



PRESCRIPTION FROM DR. LOW DOG

Microbes Associated With Common Infections

Condition	Bacteria	Virus	Fungus	Protozoa
Athlete's foot			X	
Bladder infection	X			
Colds		X		
Diarrhea	X	X		X
Ear infection	X	X	X	
Flu		X		
Herpes		X		
Lyme disease	X			
Pneumonia	X	X	X	
Sinusitis	X		X	
Skin disease	X	X	X	X
Strep throat	X			
Vaginal infection	X		X	X
Whooping cough	X			



Homemade Foaming Soap

1 cup water

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup liquid castile soap

5 drops essential oil (optional)

Soap bottle with foaming pump

Put the water and liquid castile soap into a soap bottle with a foaming pump, and you are good to go. It's that simple. If you don't want it to foam, just use a soap bottle with a regular pump. You can give yourself a little extra protection naturally by adding 5 drops of your favorite essential oil. Citrus is really nice for the kitchen, while lavender or peppermint are great for the bathroom. Liquid castile soap can be purchased online and in many health food stores. I love the old classic Dr. Bronner's organic castile soap.



Simply Shiitake

- 2 cups fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and sliced
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon tamari or low-sodium soy sauce

Remove stems and slice shiitake into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces. Crush garlic and let sit for 10 minutes; this allows the medicinal benefits to be released so that the garlic can be heated. Mix the lemon juice, tamari, and brown sugar. Heat the oil in a skillet and cook mushrooms for 5 minutes. Add garlic and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes. Add the tamari mixture and cook until absorbed. Remove from heat. Top with chopped green onion and, if desired, a few drops of dark sesame oil. Serve as a side dish or over rice, chicken, or fish.



Garlic Honey Vinegar

- 1 cup (8 ounces) apple cider vinegar, organic and raw preferred
- 1 tablespoon fennel seed
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 8 cloves garlic, crushed and let sit for 10 minutes
- 1 cup (8 ounces) honey, local if possible

Put the apple cider vinegar in a saucepan and add fennel seed and grated ginger. Simmer on very low heat, covered, for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and let sit for 10 minutes. While this is steeping, crush the garlic and let it sit for 10 minutes, allowing key enzymes to activate the medicinal components in the garlic. If you heat garlic before this enzymatic action takes place, you will lose most of its health benefits. Chop the onion and add it and the garlic to the liquid in the saucepan. Cover and steep for 60 minutes. Strain. Pour the liquid back into a clean saucepan and add the honey. Gently stir on very low heat. Pour into a glass jar and store in the refrigerator; this will keep for months.

How to Use: Use it to dress vegetables, salads, or meat dishes. As medicine, take 1 tablespoon every 3 to 4 hours when you're coming down with the sniffles or dealing with diarrhea.

Garlic, as well as onions, help to protect the gastrointestinal tract from damage when eaten as part of your regular diet. What's more, garlic has been dubbed Russian penicillin because it has been widely used in folk medicine to ward off colds and respiratory and intestinal infections. Raw apple cider vinegar is made from whole apples and is rich in minerals, nutritious, and great for the digestion and intestinal microflora. I absolutely love this garlic honey vinegar as food and medicine.



Fever Tea

1 teaspoon chamomile flowers

1 teaspoon elder flowers

1 teaspoon lemon balm (may use peppermint in those over 5 years of age)

1 teaspoon maple syrup or honey

2 cups water

Pour 2 cups of near-boiling water over the herbs and let the mixture steep for 5 minutes. Strain. You can add 1 teaspoon of maple syrup for a child under the age of 12 months, or honey for anyone older.

How to Use: For babies 3 to 6 months, give 2 teaspoons every hour or two. For children 6 to 12 months old, give 1 to 2 tablespoons every hour or two. Older children and adults should drink freely.



Saline Solution

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon noniodized kosher salt

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon baking soda

1 cup (8 ounces) boiled or distilled water

Clean jar for solution

Mix water with salt and baking soda. Stir well until salt and soda have dissolved. This solution can be stored up to 24 hours.

Note: Baking soda is a buffering agent that makes the salt-water less irritating to your nose. If you don't have baking soda, just omit from the recipe. I recommend noniodized kosher salt because iodine can be potentially allergenic, and sea salt can contain algae and other contaminants. Always use boiled or distilled water when making your saline solution.



Ginger Cold Relief

- 1 inch fresh ginger rhizome (root) cut into slices OR $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried ginger
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (12 ounces) water

Put water into a saucepan, add ginger, and gently bring to a boil. Cover and simmer on very low heat for 15 to 20 minutes. Strain and add honey and lemon juice.

How to Use: Teens and adults should drink 1 to 3 times a day. Children under the age of 12 months can drink $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, 1 to 3 times a day, depending on age.

Awesome cold reliever. If you want an extra anti-inflammatory, antiviral boost, you can add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon licorice root when cooking your ginger. Licorice is particularly helpful for soothing a bad sore throat. Except for those with high blood pressure, adding this amount of licorice is perfectly fine for 2 to 3 days.



Echinacea Apricot Tincture

60 grams *E. purpurea* dried root, ground or chopped
300 milliliters brandy (80 to 100 proof)
10 unsulfured dried apricots, sliced
1 tablespoon honey (optional)

Grind echinacea to a coarse powder and put in a large wide-mouthed canning jar. Add brandy, honey, and apricots. Stir well and cover with a lid. If more liquid is needed, add another 60 milliliters brandy. Shake daily and let sit for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain and pour into a dark colored bottle. Label and store in a dark, cool place.

How to Use: Teens and adults: Take 1 teaspoon of the tincture every 3 to 4 hours if you feel like you're coming down with a cold or sore throat. Do this for the first 48 hours, and chances are you might avoid getting sick all together!

Children 12 and under: Take $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon every 3 to 4 hours, depending upon age. This tincture has a small amount of honey, so isn't suitable for children under one year of age. (I generally give children echinacea glycerite, as it doesn't contain any alcohol and they generally prefer the taste.)



Kiara's Cherry-Echinacea Glycerite

60 grams *E. purpurea* root, ground or chopped

240 milliliters kosher vegetable glycerin

60 milliliters dark cherry juice OR

60 milliliters distilled water + 20 drops natural cherry flavoring

In a large saucepan, put vegetable glycerine and cherry juice OR distilled water and stir until blended on very low heat. Add echinacea, and on the lowest setting, gently heat, covered for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and let steep for 10 minutes. Without straining, pour into a widemouthed canning jar. If you used distilled water, you can add the natural cherry flavoring at this time. Cover with a lid. Let it sit for 2 to 4 weeks.

If you need to add more liquid, add 40 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 20 milliliters water or dark cherry juice. When ready, remove the lid and put the jar into a saucepan that contains 1 to 2 inches of water. Bring water to a low boil and gently stir the mixture in the jar until it becomes slightly runny. Using a hot pad or mitt, carefully remove the jar and pour the liquid through a cheesecloth-lined strainer into a bowl. Then using a funnel, pour the liquid into a clean, dark-colored bottle and label. This glycerite will stay good for roughly 2 years and is suitable for all ages.

How to Use: Children for up to 5 days:

15 to 25 pounds: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon every 2 to 3 hours

25 to 50 pounds: $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon every 2 to 3 hours

50 to 75 pounds: 1 teaspoon every 2 to 3 hours

75 to 100 pounds: $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons every 2 to 3 hours

This remedy was my daughter Kiara's favorite growing up. On those days when she'd come home with sniffles and a scratchy throat, she'd ask for her "etch-in-a-chea" and happily take a teaspoonful without fuss. I figured being a kid was hard enough without having to take a yucky medicine when you're feeling bad. Though not as "strong" as a tincture made with alcohol, vegetable glycerin is the preferred solvent for children, in my opinion. You simply give them a little bit more to make up the difference.



Thyme Cough Syrup

4 tablespoons fresh thyme

1 teaspoon lemon juice

1 cup water

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey, preferably raw and local OR

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup maple syrup if using for a child under 12 months of age

Pour near-boiling water over thyme and steep, covered, for 15 minutes. Strain. Add honey and lemon juice. Refrigerate for up to 1 week. For children 12 months and older: Give 1 to 2 teaspoons every 2 to 3 hours, as needed. Teens and adults can take 1 to 2 tablespoons every 2 to 3 hours, as needed.

For children under the age of 12 months, substitute maple syrup for the honey and give $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon every 2 to 3 hours, as needed. Maple syrup comes from inside the maple tree and is then boiled at high heat, making the risk of infant botulism from maple syrup virtually nonexistent, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Thyme is definitely my go-to acute cough syrup because it works quickly, tastes great, is very safe, and costs so little to make. The common garden thyme is one of our most trusted and respected herbs for relieving coughs and congestion. In fact, the German health authorities endorse the use of thyme for treating acute and chronic bronchitis, whooping cough, and URIs. The essential oil fraction of the herb—the compounds that give thyme its aroma—makes the mucus thinner and easier to expectorate or cough up, and acts as an antiseptic and antibacterial in the

lungs. To get the most benefit from thyme, use the fresh herb, which you should be able to find throughout the year in the produce section of most grocery stores.



