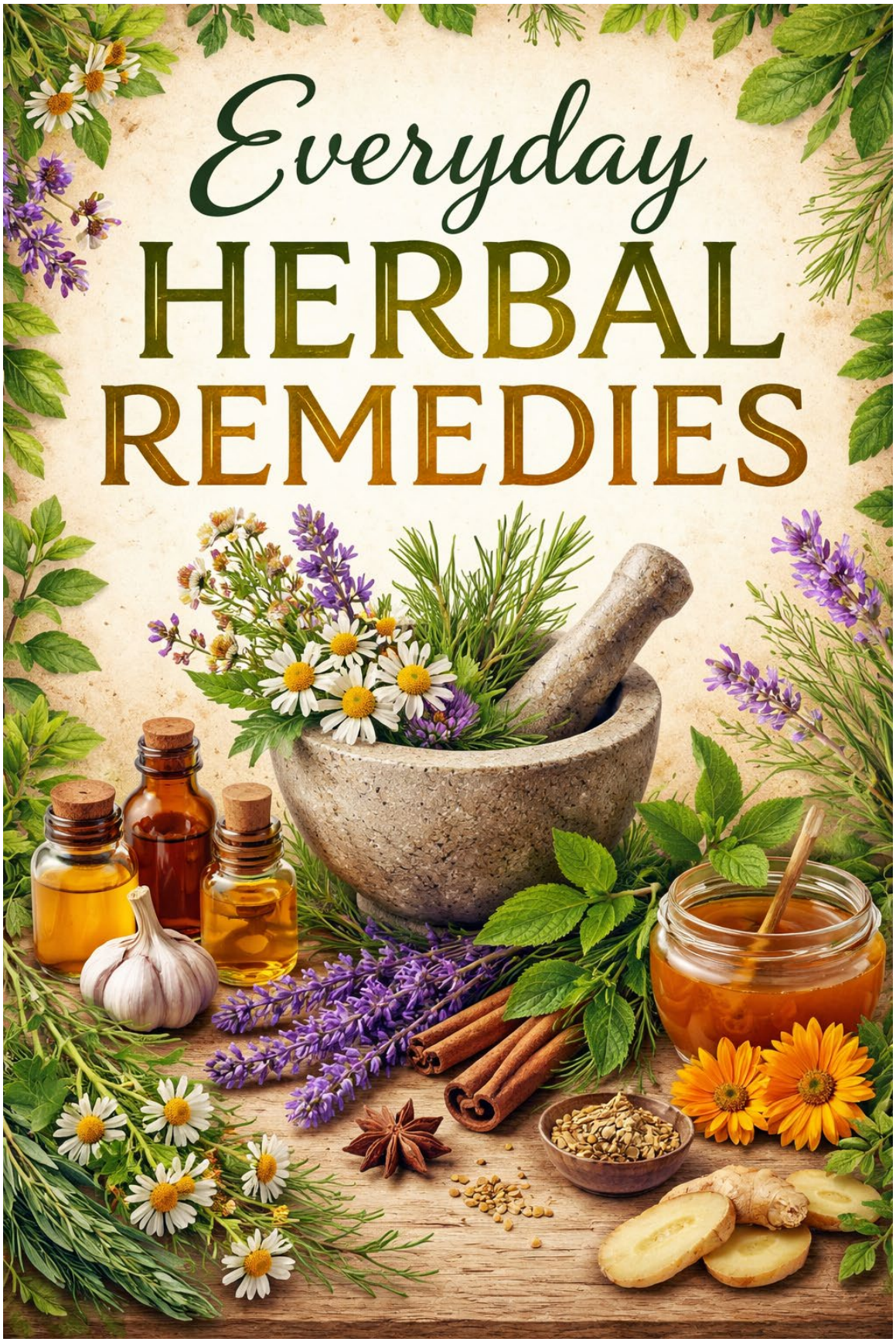
Everyday
HERBAL
REMEDIES

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Introduction – Why Learn About Herbal Remedies?



Have you ever wondered what you would do if a disaster occurred in your area? With unpredictable weather systems and even more unpredictable political climates all over the world, the chances of something disastrous happening are higher than they've ever been before.

