

Ingredients for an herbal first aid kit and how you can use them effectively

By David W. Christopher M.H.

Many of you have discovered the deep satisfaction and savings that comes from making your own clothing, growing and processing your own food, repairing and maintaining automobiles, and in some cases defending yourselves in legal matters. The expertise in these areas is commendable, but nothing compares to the exhilarating feeling of being free from the current health care system, of becoming self-sufficient in your health care needs. In this regard, you will find natural health care to be extremely simple and greatly rewarding.

If you have stored food and supplies sufficient to tide you over during a natural or man-made crisis, keep in mind that you will not be able to use these supplies if you are sick or injured, with no access to outside help.

Take a lesson from the riots

Let us take a cue from the past unrest experienced in Los Angeles and other parts of the country. In particular is the case of the young father who ventured out during the riots to buy milk for his baby and ended up being shot. We should all store at least 72 hours worth of provisions so we do not repeat history. A medicine kit should be in every home, car, and place of business.

You could go to a well equipped pharmacy and purchase a kit supplying the basics but they will also contain the same old unnatural, poisonous, and sometimes habit forming materials that give temporary relief but do not go to the cause and correct the underlying problem. So let's put together our own, and make it as natural and effective as possible.

An herbal medicine kit

A medicine kit first of all should contain the basics which include, but are not limited to, first aid tape, sterile gauze, and assorted bandages including butterfly and knuckle. Other items would include good scissors, tweezers, a thermometer, and an instruction manual on CPR and other lifesaving techniques.

As you prepare your medicine kit you will want to include something to counter infections. This is where herbs should be used, mainly because they are safer and more effective. The simple herb, **cayenne pepper** stops bleeding and helps to heal wounds. The herb golden seal root will counter any infection and also aid in healing. **Comfrey** is another healing herb that I have seen work miracles. **Oak bark**, **bayberry bark**, or any other astringent herb will help pull tissue together, further assisting in the healing process.

Cayenne to the rescue

I remember the last time I cut myself seriously enough that the blood was spurting, I found that my biggest danger wasn't in bleeding to death, but losing it all through going into shock!

So the first thing that I put in my personal first aid kit was cayenne extract which prevents shock. All it takes as a dosage is one dropperful. This same cayenne extract can be used to stop a heart attack.

My father who was a practicing herbal doctor, never lost a client due to heart attack when cayenne was administered. His method was to mix a heaping teaspoon of cayenne in a glass of warm water and have the patient drink the whole amount.

This same procedure was used in cases of gunshot wounds, where the blood stopped spurting within 10 seconds of drinking the **cayenne tea**. I personally suffered from bleeding

stomach ulcers, which were arrested with one day's therapy using this same cayenne tea.

Cayenne works equally as well externally. Many people have reported excellent results of immediate cessation of bleeding, wound healing, and no scarring by immediately placing cayenne on the wound when the occasion arises.

Cayenne should also be used in cases of hypothermia. After getting the person dry, warm and calm, administer the dropperful of cayenne extract or a heaping teaspoon of



CAYENNE

cayenne, which has been mixed into a cup of warm water. Warm the torso first and then the extremities—with your own body if necessary. Since the person is most likely exhausted, nourish him or her with warm liquids, soups, warm vegetable juices, honey in warm water, etc. (**Honey should never be given to babies.-Editor**)

One more situation in which you can use cayenne is in cases of frostbite. Use one tablespoon in a gallon of warm water, not hot, and soak the

extremities. We could go on for days about the uses of cayenne.

For bites and stings

The next item that I would want for my medicine kit would be used, for venomous bites or stings. The herb of choice is echinacea in extract form.

I would take a dropperful every hour and also use an echinacea compress on the bite or sting. A compress is made by soaking gauze with the extract and taping the gauze over the bite, or the dry herb is mixed with water or saliva to make a paste that is placed on the bite. It is important to keep the person still and calm, while restricting lymph flow with slight even pressure between the injection and the heart, around the circumference of the affected limb. All toxins are eventually eliminated through the bowels, so it is imperative that this channel is kept operating. Enemas and herbal laxatives would be in order to accomplish this goal. The best herbal laxative, Naturalax #2, can be purchased in any good health food store.

Gastro-intestinal disorders

The most common health complaint is that of gastro-intestinal disorders. There is absolutely nothing in drug stores that can approximate the effectiveness of herbs for these disorders.