Marshmallow Root Infusion

1 heaping teaspoon marshmallow root, dried and chopped
1 cup purified water

Put the chopped marshmallow root into a mug and add room-temperature water. Cover and let it sit for 2 to 3 hours. Strain the liquid through a tea strainer.

How to Use: Drink $\frac{1}{2}$ cup 2 to 3 times a day.

Few herbs are more healing for the throat, esophagus, and stomach than marshmallow leaves or root. The Romans ate marshmallow leaves in their soups and stews, while physicians in the United Kingdom made a hard candy from the juiced roots, egg whites, and sugar to soothe children's sore throats. Marshmallows bought in a grocery store today are a pale shadow of this original. Marshmallow contains mucilage, which protects and eases irritated mucosal membranes. The herb is completely safe and gentle enough for any age.



Slippery Elm Lozenges

The inner bark of the North American elm tree has been used for many centuries to soothe sore throats or ease heartburn. In fact, the FDA has declared that slippery elm is a safe and effective oral demulcent, meaning that it relieves inflammation and irritation.

Powdered slippery elm bark is perfectly safe for young and old. It can be prepared as a tea, taken as gruel, or easily made into throat lozenges. I like lozenges because you can be creative with them. I've made batches with natural cherry flavoring, essential oils, maple syrup, and fruit juice. My kids loved to help me make them.

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup slippery elm bark powder

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cinnamon powder or pumpkin pie spice (optional)

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup honey or maple syrup

Put the slippery elm powder and cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice into the mixing bowl and stir to blend. Then make a little well in the middle and add the honey or maple syrup. Mix well. It should have a consistency like Play-Doh. You can add more slippery elm powder or more maple syrup or honey, as needed.

Next, coat your hands with a little slippery elm powder, and then roll small pieces of the dough into marble-size balls. The slippery elm powder keeps the dough from sticking to your hands. The lozenges will stay fresh for months in an airtight container.

If you want to get fancy, sprinkle slippery elm powder on a sheet of waxed paper. Then use a rolling pin until the dough is about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Use a small candy cutter or the cap from a small bottle to make your lozenges. Sprinkle with a little extra slippery elm powder and store in an airtight container.

How to Use: Suck on a lozenge every 1 to 3 hours for a sore throat. Slippery elm lozenges can be used to ease a sore throat, no matter the cause. Here are three variations:

Option 1: If you've made any medicinal honeys, like sage or thyme, use these instead of plain honey to increase the antibacterial and throat-soothing effects.

Option 2: Use 2 tablespoons honey and 2 tablespoons dark cherry concentrate, and leave out the cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice. Make exactly the same way as the original recipe.

Option 3: Make the original recipe but leave out the cinnamon/pumpkin pie spice and add 4 to 5 drops essential oil for flavor and additional antiseptic activity. Some good choices include peppermint or clove bud oil.



Garlic Ear Oil

2 cloves fresh garlic

Extra virgin olive oil or mullein oil

Chop two cloves of fresh garlic and let sit for 10 minutes. Then put the garlic into the top of a double boiler and add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil (or your strained mullein oil). Cook over very low heat for 15 minutes. If you don't have a double boiler, you can use a saucepan over very low heat, but stir frequently to prevent scorching the oil. Strain well and let the oil cool completely. Place the liquid in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and use within a week.

How to Use: Lie on side with affected ear facing up. Put 2 to 3 drops into the ear. Gently push and pull the outer ear to work the oil down into the canal. Lie in this position for about 5 minutes. You can use a cotton ball to keep the oil in the ear canal. Repeat 2 to 3 times a day.

Note: Never put cold oil into the ear, as it can cause severe dizziness. And never put hot oil in the ear, as it can burn!

I've used garlic oil many times over the years with great success. However, I've had a handful of occasions in which it actually worsened the ear pain. Once I put a few drops in a child's ears, and he started crying. I gently wiped the ear clean with a cotton swab. When I examined the area, the ear canal was redder than it had been before I used the oil. So a word to the wise: Put 1 drop in the ear the first time you use it. Wait 5 to 10 minutes. If there isn't any problem, proceed as directed.



Vinegar Ear Drops

2 tablespoons (1 ounce) water

2 tablespoons (1 ounce) white vinegar

Bottle with eyedropper

Mix the water and vinegar together and put the mixture in a clean container. The acidity in the vinegar will prevent bacteria from growing.

How to Use: Lie on your side with the affected ear facing up. Put 2 to 3 drops directly into the external ear canal and then gently push and pull your ear to work the drops down into the canal to remove any trapped air. Lie in this position for about 5 minutes to ensure that the ear drops do not drain from your ear canal. Leave your ear canal open to dry.



Vinegar-Alcohol Ear Drops

If you are prone to getting swimmer's ear, use this remedy to prevent infection. Don't use this once your ears are hurting, however, because the alcohol will burn.

2 tablespoons (1 ounce) rubbing alcohol

2 tablespoons (1 ounce) white vinegar

Bottle with an eyedropper

Mix the alcohol and vinegar together and put the mixture in a bottle. The alcohol effectively removes the water, while the acidity in the vinegar prevents bacteria from growing. Label the bottle carefully with the words FOR EXTERNAL USE ONLY. You never want to use rubbing alcohol internally.

How to Use: Apply 2 to 3 room-temperature drops in each ear after swimming or showering. Follow directions for use provided under Vinegar Ear Drops.



Sage Relief

1 tablespoon fresh sage leaves or 2 teaspoons dried sage
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
1 cup water

Bring the water to a boil, turn off the heat, add fresh or dried sage, cover, and let steep for 10 minutes. Strain. Pour into a tea mug and add salt. Stir.

How to Use: Gargle every 1 to 2 hours, or as needed, for sore throat. (Don't swallow the sage and salt; just swish and spit.)

This gargle combines really well with echinacea tincture if you're fighting off a cold. It can also be used safely with antibiotic treatment for strep throat. If you've made Sage Medicinal Honey, this would sure be a good time to use it.



Nettle Relief

20 grams nettle leaf, fresh is best

100 milliliters vodka (80 to 100 proof)

Carefully put nettles into a widemouthed jar and add vodka. Let it sit, covered, and shake daily for 2 weeks. Strain through muslin cloth, pour decanted liquid into a dark bottle, label, and store. Compost herbs.

How to Use: Take $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon 2 to 3 times a day.

You can purchase freeze-dried nettles in capsules. The dose is 300 milligrams 2 to 3 times a day. If you live where nettles grow, you can wear gloves and carefully gather them. Let them wilt overnight. Then tincture them in the morning.



Seek Immediate Medical Attention if Your Allergic Reaction Causes:

- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Swelling of the lips, eyes, tongue, or mouth
- Chest pain and tightness
- Shock or sudden loss of consciousness
- Hives or joint swelling
- Widespread, intense skin redness
- Nausea, vomiting, or abdominal cramps

If you live in a remote area, keep an epinephrine auto-injector around (for example, EpiPen, Twinject). These can be lifesaving in cases of acute anaphylactic (severe allergic) reactions.

► Cold Sores

If you suffer from cold sores, you know the sign of an impending breakout: that slight tingling or numbness near your lip. “Oh, no . . . not now,” you say to yourself. Cold sores, also called fever blisters, always seem to show up at the most inopportune times, usually when you have somewhere important to go or something important to do. I know, because I get cold sores, and they’re embarrassing, so I’ve spent years looking into treatments that will quicken the healing time.

Cold sores are caused by herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1). They’re more common than you might think: Roughly 85 percent of Americans have been infected with the virus by the time they turn 50 years old.

The name “herpes” comes from the Greek *herpein*, which means “to creep” or a “creeping thing.” (That’s why people who study snakes are called herpetologists.) Transmitted by personal contact, the virus enters the body through the skin or mucus membrane. From there, it “creeps” up the nerves until it reaches the “terminal nerve cluster” in the spinal cord. Once there, it resides for life, lying dormant until reactivated by a weakness in your immune system.

The virus then starts to multiply and “creeps” back down the nerve pathways. At this point, it can be spread to others, even though the characteristic blisters and sores don’t develop for hours or days. The ensuing eruption consists of several tiny



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Is It a Cold Sore or a Canker Sore?

Patients often come to me wondering if the painful ulcer-like disruptions on the inside of the lips or cheeks or under the tongue are cold sores. No—they’re canker sores, characterized by a red color with a whitish or whitish yellow coating. Canker sores are unrelated to cold sores.

