

HERBAL MEDICINE GARDEN

Heal common ailments growing
your own garden at home



SUMMER WALLACE

HERBAL MEDICINE GARDEN

Summer Wallace
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INTRODUCTION

I would like to thank you for choosing this book, and I hope that you find it informative and helpful. Deciding to grow herbs for medicinal purposes is a smart step to take for your health. It is also a decision that your body will thank you for.

The book is broken into four parts. In the first part, we are going to go over the basics of herbal medicine. This will look at what herbal medicine is and then go through a quick introduction into medicinal herbs.

In the second part, we will go over how to create an herb garden. We'll go over how to create a garden in whatever space you have. Whether you live in an apartment or you have a small backyard, you can have a garden. We'll also discuss what you will need to grow your plants. This will include the types of soil it needs, along with the amount of water and sunlight they will need. We'll also look at the tools you should have on hand to make your gardening easier.

The third part will go over all of the herbs that you should think about growing in your garden. You may be surprised by some of these plants, considering many of them have been labeled as weeds.

In the fourth part, we will go over different ways to use your herbs. First, we'll talk about how to prepare your herbs for use. Then we will look at how to make herbal infusions, essential oils, lotions, and salves.

Herbs were on this planet long before modern medicine was. Some believe that there is a plant for every disease. Keeping your own medicine garden is a great way to care for yourself, keep yourself healthy, and make sure you're ready for any unforeseen illness. Plus, you have the added benefit of having delicious herbs on hand whenever a recipe calls for it.

Before we jump into the information you came here for, let's go over the

medical disclaimers.

The use of herbs and plants for medicine should not replace the advice of a doctor and modern medicine. If you have a serious medical condition that you are taking medicine for, do not discontinue use of the medicine. Herbs should only be used as a supplement or a preventative measure, and should never be used to replace regular medical care. The choice to use these herbs as medicine is up to you. I am here only to supply some information. I am not a doctor, so the information within this book is simply information and should not be seen as medical advice. Always consult with your doctor before starting an herbal regimen, especially if you are already on prescribed medication.

PART 1: HERBAL MEDICINE

CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS HERBAL MEDICINE

Herbal medicine, which is also known as herbalism, is the study of botany and using medicinal plants. Plants have long been the basis for medicine through most of history, and because of this, it is still widely practiced. Our modern medicine also using many plant-derived compounds to create a basis for evidence-based pharmaceutical drugs. Some forms of herbal medicine will also include the use of bee and fungal products, as well as animal parts, minerals, and shells.

Herbal medicine is also sometimes referred to as paraherbalism, phytomedicine, or phytotherapy. This describes alternative practices that use unrefined plant extracts as health-promoting agents or medicines. Herbal dietary supplements tend to be categorized under the phytotherapy category.

There is archaeological evidence that shows that the use of medicinal plants dates all the way back to the Paleolithic Era, around 60,000 years ago. Written proof of herbal medicine dates back around 5,000 years ago to the Sumerians. Some ancient cultures wrote about plants and their medicinal uses in books that they referred to as herbals. The ancient Egyptians wrote about herbs in their medical papyri, drew illustrations of them in tombs, and in rare instances, there have been medical jars containing trace amounts of herbs. One of the lengthiest, oldest, and most important papyri in Egypt is the Eber Papyrus. It dates to around 1550 BCE and goes over more than 700 compounds, which are mainly plants.

One of the earliest known Greek herbals was written by Theophrastus of Eresos in the 4th century BCE. He wrote *Historia Plantarum*. Only a couple of fragments of these writings have survived the years, but what does remain, scholars have found overlap significantly with the Egyptian herbals.

Seeds, which they probably used for herbalism, have been found in archaeological sites of China's Bronze Age dating from around the Shang Dynasty. 224 compounds are talked about in the *Huangdi Neijing*, which is an early Chinese medical text, and around 100 of those compounds were herbs.

Herbs are a very common feature in ancient India's traditional medicine, where their main treatment system for diseases was diet. Pedanius Dioscorides, a Greek physician, botanist, and pharmacologist, wrote *De Materia Medica* and is one of the best examples of herbal texts, which was used for 1500 years until around the 1600s.

There are many different types of herbal forms which can be administered; the most common is a liquid form that the patient drinks, which is normally a tea, but can be a diluted plant extract. Herbal teas are created through extract herbs into water, but they can be made in many different ways. Infusions use hot water to extract herbs, like mint or chamomile, through steeping. Decoctions are where herbs are boiled for a long time and usually use harder substances, like bark or roots. Maceration is a cold infusion of plants that have a high mucilage content, like thyme or sage. To make macerates, plants get chopped up and then added to cold water. They are left there for seven to 12 hours.

Tinctures are created with alcohol, and they are stronger than teas. Tinctures tend to be made by combining 100% pure ethanol and herb. The finished product normally has an ethanol percentage of around 25%, but can be up to 90%. You can make non-alcoholic tinctures with glycerin, but they are believed to not be as easily absorbed by the body as alcohol tinctures.

Herbs can also be applied topically. Essential oil extracts can be rubbed onto the skin once diluted in a carrier oil. Lotions, creams, balms, oils, and salves are other types of topical application. Most topical applications are made from oil extractions. You can take a food-grade oil and soak herbs in it for a week to a month to allow its phytochemicals to be extracted into the oil. Then the oil is used to make lotions, creams, or salves.

CHAPTER 2: INTRO INTO MEDICINAL HERBS

A medicinal herb is a plant that is used for medicinal purposes. There are also aromatic herbs that are used to add fragrance and culinary herbs that are used to flavor foods. Most medicinal herbs are used as culinary and aromatic herbs as well. Medicinal herbs tend to cover a wider range of plant life. They could be perennials or annuals, herbaceous or woody, shade requiring or sun-loving. The plant parts that get used for medicine may be their bark, seeds, roots, flowers, or leaves. The one thing that groups medicinal herbs is their healing properties. Since plants have a long history of medicinal use, there is a lot of folklore associated with them.

The word herb used to only apply to any non-woody plants, including some shrubs and trees. Nowadays, the word herb is used to refer to any part of the plant like the roots, stigma, leaf, flower, bark, stem, seed, or fruit, as well as any non-woody plant. These medicinal plants get used for perfume, flavonoid, or food, as well as for medicine and spiritual activities.

The World Health Organization has estimated that around 80% of the world's population relies on herbal medicines for some part of their primary health needs. The WHO has also stated that around 21,000 plant species can be used as a medicinal plant.

Overall, the use of medicinal plants is seen as safe with no or minimal side effects. The main advantage of medicinal herbs is the fact that it is in sync with nature. It is also independent of any sex or age group. The main thing you have to be aware of is that some herbs have contraindications to some prescribed medicines.

Ancient scholars believed that herbs were the only solution to cure several health problems. They would conduct studies to get accurate conclusions

about the herb's efficacy. This is why most of the drugs created have little to no side effects or reactions. This is the main reason why herbal treatments have grown in popularity all over the world.

With the introduction of technology, we have moved further and further away from nature. But we can't escape nature because we are nature. Since herbs are natural products, they don't come with the side effects that man-made drugs do; they are fairly safe and eco-friendly. Traditionally, there are several herbs used to help cure ailments related to the different seasons.

PART 2: CREATING AN HERB GARDEN

CHAPTER 3: HERBS KNOW NO BOUNDS

Your balcony garden can be as small or large as you want or that your space will allow. It might range from a few baskets that hang on railings to pots or even a vertical garden that covers every piece of wall space. If you have always wanted to have a garden but don't have any idea how to create one, keep reading.

You need to know which way your balcony faces. Since the sun is the most important aspect of growing a garden, you need to think about how much sun your spot will get. Every plant needs a specific amount of sunlight, so you need to pick varieties that will work with your space. Full sun is when an area gets at least six hours of sun each day, but for some vegetables, this is very low. Vegetables normally require about eight to ten hours of sun daily. If your balcony gets less than six hours, this is considered to be partial shade, and if it is less than three hours, this is going to be full shade. If this describes your balcony, don't worry, there are still plants you can grow.

Gardens can easily be grown on balconies. The most important thing is to make sure you know the limits of your balcony. Talk with the building manager to find out if your balcony has any weight restrictions to make sure you don't end up damaging things

You should also be mindful of your neighbors below you. They might not appreciate getting a shower every time you water your plants. Think about putting in a diversion system or catchment for your containers.

Designing Your Garden

When you have figured out the weight limits and amount of sunlight, you can start designing your balcony garden. You might have to get creative by using

various containers.

If you can combine flowers, herbs, and edible plants, you are getting the best of both worlds. When you are designing your garden, think about the filler, spiller, and thriller aspect when choosing plants. Spiller plants will cascade over the pot, the filler is going to take up space between other plants, and the thriller is the focal upright plant that takes center stage. This design will bring beauty to your garden.

Pots and Planters

If weight isn't going to be a problem for you, large pots and planters made from terra cotta and wood are attractive and give you all kinds of space to grow various plants. Remember that terra cotta will dry out fast. Plastic and resin pots are lightweight choices that come in lots of self-watering options, shapes, and sizes.

When you have larger planters and pots, you could grow garden vegetables, perennials, and even small shrubs. Small planters and pots are great for planting annuals, perennials, and herbs. These can be used with vertical gardening.

- Up-Cycle

You are the artist, and you have the choice to add some flair to your balcony garden. You can transform any old container that you have lying around your house into a planter as long as you add holes for drainage. You can use baskets, jugs, mugs, yogurt containers, and even rubber boots. You can reduce your carbon footprint and save you money.

- Hanging Baskets

Hanging baskets, window boxes, or railing baskets are a great choice for small balconies. These can be made out of plastic, steel, or wood and are made to hang off the railings on a balcony or even from the eaves. They are normally shallow and dry out faster. They are best for small plants that are drought-resistant. All of these containers need to be secured by using brackets, screws, or zip ties to keep the container in place so it won't fall off if you accidentally bump it.

- Go Vertical

Vertical gardens save lots of space since they use the walls of your balcony. There are various ways to use these: using planter stairs, hanging old gutters from chains, attaching pots to trellises, or using pallets that have been filled with soil and hung on the wall. The bad thing about vertical gardens is they do splash a lot and can make your walls dirty. Using drip irrigation will work great to keep this problem at bay.

Herb Garden Box

When you build a box for herbs, it will give you more control over the way it looks, its location, and the soil's composition. Many herbs need at least six hours of sun and great drainage.

Choosing the ones you usually cook with is a great place to start. You could also look at medicinal herbs or herbs used in teas. If you follow these simple steps, you will have an herb box in no time.

1. You need to figure out what size your garden box should be. Make a box that is narrow enough so you can reach it from either side. If you want it as a window box, make sure that it will fit in your window sill. It needs to be at least six inches deep, so the herbs have the room to grow.
2. You are going to need lumber that has been pressure treated that will stand up to the moisture from the soil. Measure the lumber to the right lengths and cut them. Use about three rows of lumber put together to make the sides resistant to weather. If you want a large garden box, you can use redwood. Two by fours would be better for window boxes. You can use different types of wood to make your boxes look more pleasing. You are going to need some two by two-inch wood supports to help hold them together. Just put them on the inside of every corner. If you are building a large box, place supports every six inches.
3. Make sure you cut your wood to the correct lengths, so you don't waste anything. Use wood screws that have been weather

treated.

4. Cut your landscape fabric to fit into the bottom of your box if you are going to be putting it on the ground. If your box is going to sit on concrete or other artificial surfaces, you will need to make a bottom for your box, too. You will need to drill some holes in the bottom of your window box and then line it with gravel to help with drainage before adding soil. If your box is going to be fairly large, think about adding casters to help you move it around. Attach your window box securely to your home to keep from accidentally knocking it off.

Starting an Herb Garden

Herbs are fairly easy to grow. All you need is water, well-drained soil, some sun, and a bit of fertilizer. You can grow them in pots, but they prefer to be in the ground. This way, they can spread out. Some herbs can get fairly large. When these get put into pots, they could become stressed and won't grow as well.

The main thing that you need to know is where to plant. You have to put them in the spot for them to grow well. Most herbs like full sun as long as the temperatures don't get above 90 degrees. If the summer months get very warm, think about planting them in a place that gets morning sun and evening shade or put them under the shade of a tree. Just make sure that the area gets no less than four hours of sun.

You are going to need about one to four feet of space for every plant. It all depends on the plant. Now, you need to get your soil ready. Digging with a garden fork will loosen the soil. This helps the water drain and makes space for its roots. This is very important. You can add some compost or fertilizer during this time, too.

Make sure you water your plants when they get dry. Many herbs like being watered when the soil is dry to the touch. Because humidity and temperatures can cause the soil to dry out, you have to check the soil often. Make sure you don't overwater. Watering too much could cause diseases or bad growing conditions, which could cause reduced growth.

