ARTICHOKE LEAF TINCTURE

Artichoke leaves contain a compound called cynaropicrin. This compound has been shown to be antispasmodic. One-way artichoke leaf tincture helps with IBS is that it can normalize bowel movements. Those with IBS can have both constipation and diarrhea, so artichoke leaf may provide relief from the constant back and forth.

RECIPE: Fill a small jar with dried artichoke leaves and cover them with alcohol. Let the mixture sit for four to six weeks and strain out when you are ready to bottle it.

DOSAGE: Take six to twelve drops of this tincture twice a day under the tongue for best results.

REMEDY #2: EVENING PRIMROSE-INFUSED OIL

Evening primrose has been found to be helpful for women who have IBS. It has been shown to reduce IBS symptoms that often worsen during menstrual periods.

RECIPE: You can create an oil extract with evening primrose flowers and seeds by infusing them in coconut oil. Coconut oil may be helpful for those with certain types of IBS because it may aid in constipation relief. To infuse in coconut oil, melt the oil and pour it over three parts dried or wilted evening primrose flowers and one part seed. In an oven safe dish or bowl, bake the mixture on a very low setting (150 degrees is fine) for four to five hours. Take care not to let the oil boil, so check it often and adjust the temperature if necessary. After it is finished infusing, carefully remove it from the oven and let it cool.

DOSAGE: Take one teaspoon of this up to twice a day. Add it to recipes if desired!

LIVER

Our liver is our largest internal organ. Located under the ribcage, the liver sits on the right side of the belly. This organ is meaty, weighs roughly three pounds, and is comprised of two large sections called the right and left lobes. The primary job of the liver is to filter blood coming from the digestive tract before filtering it to the rest of the body. Another job of the liver is to detoxify chemicals and metabolize drugs. As a result, it secretes a substance called bile. The liver has it especially rough, as it is responsible for processing all the bad things our body takes in. Sometimes, our liver cannot handle the load, and problems arise. Below are various common issues that can arise with the liver, as well as remedies to help.

FATTY LIVER DISEASE

Fatty Liver Disease simply means that you have extra fat in your liver. This can be a problem because it can make it harder for your liver to work. If left untreated, this can lead to more serious problems, such as scarring in the liver and even cirrhosis. Diet and a healthy lifestyle might help reverse this condition. Eating healthy, unprocessed foods can be easier on your liver and help it to heal. If you suffer from fatty liver disease, it is best to avoid alcohol, sugar, fried foods, foods high in fat and calories, salt, white bread, pasta, rice, and red meat. All these foods and drinks can harm the liver. Symptoms of fatty liver disease include yellowing of the eyes and skin (jaundice), loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, and moderate to severe abdominal pain. Swelling of the liver is also a sign of issues. The liver cannot usually be felt, as it is hiding under our ribcage, but sometimes the liver swells and grows larger in size when there is an issue, making it more visible and noticeable.

REMEDY #1: GREEN TEA WITH LEMON AND LIME FOR LESS FAT ABSORPTION

Studies have shown that green tea may help interfere with our body's fat absorption. It is currently being studied to see if it can help reduce fat storage in the liver, as well as improve liver function. In addition to these things, green tea has been said to aid in lowering cholesterol, as well as help you get a better night's sleep. In conjunction with a clean diet, drinking green tea may be a great idea if you have fatty liver disease! To create a tasty green tea beverage, combine a fourth cup of lemon juice, a fourth cup of lime juice, and five cups of water. Bring it to a boil in a pot. Remove it from heat and cover it with a lid after infusing five tea bags of green tea inside. Let them infuse for fifteen minutes. Add peppermint leaves and raw honey as desired. Drink this as often as you please. Serve hot or chilled.

REMEDY #2: WALNUTS TO PROMOTE LIVER FUNCTION

Walnuts are a great source of omega-3 fatty acids. Research has shown that those who have fatty liver disease and begin eating walnuts regularly actually have improved liver function tests! Add walnuts to everything! Create a liver-healing smoothie with greens like spinach, kale, and Brussels sprouts.

RECIPE: Add walnuts and blend thoroughly. Sweeten it with raw honey for a great way to start the day. Throw a handful of walnuts into a salad for lunch. Eat walnuts as a snack if you are hungry and want something filling. There are limitless ways to enjoy this healthy nut!

CIRRHOSIS OF THE LIVER

Cirrhosis of the liver is more serious than fatty liver disease. This is the result of scarring. Causes of this condition vary, but one of the most common causes is alcoholism. Alcohol is very hard on the liver. Regular use of alcohol over a period of time can directly impact the liver in a very negative way. Other causes of cirrhosis include Hepatitis B and C. The liver tries to heal itself, but when it is attacked on a constant basis, self-healing is hard. Symptoms of cirrhosis include abdominal pain on the right side, lack of appetite, severe itching, weight loss, fatigue, and jaundice. Below are remedies for this condition:

REMEDY #1: MILK THISTLE GLYCERITE

Milk Thistle is arguably one of the most popular herbs for liver health. It has been used for thousands of years by those wanting to support their liver. Although there are many preparations, it is best to avoid alcohol when you suffer from cirrhosis. Therefore, a glycerite is the best way to use this plant to treat liver issues. Milk thistle is not very water soluble, so teas or decoctions are not good ideas either. It is thought to work by concentrating within the liver cells and crowding out toxins.

RECIPE: To create an extract with this plant, use all the aerial parts. Fill a jar with dried plant material and then fill the jar three-fourths of the way with vegetable glycerin. Because vegetable glycerin is so thick, you may want to top it off the rest of the way with distilled water or apple cider vinegar. Put the lid on and shake it well. Store this mixture in a cool, dry place for four to six weeks. Shake it daily to further promote infusion.

DOSAGE: Strain it out when ready and bottle. A good dosage to start is two milliliters, twice a day. You may go up to three milliliters if you are not seeing results after a month or two. Some people have reported that this plant may have a laxative effect.

REMEDY #2: JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Japanese Knotweed is often thought of as an aggressive and invasive species in other parts of the world. However, this plant may be useful in the treatment of issues like cirrhosis of the liver. This plant is an abundant source of the compound resveratrol. This compound is actually an antioxidant that has been shown to increase survival of those who had liver transplants, decrease fat deposition, and protect the liver from injury. This thick-stalked plant is edible, and is said to taste very similar to rhubarb. Incorporate this plant into your diet by cooking it in stir fry, etc. You can also drink it. Drinking it in tea is a great way to harness its medicinal properties. If you are lucky enough to have this invasive plant growing near you, harvest it and chop it well. Boil around two cups of water and infuse a one third to one half cup of chopped knotweed into the pot. Remove from heat and let it infuse for ten to fifteen minutes. This can be enjoyed as a hot or cold beverage. Sweeten with raw honey to taste. In many areas, you can get into legal trouble for helping this plant spread, so burn any leftover plant material you are not going to use!

HEPATITIS

There are several types of hepatitis that can negatively impact the liver. One type is a viral infection. Other types of hepatitis that affect the liver include autoimmune hepatitis and hepatitis caused by drugs, medications, alcohol, and other toxins. Hepatitis is an inflammatory condition of the liver. Early symptoms of hepatitis include dark urine, joint pain, fatigue, abdominal pain in the liver area, clay-colored stools, loss of appetite, nausea or vomiting that comes on suddenly, and a low grade fever. Some types of hepatitis are treated with antiviral medications. Treatment of hepatitis depends on knowing which type of hepatitis you have and understanding the condition.

REMEDY #1: ASTRAGALUS TEA

If you happen to be suffering from viral hepatitis, astragalus may be a plant worth trying. Research has suggested that this plant may help reduce damage and death of liver tissue caused by viruses. It may also block the virus from replicating. Drinking a tea made from astragalus root may be a good method to try first. To make a tea using this plant, infuse one teaspoon of the dried, shredded root in two cups of hot water for ten minutes. Strain it out and drink up to twice a day for best results. Astragalus may work well in conjunction with milk thistle for this condition.

REMEDY #2: DANDELION ROOT TEA

What most people see as a common (if not annoying) yard plant, many herbalists see as a valuable medicinal gift. All parts of the dandelion are useful. The flowers are edible and delicious as fritters. The leaves are a rich source of vitamins and minerals, and the roots are known for their tonic properties, especially related to the liver! Dandelion roots are thought to help the liver by acting as a diuretic and helping to detoxify the liver. The root has also been used for high cholesterol, heartburn, gastrointestinal disorders, and cancer. Create a beneficial tea with dandelion roots by infusing one tablespoon of fresh, chopped roots into two cups of hot water. Let it infuse for ten minutes before consuming. Since dandelion is found almost everywhere, you can opt for digging up your own dandelion roots to use medicinally. However, if you do this, make sure you are getting them from a place that has not been sprayed with pesticides or any other harmful chemicals.

HEMOCHROMATOSIS

Hemochromatosis is a hereditary disorder that causes iron salts to be deposited into tissues. This leads to liver damage, among other issues. Early symptoms of this disease include a lack of energy, abdominal pain, weight loss, weakness/fatigue, body hair loss, low sex drive, memory issues, and heart flutters. Most cases of hemochromatosis are treated with a procedure known as phlebotomy. This entails removing blood from the body to reduce iron overload. If you have hemochromatosis, things to avoid include foods high in iron, excess red meat, raw seafood, foods rich in vitamins A and C, fortified foods, supplements that may increase iron, and alcohol. Foods to eat more of include fruits and vegetables with antioxidants and beverages like tea and coffee (due to tannins that help the body inhibit iron absorption). Below are remedies that may help the body lower iron levels.

REMEDY #1: GOLDEN MILK WITH CLOVE AND CINNAMON

Turmeric is a great resource for those wanting to reduce the build-up of iron in the body. It has been shown to reduce iron overload, as well as fight inflammation. Clove and Cinnamon both contain tannins. Tannins are thought to help the body inhibit iron absorption, thus making them perfect when used in conjunction with turmeric. All of these

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ingredients mesh well together in a warm, golden milk drink. Cow's milk is low in iron. Additionally, what iron it might contain is poorly absorbed by the body. It may even work to decrease the absorption of iron from other dietary sources.

RECIPE: Combine one tablespoon powdered turmeric with two cups of milk on the stovetop. Under low heat, stir constantly until the turmeric is completely dissolved and absorbed into the milk. Add powdered cinnamon and clove to taste. Consume when the mixture is sufficiently warmed.

REMEDY#2: CINNAMON AND CLOVE FRAPPE

Coffee contains tannins, so it is no wonder that it may be useful in recipes for hemochromatosis.

RECIPE: Create a frappe by mixing ice, coffee, cinnamon, clove and milk in a blender and enjoying this chilled beverage for breakfast. You can leave out the ice and blend it together while still warm to create a creamy and spicy coffee. All ingredients listed are good sources of tannins!

LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

The lymphatic system is a vital part of the way our body works. It is responsible for helping the body to get rid of waste, toxins, and unwanted materials. It transports a substance called lymph throughout the body to fight infections. Lymph is comprised of white blood cells. If one does not watch their diet, it is likely their lymphatic system may get bogged down with toxins. Below are several common lymphatic system issues and remedies that can help.

POOR LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE

Sometimes, the lymphatic system does not function like it should. This can be caused by an injury to the area or a disease. Symptoms of poor lymphatic drainage include blisters, skin changes, skin discoloration, infection, and leaking or fluid from the skin. Other signs you may have lymph issues include lymphedema. This is a swelling of the lymph nodes. If lymphedema is present in the neck area, you may have trouble breathing, talking, or swallowing. Below are remedies using plants that have been proven to cleanse the lymphatic system and promote proper drainage:

REMEDY #1: CLEAVERS COLD INFUSION

Perhaps one of the most famous lymphatic cleansing plants is cleavers. This sticky, unique plant is very common in early spring. It is best used fresh. Cleavers have been used historically to combat water retention, help with urinary tract infections, and most importantly, to tonify and cleanse the lymphatic system.

RECIPE: Make a decoction with cleavers to help promote lymph passage through the body, as well as unclog blockages. Create a cold-infusion with cleavers by macerating one and a half ounce of fresh cleavers. Infuse this in a pint of warm water for at least two hours.

DOSAGE: Take anywhere from two to four ounces three to four times daily. Store in the fridge and drink when cold.

REMEDY #2: DEVIL'S CLAW TEA

Devil's claw has been used for its ability to stimulate lymph, improve the body's natural lymphatic drainage, as well as to promote detoxification of the lymphatic system. It has also been said to help with conditions like arthritis and gout- likely due to its anti-inflammatory properties. Create a cleansing tea by brewing four to five grams of the root in one to two cups of water. Allow to steep for ten minutes before straining it out and drinking it. Drink once a day for lymphatic support.

LYMPHOMAS

Lymphomas are a type of cancer that begins in lymphocytes. Lymphocytes are the infection-fighting cells of the immune system that can be found in the lymph nodes, spleen, thymus, and bone marrow. Early signs of this include enlarged lymph nodes, weight loss, chilling, chest pain or pressure, fatigue, shortness of breath or a cough, and a swollen abdomen. Some people also experience a feeling of being full after only eating a small amount of food. There are several remedies that may help with the symptoms of lymphomas, but it is also very important to seek

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medical treatment for lymphomas, as they can be deadly. The remedies below are complimentary therapies that can be done in addition to medical treatment:

REMEDY #1: GINGER AND CHAMOMILE TEA

Ginger can be helpful for those going through cancer treatment for lymphoma because it helps reduce nausea. Chamomile pairs well with ginger in this particular recipe because it is calming and helps to reduce stress and anxiety.

RECIPE: Add freshly grated ginger to a tea bag, along with chamomile flowers. A good ratio is one-part shaved ginger to two parts chamomile flowers. Let this infuse in a hot cup of tea for ten minutes before consuming. Add raw honey to taste.

DOSAGE: Enjoy daily, along with other therapies like yoga, acupuncture, and meditation, to help with stress and nausea. Make sure that ginger does not interfere with any cancer treatment or medications before consuming.

REMEDY #2: LAVENDER LEMONADE

Famous for its stress-reducing and calming properties, lavender has been used for years to help with a variety of stress-related issues. For this reason, it is handy to have around when you are suffering from conditions that can cause extra stress in your life. It can be used topically, as well as internally. Enjoy this refreshing lavender lemonade to promote relaxation and well-being!

RECIPE: Combine a handful of freshly-picked lavender flowers (or a tablespoon of dried buds), with two cups of boiling water. Let it steep for several minutes. Let this mixture begin to cool. While still warm, add one and a half cup of fresh lemon juice and enough raw honey to sweeten the mixture. Add more cold water to taste. Serve on ice.

SPLEEN

The spleen is a major part of the lymphatic system. Its job is to act as a filter for blood. Old red blood cells are recycled in the spleen. The spleen also stores white blood cells and platelets. The spleen can fight for us when we have certain infections like pneumonia and meningitis. Sometimes the spleen is injured, infected, or diseased. Sometimes it is even removed due to the severity of injuries sustained. Although it is possible to live without your spleen, removal results in other organs like your liver having to work to take over for the spleen's absence. For many people, there are no symptoms associated with spleen disease. For others, signs that the spleen is not functioning properly include a pain or fullness in the upper left abdomen. This pain is said to spread to the left shoulder. Symptoms such as anemia, fatigue, frequent urination, easy bleeding, and frequent infections may be present with spleen malfunction. Below are remedies to promote spleen health and longevity:

REMEDY #1: CHINESE SKULLCAP TEA FOR SPLEEN SUPPORT

The roots of Chinese skullcap are thought to target the spleen, as well as the heart, large intestine, lungs, gallbladder, and small intestine. The medicinal effects of this plant may be due to the fact that it contains antioxidants called flavones. These flavones are thought to help with the effects of oxidative stress on the spleen. In addition to these attributes, Chinese skullcap may also help the body with inflammation.

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RECIPE: Create a tea for spleen and liver support by infusing a tea bag full of dried and chopped Chinese skullcap root into a hot teacup of water for ten to fifteen minutes.

DOSAGE: Drink this daily, or as long as symptoms persist.

REMEDY #2: WHITE ATRACTYLODES TO TONIFY THE SPLEEN

In Chinese medicine, this genus of the sunflower family has been used to help with dampness of the spleen, poor appetite, vomiting, fatigue, and other symptoms of a diseased spleen. It can be taken in many forms, such as tinctures, decoctions, and teas.

RECIPE: For tea, infuse the chopped and dried rhizomes in a tea bag or infusion ball in a teacup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes.

DOSAGE: Drink this daily for spleen tonification. Drink in a decoction for a more concentrated dosage.

GALLBLADDER

Although many people are walking around without one, the gallbladder does an important task in the body. It stores and concentrates bile. Bile is a digestive enzyme that is produced by the liver. The gallbladder also serves as a reservoir for bile when it is not being used for digestion. When stones or sludge develops in the gallbladder, the pain it brings can be massive. It radiates from the upper abdomen and between the shoulders. This pain is usually referred to as a “gallbladder attack.” These attacks are often accompanied by nausea and vomiting.

Other symptoms of gallbladder disease include tea-colored urine and light colored stools, a yellow color in the whites of the eyes (jaundice), and fever accompanied by chills. It is no wonder many who suffer from gallbladder malfunction just have it removed. However, there are side-effects to gallbladder removal as well. This is because all the bile that was once in the gallbladder is redirected straight to the intestines when the gallbladder is removed. This can mean that the body might have a difficult time learning to digest fat. It may react with severe and sudden diarrhea, flatulence, or even constipation at times. Some people wish to avoid the complications of surgery and eat a diet low in fat and other foods that may upset the gallbladder. They may also try gallbladder cleanses to remove stones. Below are remedies for gallbladder issues:

GALLSTONES AND SLUDGE

Most often, gallstones and sludge are the reasons for gallbladder woes. Gallstones are hardened deposits of digestive fluid that form in the gallbladder. They can become a problem when they are too big to pass out of the gallbladder and become stuck in the biliary duct. This can be very painful. Symptoms of gallstones include pain in the right shoulder and pain in the central or upper right portion of the abdomen. This attack can last anywhere from thirty minutes to several hours. Sludge is another gallbladder issue. Sludge is formed when bile remains in the gallbladder for too long. This results in mucus mixing with cholesterol and calcium salts. This can especially become a problem in pregnancy, so if you think you might be experiencing gallbladder pain or attacks and you are pregnant; watch your diet very closely to avoid further complications! Eat healthy, calcium rich foods like dark leafy greens.

Eat lean protein, fiber, and healthy fats only. Make it a point to avoid all refined carbohydrates. Refined carbohydrates include sugars, sweeteners, flour, starches, and refined grains. These can upset the gallbladder. Other foods to avoid include excessive or unhealthy fats. Unhealthy fats include fried foods and ultra-processed foods. Avoid trans-fats, hydrogenated oils, and excessive saturated animal fats as well. Following this diet may significantly reduce your chances of suffering from an attack. Remember that the more attacks you have, the higher the chances that your gallbladder could rupture, putting you in mortal danger.

REMEDY #1: PSYLLIUM HUSK, APPLE CIDER VINEGAR, AND APPLE JUICE DRINK

Get a good dose of fiber from psyllium husks by mixing it in gallbladder-friendly liquids like apple juice and apple cider vinegar. Psyllium husks have been studied for their ability to protect the body from the formation of cholesterol gallstones. Apple cider vinegar is prescribed in many gallbladder cleanses because it is thought to soften gallstones, making them easier for the body to excrete. Drinking apple cider vinegar undiluted is not only cringe-worthy; it is also not good for your tooth enamel. This is why those who drink it tend to mix it with something else, usually apple juice.

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RECIPE: Try to opt for apple juice low in sugar, as it is never good to ingest large quantities of sugar! Fill a blender with a cup of apple juice, a third cup of apple cider vinegar, and sprinkle in a teaspoon of psyllium husk powder.

DOSAGE: Drink this daily, along with eating healthy, to avoid gallbladder attacks.

REMEDY #2: PEPPERMINT TEA

Some people have reported success with peppermint tea when drank at the first suspicion of a gallbladder attack. Peppermint is known for its ability to promote digestive ease, curb nausea, and ease pain. The menthol in peppermint is often credited for these abilities.

RECIPE: Place dried peppermint leaves into a tea bag or infusion ball and let them infuse in a hot cup of water for ten minutes before drinking the tea. As sweeteners can cause gallbladder upset, it is best to avoid using them in this tea.

DOSAGE: In addition to helping ease the pain of an oncoming gallbladder attack, it can be enjoyed daily to promote gallbladder health and prevent attacks as well.

CHOLECYSTITIS AND REMOVAL

Cholecystitis is an inflammation of the gallbladder. The most common cause of cholecystitis is gallstones blocking the tube leading out of your gallbladder. Blockage of the tube causes a buildup of bile, which then leads to major inflammation. If left untreated, this can lead to gallbladder rupture. This would cause all the bile and other material in your gallbladder to then spill out into your abdominal cavity, which could lead to infection and death. Sometimes the gallbladder doesn't rupture, but the tissue dies. This condition can also be lethal. Many times, people with cholecystitis end up having their gallbladder removed. Sometimes this is unavoidable. Below are remedies for taking care of your body and promoting healing after the removal of the gallbladder due to cholecystitis.

REMEDY: BONE BROTH WITH STINGING NETTLE AND DANDELION LEAVES

After the gallbladder is removed, the body must adjust to the new way it has to digest food. This can be very hard for many people, as they will experience unwanted side-effects like diarrhea, bloating, and pain. It is important to gradually re-introduce food back into your diet to avoid these things. A great way to promote healing, be easy on your digestive system, as well as provide yourself with nourishing plants, is to make a bone broth and infuse it with nutritious leaves from nettles and dandelions.

Bone broth is a wealth of nutrition in itself. It is said to help detoxify the liver, relieve joint pain, aid in wound healing (perfect for post-surgery), support digestive health, promote healthy bones, and boost immune function. It is incredibly easy to make this base for soups!

RECIPE: After cooking a turkey or chicken, take the bones/carcass after all the meat is gone and put it in a pot. Cover the bones in water and let this simmer on the stove for hours to release the nutrients from the bones and into the water. The longer you let it simmer, the better. Try to go for at least six to eight hours of simmering under low heat if you can. Add garlic and other useful herbs and spices to flavor this broth. When you feel it is thick and you can see the gelatin in the pot, strain out this broth and set it aside to cool. Freeze it in freezer-safe jars until you are ready to use it. When you are ready to make soup with this broth for gallbladder removal healing, thaw it and add

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the desired amount of nettles and dandelion leaf and let this infuse for as long as you wish before consuming. Nettles contain vitamins A, B, C, and K. They contain a variety of minerals, amino acids, carotenoids, as well as antioxidants. They have medicinal properties ranging from healing inflammation to helping lower blood sugar. Dandelion leaves are an abundant, as well as nutritious edible green. While young, they have a tasty flavor. They contain vitamins, minerals, fiber, and even folate. Because these contain fiber, take care not to add too many to the broth to avoid gas after surgery!