No one knows exactly what causes canker sores, but being tired or stressed, undergoing trauma, or eating acidic foods such as tomatoes and pineapple have all been linked to outbreaks. Canker sores can be a symptom of sensitivity to gluten (the protein found in many grains), celiac disease, or B₁₂ deficiency.

Treatments other than drugs can help. The Sage Gargle listed in “Sore Throat Soothers” (on page 111) works really well, as does propolis, myrrh, or licorice tincture applied with a cotton swab directly on the canker sore four to six times a day. However, if you have frequent canker sores or whitish patches in your mouth that don’t go away within 10 to 14 days, make sure you consult your health care provider. If you have recurrent canker sores, you should ask about being tested for celiac.

blisters that eventually congregate to form one large sore around the lips or nose. Some of the common triggers are colds and fevers (hence the name), excessive exposure to the sun, physical trauma, and emotional stress.

HSV-1 is spread through casual contact, so it's almost impossible to prevent. After all, who wants to go through life avoiding kisses? And so often, we share personal items such as cups or silverware, without even thinking about it. Are there some practical measures you can take to reduce future outbreaks and to shorten them if they occur? Definitely. Here's what I personally use and recommend to my patients:

- *Wear sunblock or sunscreen.* If you spend time on the beach or on the ski slopes, reapply frequently to your lips.
- *Get a new toothbrush.* Toothbrushes can harbor the virus, so make sure you trade yours in at the end of an outbreak.
- *Take your zinc.* Studies show that salivary zinc levels are low during an acute outbreak and lower in those who have recurrent infections. Make sure you are getting 15 to 30 milligrams of zinc glycinate or zinc gluconate every day, and take zinc lozenges during acute outbreaks.
- *Consider lysine.* For more protection, supplement with lysine, an essential amino acid found in meat, poultry, and dairy. There is evidence that taking 500 to 1,000 milligrams of lysine a day can reduce the frequency and severity of recurrent outbreaks. Some experts advise taking 3,000 milligrams a day during acute outbreaks; however, these larger doses should be used only for 7 to 10 days.
- *Manage stress.* Easier said than done! But I know I'm much more vulnerable to having cold sores return when I'm tired and run-down. Do the things you know are good for you: regular exercise, plenty of sleep, and meditation.



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Genital Herpes

Genital herpes is similar to cold sores, but the eruptions appear in the genital area. It is almost always caused by HSV-2, but also can be caused by HSV-1, usually spread through oral sex. In fact, HSV-1 is thought to be the culprit in half of all the new cases of genital herpes. HSV-2 can also cause oral herpes, though this is less common.

To reduce your risk of genital herpes, do not engage in sex during an active outbreak. Blisters do not have to be visible for you or your partner to be contagious, however. Use a latex condom while having intercourse. Natural condoms made from animal skin (such as lamb) allow the viral particles to pass through them. Use a dental dam if engaging in oral sex. My suggestions for the prevention and treatment of cold sores apply to genital herpes as well.

Licorice

Here is my favorite go-to remedy for cold sores. I cannot tell you the number of times I've used licorice tincture when I felt that old familiar tingle, usually before a big presentation or important event. And it's always the same result: The vast majority of the time, the blisters never even appear.

Why does licorice work so well? According to some scientific investigations, licorice root has compounds that block the virus from creeping down the nerves and causing eruptions on the surface tissue. Licorice also has powerful anti-inflammatory effects that reduce redness and swelling. Licorice tincture therefore offers multiple defenses for attacking the outbreak. Incidentally, I prefer a tincture to tea, because the alcohol disrupts the envelope of the herpes virus, which speeds healing. See my recipe for Licorice Relief Tincture in "The Eighteen Essentials," page 285.

Lemon Balm

Lemon balm extract is made from the herb *Melissa officinalis*. In research, creams containing this herb have been shown to reduce the duration and severity of cold sores when applied topically several times a day soon after they appear. You can purchase these creams at natural grocery stores or online. Or, just put a drop of lemon balm essential oil directly on the blister three times a day for one to two days. This treatment can be quite effective, but be careful with undiluted essential oil, as it can cause irritation if used too long or on sensitive skin.

Chapter 4



Calming the Nerves, Strengthening the Nervous System

The human nervous system is an exquisitely complex information highway that controls all of our biological processes, movements, and thoughts. Because of its vast reach in the body, I feel it is important to focus in on one primary area—how the body responds to stress. Let's start by quickly familiarizing ourselves with how the nervous system is organized.

The central nervous system (CNS) is made up of the brain and spinal cord. The brain is responsible for processing complex information, and the spinal cord serves as a relay for bringing messages to and from the brain. The peripheral nervous system is comprised of the somatic nervous system and the autonomic nervous system (ANS). The somatic nervous system is responsible for transmitting all the messages coming from our skeletal muscles and sensory organs. The ANS is in charge of all the “automatic” functions in our body, things we don't consciously control like the secretion of stomach acid or the beating of our heart. I am primarily interested in discussing



St. John's Wort Tincture

25 grams St. John's wort, fresh flowering tops

65 milliliters grain alcohol

40 milliliters water

To make a 1:5 fresh herb tincture, chop the St. John's wort into small pieces and put them in a jar. Add 65 milliliters grain alcohol and 40 milliliters water to achieve a 1:5 strength fresh herb tincture with a solvency of 50 percent (you have to account for the water in the fresh herb). Mix well. Cover with a lid and label. Steep for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain through a cheesecloth and store in a dark bottle.

How to Use: St. John's wort tincture is a highly effective mood lifter. The dose of tincture for an adult is 3 milliliters 2 to 3 times a day. The tincture may also be applied topically as a compress for bruises and nerve pain.

Although most people think of St. John's wort as the "anti-depressant" herb, the truth is that it has been used for more than 2,000 years to calm the nerves, lift one's mood, and help reduce pain. Modern science has confirmed that it is as effective as prescription antidepressants for mild to moderate depression, and preliminary research also shows it can ease PMS symptoms and improve menopausal symptoms. The one thing you have to watch for when using St. John's wort is possible herb-drug interactions. Check with your pharmacist or health care provider before using it internally if you are taking any prescription medications.



Herbal Stress Relief

10 grams lemon balm herb

10 grams chamomile flowers

10 grams skullcap herb

150 milliliters brandy or vodka OR

170 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 70 milliliters water

Grind herbs into a coarse powder and put in a glass jar. Add vodka OR vegetable glycerin and water. Stir well. If you need to add more liquid, put in an additional 15 milliliters glycerin and 5 milliliters water. Cover and let sit for 2 weeks, shaking daily. Strain and pour liquid into a dark bottle, label, and store in a cabinet. Compost herbs.

How to Use:

Herbal Stress Relief Tincture (made with brandy or vodka):

Teens and adults: Take 1 teaspoon of the tincture 2 to 3 times a day, as needed to ease tension or anxiety.

Herbal Stress Relief Glycerite:

40 to 60 pounds: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon 2 to 3 times a day, as needed

60 to 90 pounds: 1 teaspoon 2 to 3 times a day, as needed

90 to 120 pounds: $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons 2 to 3 times a day, as needed

Over 120 pounds: 2 teaspoons 2 to 3 times a day, as needed



Tieraona's Winter Elixir

10 grams ashwagandha root

10 grams rhodiola root

10 grams astragalus root

150 milliliters brandy or vodka plus 2 tablespoons honey OR

170 milliliters vegetable glycerin plus 70 milliliters water

Grind herbs into a coarse powder and put in glass jar. Add brandy, vodka, OR vegetable glycerin and water. Stir well. If you need to add more liquid, put in an additional 30 milliliters brandy or vodka or 25 milliliters glycerin and 5 milliliters water. Cover with a lid and let sit for 2 weeks, shaking daily. Strain and pour liquid into a dark bottle, label, and store in a cabinet. Compost herbs.

How to Use: Take 1 teaspoon brandy or vodka elixir or 2 teaspoons glycerin elixir every day.

I include astragalus to give me a little extra immune protection during the winter. You can leave this out and just use 15 grams of rhodiola and ashwagandha.



T's Slumber Elixir

5 grams hops flowers

5 grams valerian root

5 grams California poppy herb

5 grams lemon balm herb

100 milliliters brandy and 2 tablespoons honey OR

115 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 45 milliliters water

Grind the herbs and put in a tall glass jar. Add brandy and honey OR vegetable glycerin and water. Stir well. If you need more alcohol, add another 20 milliliters brandy. If making a glycerite, add an additional 15 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 5 milliliters water.

Cover with a lid and let sit for 2 weeks. Strain and put in a dark bottle, label, and store in a cabinet. Compost herbs.

How to Use:

Slumber Elixir with brandy:

Teens and adults: Take 1 to 1½ teaspoons 30 minutes before bed. Can be taken in hot water, tea, juice, or straight off the spoon.