CHAPTER 4: GIVING THEM WHAT THEY WANT

It doesn't matter if you decided to grow your herbs inside or outside; all of them need lots of sun, moderate temperatures, and soil that drains well. Remember that most herbs are native to the Mediterranean region, so you need to give them conditions that are similar to this region so they can flourish.

Indoor Gardening

Remember that location is important when growing your herbs inside. They need six hours of sun every day. You also need a great growing medium when growing herbs indoors. Pick a growing medium that drains well and is loose. You could buy some or create your own:

- **Soilless Mix:** Combine one part vermiculite, one part perlite, and four to six parts peat moss. If you want to add nutrients, you can add half a cup canola/cottonseed meal, oyster shell lime, and bone meal for every eight gallons of potting mix.
- **Soil Mix:** You will use equal parts builder's sand, sterile topsoil, and compost. You can also add an all-purpose fertilizer to this, too.

Make sure you water your plants to make the soil moist without watering too much.

Outdoor Gardening

The soil in every garden is going to be different. There are certain things that every herb needs. Try to find a place where the soil drains well and is loamy.

You can improve the soil by adding some peat moss, compost, or manure. The soil needs to drain well but holds onto nutrients and moisture. You can use soil tests to test various sites throughout the garden. The pH of your soil can be raised by adding oyster shell lime or lowered by adding elemental sulfur. Most herbs like being in soil that is neutral to slightly acidic around 6.0 to 7.0. If your soil is too bad, think about making a raised bed. You can fill it with a growing medium, and this lets you stay away from the bad soil.

Get your beds ready by digging about one foot into the soil and turning it over. Throw out all stones. Take the time to work in some good organic material like manure or peat moss. Take a rake and level the ground once you are finished. Water to moisten the soil.

Planting

Most herbs can be started from seeds, but some do better when grown from transplants or cuttings. Figure out which herbs you want to grow and then figure out which way they grow best.

- **Starting Seeds Indoors**

If you know which herbs you want to grow, starting them inside is fairly easy.

- Choose your containers. You can make pots from newspapers, egg cartons, or yogurt cups.
- Use potting soil that is high quality
- Put the potting soil into the container and water. Don't make soup, just moisten well.
- Put the seeds on top and cover with a sprinkling of soil. Tiny seeds can be put onto the surface without covering them.
- Put the pots in a window that faces south where the temperature will hover around 65 degrees. A heat mat could keep your plants warm.

- Transplanting
 - After about five to ten weeks, your seedlings are ready to go outside. Never throw them outside and forget them.
 - Make sure the danger of frost is over before you harden them. To do this, you need to leave them outside in a shady part for longer times every day. Begin with just a few hours and work up until you leave them out for 24 hours.
 - Water them about two hours before you transplant them.
 - Try to transplant them on a cloudy day if at all possible or during the evening hours to keep from shocking the plants.
 - Make sure your beds are ready before you transplant them so the move will be quick.
 - Gently loosen the herbs from the pot and rest them in a tiny hole. The bottom of the plant needs to be even with the ground.
 - Fill the hole with soil and tamp it down.
 - Water well

- Direct Seeding
 - You can plant seeds once the danger of frost has passed.
 - Read the packet of seeds to figure out how deep to plant them.
 - Fix a trench to put the seeds at the right depth. Use a trowel or your hand to do this.

- Place the seeds at the right spacing. It is better to plant too many seeds than too few. You can thin out the plants later if you need to.
- Cover the seeds with some soil. If your garden has a lot of clay, think about covering the seeds with vermiculite. Because clay will absorb heat, our seeds might get burnt.
- Gently water.

Fertilizing

Growing herbs outside in a garden might not need a lot of fertilizer. It won't hurt to put some nutrients on your plants, but if you are growing your herbs in containers, they are going to need some extra care.

Even if your growing medium is organic, when you grow a plant in a container, the plants use all the nutrients in the soil. They get leached out each time you water, too. You are going to be watering more since potted plants will dry out faster.

To make sure you have healthy plants, mix a time-release fertilizer into the soil before your plant. You can add some liquid fertilizer throughout the growing season, too.

Try not to over-fertilize your herbs. Too much will give you larger plants, but the essential oils that they give will be diluted.

Watering

This is the most important job of any gardener. Watering plants is easy, and you don't have to overthink the details. You need to just focus on the larger picture and make sure you are watering your herbs regularly.

There has been a lot of debate about how often herbs need to be watered, but an agreement hasn't been reached yet. This means that you have more flexibility. Just look at how other gardeners water their herbs and pick the one that is right for you.

How Often to Water

Herbs require less water than vegetables and flowers since most species of herbs have been adapted to grow in dry conditions. Some herbs taste better when they aren't given a lot of water.

Don't overgeneralize this. The best way is to put your herbs into two categories: drought-tolerant and moisture-loving.

- Drought-tolerant

Herbs that grow well in dry soil are called drought-tolerant. Sage, thyme, and rosemary are examples of drought-tolerant plants.

Some perennials like catnip and oregano can also survive on just a bit of water. Some herbs fall between these categories but are usually treated like moisture-loving plants.

These herbs will have wider and deeper root systems, so this allows you to water them when the soil is very dry.

- Moisture-loving

These herbs normally do better in wet soil rather than in dry soil. Bee balm, chervil, dill, and mint are examples of moisture-loving plants.

What is more interesting is that most of these herbs are annuals. This means that they only live for one year and normally die during the fall.

Herbs liked to be watered when the soil is just about dry. The best rule to go by when watering herbs is to check the top inches of your soil. To do this, just stick your finger into the soil. If it feels wet, don't water. If it feels dry, it needs to be watered.

You can always just get on a watering schedule and follow it if you are doing it the right way. Just remember to water them either early each morning or during the evening hours, so they don't lose their water through evaporation.

How to Know You Are Doing It Right

Herbs are very honest about what they need, and they will tell you when they aren't getting what they need. There are some signs that you can look for:

- Not Watering Enough
 - Leaves will turn yellow, curly, and might begin rotting.
 - They are going to wilt in dry soil.
- Watering Too Much
 - They get attacked by fungus.
 - They will wilt even when the soil is wet.
 - Lesions or blisters are on the leaves.

You probably won't encounter any of these symptoms, but if you see any of them, you have to act fast, especially in drought conditions.

Lighting Tips

If you are growing your herbs indoors, you need to have six to eight hours of light every day. Having enough light is needed for helping the herbs produce the essential oils that give them their flavors.

If your herbs don't have the correct amount of light, they aren't going to taste like herbs. Sunlight is ideal for plant growth, but when there isn't enough sunlight like during the winter, you have to improvise.

Let's look at some ways you can give your herbs the light that they need. Just know that some herbs won't grow well inside. Dill and cilantro, for example, won't grow back after you clip them, so you will need to constantly replant. Thyme, rosemary, mint, chives, and oregano grow back more when they are trimmed. This gives you a steady stream of herbs.

Types of Lights

Sunlight is always best, but when you don't have a window that gives you the light you need, what can you do? There is artificial lighting. I'm not talking about the normal light bulbs in your house. They don't give off the right color rays for plants.

First, don't ever use a sunlamp. These are for people and never to be used on plants. They normally give off too much ultraviolet or infrared rays that can

hurt plants.

The lights you use are going to be on for about 12 hours each day, so you need to find energy-efficient bulbs that will save you money. I will list your options from cheapest to most expensive:

- Incandescent Grow Bulbs
- Fluorescent Grow Lights
- Full Spectrum LEDs
- Full Spectrum Plasma Light
- All In One Planter

CHAPTER 5: TOOLS

Growing plants indoors can be a bit hard, but with some tender loving care, herbs can be easily grown. Indoor gardening is popular right now because who doesn't want herbs to use in cocktails and recipes.

All you need is some potting soil, and some seeds and planting is a breeze. If you don't think you have a green thumb, or going to garden centers is just too overwhelming, the following tools will help you successfully grow plants indoors.

Starter Kits

If you want something simple and easy, these starter kits are for you. They come with three mason jars filled with soil, seeds, and labels. All you have to do is follow the directions, and you will soon have herbs sprouting.

Mister

You can use a mister to keep your herbs happy by misting them each day. They can give moisture-loving plants with the right amount of moisture in the air and soil. For the plants to absorb the right amount of sun, you might need to clean the plant's leaves with some water and a cloth. You could also use a mister to apply insecticides. These don't have to be anything expensive; just a cheap plastic spray bottle will work fine.

Herb Keeper

After you have harvested your herbs, you need to put them in an herb keeper to keep them fresh. These have been designed to extend the life of herbs. This lets you use a whole bunch rather than finding them slimy in the back of your refrigerator. Some of them look like covered vases. You place your herbs into them with the stems in water. The container keeps the leaves and stalks protected and contained. Just load the herb keeper according to the

instructions and add water to cover the bottom of the stems. Never fill past the maximum fill line.

Moisture Sensor

If you have problems watering your plants on time, you might need to get a moisture sensor. They let you know how healthy your soil is. There are several types out there. They run from a couple of bucks to hundreds of dollars. Finding the best ones can be a bit hard. If you want one that just tells you how much moisture is in your plant's soil, an analog moisture only meter is the way to go. The more expensive ones are for checking moisture in compost piles or moisture deeper in the soil.

Plant Labels

Plant labels are quick and easy to make. You can repurpose items like broken terra cotta pots, cans, shells, containers, corks, bamboo skewers, and pebbles. There isn't a certain way you can do this. Just let your imagination take over and go crazy. You absolutely must use plant labels if you:

- Want to stop losing bulbs each year
- Grow perennials like yakon, turmeric, or ginger, so you don't dig them up
- Share garden space with others
- Learning how to identify plants
- Have plants in your garden you don't know
- Are growing food, and you want others to know what you are growing.

Grow Lights

If you are trying to grow plants indoors and you don't have the right amount of sunlight coming into your plants, you need to find some indoor grow lights. There is a list in the chapter above.

Transplanter or Trowel

Once your plants have grown a bit, you might need to move them to bigger pots. You need to have a good digging tool that won't kill your roots. These aren't just used to transplant seedlings. Any experienced gardener will tell you that you need to have one of these. It will make your life a lot easier. You can use it to break up the soil to get the garden ready for your plants. They are a great multitasking tool that is easy to use and very durable.

Pruners

The best way to buy a pair of pruners is to hold them in your hands and find a pair that feels right for you. A good pair will be able to cut branches and limbs, all while cutting delicate herbs like chives, dill, oregano, etc. If they are a very good one, they should be able to cut a wooden dowel. They need to have steel blades that can be sharpened over and over again. Their handles need to be almost unbreakable. You should be able to find replacement parts if something were to happen. As with most things, do your research. Don't go out and buy the first pair you see.

Fertilizers

You need to keep your plants healthy by using a good quality fertilizer. Plants that are fed well will be more beautiful and more productive. Plants need to be fertilized since most soils won't give them the essential nutrients needed for their optimal growth. Even if you begin with great soil, as the plants grow, they will absorb all the nutrients from the soil and leave the soil without any nutrients. All those tasty tomatoes you grew last season? They took a lot of nutrients from the soil to make those. When you fertilize your garden, you are going to replenish all those nutrients that were lost to make sure that your plants this year have all the food they need to flourish and grow.

Watering Can

Your plants need to have good drainage, and you need to water them well. A watering can is a portable container that has pouring spout and handle that is used to water plants. These can come in various sizes and most of them have a removable "rose" at the end of the spout, so the water comes out in a mist rather than a stream. These are normally made from plastic, ceramic, or metal.

Herb Planters

Most herbs are going to need an eight-inch pot to be able to grow and thrive. Starting herb gardens is a great hobby. Many people today don't have backyards to grow things in. You don't need a lot of space to grow just a few herbs. You just need to get creative, and you will be growing herbs in no time. Look back at chapter three to get some ideas about how to make planters.

Seeds

You can't grow anything without either having seeds or plants that you can propagate. The secret to growing anything from seeds is keeping it moist while it is germinating and giving the seedlings the proper lighting when they finally sprout and start growing. There are many seeds on the market, so you just have to decide what you want to grow and then buy the seeds you want.

PART 3: HERBS

CHAPTER 6: CALENDULA

Calendula is very easy to grow herb and highly versatile medicinal plant. Calendula should not be confused with marigolds. While they are both in the same family, marigolds are in tagetes genus and are not medicinally interchangeable.

The entire flower can be used. It is often used as a digestive aid and is a treatment for GERD. It also has anti-inflammatory, antifungal, and antibacterial properties. It also stimulates menstrual flow, bile production, and promotes wound healing. It can be used to stimulate the lymphatic system to help fight off respiratory and localized infections, such as tonsillitis. It is also a great topical treatment. It can help heal postpartum perineal tears, cracked nipples from breastfeeding, cervical dysplasia, cold sores, chickenpox, bruises, scrapes, insect bites, acne, eczema, swellings, abrasions, burns, wounds, stings, and rashes.