KIDNEYS, BLADDER AND URINARY SYSTEM

Also referred to as the renal system, the urinary system is comprised of the kidneys, ureters, bladder, and the urethra. This system eliminates waste from the body, regulates blood volume and blood pressure, controls metabolites and electrolytes, and helps regulate blood pH. The kidneys make urine when they filter wastes and extra water from the blood. Urine then travels through ureters to the bladder where it will stay until the bladder is full. Signals are sent to the brain to eliminate the bladder and they body urinates through the urethra to fully expel the urine. Below are common problems that arise within this system, as well as remedies to treat them.

INFECTIONS OF THE URINARY SYSTEM

One of the most common maladies that affect the urinary system is urinary tract infections. These infections can also occur in the kidneys, bladder, and urethra. Women are more susceptible than men, although men can suffer from these infections as well. Bacteria typically enter the urinary tract through the urethra and then make their way to the bladder where they multiply. Symptoms of an infection in these areas include a sudden, strong urge to urinate. You may have this feeling, and then when you urinate, you still feel like you need to go. Other symptoms are a burning when urinating, passing frequent, small amounts of urine, strong-smelling urine, cloudy urine, and pelvic pain (especially in women). Sometimes blood is present in the urine during an infection and urine will have a pinkish tint or be bright pink to brown colored. There are some differences in symptoms, depending on if you are suffering from a kidney, bladder, or urinary tract infection. If you are experiencing flank pain, fever, nausea/vomiting, and chills, you may have a kidney infection. If you feel pelvic pressure, major discomfort in the lower abdomen, have frequent and painful urination, or blood in the urine, you may have a bladder infection. Finally, if you are experiencing burning when you urinate and discharge, you may have a urinary tract infection.

If you suffer from frequent urinary tract infections, there are some steps you can take to prevent getting them in the future. Possibly the most important thing you can do for urinary tract health is to drink plenty of water. Assess your water intake: how much are you drinking daily? Are you drinking sugary drinks instead of water? Optimally, you should be drinking around two-and-a-half liters if you are female and three-and-a-half liters if you are male. This helps flush out bacteria that might cause issues! Also, opt for taking showers as opposed to baths. Baths can up your chances of letting bacteria into the urethra. If you are female, try urinating after intercourse to flush out potential bacteria that may be present. Avoid sugar, which can feed bacteria and make any infection worse. On a related note, cranberry juice is a popular remedy for a urinary tract infection. However, it does absolutely no good to drink cranberry juice if you are drinking it with sweeteners like sugar or even artificial sweeteners. Opt for unsweetened cranberry juice if you can.

REMEDY #1: UVA URSI AND GOLDENSEAL TINCTURE

Goldenseal is a natural antibiotic. It has been known to kill bacteria that cause infections in the body. Uva ursi, also known as bearberry, is a shrub. It contains compounds called glycosides. Glycosides are converted to hydroquinone in the body. This antibacterial substance can attack infections. Uva ursi also helps with urinary pain and inflammation. It contains tannins that give it an astringent effect in the body. Create a tincture with these two plants to help flush out infection. This is best taken at the first sign of issues, so prepare this ahead of time to have on hand.

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RECIPE: Fill a small jar with two parts goldenseal leaf and root and one part uva ursi leaves. Cover with alcohol and let it infuse for four to six weeks before straining it out to bottle. At the onset of symptoms, take two droppers-full three times a day.

DOSAGE: Drink plenty of water as you take this tincture. Do your best to help your body flush out the infection. Avoid sugars, which feed the infection.

REMEDY #2: CORN SILK TEA

Like cleavers, corn silk is an excellent diuretic. It helps the body flush out unwanted bacteria. It seems to have an anti-inflammatory effect on the urinary system. It is water-soluble, so a great way to use it to its fullest potential is to infuse it in hot water and drink like tea. Fill a pot with two cups of water and bring it to a boil. Add a generous handful of corn silk and remove it from heat. Let it steep for ten minutes and strain out. Drink a cup of this two times a day as long as symptoms persist. Remember to continue to drink plenty of water during this time. Since corn silk is a diuretic and helps the body expel water, you must be extra careful not to dehydrate yourself because this can make the infection worse. Drink as much water as you can handle while taking corn silk.

KIDNEY STONES

Many who have experienced the pain of kidney stones will swear that the pain caused by these tiny fragments of minerals, calcium, or salts is worse than any pain they have experienced. These stones start in the kidneys, and oftentimes if they just stay in the kidneys, no symptoms are present. However, it is when these stones move from the kidneys to other places in the urinary system and become lodged, that severe pain develops. Symptoms of these stones include nausea and vomiting, an intense need to urinate, dark-colored urine, burning during urination, and men sometimes describe pain in the tip of the penis. One of the most common symptoms is a sharp, cramping pain in the back and side. This pain can move to the lower abdomen and groin as well. The pain might come on suddenly and also come in waves as the body tries to expel the stone. The first line of defense in treating these stones may be simple, but it is effective: drink plenty of water! When trying to pass a stone, drinking more water can actually speed up the process. Drink more water than usual when you suspect a kidney stone. Once you pass the stone, continue to drink an elevated amount of water in order to keep more from forming. Below are remedies that can aid in the passing of stones:

REMEDY #1: HORSETAIL JUICE

Horsetail is an interesting plant. It is said to be one of the oldest surviving plants to survive from millions of years ago. It is actually a product of larger plants that grew 270 million years ago during the carboniferous period. This plant is thought to be a scourge by many because it can be aggressive and take over quickly. It is a noxious weed that loves wet and watery areas. What makes this plant so special and useful for herbalists is that it contains silica. Silica can help promote healthy skin, hair, and nails. It is also great for fluid retention. Horsetail is used for kidney and bladder issues because it may help expel stones faster due to its ability to promote expulsion of fluids. In addition to increasing urine flow, horsetail can soothe swelling and irritation caused by the stones.

RECIPE: The medicinal portions of the plant lie inside the thick stalks. Cut them open to scrape out the gel and process this into juice. Drink a cup of this juice daily when experiencing symptoms of stones. It should be noted that horsetail can decrease vitamin B levels and potassium, so avoid if you have any conditions that affect these levels. It also contains nicotine, so beware of using this plant if you wear nicotine patches.

DOSAGE: Do not drink horsetail juice if you take lithium, diuretics, or heart medications. Avoid using this plant for prolonged periods.

REMEDY #2: GOLDENROD TEA

Goldenrod gets a bad reputation because many people blame it for their seasonal allergies. However, goldenrod is not usually to blame for these allergies, but has the misfortune of growing at the same time ragweed does, making it guilty by association. The truth is, goldenrod is a powerhouse of antioxidants and medicinal properties. In fact, it has quite a bit more antioxidants than green tea. It is also used for kidney and bladder health because it acts as a diuretic, helping to flush out impurities. It increases urine flow and helps the body release excess water. In spite of its bad reputation for allergies, it can actually help the symptoms of allergies for some people. It is also used to combat viruses. Harvest the aerial parts of this lovely golden plant when it is flowering. In many areas, the best time to harvest is in the fall, when the plants are in full bloom. Let them hang or sit to dry and then use them in tea as needed. To create a tea with goldenrod, simply fill a tea bag or tea ball with dried, finely crumbled goldenrod flowers and leaves. Let this infuse in a hot cup of water for ten minutes before enjoying. It has a pleasant flavor! For an extra potency, mix a few tablespoons of apple cider vinegar in the tea as well. Apple cider vinegar has been said to help dissolve kidney stones due to its acetic acid content.

DOSAGE: Drink this mixture throughout the day when suffering from symptoms of kidney stones.

KIDNEY INJURY

Sometimes injury to one kidney – or both – may cause issues with the urinary system. The kidneys are bean-shaped organs located against the back muscles in the upper abdomen. The right kidney sits slightly lower than the left due to the location of the liver. Because of the location of the kidneys, this is why most kidney issues present pain in the back area. These organs are hard to damage, but it does happen. Whether it is a car accident or fall, kidneys can be damaged. Other causes of kidney injury include loss of blood flow to the kidneys due to dehydration or blood loss. This is why it is important to stay hydrated at all times, especially when you are sick! Below are remedies that nourish the kidneys and promote kidney health:

REMEDY #1: BEET AND APPLE JUICE

Beetroot may help reduce the risk of kidney failure by replacing the lost nitric oxide in the kidneys. Ongoing studies are being conducted to further prove this theory. Apple juice is lower in potassium, which makes it a good juice to blend with beet juice for kidney health.

RECIPE: Use fresh beet roots for juicing, filling half of an eight ounce glass. Top the remainder of the glass off with unsweetened apple juice.

DOSAGE: Drink this combination daily to promote kidney health. Beets contain higher levels of oxalates, so avoid if you are especially susceptible to kidney stones.

REMEDY #2: JUNIPER BERRY AND DANDELION ROOT TEA

Juniper berries are a diuretic, making them a good remedy for kidney issues. Diuretic plants are usually prescribed for a variety of urinary system issues because they help to rid the body of excess water and increase the flow of

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urine. Juniper berries contain a compound called terpinen-4-ol. This compound is thought to increase the rate of kidney filtration, helping to flush out bacteria by increasing urine flow. Dandelion root is renowned for its ability to cleanse and tonify the liver and kidneys. It may also help increase urine production. Fill a tea bag or tea ball with half juniper berries and half dried and chopped dandelion root. Let this mixture infuse in your teacup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes before consuming. You may add a small amount of raw honey to sweeten it.

CAUTION: Since both of these plants are diuretics, you will want to make sure and drink plenty of extra water, as your body might be working to expel excess water afterwards. Drinking plenty of water is essential to kidney health.

OVERACTIVE BLADDER/INCONTINENCE

An overactive bladder can affect anyone, but it seems to affect women who have had children the most. This is partly due to the fact that a growing fetus sat on top of the bladder for months. Also, pregnancy and childbirth can weaken the pelvic muscles, making it harder to hold urine. An overactive bladder is described as a condition in which the bladder squeezes out urine at the wrong times. Symptoms of an overactive bladder include urinating eight or more times a day and two or more times at night. Other symptoms include a strong need to urinate immediately. Incontinence is described as urine leakage. There are two types of incontinence: the first is referred to as stress incontinence. This is when the body leaks urine after sneezing, coughing, laughing, lifting, or exercising. Another type of incontinence is referred to as urge incontinence. This is characterized by a sudden urge to urinate, followed by involuntary loss of urine. While these conditions come with age, as well as natural wear and tear on the body, there are several things you can do to help. The first thing you can do is help strengthen the muscles that help to hold in urine. These muscles can be “exercised.” To do this, make sure your bladder is empty and sit down. Tighten the pelvic floor muscles, holding for three to five seconds. These are the muscles you use to stop the flow of urine. Relax the muscles for three to five seconds. Repeat this exercise then times, three times a day to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles and increase your ability to hold in urine. Other things you can do to help with this condition include avoiding coffee (it is a diuretic and can make you have to urinate worse), stop smoking, lose weight if needed, and treat any existing constipation. Below are additional plant remedies that are said to help with an overactive bladder and incontinence:

REMEDY #1: PUMPKIN SEED TINCTURE

Pumpkin seeds are often used by herbalists for clients needing to strengthen their bladder. It can be especially helpful with strengthen bladder tissue, helping it better expand and contract. It can help the nerves in the bladder regain control (especially after childbirth) and reduce trips to the bathroom during the day and night.

RECIPE: To create an extract with pumpkin seeds, simply fill a jar with pumpkin seeds and cover them with alcohol. Tighten the lid and let this mixture sit for four to six weeks, shaking daily.

DOSAGE: Strain out the tincture when it is ready and take six to twelve drops of this tincture daily to increase bladder strength.

REMEDY #2: BLADDERWRACK TEA

Bladderwrack is actually a type of sea moss. It is an abundant source of iodine, making it useful for thyroid conditions, as well as urinary system issues. It contains anti-inflammatory properties, and can help soothe irritated

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tissues in the body. Because of this, it is thought to help treat an overactive bladder due to irritated bladder tissue. Make a tea with this moss by placing one fourth cup of dried bladderwrack in a jar or teapot and filling it with boiling water. Let it steep for a few minutes, then strain and let warm before consuming.

DOSAGE: This tea can be consumed two to three times a day. Feel free to add a sweetener like raw honey to this tea.

REMEDY #3: BUCHU

Buchu is a South African plant that has been used for many years for a variety of urinary system issues. This spicy bush is said to have a taste similar to black currant. The leaves of the shrub are the main part used for medicinal purposes. Buchu is said to be anti-inflammatory, as well as antiseptic. Like many plant remedies for the urinary system, it is also a diuretic. This plant is also used for carminative action and treatment of cystitis, urethritis, prostatitis, and gout. Some herbalists use it to treat leukorrhea and yeast infections as well.

RECIPE: Create a nourishing tea with the leaves of this plant by boiling a teapot of water and adding finely chopped leaves (around one teaspoon of leaves per cup of water). Remove from heat and let this steep for ten minutes before straining out.

DOSAGE: Drink when warm enough to consume. Enjoy this tea one to two times a day.

FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

The female reproductive system consists of the ovaries, which produce eggs, the vagina, the uterus, and fallopian tubes. This system goes through a series of phases each month beginning with the follicular phase and ending with the luteal phase. It functions due to the delicate balance of hormones helping it run smoothly. Sometimes, due to a variety of factors, problems can arise in the reproductive system that can result in infertility, menstrual issues, pain, and more. Below are several common issues of the female reproductive system, as well as remedies to help balance and nourish this amazing and life-giving system.

HORMONE IMBALANCE

As women age, they may experience a variety of unwanted symptoms due to an irregular fluctuation of hormones. Symptoms of a hormonal imbalance include irritability, weight gain, adult acne, depression, anxiety, irregular or absent menses, memory issues, sleep issues, joint pain, migraines, vaginal dryness, low sex drive, and hot flashes. These symptoms are not always indicators of menopause or perimenopause, and there are plant remedies that may help correct the imbalances causing issues. However, it is important to have bloodwork done so you can pinpoint specific hormones that may need lowered or raised, depending on your circumstances.

REMEDY #1: CHASTE BERRY TINCTURE FOR OVERALL HORMONAL BALANCE

If your hormones are out of balance, chaste tree berry may be especially helpful. If your prolactin levels are too high, it may be able to lower them and restore proper hormonal balance, bringing on regular menses, or in the case of menopause, a healthier balance of female hormones. Chaste tree berry is known to be adaptogenic, meaning it can detect and fix the problem, bringing balance to the body.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with the berries by filling a jar with them and covering everything with alcohol. Let it sit for at least four weeks before straining out the liquid.

DOSAGE: Take two droppers full twice a day. Sometimes this needs a few months to begin working, so do not give up on it too soon, but rather, give it time and patience to begin balancing your hormones.

REMEDY #2: MACA FOR ESTROGEN DOMINANCE

Maca is a well-known remedy for feminine issues. It is primarily used for estrogen dominance. It is thought to balance hormones by encouraging a more favorable estrogen and progesterone balance. Women taking maca also report an increased sex drive, making this remedy helpful for those suffering from a low sex drive due to hormonal issues. This plant comes from Peru. It is said that the red variety of maca is best for hormonal support, so make sure you have this variety on hand to create your plant remedy with. Make a Tincture with maca by filling a jar with dried and chopped roots. You do not have to fill the jar to the top, filling it three-fourths of the way will do. Cover the roots with alcohol and then fill the rest of the jar with distilled water. Shake this mixture well and leave it in a cool, dry place for four to six weeks. Shake it daily to promote infusion. Strain it out after the allotted time and take one dropper full two to three times a day.

REMEDY #3: NOURISHING THE UTERUS WITH RASPBERRY LEAF AND RED CLOVER

Red raspberry leaves have been used traditionally for their uterine-nourishing properties. They are said to tone the uterus and help strengthen it. Drinking an infusion of these leaves might help nourish the uterus. The vitamins and minerals in these nourishing leaves will also help provide your body with additional nourishment. Red Clover is also full of nutrition. It is a sweet-tasting pink clover that contains phytoestrogens. Phytoestrogens are a plant version of the hormone estrogen. If you are experiencing problems with low estrogen production, this plant is especially helpful.

RECIPE: Combine a half cup of red raspberry leaves and a half cup of red clover in six cups of boiling water. Let this boil until the liquid is reduced to roughly four cups.

DOSAGE: Drink one cup a day. This can be refrigerated for several days, so you can prepare it ahead of time to drink through the week.

ENDOMETRIOSIS

This painful disease of the female reproductive system can wreak havoc and cause an abundance of scar tissue in the body if left untreated. What happens in the body of a woman with this condition is that the lining of the uterus, also called the endometrium, grows outside the uterus. This lining can grow and cover the fallopian tubes, the ovaries, and many other parts of a woman's insides. There are several stages of this condition, depending on the extent of the scar tissue, cysts, and damage. Stages include minimal, mild, moderate, and severe. Severe endometriosis is characterized by large cysts on at least one ovary, and dense adhesions throughout the pelvic region. This affects women of childbearing age.

Many women will begin to notice signs of this disease when they begin having periods. This is because the endometrium will begin growing where it is not supposed to each time a woman has a menstrual period. Each period will become more and more painful. Symptoms include very painful periods with severe cramping. Periods may last longer than normal. Bleeding is usually heavy during periods as well. Some women with endometriosis complain of severe migraines and lower back pain with periods. Other symptoms include painful bowel movements (endometrium can grow on colon and surrounding areas), as well as diarrhea. When endometrium grows near the bowels, it may lead to digestive issues like bloating and gas. Women may also experience nausea and fatigue during their menstrual cycle as a result of the damage being done inside. It is important to make sure you get medical attention at the first sign of this condition to be treated before it gets too severe.

The good news is that no matter how severe, there is hope. There are several ways to help your condition if you have endometriosis. It has been discovered that diet plays a role in treating endometriosis. Try to eat foods high in omega-3 fatty acid. This compound was found to reduce inflammation on endometriosis lesions. Eating foods high in antioxidants is also helpful. Antioxidants can help reduce endometriosis pain. Begin your diet by researching foods that are consistent with an anti-inflammatory diet. Eating foods that support this type of diet may help to reduce symptoms of endometriosis. Foods to avoid when you are suffering from this condition include sugar and processed foods. Sugar can make things worse.

Processed foods contain ingredients that may cause more inflammation, so try to eat organic, whole foods like fruits and vegetables. It is also important to avoid foods high in trans fats. It has been discovered that women who

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consistently eat foods high in trans fats have a much higher chance of suffering from endometriosis. Reading labels should become second nature to a women suffering from this condition. Get to know what is in your food and how your body responds to certain foods. Sometimes, you can help treat endometriosis with diet and the right plant remedies.

Other times, depending on the damage already done, you may require surgery to remove the lesions and scar tissue. By the time menopause comes, the symptoms of endometriosis usually fade. This is because the condition thrived with the cycle of hormones released during menstrual periods. When menopause occurs, these hormones, specifically estrogen, are significantly reduced. Estrogen is the hormone responsible for causing the uterine lining to thicken each month. Knowing this, it is important to avoid all plants, foods, and supplements that are phytoestrogens. These include red clover, soybeans, tempeh, sesame seeds, linseed, soy, oats, barley, and wheat berries. Below are other ways to help treat the symptoms of endometriosis:

REMEDY #1: TURMERIC AND BLACK PEPPER TINCTURE FOR FIGHTING ENDOMETRIOSIS INFLAMMATION

Turmeric has already been mentioned more than once in this book, and that is for good reason. Many diseases of the body are caused by inflammation. The Curcumin in turmeric has been scientifically proven to reduce inflammation. Another theory about turmeric is that the curcumin it contains may help endometriosis by reducing the chemical estradiol. This may help reduce excess tissue development in the lining of the uterus. This root also contains antioxidants, which may be helpful for treating endometriosis.

RECIPE: Create a tincture from the fresh roots of turmeric by chopping them finely and filling a jar three-fourths full. Next, add one to two tablespoons of organic black peppercorns. You may add them whole or choose to grind them first. If you grind them, only add one tablespoon. Cover the contents of the jar with alcohol, put a lid on it, and sit it somewhere dark and cool for four to six weeks. Shake the jar daily to help the turmeric better infuse in the alcohol. When it is ready, strain it out and squeeze it really good through a cheesecloth to make sure you are getting all the liquid out of the plant material.

DOSAGE: Bottle your remedy and take two droppers full, two to three times daily. Remember to use caution when taking turmeric because it may interact with certain blood thinning medication, as well as blood pressure medication.

REMEDY #2: LAVENDER, CHAMOMILE, PEPPERMINT AND GINGER FOR PAIN

Lavender contains compounds that help with mild to moderate pain. It may aid in pain relief associated with menstrual period cramping. Peppermint may also aid in pain relief associated with menstrual periods because it contains antioxidants. Chamomile is known for its calming properties, as well as helping with mild to moderate pain. However, more promising news about this flower is emerging. One theory suggests that a substance called chrysin in chamomile actually helps to suppress the growth of endometrial cells. This could be highly beneficial for those with endometriosis! Finally, ginger is known for its anti-inflammatory properties. These properties can help reduce inflammation, as well as relieve pain.

RECIPE: Create an infusion of these plants to drink daily for endometriosis pain management. First, fill a half-gallon glass jar with a half cup of sliced, fresh ginger. Add a half-cup of dried peppermint leaves, as well as a half-cup of chamomile flowers. Finally, add one-third cup of dried lavender buds. Boil enough water to fill the jar. Dump

the water into the jar of plant material and let this sit and infuse for several hours. When it is cooled, put it in the fridge.

DOSAGE: Drink one to two cups of this infusion daily. It is best to begin drinking this a week before your projected period, as well as during your period for best results.

MENOPAUSE

Menopause occurs when a woman's menstrual cycles stop. Most women go through this at around 45 years of age, although some women experience discontinuation of a menstrual period before or after this age. A woman's ovaries will stop producing the hormones required for ovulation and menstrual periods. These hormones include estrogen and progesterone.

When a woman has not had a period for one year, this is considered to be menopause. Signs you are nearing menopause include irregular periods, hot flashes, sleep disturbances, vaginal dryness, and mood swings. Other signs include fatigue, breast tenderness, lowered sex drive, premenstrual syndrome worse than usual, and urine leakage when coughing or sneezing. Although the symptoms of menopause can be uncomfortable, it is good to know that there are several plants that have been used historically to treat the symptoms of menopause. Some plants contain phytoestrogens and other plant-based hormones that are very similar to the hormones we produce. Taking these plant remedies can actually help the body replenish these hormones and thus relieve symptoms:

REMEDY #1: RED CLOVER INFUSION

This common clover is a common type of clover that is not really red. It is often confused with crimson clover, and rightfully so. Red clover's name suggests that it is red, when it is in fact pink. This plant can be found flourishing in the wild all over North America, but is native to Europe, Western Asia, and Northwest Africa. It is a plant that easily grows about everywhere it is planted, so it is no wonder it has established itself in so many parts of the world.

This clover has a pleasant and sweet taste. It is usually harvested by taking the flowering tops and sometimes the little green leaves just under the flower. It is then dried and used in teas, decoctions, poultices, and more! A great way to enjoy this plant for menopausal symptoms is to make an infusion with it. This plant is one of several plants that have been discovered to contain phytoestrogens. Phytoestrogens are plant-based estrogens. These compounds have been found to be very similar to the estrogen women make, and many women have proclaimed its success in alleviating symptoms of menopause associated with lowered estrogen production.