Slumber Elixir with glycerin:

60 to 90 pounds: 1 teaspoon 30 minutes before bed

90 to 120 pounds: 1½ to 2 teaspoons 30 minutes before bed

over 120 pounds: 2 to 3 teaspoons 30 minutes before bed

This can be taken in hot water, tea, juice, or straight off the spoon.

Note: This elixir is designed to help you sleep. Do not take it if you are going to be driving or doing other things that require your attention. Don't mix herbal sedatives with prescription sleeping pills. Women who are pregnant or breast-feeding should not use this elixir.



Peppermint Headache Oil

20 drops peppermint essential oil

4 tablespoons (2 ounces) almond, grape seed, or sunflower oil
as the carrier oil

Put the carrier oil into a bottle and add peppermint essential oil.
Shake well. Put on a lid.

How to Use: Gently rub oil into temples, forehead, neck, and
shoulders, being careful to avoid the eyes.

Note: Peppermint should not be used on the face of any child
under the age of three.



T's Tummy Tea

- 4 tablespoons chamomile flowers
- 2 tablespoons meadowsweet herb
- 2 tablespoons licorice root

Mix all the herbs together and put them in a glass jar. Screw on the lid, label the jar, and store it in your kitchen cupboard.

How to Use: Pour 1 cup near-boiling water over 1 heaping teaspoon of the herbal mixture. Steep for 10 minutes. Strain. Add honey if desired. Drink $\frac{1}{2}$ cup 1 to 2 times a day after the main meals of the day. This tea is gentle, tasty, safe, and effective when taken as directed.

Note: Although very unlikely to bother you at this dose, if you have high blood pressure, it's probably best to omit the licorice. If you are allergic to aspirin, substitute marshmallow leaf for meadowsweet.



Colic Relief Tea

1 tablespoon chamomile flowers

1 tablespoon lemon balm herb

1 tablespoon fennel seed

Mix the herbs together, place them in a jar with a tight-fitting lid, and label.

How to Use: Pour 1 cup near-boiling water over 1 teaspoon of the herb mixture. Steep for 5 minutes. Strain. Let cool. After feeding, offer 1 ounce of the tea. It's important to make sure the baby nurses or takes the bottle first, because those calories are needed. The tea comes at the end.



Baby Tummy Soother

10 grams chamomile flowers

10 grams lemon balm herb

5 grams fennel seed

140 milliliters vegetable glycerin

60 milliliters distilled/bottled water

Grind the herbs and put them in a jar. Cover with vegetable glycerin and water. Cover with a lid and let sit for 14 days, shaking daily. If the glycerite appears too thick, add another 20 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 5 milliliters water. After 2 weeks, strain the mixture through muslin cloth, pour into a dark bottle, and label. It will keep for 2 years.

How to Use: Give your baby 10 drops after each feeding, add it to the formula, or put it directly on your nipple before breastfeeding. Babies love the taste, and it is much easier to use than the tea. Make this ahead of time, so it's ready when you need it.



Ginger Tea

Pour 1 cup near-boiling water over $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon dried powdered ginger. Let it steep for 10 minutes. Carefully pour off the liquid, leaving the powder settled in the bottom of the cup. If desired, add a small amount of honey.

For morning sickness: Drink $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of ginger tea 3 to 4 times a day. It is safe to use in pregnancy, but do not exceed this amount of tea. If taking capsules, do not take more than 1,000 milligrams of dried ginger a day. (For more tips on morning sickness, see the sections on moms-to-be).

For motion sickness: Drink $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of ginger tea an hour prior to travel. Then drink $\frac{1}{4}$ cup every 1 to 2 hours, as needed. Ginger capsules may be more convenient when traveling. Take 500 milligrams every 4 hours and up to 2,000 milligrams a day.

For chemotherapy-associated nausea: Drink $\frac{1}{4}$ cup 4 times a day for 3 days BEFORE you go in for treatment, then again the day of and day after treatment. Ginger must be taken before treatment for maximum benefit. If taking capsules, take 500 milligrams every 4 to 6 hours, up to 2,000 milligrams a day. Ginger will not interfere with your medications. I also highly recommend the book *One Bite at a Time* by Rebecca Katz for practical and insightful tips on eating while undergoing chemo treatments. If you need something stronger than ginger and acupuncture, ask your doctor to give you a prescription drug like ondansetron (Zofran).



Chamomile Infusion

2 teaspoons German chamomile flowers

1 cup water

Put the chamomile flowers in a mug and pour freshly boiled water over the herb. Let it steep 3 to 5 minutes. Strain the liquid through a tea strainer.

How to Use: Drink 1 to 2 cups to settle the stomach, to soothe the nerves, or just to make the world feel a little less chaotic. If desired, add a dab of honey and/or lemon.

Note: You may have heard that some people with severe ragweed allergies may also have allergies to chamomile. Although this can occur, it is actually quite rare.



Oral Rehydration Solution

4½ cups (1 liter) clean water

½ teaspoon salt

6 level teaspoons sugar

Combine all ingredients. Stir until the sugar and salt have dissolved. You can add ½ cup orange juice to improve the flavor and provide roughly 260 milligrams of potassium. Or substitute 2 teaspoons sugar with 2 teaspoons molasses, which provides roughly 350 milligrams of potassium. Make fresh daily.

How to Use: Give your infant or young child ½ cup or more after every stool. For an older child or adult, give 1 cup or more after every stool.



Rice Water

1 cup rice

4 cups water

Put 1 cup rice in 4 cups water, and bring to a boil. Cover, turn down heat, and simmer for 20 minutes. Strain the milky water.

How to Use: Drink throughout the day. Not only is this good for humans, it is one of the best things you can do for dogs with diarrhea. You can add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken broth to increase their desire to drink it.



Barberry Glycerite

25 grams barberry root bark, dried
90 milliliters vegetable glycerin
35 milliliters water

Grind barberry root bark to a coarse powder and put in a glass jar. Add vegetable glycerin and water. Stir with a spoon. If you need more liquid, add an additional 20 milliliters glycerin and 5 milliliters water. Replace the lid. Shake daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Pour the contents of the jar into fine cheesecloth and strain, squeezing firmly to remove all liquid. Compost the herbs. Pour the liquid into a dark glass bottle and label. The glycerite will keep for 2 years.

How to Use:

15 to 25 pounds: 1 milliliter 3 times a day
26 to 40 pounds: 1.5 milliliters 3 times a day
41 to 60 pounds: 2 milliliters 3 times a day
61 to 90 pounds: 3 milliliters 3 times a day
Over 90 pounds: 3 to 5 milliliters 3 times a day

If you have children or pets in the house, or adults who don't like or cannot tolerate alcohol, you should consider keeping some barberry glycerite around the house. Even though the kids are grown, I keep the glycerite around the house to use with the dogs and cats when they come down with diarrhea.



Belly Massage Oil

4 tablespoons (2 ounces) olive, grape seed, or sesame oil

12 drops peppermint or lavender essential oil

Mix together and put in a dark colored bottle.



Flax Yogurt

1 tablespoon flaxseeds, ground

1 cup (8 ounces) live-culture Greek-style yogurt

Handful of fresh fruit in season, washed

Pinch of cinnamon

Use a coffee grinder to grind the flaxseeds into a powder and mix into the yogurt. Pour the yogurt over fresh fruit.

How to Use: Eat 1 cup every day to increase dietary fiber and healthy probiotics, and to improve regularity.



Flax Smoothie

1 cup almond milk

1 to 2 tablespoons flaxseeds, ground

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup raspberries, strawberries, or blackberries

1 tablespoon almond butter

Grind the flaxseeds in a coffee grinder. Put all the ingredients into a blender and blend on high for 30 to 45 seconds.

How to Use: Pour into a glass and enjoy. It's high in fiber and protein and low in calories—delicious! You can substitute dairy, soy, or coconut milk for the almond milk.



Easy-Goes-It Tea

4 teaspoons dandelion root

4 teaspoons senna leaves

2 teaspoons licorice root

2 teaspoons fennel seed

1 teaspoon ginger rhizome/root, cut (not powder)

Blend the herbs together and store them in a jar. This herbal mixture will stay good for approximately 2 years if kept in an airtight container and stored in a cool, dark cupboard. This tea is only for occasional use as a laxative and may be taken safely for 5 to 7 days.

How to Use: Place 2 teaspoons herbal mixture in 12 ounces cool water and bring to a boil. Cover, turn off heat, and steep for 20 minutes. Strain. Store in the refrigerator and drink cold or at room temperature. Take $\frac{1}{4}$ cup in the morning and night. You can increase your dosage to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup morning and night on the second day, if necessary. This tea usually takes 8 hours to work.

Note: If you have high blood pressure, omit the licorice root. Talk to your health care provider before taking any laxatives if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. This tea is for those 10 years and older. Never take a laxative if you're having severe abdominal pain.