Calendula should not be taken internally while pregnant since it is used to bring on menses. Since it is in the aster family, it can cause reactions in those who are sensitive to plants like chamomile and ragweed. This is a very rare possibility, but sensitive people should proceed with caution when they first use it. Rare incidences can cause contact dermatitis.

The seeds should be sown in mid-spring. They also do well with transplanting from starter trays if you live in a particularly cold region. They thrive in all types of soil and prefer soil that is not overly dry or wet. In some climates, it can be a perennial but is mainly an annual.

CHAPTER 7: MOTHERWORT

Motherwort is considered a nervine and is very helpful in supporting a healthy reproductive function in women, especially those that tend to be influenced by stress and tension. It can also help to support a healthy cardiovascular system.

This is a perennial plant that is part of the mint family. It is very much an herb for females because it helps to support all parts of the reproductive system and helps to maintain healthy stress levels, especially stress affecting women. It is often used to help moms who are combating the “empty nest” syndrome and can help them make that emotional transition. It can also help strengthen the endocrine system.

Motherwort should not be used if you are pregnant. Also, if you are currently taking any pharmaceutical drugs, you should consult with your doctor first.

When growing motherwort, it prefers full to partial sun. You can sow the seeds indoors and then transplant them during the early spring. You can also directly sow them in late spring. Seedlings should be four inches tall before being transplants. Motherwort likes being watered, but should not stand in water, so you need well-draining soil. If you are not growing it in a container, and even if you are, you should remove the flower stalk before the seeds have a chance to mature. If you don't, you run the risk of the plant overtaking your garden.

CHAPTER 8: ECHINACEA

Echinacea, also called purple coneflower, is an easy to grow, hardy perennial. It has large daisy-like flowers and makes a lovely, water-wise border choice. Echinacea is commonly used during the cold and flu season to help boost the immune system.

Not only is Echinacea a great immune booster, but it is also an antiviral, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory. It can also help to prevent blood sugar spikes in diabetics and can help lower blood pressure for those suffering from high blood pressure. It also affects mental health and can help manage anxiety problems. It does not get rid of the “fear reflex” that people with anxiety have, but it does calm the physical effects of anxiety and helps you to feel calmer.

If you have an autoimmune disease, it is best to steer clear of Echinacea because of its strong effect on immune reactions. Some people are allergic to Echinacea, so you should make sure you do not have an allergy to the plant before taking it internally. If too much is consumed, you can experience mild stomach pains and nausea.

Echinacea does not require a lot of water and prefers full sun and rich soil. It grows well from direct-seeding or through division. Sow your seeds directly when there is still a chance of a light frost. They will germinate in 10 to 20 days. If you are growing them indoors, you can direct sow in the pot whenever you want. Cut the plants back to the ground in late winter once the flowers go to seed.

CHAPTER 9: HOLY BASIL

Holy basil is often used to help support a healthy response to stress, maintain healthy blood sugar levels, promote longevity, and nourish the mind. It exhibits an adaptogenic activity, which helps the body to adapt to different types of stresses. This herb has a broad-spectrum, normalizing action that helps you to maintain homeostasis.

Holy basil has been used to treat many different conditions, like earaches, upset stomach, stress, fever, headache, common cold, and the flu. It can also be used topically to help repel mosquitoes and to treat ringworm. Studies have found the holy basil also has the following properties: anticoagulant, anti-arthritis, anti-tussive, antipyretic, anti-diabetic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-diarrheal, and antimicrobial.

Holy basil is often safe for pretty much anybody, except for pregnant or breastfeeding women, or anybody trying to get pregnant. It does not have any known side effects. For women trying to get pregnant, it can affect their fertility because it can cause uterine contractions. You may also need to stop the use of holy basil at least two weeks before any type of surgery. As such, you should not take holy basil if you are taking any anti-coagulant drugs.

Holy basil often needs warmer temperatures than other herbs. It grows great outdoors during the summer, but if you want to keep it year-round, you will need to bring it inside during the colder months. It prefers light, well-draining soil. Keep the plant watered, but don't let the roots get soggy.

CHAPTER 10: MEADOWSWEET

Meadowsweet is great medicine for treating diarrhea. It is also used to help correct stomach upsets and can help treat blood-related illnesses. It is a great remedy for heartburn, peptic ulcers, and upper GI problems. Meadowsweet contains methyl salicylates, which is what gives it its wintergreen aroma and taste. It can also be used to help treat pain and inflammation. As such, it can be used to treat sore muscles, pulled muscles, and arthritis.

In some studies, meadowsweet has been found to inhibit the growth of *H. pylori*, which is the main cause of peptic ulcers. Every part of the plant, leaves, flowers, and roots, contain high levels of phenolic compounds. One form of these compounds is ethyl acetate, which has been shown to inhibit T-cell proliferation and causes cascade activation, which inhibits the immune response. This plays a part in the inflammatory response, which reduces any unneeded inflammation in the body.

There are no known precautions.

Meadowsweet loves partially shaded areas and soil that drains well and has good water retention. Adding wood chips or mulch around the plant helps to keep the soil moist. Meadowsweet should be watered regularly during its growing season. Around an inch of water, each week is all it needs. If the soil gets dry, the leaves will turn brown. Meadowsweet should be cut to the ground in late winter or early spring to give room for new growth.

CHAPTER 11: BEE BALM

Bee balm, which is also sometimes referred to as bergamot or wild bergamot, is an antimicrobial. It is often used as a treatment for the cold and flu. It also helps to soothe the digestive tract and is a great remedy for indigestions, nausea, and bloating. It does more than just soothe the digestive system. It also has antispasmodic properties and can help treat menstrual cramps and coughs. It can be used on the skin to help treat rashes, scrapes, and stings.

It is also nervine, which helps to provide a calming effect on the nervous system. It is safe enough for children to use as well. As a digestive aid, bee balm can help to relieve gas, upset stomach, and nausea. Bee balm is commonly made into cough syrup.

Poultices made from bee balm can be wrapped in a cloth to place over sore eyes, to relieve headaches, muscle spasms, heal fungal infections, and to slow bleeding. Bee balm can be made into a mouth wash to help with mouth sores and sore throats.

Bee balm prefers full sun and loamy soil. You can plant it in spring or fall. It likes well-draining soil, and it needs good air circulation; otherwise, it could develop mildew. When you plant it, make sure you water thoroughly. You can deadhead faded blooms to encourage the plant to re-bloom.

CHAPTER 12: LAVENDER

Lavender has become highly regarded in the skin and beauty line and is one of the most commonly used fragrances in health and beauty products.

Lavender is another nervine. It is a gentle sedative and can help to reduce or relieve insomnia, and stress. Its calming effects can act as a mood booster for some.

Since lavender is slightly bitter, a lot of herbalists will use it as a bile and hepatic stimulant. It is also anti-inflammatory and carminative. It is safe for both the elderly and children. It can be used to treat nausea, irritable bowel syndrome, and intestinal gas.

Topically, it can be used for a sitz bath to help heal tears in the perineum due to childbirth. It can also be used in douches to treat yeast infections and bacterial vaginosis.

There are no known side effects, but it can dry out skin and mucus membranes with long-term use, especially for people who already suffer from dry skin.

Lavender is a perennial and likes full sun and well-drained soil, along with ample airflow. It is considered to be a drought-resistant plant. High humidity can be a problem, as can cold, wet winters. While lavender can be grown from seeds, it is typically propagated from cuttings because growing from seed tends to take a long time. It is considered to be a low-maintenance plant.

CHAPTER 13: PEPPERMINT

Peppermint is one of the most common aromatic plants and was created by combining water mint and spearmint. There are several different conditions that peppermint can help treat. It is a great herb for treating the flu, colds, headaches, skin conditions, nausea, and IBS. It also has calming effects. It has also been used to treat flatulence, menstrual pain, diarrhea, nerve and muscle pain, and indigestion.

Peppermint helps to calm the muscles in the stomach and improves the flow of bile, making it a great remedy for indigestion. The menthol in the peppermint helps to improve blood flow and provides a cooling sensation that helps to ease pain. This is also why it can help to relieve menstrual cramps.

Peppermint also has anti-inflammatory, antiviral, and antibacterial properties. This makes it a good choice for unclogging sinuses caused by allergies, infections, and the common cold. Its menthol content plays a part in this because it helps to improve the airflow in the nasal cavity.

Peppermint is a perennial and can easily take over a garden if not contained in some way. It grows through the above-ground and underground stems, so you should keep an eye on the plant, especially if you are not growing it in a planter. Peppermint will grow alongside water or in damp areas, but also does well in drier soils. They grow best in partial shade.

CHAPTER 14: ROSEMARY

Rosemary is part of the mint family. It has traditionally be used to help relieve muscle pain, boost the circulatory and immune system, improve memory, and promote hair growth. Rosemary is full of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds, which can help to improve blood circulation and the immune system. Rosemary is also used to help treat indigestion.

Scientists have even found that rosemary helps stimulate the brain. Rosemary contains carnosic acid, which can help to fight off the damage that free radicals can do to the brain.

The carnosic acid in rosemary can also help improve eye health. This can help to prevent or treat diseases like macular degeneration, which is one of the most common eye diseases within the United States.

Rosemary is generally safe when it is taken in low doses. While rare, if rosemary is taken in too high of a dose, it can cause vomiting, coma, and pulmonary edema. High doses of rosemary have also been known to cause miscarriages; therefore, it is best for pregnant women not to consume a supplement of rosemary.

Rosemary is drought resistant, so it tends to be a very forgiving plant. It does best in full sun. In warm areas with an average amount of humidity, rosemary can grow several feet high. It can grow so quickly that it is hard to control. In some areas, it can be kept outside year-round. In colder climates, it should be brought inside during the winter. Make sure you don't overwater and that the soil drains well. Regular pruning will prevent the plant from becoming lanky.

CHAPTER 15:

CHAMOMILE

Chamomile is a common herb that you have likely heard of. The uses for chamomile focus around calming and decreasing inflammation. It can calm both the nervous and digestive systems. One of its main uses is to soothe the digestive tract, especially if stress has caused the upset. Chamomile is a great remedy for irritable bowel flare-ups. Children can also take chamomile.

Chamomile has also been used to help teething babies. Studies have also found that it is healing for gastrointestinal ulcers. It can also help to heal tattoos, soothe rashes, and prevent ingrown hairs after shaving or waxing. The essential oil contained in chamomile, azulene, has been studied for its anti-inflammatory effects, and the fact that it is bright blue.

Chamomile is also antimicrobial and can help treat fungi and bacteria. This means it is broadly useful for treating internal and topical infections. Most commonly, chamomile is used for relaxation. It is a popular pre-bed tea choice.

Chamomile needs to be used with caution because allergies are common. That said, most allergies are caused by the adulteration with another, similar-looking, plant. Some people are sensitive to other types of plants in the Asteraceae family. If you think you may be allergic, avoid it and check with your doctor to find out for certain. If you are pregnant, you should avoid chamomile because it can cause uterine contractions. You should also avoid the herb if you are on blood thinners.

Chamomile likes full sun and prefers less-rich soil. There are two main types of chamomile, German and Roman. German is an annual; however, it does self-seed, so it is easy to think that it is a perennial. It is easy to start from seed. If planting outside, it should be started indoors about six weeks before

the last frost. Seeds do not need to be covered with soil. Simply press them into the soil. Roman chamomile is a perennial and is commonly used as a ground cover. It can be grown just like German chamomile. If allowed to self-seed, it will provide more ground cover for the next year. They are drought-tolerant, and it is best to let them dry out between watering.

CHAPTER 16: PARSLEY

Parsley is full of flavonoids, furanocoumarins, phthalide, glucosides, carotenoids vitamins A, E, C, B1, B2, B3, and B5, as well as minerals like manganese, copper, sulfur, selenium, phosphorus, magnesium, calcium, potassium, and iron.

Externally, it can be used to help treat insect bites, injuries, and to get rid of lice. It can be used internally to help treat jaundice, gallstones, and dysentery. It has also been used to replace the use of quinine to treat malaria.

The furanocoumarins that the leaves contain have antimicrobial properties, and the antioxidant properties of vitamin C make this herb helpful in improving your immune system and building up resistance against disease and infections. Parsley may also be able to protect you against some carcinogenic substances. It is also sometimes used to treat hay fever.

Children should not take medicinal amounts of parsley. For adults, large doses of parsley should be taken under the guidance of a trained herbalist. Pregnant women, people with kidney problems, and children should avoid the essential oil and seeds of parsley.

Parsley prefers full to partial sun. If you plan to keep it outside, start the seeds in individual pots inside ten to 12 weeks before the last frost. The seeds germinate faster when soaked. Plants should be watered evenly during the summer.

CHAPTER 17: DILL

Dill has long been used in Ayurvedic medicine. It can be used to help with insomnia and sleep disorders, dysmenorrhea, genital ulcers dysuria, renal colic, neuropathy, spasms, hemorrhoids, urinary tract problems, gallbladder and liver complaints, infectious disease, bronchitis, cough, fever and colds, flatulence kidney disease, loss of appetite, and gastrointestinal disorders.