RECIPE: To create an infusion, fill a half-gallon glass jar with two cups of dried or fresh red clover flowers. Boil enough water to fill the jar. When it has come to a boil, carefully dump the hot water over the plant material in the jar and let it sit and infuse. Refrigerate the jar when it is cooled enough to go in the fridge. This will last three to five days in the fridge.

DOSAGE: Drink one to two cups of this infusion daily to curb symptoms of menopause.

REMEDY #2: BLACK COHOSH FOR DRYNESS AND HOT FLASHES

Many women going through menopause find vaginal dryness and hot flashes to be particularly annoying. Black cohosh root has been used for thousands of years to help relieve these symptoms. It is important to take this root at the earliest sign of menopause for it to have the best effect.

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RECIPE: Drink this in tea for its benefits: Fill a tea bag with dried black cohosh roots and let it infuse in a teacup of hot water for around fifteen minutes before consuming. Add raw honey to sweeten.

DOSAGE: Drink a cup daily to curb unwanted menopausal symptoms.

REMEDY #3: VALERIAN ROOT TEA FOR NIGHT SWEATS AND INSOMNIA

Valerian root has been used traditionally to treat a variety of issues, including insomnia, stress, anxiety, and headaches. It is a mild central nervous system depressant and can have relaxing properties. Many menopausal women complain of night sweats and the inability to sleep. Valerian works great for these issues. There is also evidence that valerian root may help relieve joint pain associated with osteoporosis. This plant remedy is far superior to melatonin for insomnia, as most melatonin is synthetic. In addition, taking melatonin can result in losing your body's ability to make it naturally. This can mean that you may become dependent on it. Valerian is a great alternative to melatonin, and does not come with the negative side effects! Drink valerian root tea thirty minutes before bedtime.

RECIPE: Fill an empty tea bag with dried and chopped valerian root and let it infuse in a cup of hot water for fifteen minutes before consuming. Avoid excessive sweeteners in this tea, as they may be counteractive to the effects of the valerian root. Do not operate heavy machinery, drive, or anything similar after taking this tea.

REMEDY #4: DONG QUAI FOR HORMONE BALANCE

Dong quai can be enjoyed in a tea to help balance hormone levels during menopause. Another benefit of dong quai is that it may help with pain from cramping associated with premenstrual syndrome. Pelvic pain from premenstrual syndrome may worsen around menopause.

RECIPE: Add chamomile to this tea to help fight hot flashes as well! In a tea bag, add one-part chamomile flowers and two parts dried dong quai root. Let this mixture infuse in a teacup of hot water for fifteen minutes prior to consuming.

DOSAGE: Drink this tea daily, especially when you are experiencing premenstrual symptoms such as moodiness, irritability, and pelvic pain.

REMEDY #5: SKULLCAP AND PASSIONFLOWER FOR ANXIETY RELATED TO HORMONE IMBALANCE

Skullcap is a nervine, meaning it works on the nerves to help calm anxiety, frustration, and irritability. Passionflower has many of the same uses. When combined, they can work synergistically to help those experiencing problems with anxiety and stress. This tincture would work great in conjunction with one of the hormone-balancing remedies mentioned in this book.

RECIPE: Fill a jar with chopped (dried or fresh) skullcap and passionflower. Use the aerial parts of the plants and do one part skullcap and one part passionflower. Cover the plant material with a solvent and let this infuse for four to six weeks. Strain it out and put the liquid extract in a dropper bottle.

DOSAGE: Take one to three droppers full, up to twice a day for anxiety.

ISSUES WITH MENSTRUAL PERIODS

The ages in which women have menstrual periods vary greatly. Every woman is different. Some women will still have regular periods into their sixties, while others will begin to see periods stop in their mid to late thirties. In a non-menopausal woman, a period will occur around every twenty eight days and last anywhere from three to five days, but “normal” varies, and can also mean anywhere from one to seven days. Periods can be long or short, as well as heavy or light. However, when periods are irregular, involve excessive bleeding or severe cramping, there may be an issue. Below are remedies that can help with issues surrounding menstrual periods:

REMEDY #1: YARROW TEA FOR HEAVY BLEEDING

Yarrow is a wonderful plant with fernlike leaves and white flowers. It can come in other colors, but the most popular variety to be used medicinally is the variety with white flowers, *Achillea millefolium*. It is said that yarrow got its Latin name from Achilles, the Greek warrior. He was reported to have used this plant with his soldiers in battles to treat bleeding. There are different ways to use this plant, depending on the circumstances. For external cuts and scrapes, grind the dried leaves into powder to apply to wounds to stop bleeding. For internal use, yarrow can be prepared in tinctures, decoctions, and teas.

RECIPE: A great way to enjoy yarrow while treating a heavy period is to drink it infused in tea. Add dried leaves and flowers to an empty tea bag and let it infuse in a hot teacup of water for at least ten minutes before consuming.

DOSAGE: Drink this up to three times a day during a heavy period. This tea can also help reduce fevers by inducing sweating.

REMEDY #2: MOTHERWORT FOR ANXIETY, STRESS, PAINFUL PERIODS, AND ABSENT PERIODS

Motherwort is often referred to as a woman’s herbal companion. It has been used traditionally as an effective remedy for the absence of a period due to hormonal imbalance. It is also said to help with painful periods by nourishing the uterus. It is especially helpful in alleviating painful period cramping associated with uterine spasms. Motherwort may act to soothe the uterus by calming it and improving blood flow and circulation to the pelvic area. This member of the mint family is also known for its calming effect. It can help with symptoms of anxiety and stress, making it valuable before and during a period. Motherwort is also known for its ability to help with heart-related issues.

RECIPE: For the treatment of menstrual issues, infuse two teaspoons of dried motherwort in one cup of boiling water. Let this steep for ten minutes before straining out. Consume when cooled enough to drink.

DOSAGE: You can drink this tea up to three times a day for menstrual issues.

REMEDY #3: PARSLEY FOR ABSENCE OF A PERIOD

Parsley has been used historically as an herb to bring on menses when pregnancy is not the cause. Do not use this remedy if there is a chance you may be pregnant. In addition to starting a late period, parsley may also help soften the cervix, helping better open for menstrual periods. To take parsley for delayed menses, fill a tea bag with fresh or dried parsley leaves. Let this infuse in hot water for at least ten minutes before consuming. Consume this tea

every three to six hours until a period begins. If you do not experience a period after twenty four hours, wait another day before trying it again.

UTERINE FIBROIDS

Women who have uterine fibroids oftentimes do not experience any symptoms. These noncancerous tumors are made of muscle tissue. Even though not all women who have uterine fibroids experience symptoms, the women who do say they can cause symptoms like pain, heavy menstrual bleeding, a feeling of fullness in the pelvic area, lower back pain, pain during intercourse, and reproductive issues. Some pregnant women with uterine fibroids have an increased chance of having a C-section due to complications. Uterine fibroids are not cancerous, but there are fibroids in the uterus that can be cancerous. Those are referred to as leiomyosarcomas. They are very rare. Oftentimes, if fibroids are not causing any symptoms in a woman, nothing will be done for them except perhaps keeping an eye on them to see if they get bigger. Sometimes, medication and surgery may be needed to help with fibroids. After menopause, many fibroids shrink on their own. Women who are overweight are at an increased risk for fibroids. Losing weight may actually help if you have an existing fibroid. Eating a diet rich in whole foods like fruits and vegetables can help with fibroids. Avoiding processed foods, carbohydrate-rich foods, sugar, and other baked goods may also help if you have uterine fibroids. Below are remedies for treating uterine fibroids naturally:

REMEDY #1: GREEN TEA TO REDUCE FIBROIDS

This popular tea high in antioxidants may also help reduce the amount and size of fibroids due to the presence of a compound called EGCG. This compound has been shown to help reduce inflammation and reduce bodily toxins.

RECIPE: Infuse a tea bag of green tea into a hot teacup of water for ten minutes before consuming.

DOSAGE: Drink green tea up to three times a day for best results.

REMEDY #2: PEONY

Chinese herbal medicine has been trusted for centuries and is still used today. Chinese peony is one such medicinal plant that has been traditionally used for women's reproductive issues. It is said to have a specific effect upon the uterus. This is perfect for women with issues related to uterine fibroids. The plant works by relaxing smooth muscle tissue in the uterus, as well as other parts of the female reproductive tract. There are two types and preparations of the peony. In both types, the root is primarily used. The first type is referred to as "white peony" and this is root without bark.

The second is referred to as "red peony" and this has the bark included. Oftentimes, you will see that the white peony is made from cultivated plants and the red from plants foraged in the wild. While red and white peonies have similar properties, there are some differences in their medicinal action. The white variety is thought to be more stimulating to the uterine tissues, while the red is thought to be more tonifying to the uterine tissues. Both peony varieties are anti-inflammatory and may possibly have immunomodulatory effects. It is important to be mindful of these differences as you choose which is right for your specific needs. To use these plants for uterine issues, you can drink a tea from the roots. Simply bring two cups of water to a boil and add a tablespoon of peony root. Remove from heat and let this steep for ten to fifteen minutes before straining it out. Drink one to two cups a day for uterine fibroids or any other issues involving the uterus.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES IN WOMEN

It is true that both women and men are affected by sexually transmitted diseases. However, it is a known fact that women are affected at an alarmingly higher rate. Sadly, women have a greater chance of being negatively impacted by an STD, as far as long-term health complications. One such complication that can arise from female STDs is infertility. It is also possible to pass certain STDs to a baby if an affected woman becomes pregnant. There are a several reasons why a woman is impacted so severely when it comes to STDs.

One reason is as simple as her anatomy. Unlike a penis with relatively thick skin, a woman's vagina has thin skin and a delicate mucus membrane. This makes it much easier for a virus or bacteria to enter and cause issues. In addition, the vagina is typically a warm, moist environment, making it much more susceptible to bacteria growth. Symptoms of STDs can go largely unnoticed by many women because they can be very subtle. Some women may not know they have an STD, thus not treating it right away. With STDs like Gonorrhea and Chlamydia, if left untreated, a condition called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease can develop. This disease can cause infertility, pain, and put women at a high risk for ectopic pregnancy.

REMEDY #1: GARLIC, OREGANO, AND OLIVE LEAF TINCTURE FOR INFECTIONS LIKE CHLAMYDIA AND GONORRHEA

Sexually transmitted infections like gonorrhea are usually treated with antibiotics. It is important to seek medical attention for any disease that may negatively affect your body and cause infertility. The remedy below is only for those who are in emergency situations where they cannot find access to a doctor. Gonorrhea is usually noticed when there is pain during urination. In women, vaginal itching and pain during urination are symptoms. Blood in urine is also common in those with gonorrhea. Uncomfortable urination where you feel like you have to go constantly or urination where you feel like you cannot get all the urine out are also symptoms. Other symptoms include weight loss (usually due to appetite loss), headaches, and depression.

Chlamydia is characterized by the absence of symptoms. Many men and women who have this infection do not know it until it is too late. There are subtle symptoms, but they are ignored most of the time. It is especially important to pay attention to your body and be alert to even the minutest of changes. When chlamydia symptoms are reported, they usually entail pain during urination, pelvic pain, vaginal discharge, and blood in the urine. There are several plants that act as natural antibiotics and may help fight these infections. These include garlic, olive leaf, and oregano. All three are known for their strong antibiotic properties. The earlier you can start treating this infection, the better your chances are at recovering.

RECIPE: In a six-ounce jar, combine two or three chopped garlic cloves, one part dried and crushed oregano leaves, and one part dried and crushed olive leaf. Cover the material with at least 80 proof alcohol and put the lid on. Shake this mixture daily for four to six weeks, leaving it in a cool, dark place while it infuses. Strain it out when it is ready.

DOSAGE AND CAUTIONS: Take ten drops of this three times a day for six to eight weeks. If this is taken with colloidal silver, you may help boost the antibiotic power of the treatment. Colloidal silver is simply water infused with particles of silver. It has been used for many years to treat infections. It is important to know that just like prescription antibiotics; plant antibiotics also kill the “good bacteria” in your body along with the bad. This means that to keep your gut health strong, you should take a probiotic to replenish the good bacteria.

REMEDY #2: NATURAL VITAMIN C FOR IMMUNE-BOOSTING POWER

It is known that vitamin C works to boost the immune system and help fight off illness and infection. It also works as an antioxidant to help reduce inflammation and pain associated with most STDs. There are many plants that naturally contain this compound. Eat as many vitamin C rich foods as possible if you suspect an infection. Foods that contain vitamin C include citrus fruits and vegetables. However, there is one particular and common plant that contains more vitamin C than citrus fruits. This plant is the rose. In particular, rose hips. Rose hips are the fruit of the rose bush. In the fall, the places on the bush that used to be roses will turn into these big, red balls. These are known as rose hips. Just a tablespoon of rose hips contain more vitamin C than multiple oranges combined! One species of wild rose that is common, and even invasive in North America, is called *Rosa rugosa*. These roses are found everywhere in open fields, the woods edge, and waste grounds. In the fall, noticeable red fruits appear where the roses once were. This particular species of rose has bigger rose hips than many rose species. Because of their abundance and fruit size, collecting a great amount of rose hips is relatively easy.

RECIPE: These are made into a tincture by finely chopping them and filling a jar (fresh is best). Cover the macerated rose hips, but leave a little space for adding some water as well. Vitamin C is especially water soluble, so it helps to use a little water when making a tincture with them to ensure maximum absorption in the liquid. Shake this mixture and sit it in a cool, dry place to infuse for four to six weeks. When straining it out, take care to strain it well. Some people use coffee filters because rose hips can contain tiny, irritating hairs that may cause issues.

DOSAGE: Once strained, bottle this liquid and take one dropper full, twice a day at the first sign of an infection or virus to boost the immune system.

YEAST INFECTION

Yeast infections are very common in most women. It has been reported that at least 75 percent of all women experience them at one time or another. These can be very uncomfortable and cause symptoms like severe itching and irritation, increased discharge that is odorless and looks like cottage cheese, swelling, burning during urination, and painful intercourse. A yeast infection occurs when the balance of bacteria in your vagina is offset. Your body produces good bacteria called lactobacilli to grow. Growth of this bacterium is a result of the hormone estrogen. Not all bacteria are bad, and this is especially true for lactobacilli! This bacterium actually helps to kill harmful organisms in the vagina. When something happens to kill off lactobacilli, a bad bacterium called candida can flourish. Candida is to blame for yeast infections.

There are many causes of yeast infections. These include douches or vaginal sprays. Avoid using these at all times because all they do is upset your vagina's natural balance and cause issues. Sex can cause yeast infections. Most people are not even aware that sex can spread them as well. Changing or fluctuating hormones can cause yeast infections. Oftentimes, pregnant women will experience them. Birth control pills and menopause may also be to blame. Another notorious cause of yeast infections is antibiotics. Make sure if you are taking antibiotics, or plant remedies that include antibiotic plants, that you are taking a probiotic as well. This ensures that the good bacteria remain to do their job and your body's delicate balance is not disrupted. Also, if you are taking antibiotics, try eating yogurt in addition to taking probiotics, to help restore balance. Avoid using body washes in your vaginal region. A healthy vagina only needs warm water to cleanse it. Anything else will throw off the balance and potentially cause issues. If you are especially prone to yeast infections, it may be in your best interests to take a probiotic and eat yogurt daily for prevention. Below are remedies that have been used to restore balance to the vagina if one suspects a yeast infection:

REMEDY #1: COCONUT AND TEA TREE BOLUS

Coconut oil is naturally antifungal and may help to kill candida. The great thing about coconut oil is that it is naturally the perfect consistency to create a bolus with. Always avoid coconut oil that is “fractionated.” This means it has been processed to the point of staying in a melted state. It has also lost most of its medicinal benefits. Tea tree oil has been used for many years as an antifungal and helps with conditions like overproduction of candida and even ringworm. Tea tree essential oil is commonly used in most remedies involving the treatment of yeast infections. It is simply the result of tea tree leaves being steam distilled.

RECIPE: What comes out of the condenser when the steam passes through the tea tree leaves in a still is tea tree hydrosol and essential oil. It is an isolated and strong concentrate from the plant. If you do not have tea tree essential oil, you can make a tea tree oil infusion by heating tea tree leaves into coconut oil for six to eight hours on the very lowest setting in your oven. Strain it out and let it cool before molding into a ball (otherwise known as a bolus for this preparation) that can be inserted vaginally. If you happen to have tea tree essential oil on hand, add three to four drops to one cup of coconut oil and make sure the oil is melted enough to mix well and let the oils combine.

DOSAGE AND CAUTIONS: When it is cooled and back to a solid state, simply get a big enough piece and mold it into a ball that can be inserted vaginally. When you insert a bolus, make sure you get it far enough into the vagina. You don’t want it up against the cervix, but a little down from the cervix so it can melt and drip down through the vaginal canal to reach all the candida (it has a low melting point and will melt relatively fast upon insertion). When you insert a bolus, lie down promptly to ensure it doesn’t come back out. Stay lying down as long as you can to help this get where it needs to be to kill candida.

REMEDY #2: APPLE CIDER VINEGAR AND TEA TREE BATH

You can take a bath using this recipe, in conjunction with the above remedy, to help treat a yeast infection. Apple cider vinegar can help to change the pH of your vagina when it is out of balance due to a yeast infection. Add ten to twenty drops of tea tree essential oil to two cups of apple cider vinegar and dump this in a warm bath. If you happen to have lavender essential oil on hand, you can add ten to twenty drops of this as well. It is naturally antimicrobial and antifungal as well.

DOSAGE: Do this daily to help kill candida. It is imperative that you avoid using any other products in the bath, as they may make your yeast infection worse!

BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS (BV)

Bacterial Vaginosis is characterized by excessive growth of bacteria in the vagina. Symptoms include a foul smelling discharge that is white or gray in color. It has been described as smelling “fishy.” Pain during urination is another symptom. Unlike yeast infections, itching is uncommon with bacterial vaginosis. Like yeast infections, the cause is an imbalance of bacteria in the vagina. The bacteria that are mostly responsible for this infection are called Gardnerella. Certain factors put you at an increased risk for developing bacterial vaginosis. One factor is a new sex partner, or multiple partners. As with many vaginal imbalances, another cause is douching. As with yeast infections, antibiotics can upset the balance of bacteria in the vagina and cause bacterial vaginosis as well. Smoking increases your risk for developing bacterial vaginosis. Finally, IUD forms of birth control have been known to contribute to this condition. Pregnancy can bring on changes in the balance of vaginal bacteria, and thus many pregnant women suffer from this infection. It is important that if you suspect you may have bacterial vaginosis, you

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first rule out STDs like Chlamydia and Gonorrhea before treatment, because they are much more serious. To avoid getting this infection, you can take certain steps like making sure you always wear breathable cotton underwear. Wearing underwear that are made of non-breathable fabric can cause an environment that help bacteria grow. Also, make sure you are practicing good hygiene. Good hygiene includes wiping from front to back (vulva to anus) when going to the bathroom. It also means changing your pad or tampon as often as you can during your menstrual period. If you are sexually active, make sure your partner keeps their genitals clean. Wash with only warm water when bathing and avoid using any soap or products that may upset the delicate balance of your vaginal region.

REMEDY #1: GARLIC BOLUS

Garlic has been used to treat bacterial vaginosis because it contains compounds that can help kill off the overproduction of bad bacteria. Make sure you take a probiotic when you are treating any bacterial infection of the vagina.

RECIPE AND USAGE: Create a bolus by infusing chopped garlic cloves into coconut oil. Finely chop two cloves of garlic and let this infuse in a cup of coconut oil in the oven. Make sure it is on the lowest heat setting. This can infuse for up to six hours before you take it out and strain out the garlic (you will need to strain it out when it is still warm before the coconut oil hardens again). Take care to avoid burning yourself with hot oil or a hot baking dish. Let this cool and harden before molding into balls and inserting vaginally. Insert a bolus one or two times a day when you suspect an infection. Lie down to let it settle in the vaginal canal and work on killing off bacteria. If you have tea tree oil on hand, you can add two to four drops to this mixture as well. If you experience any discomfort or reaction, discontinue using the boluses.

REMEDY #2: COCONUT AND TEA TREE OIL ALTERNATIVE APPLICATION METHOD

Another alternative to a bolus is to soak a tampon in the medicinal oils and insert this into your vagina instead of a bolus. The good thing about this method is that it will stay in place, delivering the bacteria-killing oils to where it is needed for a longer amount of time. Simply follow the steps in the remedy above for creating a coconut oil and tea tree bolus (under treatment for a yeast infection) and before the oil cools and hardens, soak tampons in it. You can soak as many tampons as will fit and absorb what you made. Just make sure you keep them somewhere clean for later use. Insert the tampon like you normally would and let this sit for three to four hours before taking it out. Take it out earlier if you suspect a reaction is taking place. Remedies for yeast infections and bacterial vaginosis can be used interchangeably, so feel free to try all of them if you think you have bacterial overgrowth in the vagina.

FEMALE SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

Female sexual dysfunction is characterized by an inability to maintain arousal or an inability to be aroused at all. This could also be an inability to produce natural lubricant that helps during sexual intercourse. Oftentimes, this is caused by hormones.

Hormones play an important role in sexual health and arousal. Whether it is menopause, pregnancy, or just a hormone imbalance, there are several plant-based remedies that have been used historically to help with sexual dysfunction in females:

REMEDY #1: MACA FOR SEXUAL DESIRE AND DEPRESSION

Maca has been used by native Andean peoples for thousands of years to treat a variety of fertility issues, with one being sexual dysfunction. Because it is also good for lifting the spirits, it may help to alleviate depression that may result from lack of intimacy. Drink maca root in an infusion for helping with lowered sexual desire.

RECIPE: First, boil a quart of water. Next, dump the water over a cup of chopped and dried maca roots in a glass quart jar. Let this infuse for six to eight hours before consuming. If desired, you can let it infuse longer.

DOSAGE: When it cools, put it in the refrigerator and drink one to two cups each day.

REMEDY #2: MILKY OATS TINCTURE

Often described as an unlikely, yet effective remedy, milky oats are a popular plant remedy for boosting the female sex drive. It is said that they work by freeing bound testosterone (a hormone responsible for sex drive in men, but also present in women in small amounts). This wonderful plant is also used to treat mild to moderate depression, as well as soothe and strengthen nerves.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with milky oats, harvested when they secrete a milky substance and are still green. Fill a jar with the oats and cover them with alcohol. Let them infuse for four to six weeks before straining out the liquid and bottling for use.

DOSAGE AND CAUTIONS: Take three to five milliliters, three times daily for best results. These are said to be safe for all ages, as well as for pregnancy and nursing! The only contraindication for these is for people with gluten intolerance or celiac disease. However, many with these conditions can still take milky oats without issues.

MALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

The male reproductive system consists of several sex organs that help with reproduction. These organs are the penis, scrotum, testes, spermatic ducts, and sex glands. Together, these parts help produce sperm, other material in semen, as well as the male gamete. The penis helps to deliver sperm out of the body and into the female vagina, where if conditions are right, it will fertilize an egg and create life. Various conditions can interfere with the way this system works and thus affect the quality of a man's sex life, as well as hormone levels. Below are several common issues with the male reproductive system, as well as plant remedies to address them.