Chapter 6



Helping and Healing the Skin

The skin is our body's largest organ and serves as the interface between our internal and external world. It gives rise to our sense of touch, the only sense that does not diminish with age. Because our skin is what we present to the world, billions of dollars are spent every year on creams, lotions, and cosmetic surgeries. I have long been fascinated with the world of skin care, learning a great deal about the physiology of the skin from the researchers and product developers at companies such as Bath and Body Works, Neutrogena, and Origins, with whom I've worked as a consultant over the past 20 years. In exchange, I shared my knowledge of how plants could be used to restore barrier function and reduce oxidative damage, inflammation, and irritation. But over the many years I've cared for those with skin problems, I've also learned that it takes more than just applying moisturizer to have healthy skin.

Before we dive into the herbs and remedies, it might be useful to spend a few minutes talking about the basic anatomy and function of the skin. The skin is made up of three parts: the outer layer, known as the epidermis; the middle layer, or



Children's Bitter Glycerite

10 grams dandelion root
10 grams chamomile flowers
10 grams burdock root
5 grams Oregon grape root
5 grams fennel seed
225 milliliters vegetable glycerin
95 milliliters water

Grind the herbs to a coarse powder and put in a saucepan. Add glycerin and water. Cook on the lowest heat setting, covered, for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let steep for 10 minutes. Pour into a glass container. Cover with a lid. Shake well. If there is not enough liquid, add another 30 milliliters glycerin and 10 milliliters water. Let sit and shake daily for 2 weeks. Then strain, bottle, and label.

How to Use:

3 to 5 years of age: 15 drops before meals (up to 3 times a day)
6 to 8 years of age: 25 drops before meals (up to 3 times a day)
9 to 12 years of age: 50 drops before meals (up to 3 times a day)
12 to 15 years of age: 1 to 2 teaspoons before meals (up to 3 times a day)
15 years and older: 1 tablespoon before meals (up to 3 times a day)



Herbal Sunflower Seed Oil

1 ounce calendula flowers

1 ounce St. John's wort, flowering tops

1 ounce chamomile flowers

18 ounces sunflower seed oil, organic

Grind the herbs into a coarse powder and put them in a glass jar. Add sunflower seed oil. Take a long-handled spoon and make sure that the oil moves freely in the jar. If it is too thick, add 3 to 6 ounces more oil. Repeat this process. Screw on the lid, put in a paper bag, and set in a warm, sunny place. If the oil is not completely covering the herb at any point, add more oil. Shake every day for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain.

How to Use: Apply this oil to affected areas every morning, night, and after bathing. Sunflower seed oil is excellent for maintaining barrier function.



Vinegar Wash

1 cup apple cider vinegar

2 cups water

Mix both ingredients together. Rinse the area with the vinegar wash to remove as much of the irritant as possible. Let your skin dry.



Calendula Salve

1 cup dried calendula (pot marigold) flowers

2½ cups sunflower seed oil

4 ounces grated beeswax

Put herbs and oil in a Crock-Pot on its lowest setting and cook for 8 hours. Turn off heat and let cool. Strain through cheesecloth. Pour 2 cups of strained oil into double boiler and add grated beeswax. Gently melt, stirring frequently. Dip a spoon into the mixture, lay the spoonful on a paper towel, and stick it in your refrigerator for 5 minutes. Take it out and test the consistency. If it's mushy, add 1 to 2 tablespoons more grated beeswax. If it's too hard, add 2 to 3 tablespoons more of your infused oil. (This is why we always make a little extra.) Test again. Texture should be firm. Pour into small glass containers or salve tins. Let completely cool and harden before putting on the lid.



Tea Tree Oil Solution

2 tablespoons (30 milliliters) tea tree oil

3 tablespoons (45 milliliters) witch hazel tincture

3 tablespoons (45 milliliters) water

Pour the witch hazel tincture into a dark bottle and add the tea tree oil. Cover with a lid and shake well. Label the bottle “EXTERNAL USE ONLY.”

How to Use: Apply to affected area 2 times a day. This recipe is a 25 percent solution. You can increase the tea tree oil to 90 milliliters for a 50 percent solution; however, this can be irritating for sensitive skin.



Natural Antifungal Powder

1/2 cup baking soda or cornstarch

4 drops tea tree oil

4 drops thyme essential oil

4 drops oregano essential oil

Put the ingredients in a jar and shake well to mix the oils and baking soda. Make your powder in small batches to preserve the power of the essential oils. Optional: If you live in a hot, humid area, add 1/2 teaspoon rice kernels to the powder to prevent clumping.

How to Use: Shake some of the powder into socks and shoes daily. You can also apply this powder under your breasts or to the groin area, especially after showering, if prone to yeast.



Vinegar Green Tea Toner

- 2 tablespoons (1 ounce) organic apple cider vinegar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (6 ounces) brewed green tea
- 1 teaspoon (5 milliliters) tea tree essential oil

Pour 6 ounces of near-boiling water over about 2 tablespoons (roughly three tea bags) green tea leaves and steep for 20 minutes. Remove tea bags. Pour into in an 8-ounce bottle, blend in other ingredients, shake well, cap tightly, and store in refrigerator. Use within a week.

How to Use: I suggest putting it on a very small area of the neck to make sure you don't have any sensitivity to the toner. If it burns or causes redness, wash it off immediately. If no problems, after washing your skin, pat dry and use a cotton pad to gently apply the toner. Allow it to dry and then apply your moisturizer. I recommend using it daily for 14 days for the most dramatic effects. Then you can use it 3 to 4 times a week, or as needed.



Honey Yogurt Mask

6 tablespoons probiotic-rich full-fat yogurt

6 tablespoons raw organic honey

Mix together and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Make sure to note the expiration date on your yogurt.

How to Use: Remove approximately 2 tablespoons from the container and set out on the counter for 15 to 20 minutes to warm up while you wash your face. Apply with your fingers or a clean cotton pad. Leave on for 10 minutes. Then rinse and apply moisturizer. Repeat 2 to 3 times a week.

Applying probiotics topically has shown to improve the skin microbiome and reduce acne blemishes. The raw honey is a potent antibacterial agent that can kill bacteria, while also moisturizing and nourishing the skin.



Clay Paste

2 tablespoons bentonite or French green clay

5 drops lavender essential oil

1/2 teaspoon arnica tincture

3 tablespoons water

Mix the arnica tincture, lavender essential oil, and water. Add slowly to the clay to make a paste. The clay helps draw out the venom from the sting and gets rid of the itch. The lavender essential oil and arnica dramatically relieve the swelling and pain.

How to Use: Apply the paste to the affected area. Cover it with plastic wrap or gauze for 30 minutes. Repeat this in 4 to 6 hours if needed.

I have used this Clay Paste so many times; it is amazingly fast and powerful for reducing pain and swelling from stings and bites.



Natural Insect Repellent

1 cup (8 ounces) almond or sunflower seed oil

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon lemon eucalyptus

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon geranium essential oil

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon lavender essential oil

Put the almond oil in a bottle, add the essential oils, and shake well.

How to Use: Apply a small amount of the oil on your arm and leave for 30 minutes to make sure you are not sensitive to any of the ingredients. If no reaction occurs, then apply to exposed skin every 3 to 4 hours when you're outdoors. Avoid contact with the eyes, mouth, and nose, and do not use on children under the age of three.



Lemon Rosemary Flea Rinse

1 lemon, sliced

10 drops rosemary essential oil

16 ounces hot water

Pour near-boiling water over sliced lemon (with peel and seeds) and steep, covered, overnight. Strain. Add rosemary essential oil.

How to Use: After shampooing and rinsing your pet, use a towel to remove most of the water and then take a sponge and apply the Lemon Rosemary Flea Rinse to the pet's hair and skin, especially around the tail, underarms, and around ears and neck. Allow your pet to dry naturally. It works really well.



Herbal or Essential Oil Washes

Here are a number of washes you can use, depending upon what you have in the cupboard:

2 teaspoons (10 milliliters) tea tree OR rosemary OR lavender essential oil

1¼ cups (300 milliliters) bottled or clean water

OR

2 tablespoons (30 milliliters) goldenseal OR Oregon grape root OR sage OR echinacea tincture

1¼ cups (300 milliliters) clean water

OR

30 milliliters witch hazel tincture OR yarrow tincture (use if bleeding is an issue)

300 milliliters clean water

Mix the tincture or essential oil and water together. Pour into a squeeze bottle and irrigate the wound. Repeat until the mixture is gone.



T's Wound Salve

10 grams goldenseal root or barberry root bark

10 grams calendula flowers

5 grams yarrow flowering tops

5 grams echinacea root

240 milliliters olive, grape seed, or sunflower seed oil (carrier oil)

Grind your herbs, put them into a glass jar, and add the carrier oil. Let it steep for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain, retain the oil, and compost the herbs.

We're doing a little variation on the salve, as I like to use raw honey in my wound salves.