At the same time, many people today depend on prescription and over-the-counter medication to live normal, healthy lives. If you have diabetes, you can control your blood sugar levels with a combination of a good diet, insulin injections, and/or other diabetes medications. If you suffer from high blood pressure or heart disease, then you can take a pill once or twice a day to maintain your health. If you have allergies, there are medications available over the counter at any drugstore. If you get a cut or scrape, you can just go to the store and get bandages and some ointment.

But what if you couldn't get to the store? What if a disaster kept your local pharmacy form restocking your medication? And what if you couldn't get to a place where you could get your meds before you really started feeling the effects of going without them?

Fortunately, a number of herbs and medicinal plants can have the same effects as many pharmaceutical drugs. The key is to know which plants can be helpful to you, how to use them, and in what doses.

In this book, we'll help you understand how medicinal plants may be able to replace common medications. Then we'll walk you through the basics on finding, growing, and using those plants if and when you need them. We'll even talk about some of the most common kitchen plants and vegetables that could save your life one day. Finally, we'll

talk about the importance of doing your homework and how a few of these helpful plants can be deadly if used incorrectly. With this guide, you should come away with a better idea of how to survive in a disaster situation, even if you cannot get the medication you rely upon on a daily basis. Remember, though, that we do not recommend using just any natural remedy to replace medication without speaking with your doctor first.

Furthermore, we can’t stress enough how important it is to gain a complete and full understanding of the plants you intend to use, including their safe dosages, interactions, and side effects.

With all that in mind, are you ready to learn about herbal remedies that could one day safe your life and/or the lives of the people you love? Let’s get started!

Part 1 – Replacing Common Medications with Natural Remedies

Chapter 1 – How to Find the Medication You Need When Your Meds Disappear



If you have specific prescription or over-the-counter medications that you can't go a day without, you've probably spent at least a little bit of time worrying what you'll do if the you-know-what hits the fan and you have to find a way to survive. Well, first of all, you're not alone, so don't feel bad. Second, fortunately, in a survival situation you might have more resources available to you than you know. There are a lot of natural remedies available to you that can help with a variety of conditions, disorders, and illnesses, so let's take a moment to discuss a few of the amazing natural alternatives you can find to everyday modern medications.

Remember, though, that just because something is "natural", that doesn't mean that it's automatically safe at any dosage. You need to use just as much care with taking these natural remedies as you do with chemical medications. The following plants should be

used sparingly and with caution because with the right dosages, they'll help you out – with the wrong dosages, they could kill you!

Non-Steroid Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (nSAIDs)

Non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (nSAIDs) are usually sold over the counter, and they include anti-inflammatories like Aspirin. You might normally take these kinds of drugs to ease pain or inflammation from an injury, or you could use them as blood thinners to reduce your chances of having a stroke or a heart attack. Unfortunately, though, these drugs have a tendency to wreak havoc on the lining of your stomach, as well as your liver and kidneys.

In fact, while people have been taking Aspirin to reduce their risks of heart attacks and strokes, new studies suggest that Aspirin may actually *increase* that risk. We've known for some time that it can cause gastrointestinal bleeding, and long-term use is associated with the development of macular degeneration.

Even if these harmful side effects weren't a factor, in a disaster situation, you will likely not have much in the way of nSAIDs lying around, and you won't be able to run to the store to pick up some more, either. So here are a few of the best natural remedies to replace them, whether you need them for their blood thinning, anti-inflammatory, or pain relieving properties.

Blood Thinners

- Water – It might sound ridiculous, but water is a great blood thinner. So drink up!

- Ginko biloba – This herbal remedy has been used to improve blood circulation and prevent clotting for centuries.

- Vitamin E – According to studies, 100 IUs of natural vitamin E can be just as effective as Aspirin for blood thinning. Be sure to get natural vitamin E, though, not synthetic.

Anti-Inflammatories and Painkillers

- Turmeric – This herb is known for its anti-inflammatory properties, and many people use it as a pain reliever on a regular basis to avoid the negative side effects of Aspirin and other nSAIDs.

- Devil's Claw – Devil's claw has been associated with reduced symptoms of tendonitis, arthritis, and muscle pain.

- Ginger root – With strong anti-inflammatory properties, ginger is also good for soothing an upset stomach.