MALE HORMONAL IMBALANCE AND ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION

Most people associate estrogen with women and testosterone with men. However, to function properly, a man needs a healthy balance of testosterone, estrogen, and prolactin. There are times when these hormones can become out of balance, causing unwanted side effects like erectile dysfunction. Other symptoms of a male hormonal imbalance include low sex drive, breast enlargement (called gynecomastia), and breast milk production (caused by elevated prolactin levels). As men age, their bodies can start to produce less testosterone and more estrogen. This might be a reason for gynecomastia. Below are several remedies for male hormonal support, as well as erectile dysfunction:

REMEDY #1: GINSENG AND TURMERIC TINCTURE

Ginseng is an adaptogen, so it is great for balancing hormones and anything in the body that is out of balance. Turmeric pairs well with ginseng in this recipe to cut down on inflammation in the body that may be contributing to hormonal issues.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with these two plants by filling a jar with half chopped turmeric root and half chopped ginseng roots. Cover the plant material with at least 80 proof alcohol and place a lid over it tightly. Shake it well. Leave it in a cool, dark place for at least four weeks before straining it out to bottle for consumption.

DOSAGE: Take one dropper full three times a day.

REMEDY #2: TRIBULUS FRUIT FOR SEX DRIVE AND HORMONAL SUPPORT

This fruit has so many benefits for men! In combination with a healthy diet and exercise, taking this fruit is said to help sperm health and increase sex drive. There is a compound in tribulus called protodioscin that is said to elevate DHEA levels. This is especially helpful for men with erectile dysfunction, which have been found to lack this. There are also compounds in the fruit that can elicit sexual arousal. Tribulus can help increase sperm count, sperm health, and sperm motility. It can also support hormonal balance and testosterone in men. Tribulus is most often taken in capsule form.

RECIPE: Capsules are made by dehydrating and grinding the fruit into a powder and putting it into pill capsules. It is recommended to fill five hundred milligram capsules and take one a day to start.

DOSAGE: Everyone is different, but if you are not experiencing any negative side effects from this, you can up the dosage to two capsules a day.

REMEDY #3: YOHIMBE BARK FOR ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION

Yohimbe bark has been used traditionally for impotence and erectile dysfunction. It is said to work by increase circulation to the tissues, thus helping with factors associated with impotence. It can make erections firmer. It may also help sustain the erection.

RECIPE: It can be made into a tincture by filing a jar with the bark pieces and covering them with alcohol. Let this sit and infuse for four to six weeks. Shake it daily to promote infusion from the bark into the liquid. Strain it out when it is ready and bottle for consumption.

DOSAGE: A good dosage to start is one dropper full a day. You can up this to twice a day if you are not seeing results after a few weeks. Pay attention to your body and be alert for any potential blood pressure drops while taking this.

CAUTION: Due to this bark's circulation stimulating qualities, it is important to remember to take this with caution. Do not take this if you have low blood pressure or are on any blood pressure medications. Do not take this with cheese, liver, or red wine because they contain the amino acid tyramine.

REMEDY #4: ASHWAGANDHA FOR BALANCE, ENERGY, AND SEX DRIVE

Ashwagandha is another adaptogen, so it will help provide your body with hormonal balance and support. It is especially popular with men and famed for its ability to increase energy, improve sexual function, balance hormones, increase stamina, and even increase muscle mass. This particular remedy is helpful if you are suffering from a hormonal imbalance that is producing too little testosterone and too much estrogen.

RECIPE: Tincture ashwagandha by filling a jar with dried and chopped ashwagandha roots and covering them with a solvent (either alcohol or vegetable glycerin, or a mix of both). Let this sit in a cool, dark place for six weeks, shaking the jar daily to help the medicinal compounds in the roots infuse into the solvent better. Strain it out when it is ready and put the tincture in a dropper bottle.

DOSAGE: Take one dropper full up to three times daily as needed for hormonal support.

REMEDY #5: CHASTE TREE FOR HIGH PROLACTIN AND PITUITARY TUMORS (PROLACTINOMA)

Although an increase in prolactin is more common in women, men can also be affected. Prolactin is responsible for helping women produce milk. Scientists are still debating its function in men, although it is present for a reason. If prolactin levels get too high in a man, this can result in the production of breast milk. It can also affect the testicles, sperm, energy, and muscle mass. Oftentimes, when a man or woman is experiencing problems with high prolactin, the doctor will run a blood test and possibly order a scan of the head. This may seem strange, but the reason for this is that the pituitary is responsible for the creation of hormones like prolactin. It is located in the head, just behind the eyes and below the brain. It is a tiny gland, but acts as the main hub for the endocrine system.

Sometimes, the pituitary can develop a benign tumor that makes the body produce too much prolactin. This is nothing to be alarmed about, but definitely something to watch closely. Since the prolactin-causing tumor is so close to the optic nerve, it may cause peripheral blindness or "tunnel vision." If this is the case, more extreme measures may be needed like removal of the tumor. Most of the time, if the tumor is not surgically removed; it is treated with

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medication that lowers the production of prolactin. The tumor almost seems to “feed” upon increased prolactin, so when it is stopped, the tumor may go away or stop growing. This is where chaste tree comes in. It can actually provide balance to hormones, and specifically, prolactin levels. It is important, however, to make sure you are consulting with your physician before turning to chaste tree.

RECIPE: Create a tincture from the berries of this bush. Fill a jar with the dried or fresh berries. Cover them with a solvent like alcohol or vegetable glycerin. Let this infuse for four to six weeks before straining through a cheesecloth. Squeeze hard to make sure you are getting all the liquid trapped in the berries.

DOSAGE: Bottle the liquid and take a dropper full twice a day for hormonal imbalance related to high prolactin.

PROSTATE ISSUES

The prostate is a gland and part of the male reproductive system. It is located between the bladder and the penis. The urethra runs through the center of the gland. The function of the prostate is to secrete fluid that nourishes and protects sperm. It also helps to squeeze this fluid into the urethra during ejaculation. Several common conditions affect the prostate and may cause issues in men. These conditions are prostatitis, an enlarged prostate and prostate cancer.

Prostatitis is inflammation of the prostate. Most of the time, this is due to an infection and antibiotics can help. An enlarged prostate is extremely common in men over fifty years of age. It can cause difficulty urinating (because it is squeezing the urethra). Another issue that affects the prostate is prostate cancer. It is one of the most common forms of cancer in men. Although the mortality rate is low for this type of cancer, it can spread fast and it is important to catch it early! It is always a good idea to go in for regular prostate exams to check for abnormalities that might be present in the prostate. Prevention is the key to a healthy prostate and a healthy life. Below are remedies for prostate issues:

REMEDY #1: SAW PALMETTO FOR AN ENLARGED PROSTATE

Saw palmetto is a very popular remedy for an enlarged prostate and has been used for years to treat this condition. It has been studied and researched, but there is still much debate as to its effectiveness. It is thought to help an enlarged prostate by counteracting the effects of androgens, which are thought to be responsible for the enlargement of the prostate. It is also thought to contain compounds that help relax the prostate tissue.

RECIPE: You can make a tincture with saw palmetto berries by filling a small jar with the dried berries and covering them with alcohol. Let this sit and infuse for four to six weeks, shaking it daily to further promote infusion.

DOSAGE AND CAUTION: Strain it out when it is ready and take a dropper full twice a day. You should be aware that this tincture might have a very strong flavor and it may be best to put it into a glass of water to dilute before drinking.

REMEDY #2: STINGING NETTLE TINCTURE

You may be surprised to find out that in addition to the remedies already mentioned in the book, stinging nettle is also helpful for prostate issues. It provides the body with a variety of vitamins, minerals, and nourishment. It is said to work especially well when taken in combination with saw palmetto. It is being researched for its ability to fight prostate cancer cells.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with the leaves of this plant by putting them in a jar and covering them in alcohol. You may use fresh or dried leaves. Let this infuse for four to six weeks before straining out.

DOSAGE: Take two droppers full, twice a day.

LOW TESTOSTERONE

As men age, testosterone levels may lower. This important male hormone is responsible for a man's sex drive, development, and muscle mass. To be officially diagnosed with low testosterone, a man would need to have levels less than three hundred nanograms per deciliter. Symptoms vary depending on individual circumstances, but they include erection difficulties, especially in achieving and maintaining an erection. Other symptoms are a low sex drive, as testosterone plays a significant role in a man's sex drive. Hair loss, fatigue, loss of muscle mass, decreased bone density, increased body fat, mood changes, trouble with memory and anemia are also symptoms of low testosterone.

Men may also become aware of a lower semen volume while suffering from plummeting testosterone levels. Testosterone is produced in the testicles, and lower levels can result in a smaller testicle size in some men. If you feel like you may be experiencing lower testosterone levels, there are some things you can do to be proactive! First, watch your diet. Eat clean, healthy foods and do your very best to maintain a healthy weight. Every ten pounds gained could result in another seven percent loss of testosterone production, according to some studies. A correlation between lower zinc intake and low testosterone has been found. This means that you should try and get more zinc in your diet, or take zinc supplements.

Foods that contain zinc include seafood like oysters, beans, nuts, red meats, some cereals, and dairy products. However, be mindful of the amounts of zinc you are eating, because it can be dangerous to have more zinc than forty micrograms of zinc each day. As always, try to get plenty of rest, exercise, and do what you can to limit stress in your life. All these things can contribute to low testosterone levels. Alcohol consumption and smoking interfere with many aspects of your health, and testosterone levels are not an exception. Getting plenty of vitamin D can significantly affect low testosterone levels in a positive way. Make a resolution to spend at least twenty minutes each day outside in the sunshine to absorb vitamin D. Maitake mushrooms are another great source of vitamin D. Below are plant remedies that may help with testosterone production in men:

REMEDY #1: PINE POLLEN

Each spring, as pollen blows off trees and causes problems for so many people, pine trees are also producing bright yellow pollen in heavy-laden catkins. The truth is, most people are not allergic to pine pollen. Pollen from other trees, and plants like ragweed, are primarily responsible for the allergies many suffer from. Pine pollen is actually produced by the male flower of the pine tree. It is the female flower that produces the pinecones. Just like there are plants that contain bio-identical estrogen for women, there are plants that contain bio-identical testosterone for men! Think of pine pollen as the "sperm" of the pine tree. Not only is it a rich phytoandrogen, it is rich in other vital nutrients, amino acids, minerals, and antioxidants.

RECIPE: The best way to create a remedy with this wonderful substance is to collect the bright yellow catkins in the spring. Wait for them to get big and yellow before harvesting them. Keep a close eye on them and when they are ready, harvest them and put them in a glass jar. You will likely get their yellow pollen all over your hands, but please be careful not to shake too much pollen off the catkins, because this is what you need to make medicine!

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When the jar is full, cover the pollen-clad catkins in alcohol and let this infuse for four to six weeks, shaking daily. Your tincture will turn a beautiful yellow-orange color. When it is ready, strain it out through a cheesecloth, making sure to strongly squeeze out all the catkins to get all the liquid.

DOSAGE: Bottle this and take one dropper full twice a day for five days. Take a two day break and then start the cycle over again.

REMEDY #2: CELERY JUICE

Celery is another unlikely source of plant androgens. It contains two natural androgens called androstenone and androstanol. Some androgens are effective at stimulating testosterone production. It is said that celery is an aphrodisiac food, and it might well be.

RECIPE: Juice enough celery to fill a cup and drink daily to support healthy testosterone levels. This, in addition to maintaining a healthy weight, exercising, and eating right, might restore testosterone balance in the body.

MALE SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

Men and women alike suffer from sexually transmitted diseases. Although women are more susceptible to various sexually transmitted diseases because of their anatomy, men can still be affected. It is important to protect yourself from these by wearing a condom during intercourse. In addition, getting tested regularly helps make sure you are disease free and cannot spread anything to any partners. Talking to your partner about being tested is important as well. Being in a monogamous relationship greatly increases your odds of living a healthy life, free from sexually transmitted diseases.

Pay attention to your body, and look for symptoms of common sexually transmitted diseases like genital sores or lesions. Painful urination is another symptom to watch for. Be aware of changes in your body that might indicate a systemic sexually transmitted disease like HIV. Fatigue, fever, and flu-like symptoms may signal a need to seek immediate medical attention to rule out a systemic disease. Many of these diseases require antibiotics to clear up the infection, and some may require other courses of treatment. Below are remedies to help foster a strong immune system that fights off infection and viruses better.

REMEDY #1: ANTIVIRAL HERBS IN BALM FOR HERPES VIRUS

Lemon balm has antiviral properties, and is often used to treat herpes, especially on the mouth area. Other antiviral plants that pair well with lemon balm include St. John's wort and self-heal. You can create a salve/balm that can be used topically to treat some herpes outbreaks, with special emphasis on strains of herpes that affect the lips. Infuse one tablespoon each of dried lemon balm, wilted St. John's wort flowers, and dried self-heal into one cup of olive oil (or the oil of your choice).

RECIPE: You can do this by heating the plants and oils together on the stovetop on very low heat for six to eight hours, or going the slower route and letting the plants sit in a jar of oil for four to six weeks. When the infusion is completed, strain out the oil and use this as the base for your balm. Still under low heat, add one ounce of beeswax and gently stir until it is melted. Turn down the heat completely. Adding a few drops of essential oils like lemon balm, frankincense, or lavender also help to boost the power of this balm. Pour the oil and wax mixture into jars and as they cool, the mixture will harden slightly into a balm-like substance.

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USAGE: Apply this like a lip balm at the first sign of a herpes outbreak. Keep re-applying throughout the day until the lesions are gone. Women and men alike can benefit from this recipe.

REMEDY #2: ANTIVIRAL HERBS TINCTURE

If you find yourself wondering if you may have a herpes outbreak, using the balm above in conjunction with this recipe might be a good idea. This remedy is a way to create a remedy to take internally using the plants mentioned above in the first remedy.

RECIPE: In a glass jar, combine one part lemon balm, one part self-heal, and one part St. John's wort flowers. The self-heal and the lemon balm can be dried, but using fresh St. John's wort flowers is always best. Cover the plant material in alcohol and let this sit for four to six weeks, shaking daily. This tincture will turn a dark color, with colors ranging from red (from the St. John's wort) to dark green (from the lemon balm). After the allotted time has passed, strain out the liquid and bottle it in a dropper bottle.

DOSAGE AND CAUTIONS: Take a dropper full of this sublingually, three times a day. Depending on the strength of the alcohol used, you may feel a burning sensation when you take a tincture. Some people can handle it and others cannot. If you find that you are having trouble taking a tincture this way, you may try another route of ingestion that is more tolerable. One way to take a tincture for those sensitive to the strong alcohol is to put a dropper full in a glass of water and drink it this way.

REMEDY #3: STAR ANISE FOR INFECTIONS

There are several plants that act as natural antibiotics or immune-boosters and may help fight infections that can be caused from sexually transmitted diseases like gonorrhea and chlamydia. One plant remedy has already been discussed in this book in under "Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Women." It is the garlic, olive leaf and oregano remedy. In addition to this remedy, there is another remedy that can be made to help. It is made with star anise. Star anise is mainly used as a delicious spice, but it has other properties that make it a staple for many herbalists. It is packed with antioxidants, antibacterial properties, and a substance called shikimic acid. This substance is actually taken from star anise and used in medications for influenza to help the immune system combat the virus. In addition to these things, it is anti-inflammatory, and might help with inflammation that can be a side effect of infections.

RECIPE: Create your own star anise tincture using the Chinese variety of star anise. Fill a jar with the dried spice. Avoid using powdered star anise, and opt for the dried and chopped stars. Cover the plant material in alcohol. You may choose to add additional immune-boosting/anti-inflammatory plants that can complement this tincture, such as rose hips, cinnamon, and ginger. Let this sit in a cool, dark place for four to six weeks before straining it out and bottling it.

DOSAGE: Take a dropper full up to three times a day as needed. If this is taken with colloidal silver, you may help boost the infection-fighting power of the treatment

MUSCULAR SYSTEM

There are three types of muscle in the human body. These types of muscle include skeletal muscle, smooth muscle, and cardiac muscle. Skeletal muscle is responsible for the movement of limbs. It is attached to our skeleton and is primarily comprised of striated muscle, having bands of proteins called myofibrils. These proteins help movement by sliding past one another when our body gives them energy, and pulling the ends of the muscles together. Smooth muscle does not contain these proteins. Its responsibility is to contract, rather than to move limbs like the skeletal muscle. Examples of smooth muscles in the body include our gastrointestinal tract, respiratory tract, bladder, iris of the eye, reproductive tracts, sphincter, and trachea. Smooth muscles produce mostly involuntary movements that are imperative to keeping our body functioning properly. The final type of muscle is cardiac muscle. This muscle consists of the muscle surrounding the four chambers of the heart. This muscle is vital to our survival, for it helps our heart keep pumping. The muscular system can be nourished by exercising daily using weights to build strength. This is called strength training. In addition to strength training, you can help your muscular system by doing exercises that involve pulling. Make sure you are including stretches in all your workouts. It is very important to stretch to keep your muscles in good shape. Yoga is a great way to stretch and strengthen your muscles. In addition to proper exercise, make sure that you are eating a balanced diet with plenty of protein, vitamins, minerals, and healthy fats. Muscles are made up of over seventy percent water! This means that you can help your muscles tremendously by drinking plenty of water each day. Below are common ailments of the muscular system and remedies to help:

TIRED AND WEAK MUSCLES

Tired and weak muscles can be caused by a number of factors. Perhaps you worked out too hard and did not stretch properly? Perhaps you are not drinking enough water and are slightly dehydrated? Are you getting enough sleep? A lack of certain minerals in the body can cause this as well. Another cause of tired and weak muscles is injury of some sort. Lack of muscle use can also result in tired muscles. Injury can result in the feeling of tired and weak muscles, especially the day after the injury. Sometimes, a disease is the cause of the weakness. Women who have just had a baby can feel this way due to anemia combined with high levels of steroids in the blood. Aging, infections, and some medications can also contribute to this problem. It is important to assess your symptoms and try to determine the cause before pursuing treatment. Symptoms of muscle fatigue include muscle spasms or twitching, pain and paralysis, a numbness (often described as a pins and needles feeling), a burning sensation in the muscles, and lowered coordination when it comes to movement. When you are experiencing muscle fatigue due to an injury, age, or anemia, the remedies below may be able to provide relief:

REMEDY #1: MENTHOL SALVE FOR DEEP TISSUE MASSAGE

This remedy is for those suffering from muscle weakness as a result of overworking the muscles. If you are having a hard time sleeping or relaxing due to muscle spasms and pain, this remedy may help. Plants containing menthols have been used for sore and tired muscles for many years. Menthols help with muscle pain and provide relief because they contain ligands that absorb into the skin, activating k-opioid receptors. This may result in numbing of the pain. In addition, menthols provide the skin with a cooling sensation that many find to provide relief. Plants that can be used in this recipe vary, but include various mints such as peppermint, spearmint, corn mint, horsemint, slender mint, and more. The most popular plant to use is peppermint, but feel free to use any native mints you have growing in your area for the recipe.

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RECIPE: To create a base for your salve, infuse dried peppermint leaves in oil by filling a jar with dried peppermint leaves and then covering them completely with a carrier oil of your choice. Let this sit in a warm place for four to six weeks with the lid on, shaking it daily. It is best to keep it out of direct sunlight, but if you wish to sit it outside in the warm sun or in your windowsill, you can protect it by putting the jar in a brown paper bag. When the allotted time has passed, strain out your mint-infused oil and gently heat one cup in a double boiler. Add an ounce of beeswax to the oil and let it melt. Turn off the heat. Add a few drops of mint essential oils if you have any one hand. These will simply boost the power of your salve. Great essential oils to add include peppermint, helichrysum, eucalyptus, wintergreen, or rosemary. Quickly, yet carefully, pour your salve into jars to cool and harden.

USAGE: Use this by massaging into muscles that feel tired, taking time to target problem areas and get into the tissues as deeply as possible.

REMEDY #2: BALM OF GILEAD

Cottonwood trees may be annoying to some due to the fact that they release a cotton-like substance into the yard that can result in a messy yard for a bit. However, these trees have more benefits than meets the eye. In late winter/very early spring, the buds of the cottonwood tree appear. These amazing buds are sticky and resinous. They are full of a camphorous substance that has been used for generations to treat tired and sore muscles, pain, inflammation, and rheumatic complaints. In fact, the very name of the salve goes back to the Bible. Harvest these buds with care and leave more than you ever take. Make sure you wear gloves, or be prepared to have a sticky substance all over your hands! Collect enough buds to fill a small jar. Cover these with a carrier oil of your choice and let this infuse for at least four weeks. When properly infused, this oil will smell wonderful. It has a faint, pleasant camphor scent. Strain out the oil when it is ready and gently heat a cup of it in a double boiler on the stovetop. Add one ounce of beeswax and let it melt, taking care not to get the temperature too high. When the beeswax has melted, remove it from the heat and pour it into jars to cool. Use this when you are experiencing symptoms of sore, tired, or weak muscles. Deeply massage it into the affected areas. This salve is also very helpful for sore joints, rashes, and inflammation, so feel free to use it for these things when needed.

MUSCLE CRAMPING AND PAIN

Muscle cramping and pain can be the result of an injury, overworking the muscles, inadequate blood supply, a mineral depletion, nerve compression, or dehydration. Symptoms of an issue with muscle cramping include a sudden, sharp pain in a muscle, or a hard knot or lump in a muscle. It is also described as a sudden, involuntary contraction of one or more muscles. Some types of cramps, like Charlie horses, can be severely painful. There are several effective plant remedies to help with these issues.

REMEDY #1: CRAMP BARK FOR PAINFUL MUSCLE SPASMS

Cramp bark has been used for its antispasmodic, analgesic, and anti-inflammatory properties. It has been prescribed by herbalists for women suffering from severe menstrual pain because the uterus is a muscle and cramp bark can help calm it down and soothe pain caused by spasms. Oftentimes, cramp bark is harvested in the fall before the leaves change and drop to the ground. If you can't harvest in the fall, you still have a chance to get to it in the spring, just try to get the bark before the buds open. Please take care to harvest the bark sustainably, and do not damage the tree beyond what it is capable of repairing.

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RECIPE: Create a tea from the bark by placing two teaspoons into one cup of water and bringing it to a boil. Once it has come to a boil, let it simmer for ten to fifteen minutes before straining it out and pouring into a cup for consumption.

DOSAGE: Consume up to three cups of this tea daily for muscle cramps and spasms.

REMEDY #2: GOLDENROD BATH SOAK FOR CRAMPING MUSCLES

Goldenrod is often mistaken for a plant that causes allergies when in reality it is usually not the culprit. The truth is that goldenrod is a powerhouse of medicinal properties. It contains compounds that give it diuretic properties, making it a useful remedy in tea for bladder and kidney issues as discussed earlier in this book. However, it also contains anti-inflammatory and antiseptic compounds. Its anti-inflammatory properties make it wonderful for topical muscle application. Combining goldenrod aerial parts with Epsom salts is a great way to help alleviate muscle spasms and cramps! Epsom salts are a form of magnesium and can soothe muscles.