2 ounces grated beeswax

4 ounces raw honey

50 drops tea tree oil

1 teaspoon vitamin E oil (optional)

Put the strained oil in a double boiler and slowly add grated beeswax, while gently stirring. Check and adjust for consistency. Remove from the heat. As it begins to harden, stir with an electric handheld blender until it is smooth. Let it cool for another 5 minutes, blending periodically. Now add your raw honey, vitamin E oil, and tea tree oil and continue mixing for an additional minute. Pour into salve containers and store in a dark, cool place.

How to Use: This salve is amazing for any kind of minor cut, scrape, burn, or for fungal infections such as athlete's foot. It is an all-purpose healing first aid salve.

This salve has been a mainstay in my practice and in my home for decades. Minor wounds heal faster and with less scarring.



Dong Quai Tincture

25 grams dong quai root

125 milliliters brandy (80 to 100 proof)

Grind the herb and put the grounds in a jar. Add brandy. Put a lid on tightly. Let the mixture steep in a warm place for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain and put the liquid in a dark-colored jar, label, and store in a dark cabinet.

How to Use: Take $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of tincture every 4 to 6 hours, as needed for menstrual cramps.



Cramp Relief Tea

1 tablespoon black haw or cramp bark

1½ cups (12 ounces) water

Put black haw or cramp bark in cool water and bring the mixture to a boil. Cover. Turn heat on low and simmer for 10 minutes. Turn off heat and let the mixture steep for another 10 minutes. Strain. Sweeten with honey, if desired. Store in your refrigerator for up to 3 days.

How to Use: Drink ¼ cup of tea every 2 to 3 hours, as needed, for menstrual cramps. For leg cramps, take ¼ to ½ cup tea an hour before bedtime.



Chasteberry Tincture

25 grams chasteberry, dried

125 milliliters vodka (80 to 100 proof)

Gently grind the chasteberry in a clean coffee grinder and put them in a jar. Add the vodka. Put on lid, label the jar, and let it sit in a warm place for 2 weeks, shaking daily. Strain. Pour liquid into a clean bottle, label, and store in a cool, dark cupboard.

How to Use: Take 2 milliliters each morning for PMS or irregular menstruation. Chasteberry should be taken every day for at least 3 months to bring your hormones back into balance. I also recommend women take this for several months when going off birth control pills. The herb has an excellent safety profile, and women can take it safely for extended periods of time.



Bladder Tea

30 grams (about 1 ounce) uva ursi leaves

15 grams (about 1/2 ounce) corn silk

4 cups (32 ounces) water

Pour 4 cups near-boiling water over the herbs and let the mixture steep for 20 minutes. Strain. You can store the tea for 2 days in a covered jar in the refrigerator.

How to Use: See pages 262–263 for recommended dosage.

If you live where you don't have easy access to purchasing herbs, you might want to get these herbs ahead of time and make them into a tincture to have on hand in case you need it. Tinctures will last many years.



Bladder Tincture

25 grams uva ursi leaf

15 grams corn silk

200 milliliters vodka (80 to 100 proof)

Grind uva ursi and corn silk and put in a jar. Cover with the alcohol. If necessary, add another 40 milliliters vodka to ensure your spoon moves readily through the mixture. Let it sit, covered, and shake daily for 14 days. Strain. Pour into dark bottle, label, and store.

How to Use: See pages 262–263 for recommended dosage.



Cranberry Spritzer

2 cups cranberry juice (with no high-fructose corn syrup)

3 cups water, sparkling or still

1 orange, sliced

Mix the cranberry juice and water together and put in a pitcher. Wash and slice an orange and add. Refrigerate.

How to Use: Delicious and refreshing, this drink can be served cold over ice. Drink 1 cup twice a day.



Heart-Centered Tea

2 cups raspberry leaf

1 cup nettle leaf

1/2 cup spearmint leaf

Mix all the herbs together in a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Label and store in a cool, dark cupboard.

How to Use: Pour 1 cup of near-boiling water over 1 to 2 teaspoons of the herbs and steep for 5 minutes. Strain. Add honey or lemon, if desired.



Shatavari Delight

60 grams shatavari root, dried
10 grams powdered cardamom
2 tablespoons raw sugar

Grind the shatavari to a coarse powder and then mix all the ingredients together and put in a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Label and store in a dark cupboard. This will keep up to 3 months.

How to Use: Put 1 teaspoon mix into a cup of milk, soy milk, or almond milk in a saucepan and gently bring to a boil. Turn off the heat, cover, and let steep for 5 minutes. Strain and drink once a day. Yum.



Arnica Tincture

For sprains, strains, and bruises

This should be a first aid remedy in all households. We use a lot of arnica tincture on the ranch. It can be mixed with clay for bug bites or used as a compress for strains and sprains. I even rub it on my mare's tendons after a long ride. Remember to keep it out of reach of children! Some folks can be sensitive to arnica when applied topically—discontinue if it causes a rash.

25 grams *Arnica montana* flowers

125 milliliters menstruum, 40 to 50 percent alcohol

Grind arnica flowers to a coarse powder and put them in a wide-mouthed jar. Add vodka. Stir to make sure that the spoon moves freely. If necessary, add another 25 milliliters of vodka. Put a lid on tightly and shake daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain the contents of the jar through muslin cloth. Store the liquid in a dark glass bottle. Label: EXTERNAL USE ONLY. Compost the remaining herb.

How to Use: Put 30 milliliters of tincture in 300 milliliters of water and apply as a compress to sprains, strains, painful spider bites, or any acute injury where there is pain and swelling. It should not be used on open wounds, however, as it is only for topical use.



Barberry or Oregon Grape Root Tincture

For minor wounds and infections

Barberry and Oregon grape root are highly reliable and effective antimicrobial agents against a broad range of bacteria, protozoa, and amoeba. They have both been a mainstay in my practice for decades. I've used them internally to treat diarrhea and other gastrointestinal (GI) infections, as an antiseptic for wounds, gargle for infected gums, douche for vaginal yeast infections, and more.

25 grams barberry or Oregon grape root bark, dried
125 milliliters menstruum, 40 to 50 percent alcohol

Grind or chop the barberry root bark into very small pieces and put in a canning jar. Add 125 milliliters of vodka (80 to 100 proof). Stir. If you need more liquid, add an additional 25 milliliters of vodka. Put on a lid and shake daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain. Put the liquid in a dark tincture bottle and label.

How to Use: Adults can take 3 milliliters 3 times a day for acute infection. Use 30 milliliters in 300 milliliters of water as a wash for cuts and wounds.

Note: Berberine-containing herbs should not be used while pregnant or breast-feeding.



Cramp Bark Tincture

For menstrual cramps, leg cramps, and muscle spasms

Cramp bark is one of my favorite herbs for relieving painful menstrual cramps, leg cramps, and muscle spasms of the back. It relaxes muscles gently but effectively. The trick is taking small frequent doses.

25 grams black haw or cramp bark
125 milliliters vodka (80 to 100 proof)

Grind the herb and put the grinds in a jar. Add the vodka. Put a lid on tightly. Let steep for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain and put the liquid in a dark-colored jar. Label and store in a dark cabinet.

How to Use: Take $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of tincture every 2 to 3 hours, as needed for menstrual cramps. For leg cramps, take 1 teaspoon of tincture an hour before bed.

Note: If you have had a history of calcium oxalate kidney stones, use cramp bark instead of black haw. *If you are pregnant, always discuss the use of black haw, cramp bark, or any herb with your midwife or doctor before using.*



Echinacea Tincture

For colds and coughs and topically for minor wounds

Echinacea was held in high esteem by many indigenous North American peoples for the treatment of fever, cough, sore throat, infections, wounds, and venomous bites. Although it isn't a "cure" for the common cold, it's the closest thing I've found to getting better faster. I've never found echinacea capsules very effective; the tincture and tea work best.

50 grams *Echinacea purpurea* herb or *E. angustifolia* root, dried
250 milliliters solvent, 40 to 60 percent alcohol

Grind the herb to a coarse powder and put the grounds in a widemouthed jar. Add 80-proof vodka or brandy if you want less alcohol. If you want a stronger tincture, use 60 percent alcohol. In this case, you'd multiply 250 (milliliters) x 0.6 (60 percent), which equals 150. That means you would use 150 milliliters of grain alcohol and 100 milliliters of water. I've made them both ways and find they both get the job done. Put a lid on tightly and shake daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain the contents of the jar through muslin cloth. Store the liquid in a dark glass bottle. Label. Compost the remaining herb.

How to Use: At the first sign of a cold or upper respiratory infection, adults should take 5 milliliters of the tincture every 4 hours (4 times a day) for 2 to 4 days, as needed. You will find more flavorful versions in Chapter 3.