Some research suggests dill could have an antidiabetic effect. It can also help manage cholesterol levels. It can also have a beneficial effect on triglyceride levels.

There are no known side effects or contraindications.

Dill prefers full sun and sandy or loamy soil. While it is an annual, it is also self-seeding. If you are growing dill in containers, indoors, or a climate-controlled area, you can promote continued growth by using it often or at least harvesting the tops to store. You can also plant a new plant every few weeks up until midsummer to make sure that you have a constant supply.

Dill does best when you direct sow into its permanent spot. It does not handle frost well, so make sure all fear of frost has passed. You can water plants freely during its growing season.

CHAPTER 18: SAGE

Sage is another plant in the mint family. There have been studies performed that found even a small amount of sage extracts, whether consumed or inhaled, can help to boost a person's recall ability. It can also help to increase concentration and focus on topics.

It can also help to treat diseases that are caused by inflammation. Chewing on sage leaves isn't all that tasty because of its intense flavor, but it is the most effective way to get its healing compounds into your system. But you can also make a tea or a tincture that you can take to help relieve inflammation of your gastrointestinal or respiratory tract. Its anti-inflammatory effects can help gout and arthritis, and the general inflammation of the cardiovascular system.

Its compounds also help fight off the damage caused by free radicals, which can cause oxidative stress. Oxidative stress can hurt the brain, muscles, joints, skin, organ systems, and heart. It can also help to prevent or reduce viral and bacterial infections. Sage has also been used to help improve the symptoms of menopause.

Sage performs best in sandy or loamy soil. It does not require a lot of water and also hates having wet feet. The sage is most easily grown from an established plant instead of from seeds. Keep an eye on the type of sage. Not every sage can be eaten.

CHAPTER 19: THYME

Thyme contains the essential oil thymol, which is a very strong antibacterial agent, as well as a strong antioxidant and antiseptic. The oil is often added to mouthwashes to help treat inflammation within the mouth or infections of the throat. Thyme is also a cough suppressant.

It also has expectorant and bronchial antispasmodic properties, which makes it a great herb to use in treating chronic and acute bronchitis, whooping cough, and upper respiratory tract inflammation. Thyme is also able to improve the functioning of the bronchial cilia and affects the bronchial mucosa. The terpenoids in thyme provide the plant its expectorant properties, and the flavonoids provide the plant's spasmolytic effects.

There are no known side effects of thyme and is considered safe to use. However, if the essential oil of thyme gets on the skin, it can irritate the skin and can cause an allergic reaction. It is also best if it is not used during pregnancy because it has been known to cause uterine stimulation.

Thyme can be planted in full or partial sun. It prefers sandy or loamy soil. Make sure that you are growing the culinary kind because there are ornamental varieties. It is drought-friendly, so it won't require a bunch of water. Make sure that the soil is well-draining because it does not like wet feet.

CHAPTER 20: CILANTRO

Cilantro, along with its seeds, has been used as a digestive aid. It can help stimulate appetite, and treat dyspepsia, and gastrointestinal spasms. It has also been used to, both topically in internally, to treat chest pains and coughs. It can help with dysentery, diarrhea, vomiting, and indigestion.

Cilantro is also antispasmodic and expectorant for bronchitis and coughs. It can be used topically as an anti-inflammatory for rheumatism and arthritis. The seeds have been used to help treat insomnia and anxiety. It can also help to treat flatulence.

It has been used in studies to help reduce insulin resistance and decrease blood sugar. The seeds can be used to lower cholesterol levels, which makes them beneficial for heart health.

Cilantro likes to receive full sun or light shade. It bolts quickly in hot weather. It likes moist, well-drained soil. Cilantro grows best when you sow seeds directly where it is going to be grown. The main reason for this is because it grows so quickly that it doesn't need a head start. It does develop a taproot, so it does not need to be transplanted.

CHAPTER 21: CATNIP

Catnip is not just a tasty treat for your cat. It is part of the mint family and comes with a wide variety of benefits for you. It has soothing properties and can act like a sedative, which makes it great for treating insomnia and relieving anxiety and tension. It is also safe enough to be used in children. You can give children catnip tea to help relieve them of nervousness, sleeplessness, headache, and stomach distress.

It is also a great remedy for colicky babies. It also relieves gas in the tummy, which will allow babies, or even adults, to have relief and calm down. This is a great herb when emotional stress creates digestive upsets.

It is also a muscle relaxant, so it helps relieve menstrual cramps or cramp in the digestive tract. You can also apply a compress of catnip tea to the belly to relieve problems. There is recent research that has found it can help to reduce fever, which makes it a great herb for treating upper respiratory infections and colds, especially when there is congestion in the middle ear, sinuses, or airways. Catnip can help heal bruises as well.

In large doses, catnip can cause vomiting. It is also not recommended for women who are pregnant.

You can start your catnip from seeds or an already established plant. If you plan to grow them from seeds, you will have to stratify them, or slightly damage them, before they are going to sprout. You can do this by placing the seeds in the freezer overnight and then putting them in a bowl of water for an entire day. The easiest way to start your catnip is to use a cutting from another plant or to purchase one from the store. Catnip likes full sun but can tolerate shade. It also likes well-draining soil. Once it has become established, they won't need a whole lot of care. They should not be fertilized because it can decrease their potency. It can also become invasive, so make sure you keep it controlled.

CHAPTER 22: ST. JOHN'S WORT

St. John's Wort can be used to treat ulcers, gout, jaundice, and rheumatism. It can also be used as an antidiarrheal. When taken internally, it can help treat nervous imbalances due to depression, hysteria, menorrhagia, worms, and urinary affections. Topically it can be used to treat bruises and burns.

This should not be taken by lactating or pregnant women. It contains hyperforin and can increase the rate of clearance of medications. If you are currently suffering from a medical condition or are taking pharmaceutical drugs, you should talk to your doctor before you use it. You should also avoid excessive exposure to UV rays.

St. John's Wort is a low-maintenance plant and grows well in just about any condition except for overly wet soil. In some parts of the US, it is considered an invasive weed, so make you keep this in a container and well maintained if you choose to keep it; otherwise, it will take over. To prevent seeds from forming, thereby controlling the spread, you will want to remove the flowers as they fade and berries before they ripen to keep them from forming seeds.

CHAPTER 23: BAY LAUREL

Bay laurel has a strong effect on the gastrointestinal system and acts as a diuretic, which decreases toxicity in the body. It can also be used as an emetic when something toxic has been consumed. The organic compounds in bay are great at settling upset stomachs, soothing IBS, or lessening the symptoms of Celiac disease.

Bay also has strong antibacterial properties. The oil of the plant can be mixed into a salve and rubbed on the chest to help alleviate different respiratory problems. Inhaling the vapors can help to loosen up phlegm and get rid of dangerous bacteria trapped in the respiratory tract. It can reduce inflammation and irritation when applied to affected areas, like the joints.

With its unique combination of antioxidants and organic compounds, bay leaves can help to protect the body from the effects of cancer-causing free radicals. Free radicals will cause a healthy cell to mutate into cancerous ones, and bay can prevent them from happening.

Bay laurel does not require a lot of water. It likes full to partial sun. It will need to be brought inside during the winter months. It is very tolerant of different types of soils as long as it drains well. Sandy or rocky soil will give the best results.

CHAPTER 24: ALOE VERA

Aloe vera contains a gel, juice, and latex. The gel is found in the innermost layer of the leaf. This is what is commonly applied to the skin to help treat burns. The juice is obtained by grinding up the entire leaf. The latex is formed is yellow and seeps through the leaf when cut. The latex has a laxative effect when ingested. The gel is safe when ingested in limited quantities. However, latex does pose some problems if ingested.

Aloe can also be used to treat hemorrhoids. The polysaccharides in the gel can help heal wounds, is antifungal, anti-inflammatory, and immunomodulatory. Collagen is an important factor in wound healing, and aloe can help to increase the turnover rate of collagen and increase collagen production.

Aloe can also help prevent recurrent canker sores, periodontitis, and gingivitis. It can also help to reduce gum bleeding, swelling, and inflammation. There is some research that suggests it can help to regulate blood sugar levels.

Aloe vera is a succulent, and so it likes dry conditions. They also prefer sandy soil. You can also find cactus potting soil mix. Make sure that it drains very well because aloe does not like standing in water. Your aloe must get plenty of bright light.

CHAPTER 25: LEMONGRASS

Lemongrass has been used to treat muscle aches, indigestion, headaches, excessive sweating, athlete's foot, anxiety, and acne. There are chemical compounds in lemongrass that has sedative, antidepressant, antioxidant, antiviral, antimicrobial, analgesic, and anti-inflammatory properties.

Lemongrass inhibits the growth of *Candida Albicans*, which is the fungus that causes yeast infections. It can also fight against pityriasis Versicolor, which is a fungus that creates small, scaly patches on the skin.

It can also help to reduce the effects of anxiety, especially its essential oil. The compound eugenol in lemongrass has a positive impact on blood-platelet action and neurotransmitter serotonin, which both play a part in causing headaches. As such, it can help to relieve headaches. It can also be used to help heal ulcers, relieve diarrhea, nausea, and stomach upsets.

If you are using the essential oil, you should never take the essential oil internally. People who have kidney or liver disease, children, nursing, or pregnant women should not take lemongrass at medicinal levels.

Lemongrass prefers full sun and any well-drained soil. It is a tropical plant that will freeze to death if the temperatures get too cold. If you live in areas that get cold during certain parts of the year, you will have to bring the plants inside. You will want to start with a purchased plant. A stalk can also be rooted in water and then transplanted.

CHAPTER 26: OREGANO

Oregano has digestive and antifungal properties. Oregano can be used to treat chronic candidiasis because of its antifungal properties. For this ailment, it would be best to take capsules to make sure that oregano gets into the stomach and the intestines.

You can take oregano supplements to treat low stomach acidity, heartburn, and indigestion. Oregano can help reduce gas and soothe a churning stomach.

Oregano has antifungal and antimicrobial properties that come from carvacrol and thymol. Oregano can keep *Candida Albicans* from growing. Oregano oil can help kill various bacteria like *staphylococcus aureus*, *salmonella enteric*, *klebsiella pneumonia*, and *Escherichia coli*.

Oregano has vitamin C, vitamin A, sterols, oleanolic acid, ursolic acid, triterpenoids, rosmarinic acid, borneol, thymol, and carvacrol.

You can drink oregano tea or rub the oil onto your skin to treat infections. Make sure you dilute the oil with a carrier oil as it can burn the skin. Never take the oil internally. The tea needs to be made with dried leaves of the oregano plant.

You can grow oregano from seeds that can be planted in the garden after the last frost has passed. You could also plant it from cuttings or established plants. The soil needs to be at 70 degrees before you do any type of planting. Try to plant them about ten inches apart.

CHAPTER 27: LEMON BALM

Lemon balm can be used by itself or with other herbs. It has a huge role in optimizing your digestive and immune health. It helps to balance the nervous system. Lemon balm can help calm bloating, gas, and indigestion. Lemon balm can help calm the body when stressed. It has been used to support cognitive function can help you focus and stay calm.

Lemon balm can help with insomnia and sleep because it acts as a mild sedative. Lemon balm tea can be given to children to help with sleep problems and restlessness. Drink a cup of chamomile and lemon balm tea a couple of hours before you go to bed.

If you have other medical conditions or are pregnant, please talk to your doctor before taking lemon balm. Lemon balm can interfere with some medications, so please ask your doctor before taking this herb.

Even though lemon balm is very safe, it can be a thyroid inhibitor. If you suffer from low thyroid activity or hypothyroidism, please talk to your doctor before you use lemon balm.

Lemon balm can help support sleep, stress, immune, digestive, cognitive, and brain systems. Feverfew contains aldehydes, monoterpene glycosides, polyphenolic compounds, flavonoids, citral, geraniol, and citronellal.

The leaves and oil from the leaves are what is normally used. The best way to consume lemon balm is to make a tea with one teaspoon leaves and one cup boiling water and let it steep 20 minutes before you drink it.

You need to plant lemon balm at a quarter-inch deep and cover lightly with soil. The seedbed needs to stay moist until the seeds have germinated.

Once it gets established in a garden, it could quickly take over. It doesn't spread by runners like other members of the mint family. Lemon balm spreads through seeds. You can cut it back right when it begins to flower to keep it from spreading too quickly. If you like having bees in the garden, you can let it flower to feed the bees. Cut the flowers back when they begin to fade right before the seeds start.

CHAPTER 28: FEVERFEW

Feverfew contains sesquiterpenes, alpha-pinene, pyrethrin, parthenolide, tannins, pyrethrin, volatile oil, and sesquiterpene lactones.

Feverfew helps migraines due to the unique chemical that it contains: parthenolide. This chemical can relieve muscle spasms and can help fight the widening of the blood vessels that happens when you have a migraine. Feverfew can lessen how often you get migraines while reducing the symptoms of sensitivity to light, vomiting, and nausea.