RECIPE: Combine one to two cups of Epsom salts with one cup of dried aerial parts of goldenrod and let this infuse in a warm bath for several minutes, until the Epsom salts are fully dissolved.

USAGE: Soak in this bath daily for soothing relief.

REMEDY #3: ROSEMARY TEA FOR MUSCLE CRAMPS

Rosemary is such a common and useful culinary herb! In addition to being a tasty herb in many dishes, rosemary is used medicinally for many ailments. It contains compounds that are useful for arthritis, muscle aches, and tired muscles. Some nutritionists even claim that eating rosemary can help those seeking to build muscle mass. It is a great source of antioxidants, which is another reason it is so good for muscles. It can also help our body by providing much needed energy! Fill a tea bag or infusion ball with rosemary leaves (fresh or dried) and let this infuse in a cup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes before consuming. You can drink this up to twice a day for muscle nourishment and health, in addition to prevention spasms and cramps.

BRUISING AND MUSCULAR INJURY

Our tissues bruise when capillaries or venules are injured due to trauma. This causes blood to seep from them into surrounding tissues, resulting in a purple, blue, or black hue we know as a bruise. Oftentimes, bruising is not a serious concern, and can be treated with ice to reduce blood flow to the area, or heat to promote circulation and increase blood flow to help clear away trapped blood when the bruise forms. Sometimes you can go back and forth between heat and ice to promote healing and relief. Twenty minutes off and on, alternating between heat and ice is sometimes prescribed for bruising and swelling after an injury. Compression and elevation are also popular ways to treat injuries that cause bruising. Below are plant remedies that have been used to treat bruising and injury to the muscles:

REMEDY #1: TRAUMA OIL FOR BRUISING AND SWELLING AFTER AN INJURY

Trauma oil is actually a combination of several plants infused in a carrier oil. These plants all have anti-inflammatory and bruise-healing properties. The first plant called for is arnica. Arnica is a very popular remedy for bruising because it helps them heal faster by reducing swelling at the injury site. The flowers are what is used. St.

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John's wort is also an ingredient in trauma oil. St. John's wort is a wonderful plant for nerve pain and soothes aggravated tissues. The flowers of St. John's wort contain the most hypericin, and are the part used most often for medicinal preparations. Finally, calendula is an ingredient in trauma oil that is invaluable. Calendula is a bright orange flower that contains anti-inflammatory and soothing properties. It has been used internally to soothe the digestive system, as well as externally to soothe rashes, burns, and muscle trauma.

RECIPE: Create your own trauma oil to use on bumps and bruises by infusing one part of each plant mentioned in a carrier oil (jojoba is a good oil to use for this because it is long-lasting and great for the skin). Completely cover the plants (make sure they are dried, or very wilted) with the oil in a glass jar. Put the lid on the jar and shake it daily for four to six weeks. Keep it in the windowsill or outside on warm days, but make sure that it is covered from direct sunlight by putting it in a brown paper bag. Warmth is great for aiding in infusion, but sunlight can damage the medicinal properties of the plants. When ready, strain everything out through a cheesecloth, taking care to squeeze the cheesecloth hard to get all the oil that may be trapped in the plant material. Bottle this oil and keep it in a cool, dark place. Use this on deep tissue injuries, bruises, sprains, or any condition that is caused by trauma.

CAUTIONS: There is one precaution when using this oil: DO NOT use it on open wounds. If it seeps into the bloodstream, it can cause major issues. It is the arnica that is responsible for the unfortunate side effects of vomiting and increased heart rate. Large doses of arnica flowers internally can also be fatal. However, when used as recommended, arnica is safe and effective. Do not mistake homeopathic arnica with arnica used in this recipe. Homeopathic arnica has been diluted to the point of causing no side effects.

REMEDY #2: GERANIUM SALVE FOR INFLAMMATION AND PAIN

There is definitely more to this common garden flower than most people realize! Geranium is actually native to South Africa. Although there are many species, the most common for medicinal use is *Pelargonium graveolens*. This flower is often made into essential oil via steam distillation or CO2 extraction. Geranium has been used to reduce inflammation, help relieve pain, and skin wounds. You can harvest the flowers and infuse them in oil to make your own salve. An oil infusion may not be as strong as an essential oil, but it will still be an effective remedy with a much lower chance of sensitization when compared to the essential oil!

RECIPE: Harvest the flowers in full bloom and lay them on a rack or towel to dry. When they have dried or at least wilted sufficiently, you can fill a small jar and cover them with a carrier oil. Let them infuse in the oil for at least four weeks. Strain out the oil when it is ready and gently heat one cup of it in a double boiler. Add an ounce of beeswax and let it melt. When it has melted, turn off the heat. At this time, you may choose to add any essential oils you think may help with pain, inflammation, and bruising. Some great and soothing essential oils you might consider adding include helichrysum, geranium, lavender, and ginger. You only need to add five to ten drops, if you want to add any essential oils at all. Pour the mixture into tins or glass jars to cool.

USAGE: Gently massage this healing salve into the affected tissues as needed for swelling, bruising, and pain.

BURSITIS

Bursitis is a painful condition caused by swelling and inflammation of the bursa. The bursa consists of fluid filled sacs located between various tissues of the body, like the bones, muscles, tendons, and skin. This fluid helps decrease friction between these areas in the body. When someone has bursitis, they can feel the friction when they move their body and it brings pain and discomfort. Bursitis can be caused by overuse of a joint, bad posture, or failure to stretch before working out. There are certain risk factors that increase your chance of suffering from bursitis. These include occupations or activities like carpentry, golf, pitching, gardening, painting, or any other activity that promotes constant and repetitive use of the joints. Old age is also a factor. Several medical conditions put you at a higher risk for bursitis. These include arthritis, gout, and some thyroid disorders. You may be suffering from bursitis if you experience symptoms like pain in a joint, or the sudden loss of movement in a joint. The joints affected by this condition typically include the elbows, hips, Achilles tendons, and knees. If you suspect bursitis in a joint, there are some steps you can take right away to make sure you don't have future issues. First, rest! Try your best to avoid using the joint and give it a break. Let it heal. Constant use is what contributes to this condition, so it makes sense that rest might help heal it. Second, ice the area. Ice can help naturally reduce inflammation. In addition to these things, below are remedies that can help with inflammation that causes the issue:

REMEDY #1: GINGER AND ROSEMARY SALVE FOR INFLAMMATION AND CIRCULATION

Ginger is popular for its ability to help with pain and inflammation. It can be taken internally, as well as applied externally. Rosemary is a stimulating herb that has benefits like the promotion of circulation and relief from pain. Combining them in a salve for bursitis is a great way to help bring relief to painful joints.

RECIPE: First, fill a jar with dried rosemary leaves. Cover the leaves with a carrier oil and let this infuse for four to six weeks. When it is ready, strain out the oil and gently heat one cup of this infused oil in a double boiler. Add one ounce of beeswax to the warm oil and let it melt. Add either one tablespoon of ground ginger or ginger essential oil (if adding ginger essential oil, wait to add it until right before you are ready to pour it into jars). You may also choose to add rosemary essential oil.

USAGE: Pour this into jars or tins to cool and massage this salve into the affected areas as often as you need to when suffering from bursitis. Remember that rest and ice will also play an important role in recovery!

REMEDY #2: GINGER AND TURMERIC INFUSION

Turmeric is famous for relieving pain and inflammation, so it should come as no surprise that it comes in handy for the inflammation caused by bursitis. Likewise, ginger also contributes to the relief of inflammation.

RECIPE: Create a nourishing infusion with fresh ginger and turmeric by boiling a quart of water on the stove. When it has come to a boil, dump it over one cup of freshly sliced ginger and one cup of freshly slice turmeric roots in a glass jar that will hold over a quart of water. Let this infuse for at twenty-four hours before consuming.

DOSAGE: Put it in the fridge when it has sufficiently cooled and drink one cup daily. This recipe should provide you with roughly four cups of the infusion to last through a good part of the week.

BACK MUSCLE PAIN

Of all the types of muscular pain, it seems as if back pain is the most common. This is because many people tend to have poor posture, in addition to using the muscles in the back so much for a variety of everyday movements and chores. Muscles in the back are large, and typically carry heavier loads than other muscles in the body. Some symptoms of a pulled back muscle include pain in a specific location on your back, pain when you move or take a deep breath, and a decreased ability to move the body without feeling pain in this area. It is important to assess your symptoms, try to figure out what may have caused it, and rule out a slipped disc. If you suspect that you may have severely strained or pulled a back muscle, the first step is to apply ice to the area. This will help reduce inflammation. Make sure you get plenty of rest and avoid making things worse by attempting to continue daily life, especially if your job or chores require you to do a lot of heavy lifting, etc. Below are massage oil remedies that help soothe muscles that have been strained:

REMEDY #1: TRAUMA OIL WITH WINTERGREEN

Trauma oil is a great way to begin treating your injured back muscle. See the above recipe under “Bruising and Muscular Injury” to learn how to make your own trauma oil. Adding wintergreen, peppermint, eucalyptus, or rosemary essential oil to this oil will increase its healing properties and soothe the pulled back muscle.

DOSAGE: Wintergreen essential oil is highly aromatic and cooling, so be sure to only use five to eight drops per cup of trauma oil.

CAUTIONS: Avoid using this oil on open wounds, as the wintergreen may sting, in addition to the arnica in the trauma oil causing an increase in heart rate if too much gets into the bloodstream.

REMEDY #2: HEMPSEED OIL WITH CAMPHOR

The camphor tree, native to Eastern Asia, has been used for a variety of issues, ranging from respiratory problems to topical rubs for pain and inflammation. For a pulled back muscle, camphor can be a lifesaver because it is both sedative and stimulating. It can numb any pain, as well as penetrate into the skin and down to the muscle to provide relief and rejuvenation. Often, the leaves and bark are processed into oil that can be diluted into other oils for topical use. Due to the strength of the oil, always make sure to dilute before applying to the skin.

CAUTIONS: Applying camphor oil to an open wound will likely cause pain, so avoid on broken skin. Hempseed oil is wonderful as a carrier oil because it is nourishing to the skin, as well as the nervous system. It can be a calming and relaxing base to any massage oil. In one cup of hempseed oil, add five to six drops of camphor oil. Make sure it is mixed well. Have someone massage this into the muscles of the back, paying close attention to the affected area or areas. Do this twice a day for relief from the pain and inflammation associated with pulled muscles.

SKELETAL SYSTEM

Providing a strong and well-crafted protection system for our internal organs, the skeletal system is a marvel. This system also provides our muscles with a point of attachment. Unlike insects that have an exoskeleton, humans have an endoskeleton, meaning our bones are on the inside. Most grown adults have 206 bones in their body. In the center of our bones, bone marrow works to provide our body with red blood cells. Most people know that the skeletal system is linked to the muscular system, but did you know that it is also linked to the immune system? Bone marrow produces lymphocytes in addition to producing red blood cells. Lymphocytes are immune cells that play an important role in the immune system.

The skeletal system is comprised of bones, joints, and cartilages. When we start out as infants, many of our bones are made of cartilage. This is nature's way of helping us make it out of the womb easier. There are many things that can affect the skeletal system, but there are also many ways you can nourish it to ensure that the framework holding your body together is strong and supportive. One way you can nourish your bones is to make sure you are getting enough calcium. Another way you can help your skeletal system is to get outside in the sunshine. This is a great way to absorb vitamin D, an important vitamin for bone health. Getting enough sleep and exercise are also important for our overall health, in addition to bone health. If you are a woman going through menopause, the estrogen loss in your body can lead to decreased bone mass and osteoporosis. To avoid this, make sure you are following the advice above when it comes to calcium and vitamin D! Avoiding sugar and drinking plenty of water each day are also ways to ensure a healthy life. Below are common ailments of the skeletal system and plant remedies that may bring healing and nourishment.

ARTHRITIS

One of the most common complaints when it comes to skeletal system issues in aging adults, arthritis is characterized by swelling and tenderness of the joints. Sometimes it is also associated with redness, stiffness, and a decreased range of motion. There are several types of arthritis, including septic arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, reactive arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, and osteoarthritis. Of the types mentioned, the most common are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. With osteoarthritis, the cartilage in joints begins to break down. In rheumatoid arthritis, the immune system attacks joints, especially the lining of the joints. You can be at an increased risk for arthritis if you have a family history of the disease. Other factors that increase your risk for arthritis include your sex (women are more likely to suffer from arthritis and men are more likely to suffer from gout), age, previous injuries, and your weight. Maintaining a healthy weight may help you avoid any complications with arthritis, as extra weight is hard on joints. Because most forms of arthritis are characterized by inflammation, swelling, and pain, there are several plant remedies that can help target these and provide relief:

REMEDY #1: CAT'S CLAW FOR ARTHRITIS SWELLING AND PAIN

Cat's claw is a tropical vine. Because it is known to boost the immune system in addition to targeting inflammation, it should be avoided by those suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. Since rheumatoid arthritis is caused by the immune system attacking the joints, cat's claw might make it worse.

For conditions like osteoarthritis, cat's claw can be beneficial. It has been used for centuries for its ability to help with swelling in the joints.

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RECIPE: Create a tincture with cat's claw to take for arthritis by filling a jar with the dried and chopped plant. Cover it with alcohol completely. Let this sit for up to six weeks before straining and bottling it for consumption. This particular tincture, though effective, should not be taken without first mixing it with water. It doesn't absorb into the body right without adding it to water to ingest.

DOSAGE: Put one to four milliliters of the tincture into a glass of water to take daily.

REMEDY #2: WILLOW BARK FOR PAIN RELIEF AND INFLAMMATION

White willow bark had been chewed by indigenous people and the ancient Greeks for aches and pains for many centuries before it was used to create aspirin. It works because it contains a compound called salicin. This compound is naturally anti-inflammatory and analgesic.

RECIPE: Using the bark, fill a jar and cover it with alcohol. Make sure the bark is chopped into small pieces. Let this sit for at least six weeks before straining and bottling.

DOSAGE: Take thirty drops in a glass of water, one to two times daily for arthritic pain and inflammation.

REMEDY #3: EUCALYPTUS SALVE FOR TOPICAL APPLICATION

Eucalyptus leaves can help treat arthritis pain because they contain compounds called tannins. Tannins are found in several medicinal plants and are good for reducing swelling and helping with pain. They lovely and aromatic scent of eucalyptus is also good to inhale for respiratory issues.

RECIPE: Create a salve with eucalyptus by infusing the leaves in a carrier oil for four to six weeks. Make sure the leaves are sufficiently dried before putting them in the oil. Before straining out the leaves, gently heat the oil and leaves in a pot on the stove top (on very low heat). This will further help release the medicinal properties into the oil. Strain out the oil and put one cup into a double boiler on low heat. Add one ounce of beeswax and let it melt into the oil. When the beeswax is melted, you may choose to add essential oils. Some helpful oils you can add are eucalyptus essential oil (only five drops will suffice), peppermint, frankincense, or camphor essential oil. Pour the mixture into jars or tins to cool.

USAGE: Apply this salve to the joints when you are experiencing pain or swelling from arthritis. This works well in conjunction with other remedies for arthritis mentioned above.

FRACTURES AND SPRAINS

Bones are strong, but when we fall a certain way - or hard enough - we can cause severe injury to them. A fracture is the medical term for a broken bone. The older you are, the more at risk you are for fractures. And with age, the fractures suffered can become more complicated to treat, as bones are more brittle and more damage can be done. There are four main types of fractures one can suffer. These are referred to as non-displaced, displaced, open, and closed. Displaced and non-displaced fractures are named for their alignment. With a displaced fracture, the bone is broken into multiple pieces and does not align with the other bones. Non-displaced fractures occur when the bone breaks, but does not move out of alignment with the other bones.

Closed and open fractures refer to whether or not the bone comes through the skin. In a closed fracture, the bone breaks, but does not puncture the skin. In an open fracture, the bone breaks and punctures through the skin. An open

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fracture is obviously more dangerous because there is an open wound and your bones have been exposed to potentially infectious materials. It is important to seek medical care for all types of fractures to avoid complications and bone infection. There are subtypes to each fracture. These help narrow down the fracture in order to provide proper treatment. One common subtype is a stress fracture. This is a fracture consisting of a hairline crack in the bone. Sometimes a disease can injure and weaken the bone and cause a fracture. This type of fracture is referred to as a pathologic fracture. When the bone breaks into several pieces, this is referred to as a comminuted fracture. When the break in the bone is on an angle through the bone, this is called an oblique fracture. A transverse fracture is when the fracture is vertical to the shaft of the bone.

Sprains may not be as severe as a fracture, in that the bone did not break, but they can feel as severe to the person who is suffering! Sprains occur because of damage to the ligaments, joints, or both. Most of the time, a sprain occurs because of trauma to the area that makes it go beyond its normal range of motion. Sprains of the ankle and wrist are the most common. Sometimes, people use the terms “strain” and “sprain” interchangeably. These are two different things. A strain is referred to as a stretch or tear in the muscle or tendon areas. A sprain is a stretch or tear in a ligament.

Sometimes strains and sprains heal on their own, and other times, depending on the extent of the ligament damage, surgery is needed. Likewise, sometimes fractures are not surgically treated, and other times surgery is needed. When you think you have fractured or sprained an area, it is important to seek medical help. This way, the severity of the injury can be assessed and you can begin healing. Some common first aid practices for fractures (while you are waiting on medical help) include applying pressure if there is a wound to stop bleeding. Next, immobilize the area.

Do not try to move further, push any bones back in, or realign anything. Apply ice to help with swelling. Sometimes a person who has just broken a bone can go into mild shock. They may demonstrate symptoms of short, rapid breaths or fainting. Have them lie down and put their head slightly lower than their trunk. Elevate the legs if possible. Once a person has been treated for a fracture or sprain, there are plant remedies they can utilize to help with recovery.

REMEDY #1: COMFREY POULTICE FOR HEALING AFTER FRACTURES AND SPRAINS

Comfrey, with its pretty bell-like purple flowers, is a common garden plant. It can be found growing wild in many parts of the world as well. It has been used traditionally for its healing properties associated with fractures and sprains. Long ago, when no medical aid was available, people would use a poultice of the leaves to apply to breaks. This method can still be used today by juicing comfrey leaves and using the pulp to apply directly to the affected area.

CAUTIONS: Make sure that the area does not have any open wounds before applying it. Once you have applied the crushed leaves to the area, wrap the area with plastic kitchen wrap, or something similar. Sit with this poultice applied for several hours, allowing the soothing leaves to reduce swelling and relieve pain. Do this daily for best results. You can infuse comfrey leaves into oil (when they are dried) to create a massage oil or salve. Simply cover the leaves in a jar with a carrier oil and allow it to infuse for four to six weeks.

USAGE: Strain out and use this oil infusion as a massage oil for sore tissues and bones, or put it in a double boiler, add beeswax, and create a salve for a more precise application.

REMEDY #2: SOLOMON'S SEAL SALVE

This beloved plant grows wild throughout most of North America and Europe. There are different species, many of which are used interchangeably in regional folk remedies. It is said that King Solomon loved this plant so much that it was named after him. Today, it is a plant known for its ability to aid in sports injuries that involve injury to the connective tissues. Solomon's seal is perfect for maintaining healthy fluids in the connective tissues and affected areas. It is especially wonderful for drawing connective tissues together, in cases where the tendons or ligaments have been overstretched.

RECIPE: Create a salve with the rhizome of this plant. Take care to get your materials from a reputable source, as Solomon's seal is scarce in some places and overharvested. Fill a small jar with the dried, finely chopped roots. Cover this in a carrier oil and let it sit and infuse for six weeks, shaking it daily to promote infusion. When it is ready to strain out, dump everything in a pan on the stovetop and under very low heat, heat the plant material and oil together for three to four hours to help ensure all the medicinal properties of the root have passed into the oil. Strain well and put one cup of the oil in a double boiler under low heat. Add one ounce of beeswax and let it melt into the oil. Turn off the heat and add essential oils of your choice. A great essential oil to use is helichrysum, as it aids in healing swelling. Ginger essential oil is a good choice as well. You do not have to add any oils if you don't have any on hand.

DOSAGE: Pour this into jars to cool and apply this salve to sprains often to relieve swelling and promote fluid balance.

REMEDY #3: MULLEIN ROOT FOR NERVE AND BONE PAIN

Mullein is known for its ability to help with respiratory issues. Its leaves are used in various remedies for lungs, and its flowers are used in remedies for ear pain and inflammation (as already discussed in this book). However, many people are unaware that the roots of this plant are also used for their ability to help with nerve and tissue pain. Oftentimes when a bone is fractured or tendons are injured in a sprain, nerve issues can occur. Shooting pains can radiate through the affected areas and throughout the body. This is where mullein root comes in. Herbalists have used it to treat issues of the back and spine, associated with shooting nerve pain and inflammation. It is therefore helpful for areas that have been affected by sprains and fractures.

RECIPE AND DOSAGE: Create a tea with the roots to drink daily. Boil a little more than one cup of water on the stove and add one heaping tablespoon of dried and chopped mullein root. Let this steep for at least ten minutes before straining out.

BONE LOSS

The most common cause of bone loss is due to aging and menopause. Although men can experience bone loss, women are at an increased risk because after they go through menopause, their bodies produce less estrogen, which is responsible for bone density. Losing bone density means you are at a higher risk for fractures. A fall that would not have done any damage in your twenties or thirties might cause a severe fracture in your sixties and seventies. The disease that causes bone loss is often referred to as osteoporosis.

Our bodies actually get rid of old bone after so many years and create new bone. Problems occur when this process halts or slows down, resulting in the body reabsorbing old bone faster than it is making new bones. While it is not

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abnormal to experience some bone density loss as you age, it is not normal to lose too much. It is important to keep a close eye on any changes in your health as you age, in addition to making sure you are eating healthy and getting plenty of vitamins and minerals. Symptoms of bone loss to watch for include brittle fingernails, receding gums, height loss, weakened grip, and bone pain. These can be early indicators that you may have a problem with bone density. You can help combat any changes in your bone density by making sure you are eating a healthy diet, rich in vitamin D and calcium. Both of these are important to bone health and can be attained by eating dairy, salmon, and leafy greens. It is also good to make sure you are getting plenty of rest.

Avoiding alcohol and smoking can be very beneficial to your overall health, including bone health. It has been discovered that those with a low body weight are at an increased risk for low bone density and osteoporosis, so always try maintaining a healthy body weight. Finally, exercise is of extreme importance. It has been proven that daily exercise is linked to stronger bones. There are several conditions that cause low bone density or bone loss as well. These conditions include type one diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, kidney diseases, and an overactive parathyroid. Those who have had organ transplants are also at an increased risk for bone loss. Bone loss is not just for those who are aging. Younger women who have went for long periods without having a menstrual period can be at risk for osteoporosis. Always seek medical help for the absence of a period, because there are risks involved and the absence of a period is often the result of a hormone issue as well. Below are remedies to help maintain strong bones that include nutritious greens and hormonal support.