Grindelia Compound Tincture

For cough, postnasal drip, and congestion

Commonly referred to as gumweed, grindelia was widely used by Native Americans to treat bronchial problems and is still recognized for this by the German health authorities. It is one of my go-to herbs for upper respiratory infections with cough, congestion, and postnasal drip. Yerba santa, or holy herb, coats and soothes a sore throat while gently loosening phlegm, making it easier to expectorate. Horehound has been used for many centuries to open the bronchioles and ease children's croupy cough. Licorice remains one of our best medicines for soothing an irritated throat and cough. It is still found in many popular cough and cold medicines. Put them all together and you have a fabulous cold and cough remedy. One of my absolute favorites!

10 grams grindelia flowering tops
5 grams horehound herb
5 grams licorice root
5 grams yerba santa leaves
125 milliliters solvent, 70 percent

Grind herbs in a coffee grinder and put in a widemouthed glass jar. Pour 85 milliliters of grain alcohol and 40 milliliters of water over the herbs. Make sure you can move a spoon easily through the liquid. If you need more liquid, add 15 milliliters grain alcohol and 10 milliliters water. Put a lid on tightly and let steep for 2 weeks, shaking daily. Strain liquid through a muslin cloth and pour the decanted liquid into a dark amber bottle. Put a lid on tightly and label. Compost the leftover herb matter.

Your tincture is ready to be used to make syrup at any time.

To make the syrup: Simply warm 4 ounces of raw honey in a double boiler. Add 40 milliliters of the tincture to the honey, cover, and heat for 10 minutes on the lowest setting. Place in a jar. Take 1 teaspoon every 2 to 4 hours as needed. Amazingly effective!

Note: *This recipe contains licorice, but in a very small amount. It is quite safe when used in the amount recommended for 4 to 6 weeks. But if you have high blood pressure and are concerned, you can remove it from the recipe and increase the horehound to 10 grams.*



Herbal Bitter Aperitif

For gas and bloating, and to enhance overall digestive health

Aperitifs are taken before meals to stimulate the appetite and prepare the GI tract. I've used the following formula for more than 30 years in my practice.

- 10 grams dandelion root, dried and cut
- 10 grams gentian root, dried and cut
- 10 grams chamomile flowers, dried
- 5 grams Oregon grape root, dried and cut
- 5 grams fennel seeds
- 200 milliliters brandy or vodka OR
- 225 milliliters vegetable glycerin plus 95 milliliters distilled water

Grind the herbs to a coarse powder in an electric coffee grinder. Put the ground herbs into a jar and add liquid. You can make this with brandy or you can make it alcohol free with vegetable glycerin and water. Secure the lid, label, and let sit for 14 days. Make sure you can move the spoon freely through the ingredients. If you need to add more alcohol, add another 40 milliliters brandy or vodka. If you used vegetable glycerin, add another 30 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 10 milliliters water. Shake every day. Strain and put in a clean jar. Label. Compost the herbs.

How to Use: Put 1 teaspoon in 1/2 cup water (still or carbonated) and drink 15 to 20 minutes before your largest meal of the day, if you used brandy or vodka, or take 2 teaspoons right off the spoon if you made it with glycerin.



Licorice Relief Tincture

For topical treatment of cold sores and inflammation

- 25 grams licorice root, cut
- 125 milliliters vodka (80 proof)

Grind licorice to a coarse powder and put in a jar. Add vodka. Stir. The liquid should completely cover the herb, and your spoon should be able to move freely. If you need more liquid, add an additional 25 milliliters of vodka, put on a lid, and shake daily for 14 days. Strain. Pour the liquid into a dark tincture bottle and label.

How to Use: Insert a clean cotton swab into the tincture and apply to the herpes (cold sore) outbreak. Reapply using a clean cotton swab every hour, while awake, during the first 24 to 48 hours. If applied frequently, it works like magic—there's no other word for it. There are no safety concerns with this topical use of licorice.



Uva Ursi–Corn Silk Tincture

For minor urinary tract infections

There is nothing that works better for minor, uncomplicated bladder infections than a combination of uva ursi and corn silk. Uva ursi helps fight off the infection, and corn silk soothes and relieves the irritation.

25 grams uva ursi leaf
15 grams corn silk
200 milliliters vodka (80 to 100 proof)

Grind uva ursi and corn silk and put in a jar. Cover with the alcohol. If necessary, add another 40 milliliters vodka to ensure your spoon moves readily through the mixture. Let it sit, covered, and shake daily for 14 days. Strain. Pour into dark bottle, label, and store.

How to Use: Take 3 milliliters in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water or juice every 2 to 3 hours (up to 6 doses) during first 48 hours of symptoms. Then 3 times per day for 72 hours.

Note: Uva ursi should not be taken longer than 4 weeks and should not be used by pregnant or breast-feeding women.



Witch Hazel Tincture

For topical use on bites, rashes, and hemorrhoids

Trust me, your own homemade witch hazel tincture will far surpass anything you find on a pharmacy shelf. That's because distilled witch hazel has no tannin, and that's what gives the herb its fabulous astringent and medicinal benefits.

50 grams witch hazel bark (*Hamamelis virginiana*)
250 milliliters solvent, 20 percent

Grind the herb and put the grounds in a canning jar. To get 20 percent alcohol strength, just multiply 250 (milliliters) x 0.2 (20 percent), which equals 50. Pour 50 milliliters grain alcohol over the herb and 200 milliliters water. Put a lid on tightly and shake daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain the contents of the jar through muslin cloth. Squeeze tightly to remove as much liquid as possible. Store the liquid in a dark glass bottle. Label.

How to Use: You can use witch hazel tincture on insect bites, skin rashes, and hemorrhoids. Just apply the tincture with a cotton ball several times throughout the day.



German Chamomile Glycerite

For upset stomach, colic, anxiousness, and insomnia

In today's crazy, chaotic world, I think many of us could benefit from the use of this gentle herb. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania found it was highly effective for relieving anxiety, while a study at the University of Michigan found that chamomile helps participants fall asleep faster and wake up fewer times at night compared to those who were given a placebo. You will see that I use chamomile in many recipes throughout this book.

50 grams German chamomile flowers
280 milliliters vegetable glycerin
120 milliliters water

Purchase high-quality chamomile flowers and grind them in your coffee grinder. Place the ground herb in a widemouthed jar and cover with vegetable glycerin and water. Replace the lid. If you need to add more liquid, add an additional 35 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 15 milliliters water. Shake daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Gently heat glycerite in a water bath and then pour the contents of the jar into fine cheesecloth and strain, squeezing firmly to remove liquid. Compost the herbs. Pour liquid into a dark glass bottle and label. The glycerite will keep for 2 years.

How to Use: Take 1 drop per pound of bodyweight up to 60 pounds and then 1 teaspoon for children 60 to 100 pounds, up to 4 times a day, as needed. Teens and adults can take 1 tablespoon up to 4 times a day, as needed.



Echinacea Glycerite

For cold, cough, and sore throat

I've had a long and enduring relationship with echinacea and have relied upon it heavily for minor colds, sore throats, and congestion. I prefer to use the glycerite for children, or for adults who cannot tolerate alcohol. The taste is mild and sweet.

- 50 grams echinacea herb or root
- 280 milliliters vegetable glycerin
- 120 milliliters water

Purchase high-quality echinacea herb and/or root and grind in your coffee grinder. Place the ground herb in a widemouthed jar and cover with vegetable glycerin and water. Replace the lid. If you need to add more liquid, add another 35 milliliters vegetable glycerin and 15 milliliters water. Shake daily for 2 to 4 weeks. Gently heat glycerite in a water bath and then pour the contents of the jar into fine cheesecloth and strain.

How to Use: Children for up to 5 days:

- 15 to 25 pounds: 1/2 teaspoon every 2 to 3 hours
- 25 to 50 pounds: 3/4 teaspoon every 2 to 3 hours
- 50 to 75 pounds: 1 1/2 teaspoon every 2 to 3 hours
- 75 to 100 pounds: 1 teaspoons every 2 to 3 hours
- 100 to 150 pounds: 2 teaspoons every 2 to 3 hours



Calendula Flower Oil

For soothing, moisturizing, and cleansing the skin

I grow calendula in my garden, not only for the beauty of its warm orange blossoms, but also because it is my go-to herb for minor skin problems. Calendula is an edible flower, meaning it's OK to use on chafed and sore nipples when nursing. Calendula is wonderful baby oil—much better than many commercial products that contain preservatives and/or mineral oil. Massage a thin layer of oil after bathing. It seals in moisture, has mild antibacterial activity to help prevent secondary infections, and reduces itching.

- Calendula flowers, dried or freshly dried
- Olive, grape seed, or sunflower seed oil (carrier oil)

Fill a jar 2/3 full with calendula flowers and then cover with the carrier oil. Put on a lid so that it fits tightly. Let it steep in a paper bag in a warm place for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain, bottle, label, and store the oil in a cool dark place.

How to Use: Apply to affected area as needed, 1 to 4 times a day.