Because of all the ingredients in the feverfew plant, it helps to stop the release of two substances that cause inflammation, which is prostaglandins and serotonin. These are thought to cause the onset of migraines. When these amines are inhibited plus histamine being produced, this herb can control inflammation that causes the blood vessels in the head to constrict. It keeps the spasms that cause headaches at bay.

Feverfew can also help with arthritis and menstrual cramps. You can make a tea from feverfew by steeping a couple of teaspoons for every cup of boiling water for ten minutes. You can add a tincture to fruit juice or water to drink daily.

Pregnant women need to avoid feverfew because it can cause uterine contractions, which could cause miscarriages. Children under two and women who are lactating should never take this herb.

Feverfew loves full sun or partial shade. Loamy or well-drained sandy soil that has a pH of 6.0 to 6.7 is great for this plant. You can begin seeds inside during late winter or sow directly in the garden once the danger of frost is over. You can expect germination between ten and 14 days.

CHAPTER 29: MARJORAM

Marjoram is great for a healthy diet. Marjoram is full of nutrients, vitamins, and antioxidants. You can find iron, vitamin C, Calcium, and vitamin A in two tablespoons of marjoram.

Drinking between two and four cups of marjoram tea in a two hour time span can help your digestion by relieving constipation, diarrhea, helping stomach cramps, helping cure or prevent intestinal infections, getting rid of flatulence, helping relieve nausea, improving appetite, calming the digestive system, increases digestive enzymes.

Marjoram can protect you from some illness because it is an antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial, and antiseptic agent. Marjoram fights many common illnesses like measles, mumps, common cold, influenza, malaria, typhoid, tetanus infections, staph infections, and food poisoning.

Marjoram is a great anti-inflammatory herb. When taken internally, it can relieve many problems that are caused by inflammation, such as body aches, fever, migraines, sinus headaches, muscle spasms, and asthma.

When you apply marjoram topically, it can help relieve toothaches, backache, sprains, sore muscles, and painful joints. Marjoram has antidepressant and sedative qualities, which can bring some neurological and psychological benefits. It can help increase sexual drive, minimizes emotional reactions, calms anxiety, reduces stress, and relieves insomnia. When it is taken in large quantities, it can bring about mild antidepressant qualities.

There are other health benefits of marjoram like lessens bruising, relieves premenstrual syndrome, regulates women's menstrual cycles, wards off fungal infections, reduces phlegm.

You can rub essential oil into the skin to relieve ailments like toothaches, sprains, and cramps. Drinking tea made from marjoram has an antidepressive,

calming effect, and can help digestive benefits.

To grow marjoram, it is best to begin the seeds inside during late winter or very early spring. Push the seeds below the surface of the soil. You can transplant the seedlings outside when the threat of frost has gone. Marjoram needs to be placed in full sun and soil that drains well.

CHAPTER 30: YARROW

Yarrow is also called milfoil and is commonly passed over today as a simple garden weed. Yarrow is a great remedy for nosebleeds. While it is great at stopping nosebleeds, and can also break up blood clots and help to get rid of bruises and blood blisters. It can also help hemorrhoids. It can also be used by women to help with vaginal discharge and painful periods.

Yarrow is most famously used for treating fevers by inducing sweating. It also has a strong effect on bodily fluids and can help with diarrhea. It can also help calm the stomach and soothe the pain associated with arthritis.

Yarrow has been known to cause allergic skin irritation. It is best if you don't give this to children under the age of five, or taken by breastfeeding or pregnant women.

When growing yarrow, it prefers full sun and well-draining soil. It is a perennial, so you don't have to worry about replanting it. It is also pest and drought-resistant. While it is a very easy grower, make sure yarrow has a place of its own because it is invasive and will push out any other plant near it.

CHAPTER 31: CHICKWEED

Chickweed is best known for its ability to cool inflammation and speed up the healing of external or internal flare-ups. Chickweed contains saponins. Saponins help to emulsify and increase the permeability of cellular membranes. This means it will increase the body's ability to absorb nutrients.

Chickweed has been used to help get rid of bacterial infections when used as a poultice. It has been used to help heal pink eye. It is very helpful, overall, for your eyes. It can help to relieve dryness, sties, redness, and irritation. It can also be used to stop skin irritation and help soothe minor burns.

Chickweed can also be used to help irritated and dry lungs. It is also a mild expectorant and can help get rid of mucus in the lungs. It is also a mild diuretic, so it can help keep bacterial infections in the urinary tract at bay.

Be careful how much chickweed you use because excessive amounts can cause diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. It is best if you are pregnant or breastfeeding that you avoid the use of chickweed, although there is not a lot of data as to what it could do.

Chickweed is a weed and tends to be invasive, so much sure you pick a large, open area, or a decent-sized pot, to grow your chickweed and keep it contained. It prefers slightly moist soil and slight shade. Chickweed isn't very picky about its soil type, but like organic material. It is not drought-resistant, but make sure that the soil drains very well so that its roots do not remain wet.

CHAPTER 32: DANDELION

Dandelion has long been used to treat a wide array of conditions. It is great for treating stomach and liver ailments. It can also help calm nervousness and relieve pain from a toothache. A poultice can be used to help relieve sore and tired eyes.

It is a great source of vitamins A, B, and C, as well as minerals like zinc, iron, and potassium. Dandelion roots and leaves have been used to help support the liver. It can also be used to help heal the urinary tract and keep the skin healthy. Dandelion can also be used to help promote digestion and support the detoxification process.

Since dandelion is a part of the same family as daisies and ragwort, it has the potential to cause allergies. However, most people don't have any adverse reactions.

Once again, this is a naturally occurring weed. When growing them, you have to make sure they have their own home so that they don't overtake other plants. Dandelions grow very well in low-quality soil, but it doesn't hurt to fertilize it. The seeds will need quite a bit of light to germinate, so do not cover them up with soil. Keep the soil moist. You can harvest the dandelion greens before the plants begin to flower so that they have a better taste. The plants should re-grow the next year.

CHAPTER 33: MARSHMALLOW ROOT

Marshmallow has commonly been used to help ease dry coughs and sore throats. The roots and leaves of the plant contain polysaccharides that have antibacterial, antitussive, and mucilaginous properties. This is way marshmallow has a soothing effect on the inflamed membranes in the throat and mouth.

It has also been used to help treat some digestive disorders, including indigestion, heartburn, and stomach ulcers. Marshmallow can also be used to help treat inflammatory skin conditions, like contact dermatitis and eczema.

Marshmallow is a perennial in most zones and prefers rich soil that retains some moisture. It also likes full to partial sun. It can grow to 36 inches tall. Marshmallow does not reach maturity for 16 months. You can start taking the flowers in its second year, and it can take a few years to produce roots that are big enough to harvest.

CHAPTER 34: MULLEIN

Mullein is a common treatment for respiratory problems, like asthma, bronchitis, and chest colds. The leaves and flowers contain mucilage, which can help to soothe irritated membranes, and saponins, which can create a productive cough. It also is anti-inflammatory.

It can be used topically to help with heat rashes. It can also help relieve hemorrhoids, rheumatic pains, earaches, tumors, and bruises. It can also be used to help soften the skin.

Caution should be used because some people find that the plant's hair can be irritating to mucous membranes and skin. It is best that you test a small amount on you before you start consuming it or rubbing across your body. You should also make sure that you strain the tea through a coffee filter to get rid of stray hairs.

Mullein is a drought-resistant plant and grows very easily from seeds. Mullein likes well-drain soil and partial to full sun. In the first year, it will grow low rosettes. By the second year, the mature plants will start growing tall vertical flowers. Mullein will self-sow, so make sure that you pull out any unwanted plants to keep things tidy.

CHAPTER 35: SAVORY

Savory is considered a carminative herb that can be used to help digestive problems and gas. It can also help indigestion, colic, and diarrhea. It also has astringent and antiseptic properties, which makes it great to help treat sore throats. A poultice of the leaves is able to help relieve insect bites.

Savory has also been used to help treat menstrual disorders, bronchial congestions, diarrhea, and nausea. You can also rub a sprig onto a bee sting to get instant relief.

Savory should not be used by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

It can be grown in full sun and well-drained soil. It is easily able to be propagated from cuttings or root division. You can also grow it from seeds, but make sure you start them indoors.

CHAPTER 36: VALERIAN

Valerian is used to help promote tranquility and improve sleep. It is a great alternative to sleeping pills as it does not cause a hangover effect the next morning and improves a person's sleep quality. Valerian can also help to relieve restlessness and calm anxiety disorders.

If you decide to take valerian to improve your sleep, it is best to only take it for two to three weeks and then take a break for the same length of time. The main reason for this is that taking valerian for extended periods of time can cause adverse side effects like depression, headaches, and withdrawal. It is also best for women who are breastfeeding or pregnant to avoid valerian.

When growing valerian, it prefers partial shade. It can also be able to grow in a wide range of soils, but prefers well-drained soil. If you want to use the roots, don't harvest until the second year. The main plant will also die back during the second year, and its smaller daughter plants will start to grow around its base. You can then transplant this out.

PART 4: USING YOUR HERBS

CHAPTER 37: PREPARING HERBS

Before you can create things with your herbs, you are going to have to harvest them and prepare them first. Most herbs are able to be harvested throughout their growing season once they have enough foliage to support more growth. By snipping the plant regularly will help to encourage new growth and will keep your herbs healthy. You should limit your harvests to less than a third of the plant so that it will be able to continue growing and producing new foliage. The best time to harvest most herbs is early in the morning right after the dew evaporates.

When you harvest, make sure you discard any moldy, insect damaged, or diseased parts of the plant.

For leafy annual herbs, like marjoram and basil, pinch off their leaves from the tips of their stems just above a pair of leaves. This will allow the plant to sprout two branches above those leaves so that they continue to grow. This is what is known as pinching off, and this will encourage the plant to become bushy. You should harvest leafy tips frequently and clip the flower buds off to keep the plant growing. Once it flowers, growth stops. If you aren't keeping them in a controlled environment where they continue to grow, make sure you harvest the entire plant before the first frost hits.

To harvest leafy perennial herbs, like tarragon, thyme, and sage, you can harvest them by the sprig or stem. Harvest by cutting the stems three to four inches from the plant's base. Herbs that have long stems, such as oregano and parsley, cut the stem close to the base of the plant. Rosemary should be harvested by cutting the stems right above a pair of leaves so that it will branch out and grow more. You should harvest perennials until around four weeks before the first frost.

There are some herbs that have single flowers, and others will present blooms in clusters along spikes or stems. Single blossoms, like calendula, chamomile, and feverfew, should be harvested by picking the flowers off once it has fully opened. For spiky blossoms, you should harvest them when some of the flowers have opened up by cutting the stem several inches from the base or right above another set of leaves.

If you are harvesting the seeds, such as dill, coriander, caraway, and anise, they are dried mainly on the plant. Let the herb form flowers and then go to seed. After it has flowered, seeds will swell and ripen from green to black or brown as they start to dry. Seeds can be picked when they have dried. Most of the time, seeds will spill out as soon as the head is touched. Hold a container underneath the head of the seed and then clip the stem so that the cluster of seeds fall into the container with the seeds.

Once the herbs have been harvested, unless you plan on using the fresh herbs right away, you are going to want to dry them in order to preserve their essential oils. A lot of people will rinse their herbs off before drying. This is great if you have treated your plants with anything or if there are any visible pests or dust. After you rinse off your herbs, make sure that you thoroughly dry them off before you start the drying process. If you start drying them while they are still wet, depending on which method you use, they will end up cooking instead of drying. Before you store your herbs in a jar, make sure they have been thoroughly dried as any moisture left in the plant can cause it to mold. The best drying environment is in a dark, dust-free, warm area that has good air circulation.

Hanging to air dry is the most common method. This is also the easiest method for herbs that have a good stem. All you do is tie the stems into a small bundle and then hang them upside down in a dry, dust-free, warm environment out of direct sunlight. Using elastics to hold the stems together are the best because they will continue to hold the bunch as the stem shrinks.

You can also air dry them on a screen. With this method, you will spread the herbs out on a window screen or drying screen. Place the drying screen between two chairs so that the air is able to circulate above and below that screen.

A food dehydrator can be used as well. This is a great option for places that

tend to remain humid. The moisture in the air can keep some herbs from drying well. You should use as low heat as possible so that you don't degrade the quality of the herbs.

You also have the option to dry in the oven. This will work as long as you monitor the temperature of the oven closely. Oftentimes, ovens can't be set at a low enough temperature, and it will cause the herbs to lose the color and flavor. However, if you can get your oven to between 90 and 110 degrees, then you can feel free to dry your herbs in the oven. You can also set your oven to its lowest temperature and then leave the door slightly open can help to keep levels at the low level they need to be. Make sure that you check on the progress of the drying often and then turn the herbs whenever you need to. It can take upwards of three to four hours to dry herbs this way.