REMEDY #1: RED CLOVER INFUSION FOR LOW ESTROGEN

As previously discussed in this book, red clover is a great source of phytoestrogens, making it a worthy choice for those seeking to raise estrogen levels naturally. Since estrogen plays a critical role in bone repair and growth, it is no surprise that it comes in handy for replenishing diminished estrogen levels in the menopausal female. In addition to being a source of estrogen, it has a vitamin-rich content and is a source of calcium and magnesium! Red clover is very plentiful in many parts of the world, and oftentimes is easy to forage in open fields. It is distinguished from other clovers by its bright pink appearance. It has a mild, sweet flavor and is often enjoyed in tea or infusions. Creating a nourishing infusion with this plant is a good way to reap the benefits it can offer.

RECIPE: Add one ounce of dried red clover heads to a jar and fill the jar to the top with boiling water to infuse for at least four hours.

DOSAGE: Drink at least two cups of this daily to promote healthy bones.

REMEDY #2: RED RASPBERRY LEAVES FOR CALCIUM

Calcium plays a critical role in bone health. Most of the calcium in our bodies is stored in the bones and teeth. Oftentimes, our bodies do not absorb calcium easily, so it is important to make sure you are eating enough. One source of calcium comes from red or black raspberry leaves. They contain a large amount of calcium, in addition to being a flavorful and abundant source of other vitamins and minerals. Red raspberry is usually cultivated, although it grows easily and can be found in the wild as well. Black raspberry is a very common and plentiful vining plant in North America. Both have similar medicinal and nutritional properties and can be used interchangeably. Black raspberry vines are often mistaken for blackberry vines, but the difference is that raspberry leaves are whitish in color on the underside. The vine they grow on is also white in hue. The berries are dark like blackberries, but have a small pit when you pluck them, whereas blackberries do not. Also, black raspberries will have ripe berries almost a month earlier than blackberries.

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RECIPE: Create a nourishing infusion to help provide your body with much needed calcium by putting one ounce of dried leaves in a quart jar and filling the jar with boiling water. Let it steep for at least four hours before consuming.

DOSAGE: Drink at least two cups daily. An added benefit of raspberry leaves is that they are a uterine tonic.

REMEDY #3: NETTLE INFUSION FOR REPLENISHING KEY NUTRIENTS

Stinging nettle is an amazing source of so many key nutrients, such as high amounts of calcium, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous, vitamin A, beta carotene, lutein, and vitamin K. They are one of the most nutritious plants out there! This is why they are often prescribed by herbalists for bodily nourishment. They are used in cooking, as well as medicinal preparations. Stinging nettles have been used medicinally to treat allergies, gout, rheumatism, rickets, arthritis, eczema, and urinary tract infections, in addition to being effective for osteoporosis! Create a nourishing infusion with nettle leaves by placing one ounce of the dried leaves in a glass quart jar and filling the jar with boiling water. Let the infusion steep for at least four hours before consuming. You may drink this throughout the day to provide your body with much needed support.

REMEDY #4: OATSTRAW TEA FOR BONE HEALTH

Along with the other plants mentioned for bone health, oatstraw is definitely high on the list of nutrient-dense plants. It is packed with calcium, potassium, iron, vitamin A, vitamin C, dietary fiber, and antioxidants. Combine it with other infusions listed above, or drink it in tea. In addition to being a wonderful source of necessary vitamins and minerals, oatstraw has been used by herbalists for its calming and anti-anxiety properties. It is a great choice if you are having issues with stress or sleep.

RECIPE AND DOSAGE: Drink a cup of oatstraw tea thirty minutes before bedtime to provide your body with nourishment, as well as a good night's sleep! Boil one cup of water and add one tablespoon of oatstraw. Remove from heat and cover, allowing this to steep for ten to fifteen minutes before enjoying.

RHEUMATISM

Rheumatism is often the name given for inflammatory conditions of the joints and connective tissues. Oftentimes it is a chronic issue, and those suffering from it find little relief or reprieve from the aching and pain that accompanies this condition. Many different diseases fall under the "rheumatic" name. Some of these diseases have already been addressed in this book, but others will be addressed below. These include arthritis, gout, lupus, scleroderma, and polymyalgia rheumatica. Symptoms of a rheumatic condition include warm feeling in the joints, pain, stiffness, and swelling. Rheumatic conditions may affect your joints, tendons, ligaments, bones, or muscles. Below are more remedies that can aid in swelling, pain, and nerve issues that accompany these conditions.

REMEDY #1: MULLEIN ROOT INFUSION FOR PAIN AND SWELLING

Mullein root has been mentioned for its ability to aid in back pain, but another way to use the root from this common plant is to create an infusion for the pain and inflammation associated with many rheumatic conditions. Creating an infusion with mullein will provide you with a stronger medicinal preparation than a tea.

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RECIPE: If you have access to this plant, the flowers can be combined with the root in this recipe. The flowers are said to have anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties as well. Place one ounce of mullein root (and one tablespoon of mullein flowers if available) into a quart jar. On the stove, boil enough water to fill the quart jar. Fill the jar with the boiling water and let it steep with the plant material for at least four hours.

DOSAGE: Drink this infusion throughout the day to combat pain and inflammation.

REMEDY #2: TURMERIC AND BLACK PEPPER INFUSION

Turmeric is an excellent choice for those with inflammatory conditions. It has already been mentioned several times in this book due to its versatility and wide range of medical uses. Combining it with black pepper helps the body absorb the medicinal components of the turmeric better. Black pepper by itself is also a good choice to treat rheumatic conditions because it contains capsaicin, an anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving compound as well.

RECIPE: Chop an ounce of fresh turmeric root, preferably organic. Place the chopped root, as well as one tablespoon of black pepper seeds, in a quart jar. Cover these with boiling water and let it steep for four hours.

DOSAGE AND CAUTIONS: Drink up to two cups of this daily to combat pain and swelling. Refrigerate what you do not drink and it is fine to drink for the next day or two this way. You can also take this in a tincture, and the recipe for this is discussed in this book under “Brain Fog” (page 213). Turmeric has been linked to thinning of the blood, so do not take it if you are already on blood thinners or any other medication that affects blood clotting. Also, avoid this if you are going to have surgery, as well as after surgery for at least a month.

REMEDY #3: BOSWELLIA

This tree goes way back as a medicinal powerhouse. *Boswellia sacra* is a species of tree widely known for its production of a fragrant resin called frankincense. The bark of the tree is peeled, causing it to produce the famed resin used to create frankincense. The resin is sometimes distilled and made into an essential oil. However, it can also be used in the raw and made into extracts, tea, and infusions. This resin is full of medicinal benefits that include anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with this raw resin that contains the water and alcohol soluble properties of the resin by using alcohol that is no greater than 80 proof. Too high of a proof can mean that you will only extract the alcohol soluble properties of this particular oleoresin and none of the water soluble properties, which can result in a less efficient preparation. Fill a small jar with the raw resin. Cover these in 80 proof alcohol and let this sit for at least four to six weeks, making sure to shake and agitate the bottle daily to promote infusion.

DOSAGE: When the time is ready to strain it out, bottle this and take one dropper full daily for overall health.

REMEDY #4: STEPHANIA ROOT TEA FOR JOINTS

Stephania is a vining plant that is said to have a cooling effect on hot, painful joints that are swollen and irritated. It has been used traditionally in Chinese and Japanese medicine. This root of this plant is what is used medicinally. It is also used for issues like fevers, asthma, indigestion, urinary issues, bladder issues, eczema, and rheumatoid arthritis.

RECIPE: Create a tea with the roots to treat hot, swollen joints caused by rheumatic conditions. First, boil a cup of water. Add two tablespoons of stephania root and cover. Let this steep, covered, for twenty minutes before consuming. Drink one cup daily for joint pain and inflammation. This tea is also great for cleansing the body and providing relief from drying dampness.

INTEGUMENTARY SYSTEM

Our skin is our largest organ. It is our first line of defense. There are several layers to this complex system. The first layer is the epidermis. This is a thick layer and its main job is that of protection. The epidermis is actually made up of several layers including the stratum basale, stratum spinosum, stratum granulosum, stratum lucidum, and the stratum corneum. Each of these layers has its own unique purpose and function. Below the epidermis is the dermis. The epidermis and the dermis are always communicating with each other. The dermis is the thickest layer of the skin. It does many jobs including the production of sweat, growing hair, sensation, protection, oil production, and providing a type of foundation to the rest of the skin.

The third layer of skin is called the subcutaneous tissue. Its job is to attach to the bones and muscles in the body. This layer also supplies the bones and muscles with the blood vessels and nerve connections they need to operate. Other parts of the skin include the basement membrane, which separates the epidermis and dermis. This membrane is responsible for controlling the communication between each layer. Often overlooked, our skin plays an important role in our daily lives. From temperature regulation to protection from germs, the skin has many important functions. It is imperative that we do our best to take care of this precious organ. There are ways we can nourish our skin to ensure it continues to do its job. First, make sure you are drinking plenty of water. Water provides our skin with the proper hydration needed to function to capacity.

Your skin might be letting you know that it needs water if you notice that your lips are dry and chapped. Other signs your skin is screaming for H₂O include tight, dry, or flaky skin. Inadequate hydration that leads to constant dry skin could result in unwanted side effects like premature aging and wrinkles, in addition to health problems throughout the body. There are many ways you can use plants to nourish your skin on the outside, but remember that nourishment starts on the inside first, with proper hydration! There are many conditions that can affect the skin, as well as the rest of the body. Below are common ailments of the integumentary system, as well as plant remedies to help treat them.

RASHES

Arguably one of the most common ailments of the skin, rashes come in a variety of forms and have an even more extensive variety of causes. A rash is a visible lesion or red and irritated portion on the skin. Rashes are usually a reaction to something or a sign of illness.

HIVES

A common rash is hives. Hives are caused by an allergic reaction to something. They appear as raised, red, and itchy bumps on the skin. If you notice a rash that appears to be hives, take an antihistamine to avoid further development of any allergic reaction that might result in anaphylaxis. Watch for signs of anaphylaxis, such as wheezing, trouble breathing, the feeling of a swollen tongue, or the feeling your throat is closing.

These are signs of a deadly allergic reaction that might need immediate medical attention. Oftentimes, those who are experiencing worsening signs of anaphylaxis will need an injection of epinephrine. Call 911 if you do not have an epi pen and are experiencing symptoms of anaphylaxis. Think about what you may have been exposed to recently. Did you use a new laundry detergent? What did you eat today? Did you eat anything different than normal? Did you come into contact with anything that might cause this reaction? Were you recently stung by an insect? Have you been under severe duress? Unfortunately, sometimes the cause of hives is never determined. Below are remedies that might help relieve the discomfort and itching associated with hives:

REMEDY #1: OATMEAL AND APPLE CIDER VINEGAR BATH FOR HIVES

Oatmeal is used to calm the skin and soothe irritation, especially when it comes to itchy rashes caused by hives or chicken pox.

RECIPE AND USAGE: Run a tepid bath (too warm might worsen hives) and add one to two cups of oatmeal. Stir well. You can also add a cup or two of apple cider vinegar, which has been proven to help with the inflammation and itching as well. Stay in the bath as long as possible, making sure you are immersing the affected areas.

REMEDY #2: WITCH HAZEL AND STINGING NETTLE COMPRESS

Witch hazel can help calm the inflammation and itching associated with hives. Stinging nettle is an excellent way to calm the reaction, as it contains flavonoids that might help suppress the production of histamines. However, use it with caution, as improper handling can result in more skin issues! Stinging nettle is also taken internally as a popular allergy remedy because of its beneficial flavonoid content. If you have any left over from the compress recipe below, infuse it in hot water to drink as a tea.

RECIPE: Bring a pot of water to a boil (only as much water as you may need to soak a compress and treat the hives). Add one tablespoon of dried stinging nettle leaves and one tablespoon of dried witch hazel leaves or bark. Let this simmer for ten to fifteen minutes, covered. Remove everything from heat and let this sit until it is completely cooled off.

USAGE: Soak a clean washcloth or rag in the liquid and apply this to the affected area, letting it sit for as long as tolerated. You may choose to use multiple cloths if the hives are covering a large area.

REMEDY #3: ALOE VERA GEL

Aloe vera is a wonderful ally to the skin. It has been used for stings, bites, burns, and other skin irritations throughout history. It is extremely easy to grow and care for. It definitely pays to have one of these plants on hand around the house! To use the plant, cut off a stalk and cut it in half. Smear the gel inside onto the affected areas to soothe irritation. Use as often as needed, and in conjunction with the other remedies above.

RASHES FROM POISON IVY, OAK, SUMAC, AND OTHER TOXIC PLANTS

The rashes that can form from exposure to toxic plants can be painful and downright excruciating. They often blister and ooze, along with producing a deep-seated itch. A word of caution: these rashes are treatable at home, but when they get on the face it is time to seek medical help. The rash could spread to the eyes, possibly causing vision loss. If you are a person who loves the outdoors and likes to spend a fair amount of time in the woods, it pays to learn how to identify common poisonous plants so you can avoid them. However, try as they might, some people can get a rash from these plants by just being in a general area with them and not even touching them.

One trick to avoid getting these rashes is to go straight to the bathroom and take a shower when you come in from the woods where there are poisonous plants. Wash with a rough washcloth and instead of soap, use dish washing liquid. It contains de-greasers that actually help to break down oils. It is the oils (even tiny amounts the size of a pin tip) that cause the rash. Scrub your entire body very thoroughly with the cloth and dish washing liquid, rinse off, and avoid excessive handling of the clothes you wore in the woods, because there is a good chance you may get it from touching them when you wash them. If you follow the advice above, and you still manage to get a rash from a toxic plant, try one of the remedies below for relief:

REMEDY #1: JEWELWEED POULTICE

There are a lot of ways people use jewelweed, but many herbalists skip the complex recipes and just use this plant fresh to treat poison ivy. Legend has it that this plant grows next to poison ivy; nature's way of helping us out a bit. If you are suffering from a poison ivy rash, you can smash the stems and leaves of this plant up and apply this poultice directly to the affected areas.

This plant is often found in the summer months growing along wet areas. The stems are hollow and juicy. They are perfect for poultice-making! The plant has a lovely orange flower dangling from it, which is visible in mid to late summer, making identification easier. Sometimes, people come into contact with poisonous plants when jewelweed is not growing.

RECIPE: If you want to have jewelweed on hand for these times, you can boil two cups of water on the stove and add three to four tablespoons of freshly chopped jewelweed when it is in bloom. Let this simmer for an hour on very low heat. You'll notice the water will turn an orange color. This is when you know the water contains the medicinal oils from the plant. Strain the liquid out and put it into ice cube trays. When it cools, freeze this immediately and you will have small, perfectly sized cubes to put on the rash.

REMEDY #2: OLD FASHIONED PLANTAIN SALVE

Plantain: This unassuming little plant grows all over the place, including out of sidewalk cracks. Chances are you have come across this plant many times. It is common in yards, parks, and just about everywhere. The leaves of this plant are a wonderful first aid when poulticed for minor cuts, scrapes, burns, and stings. They provide soothing relief from inflammation and heat. Although these work great fresh in a poultice, they can also be made into a salve for the treatment of various rashes and skin irritations.

RECIPE: To create a salve, wilt plantain leaves for several days and fill a jar with them. Cover the leaves completely in a carrier oil (jojoba is nice and skin-friendly). Shake this daily and keep the jar in a warm place, but cover it in a brown paper bag or something similar to keep it out of direct sunlight. After four to six weeks, strain out the oil, pressing the leaves good through a cheesecloth to get all the oil out of them. Use this oil as the base for your salve by combining one cup of the oil with one ounce of beeswax in a double boiler. Let the beeswax melt under low heat and then immediately transfer the salve to jars to cool.

USAGE: Apply as needed for rashes, irritated skin, and related conditions.

REMEDY #3: CHICKWEED SALVE

Chickweed is a very cooling plant, and has been utilized for “hot” rashes. Rashes that are the result of contact with toxic plants can be very hot and irritated. Chickweed works to combat this, as well as provide relief from inflammation and irritation. This cool-weather plant is usually found growing in people’s yards in early spring and late fall.

RECIPE: It is best used as fresh as possible, but if you want to make a salve, let it wilt a bit before infusing it in oil to prevent excess water content causing spoilage and mold. Fill a jar with wilted chickweed and cover the plant material with a carrier oil. Let this sit and infuse for four weeks before straining it out. Use the oil by itself, or create a salve with it by melting one ounce of beeswax into one cup of the infused oil in a double boiler. Add 5-10 drops of skin-soothing essential oils if desired and pour into tins or jars to cool.

USAGE: This plant also works great in the field as a poultice for minor wounds, rashes, cuts, and burns. Because of its cooling effect, this salve works great for heat rash as well.

DIAPER RASH AND RASHES CAUSED BY MOIST CONDITIONS

Diaper rash is usually caused by irritation on the skin due to constant moist conditions. It can also appear when a child has a reaction to the material the diapers are made from. If you cloth diaper, a child can still get diaper rashes from the laundry detergent if they have sensitive skin.

To combat diaper rash, make sure to keep the area covered by the diaper as dry as possible. This means changing the diaper often and keeping the area clean. Avoid using talc powders, or any powders, for that matter. It has been shown that this powder can be inhaled and cause harm to the lungs and other areas of the respiratory tract. Below are remedies to help treat diaper rashes:

REMEDY #1: CALENDULA SALVE

Calendula flowers are such an amazing and versatile plant medicine. They are soothing to the skin and often utilized in remedies for rashes, burns, and wounds. In addition, they can be made into tinctures and extracts to take internally for digestive issues. When harvesting calendula flowers, make sure you include the resinous green bract below the petals, as it contains wonderful healing properties.

RECIPE: Create an effective and soothing salve for diaper rash by infusing the dried or wilted flower heads in a carrier oil for four to six weeks. Shake the jar of flowers and oil daily to ensure the medicinal properties from the flowers are infusing into the oil. Keep the jar in a warm place (if outdoors or in sunlight, cover with a paper bag) and strain it out when it is ready. Melt one cup of this infused oil and one ounce of beeswax in a double boiler.

USAGE: Pour it into jars or tins to cool and apply liberally after each diaper change.

REMEDY #2: SELF-HEAL SALVE

Self-heal is a plant member of the mint family that grows wild throughout the summer months. This unassuming little plant with its tiny purple petals also goes by the names woundwort and heal-all. It comes by its name honestly, as it has been used for centuries to heal skin issues ranging from minor cuts, scrapes, boils, infected wounds, and rashes. In addition to its skin-healing properties, self-heal contains antiviral compounds and may be helpful when taken internally in a tincture for viruses.

RECIPE: A salve made with the wilted aerial parts of this plant can be used effectively for diaper rash, as well as for cold sores (due to its antiviral action). Fill a small jar with wilted or dried self-heal flowers and cover them entirely in a carrier oil. Let this infuse for four weeks in a warm place, out of direct sunlight (cover in a paper bag if it is placed outside in the sun). Strain this out and add one cup of it to one ounce of beeswax in a double boiler. When the beeswax is fully melted, pour the salve into jars to cool.

USAGE: Apply this liberally to diaper rashes, cuts, and other skin irritations to provide relief and healing.

CUTS, LACERATIONS, AND WOUNDS

There are a variety of plant remedies that have been used to treat skin wounds throughout history. Perhaps one of the most famous comes from a common plant called Yarrow. This plant is full of medicinal benefits ranging from wound care to the treatment of menstrual issues. It has been used for its ability to staunch bleeding, reduce fevers, and even clean wounds. It has antiseptic, antifungal, and febrifuge properties. When applied fresh or powdered to a wound, it can act as a styptic.

When drunk in tea, it may help reduce fevers by inducing sweating. Yarrow is a common plant found throughout the world growing wild. It has fernlike leaves and white flowers. It has a distinct smell that cannot be compared to any other plant. Legend has it that Achilles used this plant for his soldiers in battle, giving it the Latin name, *Achillea millefolium*. Below are preparations that can be made from yarrow for the treatment of cuts, lacerations, and wounds:

REMEDY #1: YARROW STYPTIC POWDER FOR BLEEDING

Yarrow is a great first aid for minor cuts, scrapes, and wounds because it can help reduce bleeding. Its antiseptic properties can also be useful for preventing infection and keeping the wound clean. Creating a styptic powder from the dried leaves of this plant is very simple! Collect a good amount of yarrow.

RECIPE: Dry the plants very well before proceeding to the next step. They will not grind to powder properly if they are not very dry. Strip the dried leaves from the plants and place them into a mortar and pestle. Grind the dried leaves into a fine powder. Keep this powder in a sterile jar for use.

USAGE: When someone has a cut or wound that is bleeding, apply the powder to the area, packing it in well. Leave this on for as long as needed until the bleeding stops.

REMEDY #2: YARROW SALVE

Yarrow can also be processed into a salve for use on minor cuts and scrapes. It can help keep the area clean, as well as treat the irritated skin and provide relief.

RECIPE: Infuse the dried, aerial parts of the plant in a carrier oil (make sure the oil is completely covering the plant material) for four to six weeks. Strain out and use one cup of this infused oil to create salve. In a double boiler, melt one ounce of beeswax into one cup of the oil. When the beeswax is entirely melted, you can pour the salve into jars to cool.

DOSAGE: Use as needed for the treatment of skin irritations associated with scrapes, rashes, blisters, cuts, and other wounds.

REMEDY #3: YARROW COMPRESS

Another way to use yarrow is to create a soothing compress. For irritated and hot skin, let the liquid cool before soaking the cloth and applying on the affected area. To create a liquid for the compress, boil two cups of water and add one tablespoon of dried yarrow (aerial parts). Completely remove this from heat, cover it, and allow it to cool and continue infusing in the water. When it is cool, soak a cloth in the liquid and apply it to irritated areas. This compress is helpful for soothing scrapes like road rash. If the area is especially hot and irritated, add a tablespoon of chopped chickweed to the water in addition to the yarrow.

RINGWORM AND ATHLETE'S FOOT

Although many people think ringworm is a worm or parasite, it is actually a fungal condition that affects the skin. The mold-like fungi responsible for this skin infection live on dead skin tissues. Ringworm can develop just about anywhere on a person. It looks like a distinct circle, often red and there is a deeper red, raised outline around the circle. This patch can itch and become scaly or bumpy. When this condition affects the area between the toes, it is often referred to as athlete's foot. This condition is contagious. You can take steps to avoid it by wearing flip flops in locker rooms or public showers (because those with athlete's foot can spread it there). Avoid skin-to-skin contact with any affected persons. You can get ringworm from pets as well, so practice good hygiene by washing your hands after petting or grooming your pet. Ringworm can be present in soil and other objects. Oftentimes, those who

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work out at public gyms can get ringworm from weight benches and other equipment that has not been properly sanitized. Below are remedies that can treat fungal infections of the skin like ringworm and athlete's foot.

REMEDY #1: TEA TREE AND LAVENDER OIL BLEND

Tea tree has powerful antifungal properties and is a must have for treating athlete's foot or ringworm. Lavender pairs well with it because it is soothing for the skin, antimicrobial, and antifungal as well. A great way to use these plants for treating ringworm or other fungal infections is to infuse each plant in oil.