Mullein Flower Ear Oil

For minor earache relief

- Mullein flowers
- Extra-virgin olive oil

Whenever possible, harvest fresh mullein flowers in late summer. Let them sit overnight to remove some of the moisture. Place them in a glass jar and completely cover them with olive oil. If you don't have access to fresh mullein, you can use dried mullein flowers. Make sure the oil is roughly 1 inch higher than the flowers. Place the jar in a brown paper bag, put in a warm sunny

place, and let it sit for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain. Put the liquid into a dark bottle, label, and store for up to 1 year.

How to Use: Lie on side with affected ear facing up. Put 2 to 3 drops directly into the ear canal and then gently push and pull the outer ear to work the oil down into the canal. Lie in this position for about 5 minutes. You can put a small ball of cotton in the ear to keep the oil in the ear canal. Repeat this procedure 2 to 3 times a day. *Never put oil in the ear if you see drainage or suspect that the eardrum has ruptured.*



St. John's Wort Oil

For the topical relief of sore muscles, nerve pain, and sunburn

St. John's wort oil is one of my favorite massage oils for relieving sore or overexerted muscles. I have also found it very handy for sunburn (or other burns) and when applied topically for postherpetic neuralgia, or the pain that can linger after the outbreak of shingles.

St. John's wort herb
Extra-virgin olive oil

Whenever possible, harvest fresh St. John's wort herb in flower. Let it sit overnight to remove some of the moisture. If you don't have access to fresh St. John's wort, you can use dried. Place the plant material in a glass jar and completely cover with olive oil. Make sure the oil is roughly 1 inch higher than the flowers. Place the jar in a brown paper bag, put in a warm sunny place, and let it sit for 2 to 4 weeks. Strain. The oil will be a deep ruby red. Beautiful! Put the liquid into a dark bottle, label, and store for up to 1 year.

How to Use: Apply to sore muscles and massage into skin. Can be used in a similar way for postherpetic neuralgia and sunburn. Apply 2 to 3 times per day.



Thyme Honey

Soothes respiratory and skin irritation

One of the most versatile medicinal honeys you can have around the house. Not only is it great for cooking, but you can use it to soothe a cough or apply it topically to a wound. If you have a young child in the house (under 12 months of age) you might want to substitute maple syrup for the honey in the recipe.

1/2 cup fresh or 1/4 cup dried thyme
8 ounces honey

Put honey in saucepan and gently heat. Add the thyme and stir for about 10 minutes. Pour your heated thyme honey into a clean canning jar, put on the lid, and let it sit in a warm place (a windowsill, for example) for 2 to 3 weeks. Using a spatula, scoop out the contents of your jar into a saucepan and gently heat until the honey has become liquid. Using a fine-mesh strainer, pour the honey into a clean jar. Label and store it in a cool, dark cabinet. Your herbal honey will stay good for at least 1 year.

How to Use: For coughs and colds, put 1 teaspoon thyme honey into 1 cup hot water and stir. Add some fresh lemon if desired. You can also just take 1 teaspoon thyme honey straight off the spoon to stop a cough. For wounds, spread a thin layer on a 3 x 3 bandage or gauze and apply. Change daily.



Sage Honey

A strong antiseptic for internal and topical use

Sage honey is another of my kitchen must-haves. Also great for cooking, sage is strongly antiseptic and can be applied topically to a wound or used to ease a sore throat and upper respiratory

infection. If you have a young child in the house (under 12 months of age) you might want to substitute maple syrup for the honey in the recipe.

1/2 cup fresh or 1/4 cup dried sage
8 ounces honey

Follow the recipe above, substituting sage herb for the thyme.

How to Use: For coughs and sore throat, take 1 teaspoon sage honey and put in 1 cup hot water and stir. Add some fresh lemon if desired. You could also just take 1 teaspoon sage honey straight off the spoon to relieve a sore throat. For wounds, apply thin layer to a 3 x 3 bandage or gauze and apply. Change daily.



Oatmeal Relief

For itch relief

By using just two common ingredients in your kitchen, you can provide your family with an amazing anti-itch remedy. Use it in the tub to soothe chicken pox, poison ivy, or mosquito bites. Or make it into a paste and apply to a bad bug bite. Totally safe and effective!

4 cups oatmeal, powdered
1/2 cup baking soda or cornstarch

Grind the oatmeal into as fine a powder as you can in a blender or electric coffee grinder. Pour the powder into a jar and add baking soda or cornstarch. Mix well. Put on a lid, label, and store in a dark cupboard.

How to Use: This mixture can be made into a paste and applied topically or added to a bath for itch relief. For more nasty rashes, like poison ivy/oak/sumac, I recommend adding a couple table-spoons cool water to 1/2 cup Oatmeal Relief to make a paste.

Spread a thin coat over the affected area, cover it with plastic wrap or a towel, and let it dry for 30 to 60 minutes. (You don't need the plastic wrap; it just keeps the poultice from falling off and making a mess!) Rinse off the paste with cool or tepid water. Hot water will make you itch. Repeat as often as necessary to relieve itching and inflammation.

For a bath, mix 1 cup Oatmeal Relief into your bathwater. Make sure the bath is warm, not hot. Soak for 20 to 30 minutes. Repeat as necessary.

Note: For those with celiac disease or gluten intolerance, oatmeal can be safely used on the skin.



Natural Anti-Inflammatory Cream

To soothe itching, relieve eczema, and heal minor wounds

I prefer to use creams, not salves, oils, or ointments, for red, blistering areas. Creams are a little harder to make, so you may want to purchase an herbal cream made from licorice, calendula, chamomile, and/or other soothing herbs from the local health food store or natural grocer. If you're up for a little adventure, though, you can make this one at home. Unlike steroid creams that can cause thinning of the skin with persistent use, this cream has no adverse effects. It's absolutely amazing for relieving itch, soothing irritated skin, and increasing the skin's natural barrier function.

This recipe requires some prepared ingredients whose recipes you will find elsewhere in the book. Read through the full set of instructions before you begin and follow the steps carefully.

Step 1

3/4 cup (175 milliliters) infused calendula oil OR chamomile oil
OR Herbal Sunflower Seed Oil (see recipe, page 210)
2/3 cup coconut oil

2 teaspoons beeswax, grated
6 ounces licorice decoction

Put the first 3 ingredients (infused herbal oil, coconut oil, and beeswax) into a double boiler and gently melt, stirring frequently. When melted, pour into your blender and let cool for about 5 to 10 minutes. It will start to get solid around the edges, but when you shake the blender, it should still be liquid. Use a spatula to scrape the sides to break up any areas that have hardened. Now turn your blender on low; slowly drizzle your licorice decoction into the oil. Use your spatula to scrape down the sides every now and then. Keep drizzling in your licorice until it has all been added.

Step 2

1 teaspoon vitamin E oil
1/2 teaspoon lavender essential oil

These last two ingredients are optional, but they are both healing and soothing to the skin. If you choose to use them, add them to the cream last, gently mixing them into the cream with your spatula.

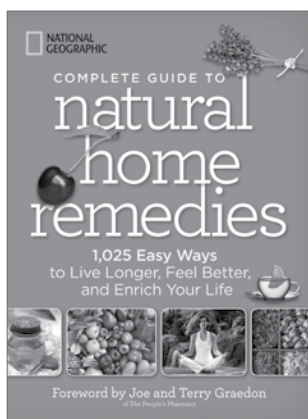
Step 3

Pour the cream into jar(s) and store in your refrigerator. Vitamin E prevents the oils from going rancid, and the essential oil keeps down microbial growth. Other than those two ingredients, this cream has no actual preservatives. It will keep for 6 months if stored in the fridge, or about 3 months if kept in the kitchen cupboard.

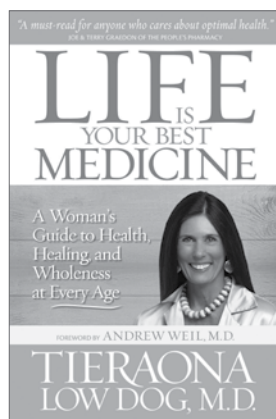
How to Use: Apply to the affected areas 3 to 4 times a day, as needed.

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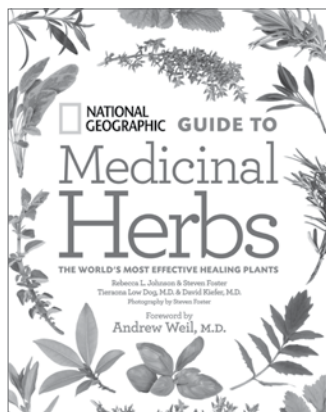


- ▲ This book features practical cures, medicinal herbs, healing foods, green housecleaning, sustainable cosmetics, alternative therapies, and tons of lifestyle changes tips.



- ▲ Dr. Low Dog weaves together the wisdom of traditional medicine and the knowledge of modern-day medicine into an elegant message of health and self-affirmation for women of every age.

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