A microwave can also be used to dry smaller quantities of herbs very quickly. You should always observe safety precautions when you choose to dry herb in the microwave. Make sure you know your microwave very well and start out with small increments. It is also best to choose herbs that don't hold a lot of moisture or aren't thick. Mints do well in the microwave, but rosemary doesn't always do well.

To dry seeds, take the seeds out of the heads and spread them out in a shallow layer in an open container to let them continue to dry for about own to two weeks. Separate the seeds from their seed head and chaff.

Once everything is dried, you will need to store the herbs. When the herbs become dry and brittle, take the leaves off of the stems and store loosely inside of a glass jar or an airtight container. To retain the potency and flavor, don't crush or crumble until you are ready to use them. Label the container with the date and name of the herb. Keep the jars stored in a dark, cool place, away from heat sources, temperature fluctuations, and humidity.

The strength in dried herbs is more concentrated than it is in fresh herbs. If you are substituting fresh herbs for dried herbs, you will only need to use about a third of the amount.

There is one last preserving method for your plants, and that is freezing. Freezing herbs is one of the easiest methods. When you freeze herbs, you will be limited in how you can use them. Typically, this method is only used if

you plan on cooking with the herbs, but you could take them out of the freezer and put them straight into some oil to let them infuse. I would not suggest using frozen herbs in any other manner because freezing them causes them to lose their shape and integrity, but it does not affect their flavor. To freeze them, wash the herbs and then coarsely chop them and place them in the freezer. One fun thing you can do with your herbs is to place them in water and freeze them. Then you can place the ice cubes in some water and create an infusion in that manner.

With this in mind, let's take a quick look at how you can use these herbs. This will give you a quick overview of what to expect in the next few chapters.

The best things about herbal medicine are the way it is prepared. There are various methods of preparing your medicinal herbs, like salves, syrups, poultices, and teas.

There aren't any concrete rules for how to use herbs for specific conditions but one good thing is any skin condition like bruises, cuts, arthritis, or other external problems can be treated with salves, ointments, or other topical blends.

Cleansing tonics, decongestants, pain relievers, and other things that can be put inside the body can be treated with oral blends.

Tinctures

This is a great way to get all the medicinal properties from your herbs. These can be stored for a long time. This is done by soaking them in vinegar or alcohol. This isn't rubbing alcohol. You will be using a grain alcohol to make these. You will then be able to make salves, teas or whatever you want to make from them. Vodka is the best option since it has a high alcohol content to bring out and preserve the herb's medicinal properties, but it won't have any flavor.

To make a tincture, just add one cup of crushed herbs to two cups of wine or alcohol. You could also add one-ounce herbs to five ounces of vinegar. Put this into a quart jar. Make sure the herbs are totally covered. Place the lid on tight and put it in a dark, cool place for two weeks. It would be better if you waited for a month.

Shake the jar every few days. Once the tincture is to your liking, strain well through a cheesecloth or coffee filter, pour this back into the quart jar, and keep stored in a dark, cool place. If you use vinegar, you will need to keep it refrigerated. Tinctures will keep for two years. One drop is equivalent to one teaspoon of herbal juice.

Syrups

To quote Mary Poppins: “Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.” This is a true fact. Syrups are basically an infusion or decoction that has been sweetened with honey or sugar. Preparing herbs in syrups is a great way to make mucus inhibitors, cough suppressants, or anything that you would like to taste great.

To make them, you just add two cups of your infusion or decoction to a saucepan with a pound of honey or sugar. Bring this mixture to a boil, take it off the heat, and let it cool.

Pour it in a container that can be sealed but isn't airtight. You just want to keep the bugs out while it ferments. The syrup might expand while it ferments, and this is why it shouldn't be airtight. You will need to keep this in the refrigerator.

Making Salves and Ointments

Ointments are normally used to treat skin problems like sore joints, sore muscles, dry skin, bites, cuts, and rashes. Ointments are good to use if you would like a waterproof base that won't run off your skin.

The normal base is petroleum jelly, but since we know that petroleum has been linked to cancer and this includes breast cancer because it has PAH's in it. Petroleum also sucks the moisture out of your skin. This isn't what you want if you are trying to treat dry or irritated skin.

You need to find “un-petroleum” jelly, if at all possible. If you can find it great, if not you can make your own. You can melt one cup of coconut or olive oil with a quarter cup beeswax. There you have it. This is great as a moisturizer, too.

To make ointments, you are just going to toss your herbs in a saucepan with

the oil and beeswax and bring it to a simmer. Make sure you keep the heat very low and let it simmer about 30 minutes. Strain well and put the ointment into a small tin or glass jar. It will thicken up as it begins to cool.

Herbal Macerations

Remember I mentioned above about some oils will break down if they get too hot? The goal of macerations is to make teas without this happening.

You can use cold water rather than hot, and you will break the berries, bark, leaves, etc. up while it is in the water. You will then allow it to sit for hours, usually overnight. This dosage is the same as infusions. You will drink one cup several times a day.

Teas

This is the easiest way to prepare herbs. Teas are very similar to infusions. The only difference is the steeping time. You don't have to wait overnight. Normally, you will just pour boiling water over herbs and let them sit for ten minutes or until it is the strength you like it, strain it, and enjoy hot.

Drying Herbs

Yes, this is what it sounds like. You will be drying your herbs to use them in salves, teas, or other methods. Normally you want to dry your herbs by hanging them by their roots, so all their oils drain down to the leaves.

You could also use a dehydrator. Make sure it is one that has a fan that will circulate the air so the herbs can dry evenly. Another choice is the lay them on screens and let them dry in the sun.

Herbal Decoctions

Decoctions are normally made from materials that are dense, like berries or bark. It just basically involves putting the materials into water and simmering them for a certain amount of time. Once they have simmered, you will let this sit overnight. The liquid is strained well before it is drunk.

You will need to be careful with decoctions since some essential oils become useless if they get heated. Some can even change their chemical compounds, so make sure you don't overheat them.

A normal oral dose is half a cup a couple of times each day.

Herbal Infusions

This is the most common way to get all the medicinal properties out of your herbs. You just pour hot water over the herbs and let them steep for a certain amount of time. This is normal until the water has cooled down. You will strain it well and then drink it. This is basically a tea. You will normally drink one cup when needed.

Oil Infusions

This way is very simple; you just put the herbs in oil to get their medicinal properties. Oil infusions are normally used when cooking, as massage oils, making soap, or as a skin conditioner. The best oils to use are sesame oil, coconut oil, olive oil, or almond oil. It all depends on the herb you are using, but some might be done sitting at room temperature or it might need to be heated up.

Herbal Poultices

Because poultices get placed onto an area of skin or a wound, they are normally used to draw out infections, draw out any foreign object from your skin like a splinter, relieve chest congestion, soothe sore muscles, and decreases inflammation.

Normal bases usually include flour, clay, or cornmeal that is added to water with either fresh or dried herbs. You will soak the herbs in water to make an infusion and then add the flour, clay, or cornmeal to make a paste and then put it onto the wound.

You will probably wrap the poultice in either newspaper or gauze. Just make sure you leave the poultice on until it dries and then remove it. You might have to reapply a fresh mixture. It all depends on your goal.

Some poultices might need to be hot to help release the herb's medicinal properties or to work well on the targeted problem. The more you practice preparing your herbs, the better you will get at reaching the desired results every time.

Get Your Recipes Ready

Now that you can make all the different herbal preparations, you may need some additional advice on herbs. It will take some practice to get the exact same results every time. You will have to figure out the best way based on the herb and what you will be treating.

You have to be careful when you cook herbs. If you go above the herbs degradation point, the oil will lose its potency. Preparing herbs is a skill that needs to be practice regularly. Do some research to become more knowledgeable about your herbs and then just get into the kitchen and do some experiments.

CHAPTER 38: HERBAL INFUSIONS

Herbal infusions are an easy way to consume the flavors and oils from your favorite herbs. An infusion is the process of soaking or steeping herbs in water or other liquid until the liquid has absorbed the flavors and oils. Then you will drink the liquid for its medicinal value or taste. Herbal teas are a type of infusion because it was made by steeping herbs in hot water. The drink will be a bit weak because the steeping time is normally short. True infusions normally use flowers, leaves, shoots, and roots of the plant, whereas teas only use the leaves during the steeping process. True infusions will take a longer amount of time. You can think about teas as just a weak infusion. Some people call true infusions “long infusions” to keep them separate from teas.

For holistic enthusiasts, infusions are a better way to take the herbs as compared to swallowing tablets or pills. For other people, infusions are a different way to enjoy the herbs’ tastes. It doesn’t matter what your goal is; it is very easy to make an herbal infusion. The process does take a long time but not a lot of effort.

Herbal teas are the best way to use herbs medicinally. Just making tea and then drinking it puts you in the middle of the healing process. It awakens a natural ability to be able to heal your body. Even though medicinal teas aren’t as active or potent as tinctures or other concentrated remedies, they are the best medicines for long-term, chronic problems.

Making herbal teas is an art form, but it is very simple. If you have ever cooked anything, you will be able to make a cup of herbal tea. You just need a quart jar with a lid, your herbs, and boiling water.

You can drink teas iced, room temperature, or hot. You can even pour them

into ice cube trays along with some edible flowers and fresh fruits to be used to flavor punches. You can also use them as popsicles to give to sick children.

Once you have brewed a tea, it needs to be stored in a refrigerator. If you let it sit out at room temperature for too long, it is going to go “flat.” Then it will get bubbly, and it will start to sour. When you store it in the refrigerator, it will be good for up to two days.

I don't normally have people make just a cupful of tea. It is time-consuming and impractical. Make a quart of tea every morning or when you get home from work. How much water you need to use will vary depending on the herbs that you are using. If the herbs are dried, you won't use as much as you would when they are fresh. The strength of your tea all depends on how long you steep it. I normally use one to three tablespoons of herb for every cup of water. If you are doing a quart, you will use four to eight tablespoons of herb for every quart of water. It all depends on the herb.

If you want your tea to be effective, it has to be drunk a cup at a time many times during the day. If you have severe or chronic problems, you will need to drink a cup four times each day. For acute illnesses like headaches, fevers, and colds, take small sips every 30 minutes until the problem goes away.

Herbal Infusion Uses

Infusions can be used for various purposes:

- Infusion of cayenne pepper and garlic will keep rabbits away from your plants
- You can use them in organic and natural home products like insect repellents and garden fertilizers.
- Infusions can be used in topical salves, homemade remedies, and cosmetics.
- It can be drunk for its medicinal properties. You can drink it either warm or cold.

Tasty Infusions

The most commonly used herbs that taste great are any herbs in the mint family, ginger, and chamomile.

You need to keep in mind that some herbs can hurt you if you take too much of them. If the infusion is steeped too long, it could hurt you, too. If you combine the wrong herbs, it could cause you some problems. Because of this, please do some research before you make an infusion that you will be drinking. You should follow a recipe from a source that you trust and pay attention to any warnings that they give.

Always talk to your doctor before you drink any infusion.

Making Herbal Infusions

Infusions are created from the delicate parts of the herb, like the aromatic parts, flowers, and leaves. These very fragile parts have to be steeped instead of simmered since they give up their medicinal properties easier than the tough barks and roots.

Infusions don't take much time to make, but you do have to wait until the herbs have steeped. Make sure you follow the measurements and times for each recipe.

To make an infusion, you are going to need three things:

- Glass jar with a tight-fitting lid
- One cup of boiling water
- One tablespoon dried herbs of choice

The amount of water and herbs can be changed to make larger infusions if you would like. It would be best to begin with a small amount if it is an herb you don't know the taste of. This way, you won't be wasting your herbs.

You will need to boil one quart of water for every ounce of your herb. An easier way to remember this is one tablespoon of herb for every cup of water. Pour the boiling water over the herb and let it sit between 30 and 60 minutes. This herb to water ratio and the time it takes to infuse it will vary a lot. Again, it all depends on the herb you are using. Begin with the above ration and then do some experiments. The longer you let it sit, and the amount of

herbs you use, the stronger the brew will be. Allow your senses and taste buds guide you.

While you are making your infusion, make sure you keep your jar covered to keep the steam inside. The heat is critical to release the herb's beneficial compounds.

To make an infusion:

- Put the herbs into your glass jar
- Pour the boiling water over the herbs until they are totally covered
- Place the jar with the lid to keep the oils and steam from escaping
- Let the infusion steep until the water has cooled down to room temperature or for the amount of time that your recipe suggests. Barks and roots are going to take about eight hours. Leaves can be infused for four hours while flowers only take two hours. Fresh berries and seeds only take about 30 minutes.
- Strain the herbs through a fine-mesh strainer or cheesecloth. Repeat this until all the herbs have been removed.
- The liquid you are left with is known as an infusion. Clean the jar and pour your infusion back into it to store. You can refrigerate this infusion for two days. You will need to throw it away after this time.