RECIPE: You can expedite the infusion process by heating your oil infusion on the stove over low heat. Do not overheat these infusions! The best parts to use for each plant are tea tree leaves and lavender buds. Let these infuse in oil (enough to fully cover the plant material) on the stovetop for four to six hours under low heat. Strain them out through a cheesecloth, making sure you squeeze it hard to get all the medicinal oil out of the plants. Combine each oil infusion and apply this straight to the affected area or areas.

USAGE: It helps to bandage the area to prevent the oil from rubbing off. Reapply the oil blend every three to four hours until the fungal infection is gone.

REMEDY #2: BEE BALM ANTIFUNGAL OIL INFUSION

Bee balm, Latin name *Monarda fistulosa*, is a powerful plant that contains many medicinal properties. In addition to being antifungal, it is antimicrobial, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, and antiesthetic. It has been used both externally and internally for issues ranging from insect bites, ringworm, and strep throat. This plant is common along roadsides and in fields throughout North America during the summer months. The leaves and flowers are primarily used, as they contain beneficial and medicinal oils.

RECIPE: Fill a jar with wilted or dried bee balm flowers and leaves. Completely cover the plant material in a carrier oil. Let this infuse for four weeks before straining it out for use. Apply this infused oil straight to the affected area and cover it with a bandage to prevent it being rubbed off. Reapply this oil every three to four hours. You can alternate between this oil and the tea tree and lavender oil blend if desired.

USAGE: Keep applying and covering until the ringworm is completely gone.

INSECT BITES AND STINGS

Depending on the insect, bites and stings can range from bothersome to downright painful! Spiders can leave bites that cause minor skin irritation, to major wounds involving dead tissue. Bees, wasps, hornets, and other buzzing insects can inflict painful stings that swell and may even result in a major allergic reaction. Fleas, mosquitoes, chiggers, and ticks can cause severe itching and irritation. Below are remedies to treat the symptoms of various bites and stings:

REMEDY #1: ALOE VERA FOR BEE, WASP AND HORNET STINGS

Aloe vera is often used to treat stings because it provides cooling and soothing relief almost instantly. It also aids in reducing inflammation, a nasty side effect of these types of stings. If you are stung by a flying insect, make sure you also watch for signs of an allergic reaction, such as wheezing, swelling, and trouble breathing. Taking an

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antihistamine as soon as you are stung may help reduce the chances of an allergic reaction. Seek immediate medical help if you suspect anaphylaxis.

USAGE: To treat stings with aloe vera, it is best to use the fresh plant. Cut the thick leaves open to reveal the gel and apply it to the affected area. Aloe vera is also a great remedy for burns.

REMEDY #2: PLANTAIN POULTICE

The great thing about using plantain for insect bites and stings is that oftentimes, it is right under your feet...or at least somewhere around you. You can almost immediately treat the sting when it happens by finding plantain (it is in most yards and grows throughout the seasons).

USAGE: Chew it up in your mouth, or if you have time, mash it with your fingers into a poultice to apply to the sting. Reapply every hour or so as needed. If you are stung by a bee, remove the stinger before applying any poultices. Many times, the stinger is embedded in the skin after use.

REMEDY #3: MARSHMALLOW POULTICE

For painful stings, marshmallow can provide relief from swelling, inflammation, and irritation.

USAGE: Simply mash up the roots or seeds of the plant and apply them directly to the sting. You may need to reapply the poultice every few hours as needed.

REMEDY #4: PEPPERMINT FOR ITCHING ASSOCIATED WITH MOSQUITO AND OTHER BUG BITES

For bites that leave behind itchy bumps, peppermint tea or compresses can actually help to alleviate the nagging itch, as well as any pain that might accompany it.

RECIPE: Simply create a small amount of tea by infusing a teaspoon of peppermint leaves into a half of a cup of hot water for ten minutes. Dip a cloth in the liquid (when it has sufficiently cooled) and apply it directly to the areas that itch.

USAGE: You can use small strips of cloth as a compress by dipping them in the tea and applying them to areas where you have more than one bite (for instance, bed bugs tend to bite in multiple places close together).

REMEDY #5: REPEL BUGS WITH YARROW, LEMONGRASS, LAVENDER, WORMWOOD, AND CITRONELLA

If you go out to harvest yarrow, you might notice the lack of bugs on the plant. This is because most bugs do not like the smell it produces. There are several other plants that bugs tend to avoid. Lemongrass is great for repelling mosquitoes. Lavender is reportedly effective at repelling flies, fleas, mosquitoes, and chiggers. Wormwood is said to be helpful at repelling fleas as well. Citronella is a popular mosquito repellent, and has been used commercially in many products for this purpose. If you are worried about fleas in your home, you may have luck planting these plants around your yard and foundation. You can also grow these in your garden (or in pots) to infuse in water and make a bug repellent spray. On the stove, boil three cups of water. Add one tablespoon each of the dried and chopped plants mentioned above. Remove this from heat and let it steep for one hour. Strain out the liquid when it has

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sufficiently cooled and put it in a spray bottle. Keep it refrigerated and use it before any outdoor excursions by spraying a liberal amount all over your clothes, ankles, arms, and even your face.

BURNS

Burns can occur when the skin comes into contact with very hot material. Hot steam and water are very common sources of burns in the kitchen. Hot stove burners or campfires also cause many accidents. Another type of burn is a chemical burn. This is the skin's reaction to being exposed to toxic substances that take off layers of skin. When you come into contact with something that burns your skin, the first thing to do is run the area under cool water. The area could swell quickly, so if you have on any jewelry that might become stuck, remove it as fast as you can. Wet a cloth with cool water and lay it on the area to keep it cool. There are several types of burns. A first degree burn is a minor burn in which the skin turns red but doesn't blister. A second degree burn is a bit more serious, with the skin burning down to the dermis. Blistering usually occurs with a second degree burn. A third degree burn is the most serious type of burn. This is characterized by charred, white skin with at least the top two layers of the skin damaged severely. Always seek immediate medical attention for more severe burns, as the skin might require grafts or other medical interventions. Below are plant remedies that can help soothe burned skin, as well as provide relief from the pain and swelling associated with them.

REMEDY #1: CHICKWEED POULTICE

Chickweed is a cooling and soothing plant, making it ideal for relieving the pain and swelling associated with burns. It is quite abundant when the weather turns cool, so it may be easy to find at several points in the year. It is best used fresh. For minor burns, collect as much chickweed as you can.

RECIPE: Wash it well and mash it up by hand, or in a food processor. Apply this directly to the burned areas. As always, make sure you follow the proper burn protocol above before applying any poultices (run under cool water, remove jewelry, etc.)

USAGE: Leave this poultice on the affected area for as long as you want. You can reapply the poultice every few hours.

REMEDY #2: SLIPPERY ELM COMPRESS FOR BURNS

Slippery elm has been used by indigenous people for centuries as a treatment for various wounds. It can provide burned skin much needed calming and soothing. The inner bark contains a substance that when mixed with water creates a valuable gel-like coating. This is why it is so useful for the treatment of burns.

RECIPE: To create a liquid for a compress, boil three cups of water and add one to two tablespoons of slippery elm bark. Remove from heat and let this steep for fifteen to twenty minutes.

USAGE: When it is cooled, dip a cloth into the liquid and apply it directly to the burned areas. You can reapply this compress hourly if you desire.

ECZEMA

Eczema affects all ages, from the newborn to the elderly. Also referred to as atopic dermatitis, eczema causes the skin to become red and itchy. It can also cause red to brown colored patches, raised bumps, and thick, scaly skin. Because it tends to itch in many places, it could develop into crusty areas caused by ooze coming from the irritated skin. It is hard, but try to avoid itching eczema. Itching will only make the inflammation worse. Although most doctors, will say there is no “cure” for eczema, many people are finding that it is triggered by their diet. If you find that you are having flare-ups, start recording what you are eating and see if you can detect a pattern. Dairy, gluten, and other allergens may be contributing to the condition. Eczema can also be caused by environmental factors such as allergens in the air, certain products, and hormones. If you can detect the triggers that may be causing your eczema, you may be able to nip your flare-ups in the bud. Below are plant remedies that can help alleviate the symptoms associated with eczema, and provide the skin with moisture, soothing, and nourishment.

REMEDY #1: ALOE VERA GEL WITH LAVENDER AND TEA TREE

Aloe Vera gel can soothe the inflammation and irritation associated with eczema. Lavender is famous for being nourishing to the skin, as well as gentle. Tea tree is used for a variety of skin conditions, and can help with the irritation and redness.

RECIPE: You may choose to buy pre-made, food grade aloe Vera gel, or make your own by slicing the leaves apart and scraping out the gel into a bowl. Add ten drops of lavender and tea tree essential oils to one cup of aloe Vera gel and stir well. Put this mixture into a bottle with a lid and store it in the fridge.

USAGE: Shake it well before each use and apply it liberally to the affected areas throughout the day.

REMEDY #2: CALENDULA AND WITCH HAZEL IN EVENING PRIMROSE-INFUSED OIL

Calendula provides relief from minor skin irritations, redness, and inflammation. Witch hazel is a soothing and anti-inflammatory plant that can help inflamed skin associated with eczema. Evening primrose is a common flowering plant that contains compounds shown to help with the itching, redness, and crusting that comes with eczema.

RECIPE: Use a carrier oil that is not too thick and won't irritate the skin by clogging pores. A great choice for this purpose is grapeseed oil. Fill a jar with one part wilted or dried evening primrose flowers, one part dried or wilted calendula flower heads, and one part witch hazel leaves. You may also choose to add a teaspoon of evening primrose seeds as well. Completely cover the plant material in grapeseed oil and allow this to sit in a warm area for four to six weeks to infuse. Keep it out of direct sunlight by covering the jar with a brown paper bag.

USAGE: When it is ready, strain it out and squeeze the plant material through the cheesecloth well to make sure you get all the oil trapped inside. Apply this oil directly to the affected areas as often as you desire.

IMMUNE SYSTEM

A weakness in the immune system can expose you to a variety of illnesses. This unique system is designed to provide the body with what it needs to combat viruses, infections, and anything else the body deems as dangerous. The immune system detects pathogens in the body that may pose a threat and sends “troops” to attack and get rid of these unwelcome guests. A fever is a sign of a healthy immune response because our body is trying to kill the pathogen by making the temperature inhabitable. Most people think that fevers are bad, but in fact, they are not always bad. A fever higher than 104 degrees Fahrenheit may need something to bring it down, but it is usually best to let the body do its work and fight the pathogen. Inflammation is often a sign of an immune response in the body as well. Many times, one might notice inflamed lymph nodes when they have an infection. This is because they are the body’s first line of defense when it is threatened with a foreign pathogen. They swell when they become overactive. There are several plants that have proven benefits when it comes to the stimulation of the immune system and helping it fight off infections and viruses.

The remedies below are popular for helping combat influenza and other similar viruses. However, if you suspect you are coming down with influenza, make sure you are also staying hydrated. Many of the people hospitalized with influenza are hospitalized because of dehydration. Keep as much water down as possible. Although food is important, focus mainly on hydration.

REMEDY #1: ELDERBERRY GLYCERITE FOR INFLUENZA

Claims that elderberry can help boost the immune system are now backed by multiple studies. This common berry can be made into an extract to be taken at the onset of symptoms. It is often taken for viruses like influenza. Elderberry should be taken as soon as you suspect symptoms. You may also choose to take it if you have been exposed to someone that you later discover had influenza. Two varieties of elderberry are commonly used medicinally: black elderberry and red elderberry, with black being the most popular.

RECIPE: Using dried elderberries, fill a glass jar. Cover the elderberries in non-GMO vegetable glycerine. Leave this to infuse, shaking it daily. After four weeks, pour the entire contents of the jar (berries and all) into a pot on the stove and cook under very low heat for four to six hours to further release the medicinal properties into the liquid. Do not overheat, as you want to retain the medicinal properties in the berries. Add cinnamon bark, rose hips, and freshly chopped ginger to the pot while it is cooking if you desire. When it has infused for four hours, remove it from heat and let it cool. Strain the contents through a cheesecloth, making sure to squeeze the berries in the cloth hard to get all the liquid out. The result is a deep, rosy glycerite that is both concentrated and great-tasting.

DOSAGE: For adults, take five to ten millilitres of this extract up to three times a day at the onset of influenza-like symptoms. For children, take five millilitres up to three times a day.

REMEDY #2: ECHINACEA AND RUDBECKIA TINCTURE FOR IMMUNE-BOOSTING

Echinacea is quite a popular plant remedy for boosting the immune system. It is a familiar, tall, purple flower, often referred to as purple coneflower. There are several species of Echinacea that grow wild throughout North America and all are used interchangeably for boosting the immune system. Echinacea has a lesser known cousin called Rudbeckia, or black-eyed-Susan. While Rudbeckia hasn’t received the fame its cousin has, studies suggest the roots of this common plant may actually be more effective than Echinacea at boosting the immune system!

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RECIPE: One way to utilize both plants is to harvest Echinacea (any variety) focusing mostly on the aerial parts. If you want, you can collect a root or two as well. Next, harvest Rudbeckia (only the roots are used). Chop all these things well and fill a jar. Cover them with alcohol, or a mixture of alcohol and vegetable glycerine. Let this infuse for four to six weeks, shaking it daily. Strain it out when it is ready and put the liquid in a dropper bottle.

DOSAGE: Take one dropper-full, up to three times daily when you are experiencing symptoms of a virus.

REMEDY #3: SHIKIMIC ACID EXTRACT (A MAIN COMPONENT IN A POPULAR INFLUENZA PRESCRIPTION)

Shikimic acid is a compound found in several plants. In labs, it is extracted and altered to create a popular prescription given to people diagnosed with Influenza. You can create your own shikimic acid extract by collecting plants that contain it and making a tincture.

RECIPE: This tincture may not be as strong as the prescription, but at least it is not a chemically altered and lab created substance! Star anise is the most popular plant that contains shikimic acid. However, when scientists were looking for more sustainable sources for creating the prescription, they discovered that unripe sweet gum seed balls and pine needles also contain shikimic acid. Sweet gum trees are very common around many parts of the world. Many people find them annoying because the seed balls they produce are hard and spiny. They can quickly ruin a yard! It is good to know that these seed balls have a very useful purpose. Collect them when they are still green. Chop them finely before filling your jar to create the tincture. Collect pine needles as well. Make sure they are finely chopped to add to the jar. Finally, if you have any star anise on hand, add these to the jar. Amounts of plants used for this recipe can vary according to what you have. You may choose to fill the jar with two parts sweet gum, one part pine needle, and one part star anise, and so on. Keep in mind that star anise is the least sustainable plant in this recipe and should be used sparingly. Cover the plant material with alcohol and let it infuse for four to six weeks, agitating daily to promote infusion.

DOSAGE: Strain it out when it is ready and take one dropper full, twice a day at the onset of influenza-like symptoms.

REMEDY #4: ASTRAGALUS TEA

Astragalus has been a popular immune-booster in Chinese medicine for centuries. It might possibly be the most used and widely studied immune-boosting plant out there. Drink a tea made from the roots of this plant to help provide your body with help fighting a virus.

RECIPE: Fill a tea infuser or bag with the roots and let this infuse in a teacup of hot water for ten to fifteen minutes before consuming. Do this daily when you suspect you are coming down with a virus.

DOSAGE: As with any of these remedies, when taken at the earliest onset of symptoms, you are likely to see a more drastic improvement.

REMEDY #5: AN OLD AND EFFECTIVE CIDER FOR FIGHTING COLDS AND VIRUSES

This recipe is often called “fire cider” by herbalists. There are several variations of it, but most include spicy and hot plants to provide warmth and circulation to the body. They are all infused in apple cider vinegar.

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RECIPE: Oftentimes, a bit of raw honey is also added. Finely chop the following fresh ingredients: one turmeric root, one ginger root, a small horseradish root, three or four cayenne peppers, one or two jalapeno peppers, half of an onion, one small sliced lemon, one to three cloves of garlic, a hearty sprig of rosemary, one to three tablespoons of thyme, one to three tablespoons of oregano, and one hearty sprig of sage. Fill a jar with these ingredients (if you do not have all of them, that's okay – just use what you can get). Cover the contents of the jar with three fourths apple cider vinegar and one fourth raw honey. Shake well and refrigerate to infuse. Shake this mixture daily and let it sit for four weeks. Strain it out and put it in a jar when it is ready.

DOSAGE: Take a one ounce shot of this cider as needed to combat viruses and help the body fight them off. Keep it refrigerated even after straining to promote a long shelf life. It can last for several months if refrigerated.

LYME DISEASE AND TICK-BORNE ILLNESSES

Tick borne illnesses are becoming more and more commonplace. The diseases that these pests are transmitting to humans cause a variety of troubling symptoms and autoimmune problems. Some of these illnesses are not only transmitted by tick, but by fleas as well.

In the United States, Lyme is the most commonly diagnosed tick-borne illness. Other illnesses include Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Babesiosis, Powassan virus, Tularemia, Colorado Tick Fever, *Borrelia miyamotoi* disease, Anaplasmosis, and Ehrlichiosis. In each disease, the body creates an autoimmune response resulting in symptoms like a rash, fever, chills, and sometimes vomiting.

Some viruses like Powassan virus can actually cause brain swelling. With Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, a distinctive rash usually develops that appears as red splotches or pinpoint. With Lyme, you may develop the telltale “Lyme Bullseye” which is a red ring around the bite that spreads. If you are going to be going outdoors in the summer months, you should consider wearing tick repellent (try the repellent recipe under “Insect Bites and Stings” in this book). Also, as soon as you come back inside, check yourself thoroughly for ticks. Don't forget to look in spots like the head (ticks are hard to see there because of hair) and between the toes, etc. Check children thoroughly as well.

The sooner the tick is removed, the better your chances at avoiding a disease. Tick removal is also important. By using tweezers, you may actually squeeze the tick, causing it to regurgitate back into your body, thus possibly increasing the chances it will spread a disease. The same goes for applying essential oils, salt, or other liquids to the tick. This may cause it to regurgitate. Instead, try purchasing inexpensive “tick twisters” for tick removal. These handy devices actually get up under the tick without squeezing it and allow you to turn and gently remove the tick.

Keep an eye on tick bites. Watch for the red ring that can develop around the bite. In addition, watch closely for signs of a tick-borne illness like fatigue, fever, chills, nausea, rashes, weakness, shortness of breath, memory issues, confusion, and joint pain. Most often, it is the deer tick that is blamed for many tick borne illnesses. However, several other ticks can spread illness as well. If you are especially worried about a tick, you can save it after removal and put it in a plastic sandwich bag.

Find a facility in your area that will test the tick for tick borne illnesses. This can help put your mind at ease, or in the case it was carrying something, help with treatment! Below are popular remedies for tick borne illnesses, but it is important to seek medical help for certain illnesses, as they can have life-threatening results if they are left untreated. It is also advisable to work with a professional herbalist or naturopath when taking the remedies below.

REMEDY #1: LYME PROTOCOL

There are several common plants that have medicinal properties which work together to help the immune system exposed to Lyme disease. Japanese knotweed is on such plant. This plant is downright invasive in many areas. It has high levels of a compound called resveratrol, which is said to act as a powerful antioxidant. These properties make Japanese knotweed helpful for fighting inflammation and protecting nerve cells, and possibly even fighting cancer cells. Cat's Claw is another ingredient in some Lyme protocols. It helps heal the gut, as well as stimulate action of "killer cells" in our bodies that attack unwanted pathogens.

When purchasing Cat's Claw, make sure what you purchase is advertised as free of harmful alkaloids. Teasel is a common roadside plant. It is invasive and unwanted in many areas. However, the roots hold a compound that helps pull toxins like bacteria out of the muscles where other antibiotic plants or meds can attack them more efficiently. Certain Lyme bacteria can actually "drill" into muscle and bone, so it is helpful to have teasel root to draw it back out. Andrographis is a plant native to South Asia. It has been traditionally used like an antiviral, helping to prevent the common cold, as well as influenza. You can create a tincture using equal parts of each plant mentioned and take one to three droppers full daily.

REMEDY #2: ANTIBIOTIC AND IMMUNE BOOSTING PLANTS TO TAKE WITH LYME PROTOCOL

The above protocol is useful for helping move the bacteria out of the body. However, when taken with additional antibiotic and immune-boosting plants, you may increase your chances at killing the harmful pathogens. Antibiotic plants to consider tincturing include olive leaf, garlic, and goldenseal. Simply follow the tincturing protocol discussed in the book for each plant. You may choose one or all of them to tincture.

RECIPE: If tincturing goldenseal, use both the roots and aerial parts, which work together to help fight infection.

DOSAGE: Take one dropper full, twice a day. For olive leaf, take one dropper full, up to three times daily. For garlic, take only ten drops with food, as it may cause stomach upset. Take twice daily.

REMEDY #3: OTHER IMMUNE-BOOSTING PLANTS TO CONSIDER

A big part of battling a tick borne illness is helping your immune system fight it. There are several plants that have been discussed when it comes to helping the immune system. These plants include Echinacea, Rudbeckia root, astragalus, and elderberry.

RECIPE AND USAGE: Consider creating tinctures from these plants to take daily (start with five milliliters twice a day) to help your immune system do its job.

VITAMIN C AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Our bodies cannot make vitamin C. This is why it is so important to eat plenty of foods that help supply this important vitamin. The role of this vitamin is to aid in the development and repair of body tissues, growth, formation of collagen, wound healing, health of the immune system, absorption of iron, and the health of our bones, teeth, and cartilage. Years ago, a Nobel Prize-winning chemist named Linus Pauling discovered that vitamin C may help prevent the common cold, as well as treat heart disease and prevent cancer and infection. There are many plants that contain high amounts of this valuable vitamin. It is always best to get vitamins from their plant source, rather

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than a lab-created version of the vitamin. Ascorbic acid is often referred to as “vitamin C,” but in reality, it is an isolated nutrient and only part of natural vitamin C. Below are plants you can incorporate into your diet that contain vitamin C. This can help you maintain a healthy immune system and body.

REMEDY #1: ROSE HIP TEA

The fruit of the rose bush, rose hips appear in the fall as bright red balls on rose bushes. These little fruits contain some of the highest amounts of vitamin C than any other plant. You can help nourish your body and immune system by drinking a tea made with rose hips. It is especially helpful to drink this tea when you are beginning to feel the symptoms of a cold or other virus.

RECIPE: Simply fill a tea infuser with chopped and dried rose hips and let this infuse in a hot teacup of water for fifteen minutes before consuming. You may add raw honey for taste, as well as medicinal benefits.

DOSAGE: Enjoy this as often as desired, and especially when you are under the weather.

REMEDY #2: VIOLET LEAF BROTH

Violets are a common, and lovely, plant in the spring. They come in many colors, and most are edible! However, some report the yellow varieties to contain saponins and taste unpleasant. Purple violets are one of the most common, and all parts except the root, are edible.