For example in double blind studies, conducted at Brigham Young University, **ginger root** was found effective in alleviating nausea experienced by volunteers who were spun in circles.

While in the same experiments, Dramamine, one of the most popular drugs, barely beat out the placebo. I would definitely have ginger root in my medicine kit. Cayenne can also be effective in digestive disorders by stimulating hydrochloric acid production which effectively breaks down the food in preparation for, the intestines.

Sometimes when it seems like we have too much stomach acid, we might reach for an antacid. Don't do it! In reality we are actually deficient in stomach acids. By eating too many acid-forming foods, we trick the body and it doesn't provide the hydrochloric acid necessary to break down the food.

The body, in an attempt to correct the problem, will allow a backwash of alkaline juices from the intestines into the stomach, which then triggers more hydrochloric acid production. It is this sensation that we wrongly identify as excessive stomach acids, and by reaching for the antacids', we upset the delicate balances of the body.

So the worst treatment for bloating, gas, heartburn, etc., is that of using antacids, which allows foods to pass into the intestines without the benefit of being acted on by stomach acids. This procedure interferes with the enzymatic action in the intestines, thus allowing undigested food to pass into the bowels, where no enzymatic activity takes place. In the bowel, remaining substances are broken down by



bacterial action, and the by-product of bacterial action is gas.

When the gastro-intestinal tract is abused and becomes stagnant, many disorders are manifest. Constipation is the first sign of stagnation and is easily resolved by using the **Naturalax #2 combination**. Greater stagnation is evident with nausea. At a time like this, a quick cleansing of the upper digestive tract is in order and calls for a wonderful herb named **lobelia**. This herb acts as an effective emetic (to

induce regurgitation). After emptying the stomach and upper intestines we can then go to work on the lower intestines, with the herbal laxative.

If nothing is done to eliminate stagnation, the body is then more likely to be subject to infestation of parasites, be it pin worms, E. coli, giardia, or whatever.

This leads to a **vermifuge** as my next candidate for inclusion in this medicine kit. **Wormwood** is my favorite, especially mixed with molasses. A good substitute is my own VF Syrup. After three days usage, a strong herbal laxative is used. This procedure should be used every week for three weeks.

If gastro-intestinal problems are not quickly resolved they may become chronic and result in ulcers or colitis.

I mentioned before the use of cayenne to eliminate stomach ulcers, which is a rough—but effective treatment. Colitis (ulcers of the intestines and bowels) is not treated effectively with cayenne, but instead we use an herb named **slippery elm bark**. This herb is very soothing and gentle and over a longer period of time (several weeks to several months) will eradicate any aforementioned conditions. I also find combining **licorice root** with the slippery elm root will effectively stop diarrhea, and helps counter inflamed hemorrhoids. Slippery elm gets my vote for being in a natural medicine kit.

Slippery elm is a very soothing herb that can be used on any irritated surface such as bed sores, diaper rash, bruises, scrapes, etc. It is just sprinkled on dry. When combined with small amounts of water it makes an excellent band aid. It sticks to the skin by itself! A small amount of **golden seal** could be added to this natural bandage to counter infection, and maybe some comfrey could be added to speed up the healing process. Of course, cayenne could be combined with the slippery elm to stop bleeding.

Burns

These herbs minus cayenne would be excellent for burns. A very excellent herbal combination to use for burns and healing is my BF&C Ointment. It is a combination of what

cine kit but should be refrigerated for long-term storage.

Poison oak

For those of us who encounter some poison oak, poison ivy, or just some, harmless but irritating stinging nettle, good drawing herbs would be essential. My favorite is plantain and it definitely is in my personal kit. I have it combined with pine tar and it never needs refrigeration.

Clay can also be used and is prepared and applied in the same manner as slippery elm bark.

When I finally find time to slip away into the mountains, I tend to overwork my muscles so I have included in my first aid kit an analgesic. I have combined essential

herb oils like **cassia, eucalyptus,** and **mint** in olive oil and use it effectively for any muscular pain including temple headaches and toothaches.

(If you are interested in learning more about the medicinal use of herbs, contact David Christopher by writing to The School of Natural Healing, P.O. Box 412, Springville, Utah 84663. The herbs listed in this article can be purchased at any good health food store or by calling The Herb Shop at 1-800-453-1406.) Δ



I consider the most effective herbs for skin problems in a natural base of olive and wheat germ oils. This would be an excellent inclusion in any medi-

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