If you don't like straining the infusion, you can make a sachet to hold the herbs while it is steeping. Put the herbs in a little piece of cheesecloth and tie it closed with a string. Put this into the jar of boiling water. You can let the string hang over the side to remove it easily.

Making Herbal Tinctures

These are just very concentrated extracts of herbs. These will be extremely potent and are taken by drops rather than spoonfuls. You can usually dilute

them in juice or water. Since these are very concentrated, they need to be administered sparingly and very carefully. If you have a chronic problem, you will use between a half and one teaspoon up to three times each day. If you have acute problems, you will use between a quarter and a half teaspoon every 30 minutes to an hour until the symptoms go away.

Most tinctures are made using a grain alcohol. Even though the amount of alcohol is small, some people don't make their tinctures from alcohol to various reasons. Tinctures could be made from apple cider vinegar or vegetable glycerin, too. They won't be as strong as making them from grain alcohol; they will work and are better when giving them to children and people who are recovering alcoholics or are sensitive to alcohol.

If you do decide to use alcohol, it needs to be between 80 and 100 proof like brandy, gin, or vodka. Take the proof number and divide it in half; this gives you the percentage of alcohol in the spirit. If your alcohol is 80 proof, it means that your alcohol is 40 percent alcohol. If your vodka is 100 proof, it means that it is 50 percent alcohol.

There are various methods that you can use to make tinctures, but there is a very simple method that I like using. You just need a jar, your vinegar or alcohol, and the herbs. This very simple method will give you a wonderful tincture each time.

The first thing you need to do is chop the herbs as fine as you can get them. Use fresh herbs for a better tincture. You could use dry herbs, but fresh gives you all the attributes of the plant. Put your chopped herbs into the jar.

Pour in your vinegar or alcohol. Make sure the herbs are covered by about three inches of liquid. They have to be totally submerged. Put the lid on tightly.

If you use vegetable glycerin, you will need to dilute it with a 50 – 50 ratio of water before you pour it over the herbs. If you use vinegar, warm the vinegar before you pour it over the herbs.

Put the jar in a warm place and let them sit for one month. The longer you let them sit, the stronger you tincture.

Shake the jar every couple of days during this time. This keeps the herbs

from getting packed on the bottom. This is an invitation to bring some magic into your medicine. While you are shaking the jar, you could sing to them, shake them in the sunlight or moonlight, wave some feathers over them, or whatever your intuition or imagination inspires you to do.

Once you have the strength of tincture you want, strain the liquid through a cheesecloth. Make sure you reserve the liquid. This is your tincture. You can compost the herbs. Remember to label and store your bottle or jar. Keep out of the reach of children if you used grain alcohol. Store in a dark, cool location. Your tincture will keep pretty much forever.

Making Herbal Decoctions

This is a stronger beverage. It is normally made by using dried berries, bark, roots, or other materials from the plant. These materials take more heat for a longer amount of time to extract the oils.

In order to make a decoction, you just place the herbs into a small saucepan and cover them with water. Place a lid on a slowly bring it to a simmer. Let this gently simmer between 20 and 45 minutes. If your recipe has a different heat time, follow it. Take off the heat, strain, and pour into a glass jar for storage.

Recipes

Here are the recipes that I promised you:

Pick-Me-Up Tea

You are going to need:

- Ginger, .25 parts
- Cinnamon, .25 parts
- Licorice, 1 part
- Ginkgo, 1 part
- Nettle, 2 parts
- Hawthorn flower, leaf, and berry, 2 parts

Use one ounce of the herb mixture for every quart of water. Let it steep for 45 minutes or longer if you want it stronger. Drink up to three cups each day.

Berry Tea

You are going to need:

- Honey
- Raspberry leaf, 1 part
- Bilberries or huckleberries, 1 part
- Lyceum berries, 2 parts
- Dried hawthorn berries, 2 parts
- Elderberries, 2 parts

Mix all the herbs together well. To make an infusion, place one tablespoon of the mixture into a cup of boiling water. Allow to steep for up to one hour. You can sweeten with honey if you would like. Drink one cup each day.

High-C Tonic

This is a refreshing blend. It gives you vitamin C and bioflavonoids in an organic base, so all the nutrients are ready for your body to absorb. The vitamins are very high levels just like you get with commercial vitamins. They can help you fight off illnesses. When you take it for daily maintenance, it can keep your body healthy and strong. This is better for children.

What you will need:

- Cinnamon chips, 1 part
- Lemongrass, 2 parts
- Hibiscus, 3 parts
- Rose hips, 4 parts

Mix all the herbs together and place them into an airtight container. When

you are ready to make a tea, place one tablespoon into a mug and cover with one cup boiling water. Allow to steep for 30 minutes. Drink one cup daily.

CHAPTER 39: ESSENTIAL OILS

If you have ever wondered how essential oils are made, let me be clear that essential oils aren't made, they are extracted from plants. Extractions are done to get the plant's active botanical compounds that are its "life force." They are basically the liquefied version of the plant. They allow these beneficial compounds to get to your bloodstream a lot faster than they do when you eat the plant.

Herbal extracts are created when botanical materials are introduced to solvents that the plant material compounds can dissolve into. This solvent gets infused with the botanical compounds that it pulls from the plant, and this is known as the extract. The liquid that stays at the end could be a liquid or the liquid could be removed to turn the botanical compounds into solids. These solvents could be agents or preservatives that can help the plant's cells break down and release their compounds.

Making essential oils are a lot easier than most people think. You can go out and buy an expensive copper still but if you have a crockpot, you are ready to go. Essential oils can get expensive, and sometimes it is hard to find the exact ones that you want.

Essentials oils are the oils that get extracted from plants or other sources. The normal method to extract is through steam distillation. You can make or purchase a still. I found a cute copper still holds two quarts for about \$400. This was way over my budget. I started doing some research to figure out how I could make my own without having an expensive still.

Even though you can make your own, be careful because most of the essential oil recipes you find on the internet are just infused oils. You need to know the difference.

Infused Oil Versus Essential Oils

Infused oils are created when you soak herbs in an oil to extract its active compounds. Some plants like calendula infuse well and make a healing oil. Lavender, on the other hand, isn't ever as good as the essential oil.

Most essential oils are extracted by steam. This involves simmering the material from plants to make steam. This will then travel through a tube, and then it goes through some cold water. The liquid that forms from this condensation is going to be in two parts. There will be an oil compound and a water compound. The water compound is how you get floral water like rose and lavender water. The oils that come to the top are your essential oils.

There are several ways to get the essential oils from plants, let's go over different ways of extraction:

Steam Distillation

This is the most popular way to extract essential oils from plants. This occurs when the steam breaks down the plant's volatile compounds. This eventually goes through a condensation and then a collection process.

How it's done:

- Using a still, which is normally made from copper or stainless steel, add the plant materials, and then it will introduce steam to the plants.
- Steam is injected through an inlet to the plant materials. This causes the plant to release its aromatic compounds and then turns them into vapor.
- These compounds will travel into a condensation flask. There are two pipes here that let the hot water exit while cold water enters the flask. This allows the vapor to change back into a liquid form.
- This aromatic liquid product will drop from the condensation flask and get collected in a receptacle beneath it. This is called the separator. Since oil and water don't mix, the essential oils will float on top of the water. From this point, it gets siphoned off. There are some essential oils that are heavier like clove oil. These can be found on the bottom of the separator.

Water Distillation

Some plants are more delicate than others like orange blossoms and roses. They will just clump together during the distillation process in a still. The best method would be to submerge the plant material into boiling water. The water will protect the oils from overheating. When the condensed liquids cool, and separate, the water that is left will be very fragrant. It has been called herbal distillate, floral water, essential water, herbal water, hydrosol, or hydrolate.

Cold Press

This method has been called scarification or expression. It is normally used when you want to get the essential oils from citrus peels.

- The entire fruit is put into a device that will pierce the fruit mechanically so that it ruptures the essential oil sacs. These are located underneath the rind. The pigments and oils will run into the collection area of the device.
- The entire fruit is then pressed to squeeze out the oil and juice.
- The juice and oil that get produced will contain some solids of the fruit like the peel. This has to be centrifuged to remove the liquids from the solids.
- The oil will be separated from the juice and then gets siphoned off to another receptacle.

Enfleurage

This method isn't normally used today, but it's one of the oldest ways to extract essential oils by using fat. By the end of the process, animal or vegetable fats get infused with the plant's fragrant compounds. The fats that get used will be solid and odorless when at room temperature. This process could be done cold or hot. Either way, the fat that gets saturated with the compounds is known as enfleurage pomade.

- Cold

Odorless and purified animal or vegetable fats, normally tallow or lard, gets spread onto glass plates in a frame that is called a chassis. This is allowed to sit.

Whole flowers or flower petals are put on top of the fat and then pressed. These are then allowed to sit for up to three days or weeks. It all depends on the kinds of flowers that get used. Their fragrance will seep into the fat during this time.

The used petals or plants get replaced, and the entire process gets repeated until the fat gets to the desired saturation.

Enfleurage pomade is the product that is produced which is the fragrant oil and fat. This then gets washed with alcohol to separate the botanical extracts from the other fat. This can then be used to make soap. Once the alcohol evaporates from this, the product that is left over is called the absolute.

- Hot

The main difference for this process is the fats get heated.

Maceration

Macerated oils are also called infused oils. These get created when carrier oils get used to extract the botanical compounds from the plant. The best thing about macerated oils is that more of the plant's botanical compounds get captured in the oil since it captures larger, heavier plant compounds than the ones that get captured during distillation. This will help the product retain more of the plant's compounds.

The plant material that will be used needs to be harvested and dried. Any moisture in the plant could cause the oil to go rancid and could cause microbial growth. You can add some wheat germ or vitamin E oil to prevent rancidity.

How it's done:

- Dried plant material is ground, crushed, or cut into a coarse powder.
- This then gets put into a glass jar.
- Oil is then added
- This is allowed to sit for one week.
- It gets shaken occasionally
- The plant material is then strained out of the oil.
- Any solids are pressed to get all of the liquid out.
- The expressed and strained liquids get mixed together.

- Liquids are then clarified by subsidence or filtration.

Once the process is complete, the base oil will have changed colors. The final oil needs to be filtered of all its plant materials and then poured into a glass jar. Store the glass jar in a dry, cool place. This will keep for one year. You will know if your oil goes bad as it will turn cloudy and smell horrible.

CO2

Any essential oil that is produced from the CO2 extraction is very similar to oils that are made from distillation. They can be used in perfumes and aromatherapy.

Oils that are made from steam distillation will be different in their qualities depending on the length of time, pressures, and temperatures applied during the process. This extraction process could produce an oil that is of higher quality because they haven't been altered by heat. In this extraction process, none of the compounds get damaged by any heat.

This means that the difference between normal distillation and CO2 extraction rather than using steam or heated water, CO2 is a solvent. This extraction process will operate at temperatures between 95 and 100 degrees, where steam distillation is at temperatures between 140 and 212 degrees.

During the steam distillation, the composition of the plant material and the oils are changed because of the temperatures that are applied. The CO2 extraction is closer in chemical composition to the plant since it contains a lot of the plant's compounds.

CO2 extracts are thicker than their essential oil counterparts, and they normally give off more aroma. CO2 extracts contain more plant compounds than using steam distillation.

How it's done:

- Carbon dioxide that has been pressurized turns into a liquid while it is in the gas state. This means that it is now a "supercritical." During this state, it is pumped into a chamber full of plant materials.

- Since the liquid properties of gas, the CO₂ is solvent to the natural plant material that pulls substances like resin and pigment from the plant material. The essential oil then gets dissolved into the liquid CO₂.
- The CO₂ is then brought back into a natural pressure and then evaporated into the gas state. What is left is the essential oil.

CO₂ is odorless, colorless, and is easily removed by releasing the pressure in the extraction chamber. This is what we exhale every time we breathe. It is needed by plants to survive. This shows how harmless it is to the extraction process. Since there aren't any harmful solvents, this means that the environment or humans get harmed.

Easy Oil Extraction

When you use this method, you can get the essential oils from some plants that you wouldn't normally think about getting oils from. I like using mint. I have discovered chocolate mint, and it has become my lifelong favorite. You won't ever find chocolate mint essential oils. If I did find "chocolate mint" essential oil, it was more of a flavored oil and wasn't the same thing. I did make a tiny amount of chocolate mint essential oil. It takes a lot of material from the plant to make a tiny amount. I will be experimenting with grapefruit mint next.

You have the ability to make blends that you can't find in nature. You can make an essential oil from patchouli, lavender, and oakmoss. You might be able to find a patchouli plant from local nurseries, or you may have to find the seeds and grow your own.

- Supplies and Ingredients
 - Time
 - Three to four cups plant material (should fill up the crockpot about halfway)
 - Distilled water
 - Crockpot with lid

- **Process**

Put your plant material into your crockpot and completely cover with water. The water should not take over more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the crock pot's volume. Place the lid on the crockpot upside down. This allows the steam that forms to condense and fall into the pot. If your lid is broken or you don't have one, just place a plate over your crockpot.