RECIPE: The flowering tops can be candied and used as a garnish on baked goods, turned into jelly, or even made into a pretty and tasty syrup by boiling a cup or two of violet flowers in two cups of water for twenty minutes, straining it out, and then adding enough raw honey to give it a syrup consistency. It is violet leaves that are the most nutritious though! The leaves contain high amounts of vitamin C. When harvested while young, they are very palatable, and have been used traditionally as a thickener in soups. To get extra vitamin C and A, add violet leaves to broth and let it slow cook on a very low setting for several hours. Too much heat can destroy this vitamin, so take care not to let it get to the boiling point, or even steaming. Other greens to add to this nourishing broth include dandelion leaf, raspberry leaf, lambs quarter, and young winter cress leaves. Harvest leaves and dry them to use in the fall and winter months.

REMEDY #3: PINE NEEDLE TEA

An old, Indigenous remedy for scurvy involved drinking a tea made from pine needles. This is because pine needles do contain an admirable amount of vitamin C, especially white pine.

RECIPE: You can harvest pine needles any time of the year to create a tea with them. Use them fresh for best results. Simply cut them to where they are big enough to sit in a cup of hot water for fifteen minutes and then remove them and enjoy.

DOSAGE: Drink as often as you desire. Pregnant women should avoid ingesting pine.

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM: AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES

The immune system is comprised of many different parts of the body. Each has its own way to defend against potentially harmful invaders that can make us sick. For example, our skin's immune system can send white blood cells to fight infection when a foreign object, like a splinter, enters. Our mucus membranes serve as a way to protect the body from pathogens by coating open areas. When viruses enter the body and begin to replicate, the body may send T cells to deal with the infected cells.

For some people, the immune system doesn't function like it should. Autoimmune diseases are diseases in which the body's immune system attacks itself. In the past few decades, autoimmune diseases have risen dramatically due to a number of factors, both environmental and genetic. This chapter will discuss some of the most common autoimmune diseases and remedies that may help nourish the immune system while suppressing an autoimmune response in the body.

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

In this type of autoimmune disease, the body's immune system attacks tissues like the lining of joints. The resulting inflammation in the area causes swollen, painful, and warm joints. Joints on both sides of the body can be affected by rheumatoid arthritis. One symptom of this condition includes stiffness in joints, especially in the morning upon waking. Other symptoms include fatigue and pain. More women suffer from this condition than men, but men who have this condition usually have more severe symptoms. Below are some remedies to help calm the inflammation in the joints, as well as treat the pain.

REISHI FOR IMMUNE SYSTEM NOURISHMENT

Reishi, or *Ganoderma lucidum*, is a species of mushroom known throughout China as Ling Zhi. It has been nicknamed the "mushroom of immortality." It has been used for centuries to treat a variety of problems ranging from pain to cancer. This potent mushroom is an adaptogen. *No matter what type of autoimmune disease you may have, strongly consider adding reishi to your health regimen.* As an adaptogen, this mushroom promotes balance in the body and acts as an overall tonic. It can help nourish the immune system while restoring whatever is not functioning properly in your body.

Adaptogens help the body adapt and normalize body functions. These mushrooms are common all over the world. They are varying colors of brown and sometimes have white around the edges. They have a leathery consistency. Many *Ganoderma* species are used interchangeably. They can be found growing in yards or on dead stumps. You can get the most out of this mushroom by creating a double extraction. To do this, chop your mushroom into small pieces. Separate the mushroom material into two equal groups. For one group, fill a jar with the material and completely cover it with at least 80 proof alcohol.

Let this sit in a cool, dark place for four to six weeks, shaking it daily. For the other group, sit it somewhere dry and wait until the four to six weeks are up for your alcohol infusion. When the four to six weeks are up, take the second group and boil it in a pot on the stove in enough water to cover the mushrooms and then a little extra. Boil this down until the liquid is reduced by half or there is an equal amount of mushroom water to alcohol extract. Strain out your alcohol extract and add equal parts water infusion to it.

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Now you have an extract that took the alcohol and water soluble parts of the mushroom and combined them to create a powerful double extraction. Take ten milliliters of this up to three times daily for immune support. Store it in the refrigerator between uses.

SOLOMON'S SEAL AND COPAIBA SALVE

Solomons' Seal is great for inflammation and contains compounds that may help to strengthen the body's muscular and skeletal system. It is often used for sports injuries that involve trauma to the muscles, bones, joints, cartilage, tendons, and ligaments. The reparative properties that make it useful for these types of injuries make it a promising remedy for inflammation and damage in the joints of those with rheumatoid arthritis. Copaiba essential oil is an amazing remedy to help control pain and inflammation. It is also said to be a "magnifying" oil, meaning it may help to magnify the effects of other substances (like Solomon's seal) used alongside it.

RECIPE: To create this salve, finely chop the roots of the Solomon's seal plant and infuse them in a jar of carrier oil for four weeks. Shake the jar daily.

Try to get enough chopped roots to make eight ounces of infused oil. In a double boiler, melt one ounce of beeswax. When the beeswax has melted, remove everything from heat and add eight ounces of Solomon's seal-infused oil. Next, add ten to fifteen drops of copaiba essential oil and blend everything together thoroughly before pouring it into containers.

USAGE: Apply a liberal amount of this salve to affected joints as often as needed, making sure to massage it into the area until it has absorbed into the skin.

CROHN'S DISEASE

Crohn's disease is an autoimmune disease that affects the bowels. The inflammation that results from this disease makes its way deep into the bowel tissues and causes severe pain in the abdominal area, inflammation throughout the digestive tract, fatigue, diarrhea, weight loss, and malnutrition due to poor nutrient absorption in the digestive tract. There are no known cures for this condition, but it may be managed through proper diet. Avoid foods that may trigger autoimmune inflammation like sugar, processed foods, GMOs and gluten. Consider taking a daily probiotic as well to maintain healthy bacteria in the digestive tract. Below are remedies to soothe the digestive tract and promote healing:

SLIPPERY ELM AND ALOE SMOOTHIE FOR SOOTHING INFLAMMATION

Both slippery elm and aloe vera will coat the digestive tract with a soothing mucilage coating that not only provides relief, but also lowers inflammation. Slippery elm is a useful remedy for helping with diarrhea and hemorrhoids because it can calm irritation both in the digestive tract and outside the body. The best way to utilize these two is daily in a smoothie. You can purchase food grade aloe vera gel from most health stores and this is an easy way to get the amounts you will need to put in a daily smoothie.

RECIPE: For the slippery elm, the best way to prepare it is to take the inner bark and boil it in water until it reaches a thick, pulpy consistency before straining out the bark. In a pinch, you can also add slippery elm powder to your smoothie without any boiling. Add one to two ounces of aloe vera gel and a cup of water thickened with slippery elm bark to a blender. Add the fruits of your choice and/or probiotic yogurt as well. Add a small amount of ice and blend thoroughly before consuming.

DOSAGE: Drink this mixture daily (or twice daily if you want) for relief from the inflammation and irritation that comes with Crohn's disease.

MARSHMALLOW ROOT AND GINGER INFUSION

Marshmallow root is very similar to slippery elm and aloe as far as what it can do to soothe and coat the digestive tract. It has proven pain relieving and anti-inflammatory action. Ginger is also great for lowering inflammation and soothing an unsettled stomach. If pain from this disease is in the abdominal area, this remedy may be helpful.

RECIPE: Add a tablespoon of marshmallow root powder and a few slices of fresh ginger to a glass jar. In a pot on the stove, bring one to one-and-a-half cups of water to a boil and then carefully pour this over the marshmallow and ginger in the jar. Let this infuse for up to four hours before consuming it.

DOSAGE: Drink this infusion daily to treat or prevent abdominal irritation.

CALENDULA TINCTURE

Most people know calendula for its soothing effects when used topically on the skin. However, calendula can also provide soothing relief for those with digestive upset when taken internally. Calendula can speed healing, lower inflammation, and even reduce the cramping that comes with some cases of Crohn's disease.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with the resinous flower heads (make sure the bracts are still attached as well – they contain a lot of beneficial resin). Fill a jar with the flower heads and the completely cover the plant material with at least 80 proof alcohol. Let this sit and infuse in a cool, dark place for four to six weeks (shake it daily) before straining it out.

USAGE: Take one dropper full up to four times daily for relief.

PSORIASIS

For those with psoriasis, the immune system attacks the skin, resulting in abnormal patches all over the body. These patches of skin are usually itchy, dry, inflamed, and darker in color than normal skin. Those with psoriasis are urged not to itch the skin because this can cause further irritation to the area and may even result in infection. The remedies in this section will focus on soothing irritation, calming the skin, and lowering inflammation.

CHICKWEED AND CALENDULA SALVE

Chickweed is a common yard plant that can be found from spring to fall in most climates. It is known for its ability to produce a soothing and cooling effect wherever applied. It is often used to treat irritated skin rashes. Its medicinal properties make it a great contender for treating issues that come with psoriasis. When combined with skin-calming calendula, the duo can help to prevent irritation, itching, and cool the affected areas.

RECIPE: To create a salve with these two plants, collect chickweed and let it wilt a bit before covering it in a jar with a carrier oil. Try infusing your plants in a light but soothing oil like jojoba oil. Let the calendula wilt or dry before infusing it in oil as well. Infuse each plant in oil separately for four to six weeks before straining everything out and making salve. Shake your jars of plant and oil daily. Melt one ounce of beeswax in a double boiler and then remove everything from heat. Add four ounces each of chickweed and calendula infused oils. If you happen

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to have geranium essential oil on hand, this is a great essential oil to add to a salve for soothing irritation associated with psoriasis. Add ten to fifteen drops. Blend everything together thoroughly and pour it into jars to cool.

DOSAGE: Apply this salve to affected areas of the skin, making sure to massage it into the area thoroughly. Repeat this as often as needed for relief from psoriasis.

EPSOM, SELF-HEAL, AND OLIVE OIL SOAK

Soaking in a bath with the above ingredients can help encourage your skin to shed excess dead skin cells and will also help provide deep healing. The olive oil will help to trap moisture in the skin to further soothe affected areas. Self-heal is a common yard plant that has been used to heal wounds for centuries.

RECIPE: To start, collect self-heal and allow it to dry a little before infusing it in olive oil. Collect as much self-heal as you can so you can make enough infused oil to last a while. Fill a jar with self-heal and cover it completely with olive oil. Let this infuse for four to six weeks, shaking daily. When it is ready to strain out, combine one third cup of this infused oil with one cup of Epsom salt in a bowl.

USAGE: Add this to a warm bath and soak as long as you can to benefit from the moisturizing and healing properties. Soak daily for best results. Follow this with a deep moisturizing salve like the aforementioned chickweed and calendula salve.

CELIAC DISEASE

For those with celiac disease, the body's immune system overreacts to a protein called gluten. Gluten is a protein found in grains like wheat, barley, and rye. If a person with celiac disease continues to eat foods with gluten, the immune response could result in damage to the villi in the small intestine. Symptoms of celiac disease include bloating, a feeling of fullness, abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, anemia, nausea, and weight loss.

The simplest thing one can do to avoid issues from this disease is do their best to avoid gluten in any form. This can be tricky, because gluten is hidden in many products. Those with celiac have to get in the habit of careful label reading to make sure the foods they are eating contain no gluten, nor were produced alongside other foods that may contain gluten. If you happen to accidentally consume gluten and suffer a reaction, you can do the following things to make yourself more comfortable:

GOLDENSEAL TEA

Goldenseal can help to control inflammation, while working to heal any digestive tract irritation. An added bonus is that goldenseal may act to inhibit abnormal cell growth in the digestive tract. This bitter has been used to treat stomach ulcers and other digestive issues due to its healing and protective properties.

CAUTION: It is strongly advised to use both the root and leaf in any herbal preparation, as they contain complementary compounds that work together to target issues.

RECIPE AND DOSAGE: Fill an empty tea bag with two parts root and one part leaf and sit it in a cup of hot water to infuse for seven or eight minutes before drinking the tea. Drink one to two cups a day for best results.

OLIVE LEAF TEA

Olive leaf can both regulate and protect the immune system, while eliminating harmful toxins from the digestive tract. The high amount of antioxidants in olive leaves may help protect cells in the digestive tract from further damage. Olive leaves are tasty in tea.

DOSAGE: You can drink one to two cups of olive leaf tea daily to protect your digestive tract. Place olive leaves in an empty tea bag or stainless steel tea infuser and sit it in a cup of hot water to infuse for seven or eight minutes before consuming.

HASHIMOTO'S DISEASE

With Hashimoto's disease, the body's immune system attacks the thyroid, gradually destroying it. The thyroid is an important part of the body's endocrine system, and is responsible for the production of hormones to regulate various bodily functions. At first, those with this disease may not notice anything, but over time symptoms such as an enlarged thyroid that causes a noticeable goiter at the front of the neck. Another major sign is sluggishness and fatigue, as the thyroid helps to regulate the metabolism. When it becomes damaged, the metabolism slows significantly. Other symptoms include constipation, sensitivity to cold, hair loss, brittle nails, weight gain, sensitivity to cold, depression, and muscle and joint tenderness or pain. Diet may trigger issues, so avoid sugar, processed foods, and gluten. The remedies below may help to nourish the thyroid and regulate the immune system.

LICORICE AND NETTLE INFUSION

Licorice may help to restore balance in the body, as well as give those with a sluggish thyroid improved energy levels. In addition, it may help protect the thyroid from cancer. Stinging nettle is highly nutritious and contains nutrients that may work to reverse iodine deficiency.

RECIPE: Create a nourishing infusion with these two plants by chopping one or two tablespoons of licorice root and one cup of stinging nettle. Add these to a glass jar. In a pot on the stove, bring one-and-a-half cups of water to a boil and remove it from heat. Carefully pour the hot water over the plant material in the jar and let this infuse for at least three hours before consuming.

DOSAGE: Do this daily for thyroid health.

ASHWAGANDHA TINCTURE

Ashwagandha is not only an effective plant for providing energy, it is also an adaptogen. This is good news to those with an autoimmune disease and even better news for those with an autoimmune disease of the thyroid. Ashwagandha's adaptogenic properties can restore balance to an overactive immune system. This plant is also an effective remedy for inflammation and stress.

RECIPE: Create a tincture with this plant to get the most out of it. Finely chop the roots of the ashwagandha plant and fill a glass jar. Completely cover the plant material with at least 80 proof alcohol. Let this sit and infuse (shake it daily) for four to six weeks before straining it out.

DOSAGE: Take one dropper full of this tincture up to three times daily to balance thyroid hormones and boost energy.

GRAVES' DISEASE

This is another auto immune disease of the thyroid, but unlike Hashimoto's, those with Graves' disease suffer the effects of an overactive thyroid. This autoimmune disease results from the immune system releasing too many antibodies that stimulate the thyroid. When the thyroid is overactive, symptoms that occur include weight loss, excessive sweating, and body tremors. In some cases, people with this disease experience eye issues when the eyes bulge from the sockets. This condition requires medical treatment because if the thyroid is left in high gear too long, the heart works too hard and can wear out faster. There are some natural remedies you can also utilize to nourish the thyroid and ensure its health if you want something to complement your current regimen, just be sure to consult with your endocrinologist first:

BUGLEWEED TEA

Bugleweed is a favorite among natural health practitioners for helping the body control Thyroid Stimulating Hormones (TSH). It may help to alleviate the symptoms that accompany the disease as well. The seeds are the most potent for helping with TSH levels, so you will need these to infuse in tea.

RECIPE AND DOSAGE: It is best to place a teaspoon of seeds in an empty tea bag and infuse this in a cup of hot water to drink. You can drink this tea up to twice daily for help with TSH levels.

LEMON BALM TEA

Not only is lemon balm a relaxing nervine, it is also great for Graves' Disease because it is linked to a reduction in symptoms like increased heart rate, palpitations, and anxiety. Lemon balm has been used for centuries to help nourish the immune system as well.

DOSAGE: Drink this herb in tea up to three times daily to experience a more calm body, mind, and spirit.

LUPUS

Lupus is an autoimmune disease that can be really hard to diagnose. This is because it may take years for those experiencing symptoms to find a doctor that puts the symptoms together to get a clear picture of what is happening. The major reason it can be tricky to diagnose is the disease affects multiple areas of the body. It can behave like Rheumatoid Arthritis and attack joints, or affect the thyroid. It can even produce symptoms like diabetes. It has been called "the great imitator" for these reasons. Symptoms are broad, but some common symptoms include swelling in limbs, a rash across the nose and cheeks, hair loss and anemia. Below are remedies to help regulate the immune system and reduce inflammation.

ASTRAGALUS

Like reishi, astragalus is an adaptogen. Unlike some herbs that stimulate the immune system, astragalus gently helps to build and regulate the immune system. This is good news for those with autoimmune issues like Lupus. Please consult with a medical professional before taking astragalus with any other immune system medication.

RECIPE: You can consume astragalus in a tea by fill a tea bag with finely chopped astragalus roots and letting this infuse in a cup of hot water for five to seven minutes. The tea can be drunk up to twice daily. You can also

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make a tincture with astragalus by filling a jar with the chopped roots and then covering everything with alcohol. Shake it daily and strain it out after four to six weeks.

DOSAGE: Take one dropper full up to three times daily.

GINGER AND TURMERIC TEA

Both ginger and turmeric are known for their anti-inflammatory effects. Because inflammation is such a big factor with many autoimmune diseases, these plants are a great choice to help control it naturally. Lower inflammation means less chance of pain and neurological issues.

RECIPE: Use fresh or dried ginger and turmeric roots by placing equal parts in a tea bag and letting this infuse in a cup of hot water for seven to ten minutes.

USAGE: Consume this up to three times daily.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is an autoimmune disease where the immune system attacks myelin around the nerves. Myelin is a substance that wraps around the nerves to protect them. When this is diminished, nerve symptoms like muscle spasms and weakness, blurred vision, feelings of numbness and tingling, pain, problems focusing, feeling tired, and poor bladder control may manifest. There are several degrees of severity associated with this condition. Some experience periods where they have no symptoms and then periods where they relapse and the symptoms get much worse. There are no known cures for MS, but there may be ways to manage the disease, like avoiding foods that trigger inflammation and getting plenty of sunlight. The remedies below may help with inflammation and nourish the nerves.

OAT STRAW

Oat straw is known for its nerve-calming abilities, so it is no wonder some people love it for treating overactive nerves associated with MS. It may also help to control spasms. Depression can be a symptom of MS, and oat straw has been used to treat mild to moderate depression as well. Oat straw also contains anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds. You can tincture these to create an extract to nourish the nerves. Fill a jar with oat straw and cover it with alcohol.

RECIPE AND USAGE: Place a lid on the jar and shake it daily for four to six weeks, allowing it to infuse. Strain the liquid out at the end of the four to six weeks and take a dropper full up to four times daily for help with spasms and nerve issues.

ST. JOHN'S WORT

St. John's Wort is much more than just an antidepressant. It also contains antiviral and nerve calming properties. The nerve calming properties are what make it useful for those with mild to moderate depression, but they also help with nerve pain and other nerve-related issues. A tincture of St. John's Wort can help to calm overactive nerves and nerve pain that result from MS. Another benefit of this plant is that it can help with depression that is often a result of the disease.

RECIPE: Fill a jar with fresh St. John's Wort flowers (you may use a little leaves and stem as well, but the flowers are preferred). Cover the plant material in alcohol and let this infuse for four to six weeks. Shake the jar daily. You will notice the liquid turn red, which is a good sign the hypericin (the active medicinal compound) in the plant is infusing well. When the four to six weeks are up, strain out the liquid and bottle it in a dropper bottle. **DOSAGE:** Take one to two droppers full up to three times daily for nerve pain and nerve-related issues.

TYPE 1 DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. The result is the pancreas not being able to produce enough insulin to help the body operate efficiently. Those with this condition often have high blood sugar levels. Onset often begins at a young age. Symptoms include frequent urination, increased thirst, weight loss, extreme hunger, fatigue, sudden bed wetting in children who don't usually wet the bed, and blurred vision. Those who grow up with this condition often manage it by taking insulin shots to help control their blood sugar. They have to test their blood sugar often to make sure it isn't too high and make sure they choose healthy snacks to nourish the body while not harming blood sugar levels. There are some natural remedies that help normalize blood sugar, but you must make sure you check with your doctor before taking them.

CINNAMON

Such a common spice, but cinnamon actually contains compounds that help to stimulate insulin activity in the body. It can help to normalize blood sugar levels when it reacts with glucose in the food you consume. Some types of cinnamon are better than others. It is suggested to try powdered Ceylon cinnamon to protect the liver. Too much cassia cinnamon can have negative effects on the body.

RECIPE: Add one teaspoon of powdered Ceylon cinnamon to a cup of hot water and stir it to dissolve as much as you can. Drink this mixture daily for best results. If you want, try adding a teaspoon of powdered turmeric for its anti-inflammatory properties. It pairs well with cinnamon.

LICORICE ROOT TEA

Since licorice is an adaptogen, it can help to bring balance to areas of the body that need it. Licorice is also known for helping with diabetes because it contains compounds called amorfrutins. These compounds are thought to reduce blood sugar levels and control inflammation in the body, which is a win-win for those with diabetes.

RECIPE: Finely chop the roots of the licorice plant and fill a tea bag or tea infusion apparatus. Let this sit and infuse in a cup of hot water for seven to ten minutes before consuming.

DOSAGE: Do this twice daily to normalize and bring balance to the body.

VITILIGO

The skin's pigment cells are attacked by the immune system in this autoimmune disease. The result is patches of skin without pigment that appear white. Many people with this condition also have other autoimmune diseases. While vitiligo is not necessarily life threatening, it can be bothersome for those that have it. It is actually a fairly common autoimmune disease, with over 2.16 percent of the entire population presumed to have it. Some medical

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treatments involve various ointments that are linked to skin cancer. Other medical treatments involve lightening the skin that isn't affected. If you are looking for natural ways to improve your skin, try the remedies below:

CARROT JUICE FOR CAROTENOIDS

Juicing carrots and drinking this daily can help supply the body with carotenoids like beta-carotene, lutein, lycopene and zeaxanthin. These are necessary for skin health. These work together to target inflammation and protect the skin. Other foods that contain these compounds include sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and kale. You can experiment with a blend that works for you by juicing any of these for skin health, but carrots seem to be the most popular among those who have experimented with natural vitiligo treatments.

GINKGO BILOBA TINCTURE

Some research suggests that vitiligo may be triggered by oxidative stress in the body. The theory is that an imbalance between free radicals and antioxidants in the body triggers flare ups of the skin. Leaves from this ancient and common tree can be made into a tincture that helps slow the depigmentation process and provides the body with more antioxidants to fight free radical damage.

RECIPE: Collect leaves from this tree and chop them finely. Fill a jar and cover the chopped leaves with alcohol. Let this infuse for four to six weeks before straining out the liquid into a dropper bottle.

DOSAGE: Take one dropper full up to three times daily for management of vitiligo.



Amber Robinson is an author, Registered Herbalist with the American Herbalists Guild, as well as a Level 2 Professional Aromatherapist with the National Association of Holistic Aromatherapy. She is founder of The Bitter Herb Academy, a school for aspiring herbalists and those seeking to learn the art of essential oil distillation. Amber is also a retired teacher, having taught in the Missouri public school system for a decade before retiring to devote her time to instructing students at her own school. She lives on a farm in the Missouri Ozarks where she enjoys wildcrafting and cultivating native medicinal plants and teaching others about plant medicine.

Forgotten **Backyard Remedies**