Turn the crockpot to high. When the water has gotten hot, you can turn the heat to low. Let this process for about four hours.

Once the plant materials have cooked, turn off the crockpot and allow it to cool. Once it's cooled off, place the inside crock into the refrigerator. If your crockpot doesn't have a removable crock, you can just put the entire crockpot in the fridge. You could also transfer this liquid to a different container. Leave it in the refrigerator overnight.

Take the crockpot out of the fridge the next day. A thin film of oil should have formed on top of the liquid. This is your essential oils. Carefully lift this oil off the top of the water. You are going to need to work fast because this will begin melting fairly fast.

Carefully put this in an amber glass bottle that has a lid. Label the bottle. You might notice some water at the bottom of the bottle. You could gently heat the oil to turn this liquid into a steam. Make sure you don't heat it too long because it could lose its strength.

Store the bottle away from heat and light.

To Use Your Oils

You will be able to use your homemade essential oils, just like any that you buy at the store. Your homemade ones might not be as strong as the store bought ones. You might have to use more than you normally do.

Important Tips

- You need to use distilled water because tap water could have contaminants or bacteria that could spoil your oils.
- Chop your plants to increase the surface volume so more of the

oils will escape.

- You are going to need four cups of plant material. This will give you a few teaspoons of essential oils. Now you know why essential oils are expensive.
- It is always best to use fresh plants instead of dried. Dried herbs will give you some oil, but fresh will give you more volume. Harvest your plants during the morning once the dew has dried. Get rid of any bug-infested, diseased, or dead leaves.

CHAPTER 40: HERBAL LOTIONS AND SALVES

The use of topical herbal treatments is a gentle yet effective way to help treat dull and dry skin, itchy rashes, and painful scrapes. There are a lot of lotions and salves on the market, but you can never really tell what they have in them. The good news is, they are quick and easy to make at home. These topical remedies are not only a great way to nourish your skin, but they can also help to create a gentle seal that helps to protect your skin and help it to absorb nutrients.

Creams, Oils, and Salves

When it comes to topical herbal treatments, there are three main types: infused oils, salves, and lotions. Infused oils are made by steeping the herbs in a carrier oil such as almond or olive to help extract the medicinal parts of the plant that will help your skin. Salves are solid mixes of wax and oils, like soy wax or beeswax. Lotions, as you are likely familiar with, can be thicker or light in texture, and combines water and oil to make a hydrating treatment.

The first step that you have to take in making these remedies is to infuse an oil with some dried herbs. After you have accomplished this, you can then use the oil as is, or you can mix it into a cream or a salve. These infused oils are able to be kept for up to a year, so you are able to mix and match depending on what type of remedy you need to make. You should also make sure that you do a patch test before you start using the oil regularly to make sure that you won't have an allergic reaction to it.

Making an Herbal-Infusion

To make an herbal infusion, you are going to need eight ounces of a body-safe carrier oil, four ounces of dried herbs, and a mason jar. Start by finely

chopping or grinding up your herbs and then add them to the mason jar. Pour the oil into the jar and then stir everything together to distribute the herbs.

Place the lid on the jar and set it into a warm, dark area to sit for several days. It is best to let the jar sit for at least five days. You can also place the jar of herbs into a warm water bath in a crockpot for a day to speed up the infusion process. Once the herbs have had time to infuse, strain the oil through cheesecloth or muslin to get rid of the dried herbs. Keep the oil stored in an airtight container and in a cool, dark place. Make sure you date the oil so that you can use it or dispose of it within a year.

Herbal Salves

While making salves may look tricky, all it really takes is some time, and you can have a herbal salve. All it takes to make a salve is to combine oil and beeswax. In fact, the simplest salve you can make is to combine warm olive oil and melted beeswax. To make an herbal salve, all you need to do is use infused oils. You can also add other ingredients like glycerin, lanolin, vitamin E oil, and essential oils into the salves.

To make a salve, you will combine the infused herbal oil and beeswax. The beeswax can either be shavings or beads. Add the beeswax and oil to a pot and gently heat them together until the wax has melted completely. To start, you should use about a quarter cup of beeswax per cup of oil. You can adjust this as needed. Take the mixture off the heat and mix any additional ingredients. Pour into a sterilized container and allow it to cool completely.

Some salve crafters prefer to melt the beeswax and then mix in the oil. Just experiment to see which of these techniques work best for you.

When it comes to making your own salves, make sure you pick out herbs that match up with the purpose of your salve. Feel free to use more than one herb in your salve to gain more benefits from it. The best oils to use for salves are sweet almond, coconut, sunflower, sesame, and olive.

You should use stainless steel or enamel pots when making your salve. Wooden spoons are the best option for stirring the recipe. To test to see if the consistency is correct, take out a teaspoon of the mixture and blow on it until it hardens. Rub it to see if it is the texture you like. If it is too runny, add more beeswax. For a softer salve, add more oil. Make sure you pour it into

containers right after it is done because it will harden quickly. The salve will last about six months, but you can refrigerate it, and it will last for a year.

The great thing about herbal salves is that you don't need to have an exact recipe. You can make a salve out of whatever ingredients will serve your purpose. But, to help you out, here are a couple of ideas.

All purpose balm:

Combine these ingredients to create a general-purpose balm to help calm irritated skin or whenever your skin needs a little TLC.

- Lavender essential oil, 2 drops
- Beeswax, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup
- Calendula infused olive oil, 1 cups
- Lemon balm infused olive oil, 2 cups

Burn Salve:

These ingredients can help create a salve that helps calm the side effects of mild scrapes and burns. If it is a severe burn, make sure that you seek medical attention.

- Lavender essential oil, 1 to 2 drops
- Calendula infused coconut oil, 1/3 cup
- Oregon grape root infused coconut oil, 1/3 cup
- Comfrey infused coconut oil, 1/3 cup
- Beeswax, ¼ cup

Herbal Lotion

Lotions are not hard like a salve, as you likely know, so it will use more oil and some other ingredients. When it comes to picking out the oil, you will use to make your infusion; there may be a bit of trial and error. From the experience of others, olive oil can sometimes be a bit too greasy and there are some people who are allergic to coconut oil. A combination of safflower, grapeseed, and sunflower oils tend to work the best. Grapeseed oil has a bunch of antioxidants, and sunflower and safflower are loaded with minerals and vitamins. You can also go with sweet almond, macadamia, or hazelnut oils. You can infuse any of these oils with herbs, and you can mix the oils, so feel free to play around to find the right combination for you.

You will also need to have a wax. Beeswax and soy wax are the two most commonly used waxes, but any wax will work. Depending on the hardness of the wax, you may have to tweak the basic recipe. It is also important to note that beeswax can vary depending on the time of year it was harvested and the flowers that the bees worked with.

When it comes to water, you can use just about any kind. You can even collect rainwater if you would like. I would suggest, if you are on city water, you should boil it first or use distilled water. You can use infused water as well, such as tea. Chamomile tea or aloe water are great options. You can even use coffee.

The last ingredient you are going to have to have is borax, which is a form of salt. This will act as the emulsifier and a preservative. A large box is fairly cheap, and you can use it for many other things as well.

Now, you can feel free to add other ingredients as well. You can add in small amounts of butters, such as cocoa, shea, or mango. You can even add in the oil from a Vitamin E capsule or some hemp seed oil. Essential oils are also a great additive. If you add essential oils, keep it to less than 10 drops. Let your nose guide you. If you wanted to color your lotion, they make powdered pigments. All you would need is about 1/16th of a teaspoon.

Lotions aren't always as forgiving as salves, so you may want to start by finding different recipes until you get the hang of creating your own. Once you get the hang of it though, it is quite simple.

Here's a basic recipe:

- Water, ½ cup
- Oil, 1 cup
- Enough wax to bring the oil to 1 ¼ cups
- Any addition ingredients you want

Start off by placing your chosen oils into a heatproof container. A two-cup glass measuring cup is a good option. Add in some wax and microwave for a minute. You will likely need three minutes to get the wax totally melted. Add in more wax if you need to, to bring it up to 1 ¼ cups. Next, mix in any butters that you would like.

In a separate container, heat the water until it reaches boiling and then mix in the borax. You need to keep this mixture hot.

Once both mixtures are hot, melted, and combined, slowly pour in a bit of water into the oil mixture. Be very careful as you do this because it can bubble. Continue doing this until all of the water has been incorporated. It should become a creamy consistency.

If it is not becoming creamy or it starts to separate, don't worry. This means that one of the liquids wasn't hot enough. Continue to stir for a few more

minutes and then use an immersion blender. This is the only way to get it to come together if it was too cool. Blend for about five minutes with an immersion blender until it thickens and becomes creamy. If you don't have an immersion blender, you can also use a hand mixer or a whisk.

Once your lotion is creamy and blended, add in some essential oil and mix. If it doesn't have a strong enough smell, you can mix in some more essential oils. Once it is to your liking transfer the lotion to a clean container.

This recipe is just a base recipe and can be used as a regular body lotion. But, with your knowledge of herbs, you can use infusions and essential oils to make specific lotions. For example, you use lavender-infused oil and aloe water to make an after-sun cream. You can use lemongrass-infused oil to make a dry skin lotion. Cayenne, turmeric, and ginger can be used in the lotion to make an arthritis cream. Rosemary and mint can be used to make a foot cream. Lavender and tea tree can be added to make a scrape and cut cream.

Since this base recipe is fairly heavy, I would not suggest using it as a face cream, but it can be used on any other part of your body. Don't worry, though; I have another recipe you can use that is light enough to use on your face.

You will need:

- Rose infused Grapeseed oil, ½ cup
- Coconut oil, ½ cup
- Cocoa butter, ½ ounce
- Vitamin E oil, 1 tbsp
- Beeswax, 1 ounce
- Aloe vera gel, ¼ cup
- Rose hydrosol, ¼ cup

In a glass bowl, add both oils, cocoa butter, vitamin E, and beeswax. Heat this over boiling water until everything has melted and mixed together. Set this

off the heat and let it cool for around half an hour.

Mix the rose hydrosol and aloe vera together in a separate bowl. Place the oil mixture into the bowl of a mixer. Turn the mixer on and slowly pour in the aloe mixture. Depending on what temp everything was, it can take five to ten minutes before it reaches a thick and creamy texture.

After this, you can mix in some essential oils if you would like. Pour into containers and enjoy.

Let's go over a couple of other recipes.

Damaged Skin Lotion:

- Shea butter, 20 grams
- Coconut oil, 25 grams
- Beeswax, 20 grams
- Vitamin E oil, 2 tbsp
- Rosehip seed oil, ¼ cup
- Calendula infused oil, ¼ cup
- Cottonwood infused grapeseed oil, ¼ cup
- Aloe vera, 1/3 cup
- Lavender hydrosol, 1/3 cup
- Essentials of your choice – lavender or tea tree are best for skin problems

You'll start by melting the coconut oil, beeswax, and shea butter together in a double boiler or in the microwave. Once mixed, remove it from the heat and slowly mix in the oils. You will likely notice them thickening up again. If you need to, you can set the pot on very low heat to get them completely melted again.

Add this mixture to whatever container you are going to mix things up in and let them rest until they are no longer clear. Start mixing the oil mixture on

high speed as you slowly pour in the water mixture. Once everything is whipped and combined, mix in your essential oils if you want.

For all homemade lotions and creams, make sure that you keep them stored in a cool place out of direct sunlight.

The cleanup when making lotions and salves are very important. You don't want the oils and beeswax to get washed down the drain because they can cause a clog. As soon as you are done making your mixtures, take a paper towel and wipe everything out. This might take a few paper towels, but make sure that most of the oil and wax remnants have been cleaned up. Then you can wash everything. You are going to want to use as hot of water as you can to help cut through any oil remnants.

With these base recipes for lotions and salves, you can create a limitless number of healing creations.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for making it through to the end of the book, let's hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve your goals whatever they may be.

The next step is to start gathering the tools you need to create your garden, whether it's a window garden, balcony garden, or a regular garden. Then decide what plants you would like to grow. Luckily, you don't have to grow all 30 of the plants we covered in the book. A lot of these plants help heal similar ailments, so decide which one you think you would use more and go with that one. It's also important to assess your space when choosing your plants. Remember, you don't have to grow all of these from seeds. Many of the plants you can find in stores or online already established. Then all you have to do is transplant it into your garden, and half the work is already done. Don't forget to nurture and care for your plants so that they can care for you.

Lastly, I want to remind you that you should never allow the use of medicinal plants to replace the advice of a medical professional. Always seek professional help for serious medical conditions, and never stop taking prescribed medication. Medicinal herbs should only be used as a support system to regular medical care. Sometimes medicinal herbs are all you will need, but always use common sense. And make sure you talk to your doctor before you start using supplements if you are currently taking any prescription medication.

Finally, if you found this book useful in any way, a review on Amazon is always appreciated!