Heart Disease, Blood Pressure, and Cholesterol

Statins

If you have a history of heart disease in your family and/or you've suffered from high blood pressure or high cholesterol levels, you've probably been prescribed statins – such as Zocor or Lipitor. If you're looking for a natural alternative in a disaster situation, there are several options available to you, including:



- Olive oil – rich in omega-3 fatty acids, olive oil is

great for lowering cholesterol levels.

- Garlic

- Red wine – Full of resveratol and other antioxidants, red wine is actually very good at helping to keep cholesterol levels in check.

- Dark chocolate

- Oats and vegetables – These and other fiber-rich foods are always recommended for lowering cholesterol.

Blood Pressure Meds

High blood pressure is often at least partially genetic, but a family history doesn't doom you to high blood pressure for the rest of your life. In most cases, blood pressure is actually a dietary issue that's highly preventable. Unfortunately, though, once you've developed it, it can be life threatening and will require daily medication.

Losing weight can help your blood pressure return to normal, but there are also some natural remedies that can help you if you find yourself in a situation in which you need your blood pressure medication and can't get to it. These include:

- Hawthorn

- Garlic

- Coenzyme Q10

- Potassium-rich foods – Load up on potatoes, bananas, coconut water, and other foods that pack a lot of potassium for lowered blood pressure.

- Magnesium- and calcium- rich foods – Likewise, eating foods that are rich in these minerals will help keep your blood pressure down and assist with digestion and bone strength, as well.

- AVOID sodium-rich foods – Sodium promotes water retention and can wreak havoc on your blood pressure. Avoid it whenever possible to keep your blood pressure down.

Antacids



If you're plagued by heartburn, acid reflux, indigestion, or an upset stomach, you're going to have trouble trying to focus on surviving. Unfortunately, you're probably not going to be able to reach for the nearest store-bought antacid. However, you don't have to worry that a stomach ache will be the end of you. Try one of these proven natural antacids:

- Garlic

- Chamomile
- Basil leaves – Chew and swallow just two to three leaves.
- Peppermint
- Grapes
- Fennel
- Ginger
- Cinnamon
- Apples – Just a single slice of an apple can reduce the amount of acid in your stomach so that you'll be feeling better in only a few minutes.
- Bananas
- Almonds – Almonds will also naturally reduce the amount of acid in your stomach. Snack on a handful of 15-20 of them, and you'll notice that your heartburn disappears in less than an hour.
- Buttermilk
- Aloe vera juice – In addition to being a great balm for cuts, scrapes, and burns, aloe vera juice is also fantastic for soothing an upset stomach. Be sure to follow the right process when making your own, though, or it could have the opposite effect. It's very easy to grow, though, so having some on hand should never be a

problem.

- Baking soda – Not to be used regularly, but for the occasional heartburn or stomach ache, drink a teaspoon of baking soda mixed in a cup of water.

- Apple cider vinegar – It might seem counterintuitive, but apple cider vinegar is great for soothing the stomach. Mix two tablespoons with a cup of water, and drink up to feel better in just a little while.

These aren't the only natural antacids you'll find, but they're definitely some of the most effective and most easily available. Plus, if you run out of one, you'll be able to find another without a problem so that your stomach problems don't keep you from doing everything you need to do to survive.

Treating Type 2 Diabetes Naturally



As of right now, there aren't any approved and proven natural alternatives to insulin injections and other medications to treat type 2 diabetes. However, some interesting studies have shown that some of the following list of remedies may be helpful and may be approved for use in controlling diabetes in the future.

For now, it's good to know what might be able to help you in a disaster or survival situation. Check out these natural remedies, which could help keep you alive and healthy after the you-know-what hits the fan.

- Cinnamon – Recent studies have shown a correlation between taking between one and six grams of cinnamon per day and improved blood glucose control for patients living with type 2 diabetes.

- Chromium – Taking an appropriate amount of chromium each day can improve the way your body metabolizes carbohydrates and fats, and it can help improve your body's response to insulin.

- Magnesium – An essential mineral for improving your body's blood sugar metabolism and its ability to handle sodium, you can get natural magnesium in nuts, grains, seeds, and leafy greens.

- North American ginseng – Recent research points to potential benefits for patients' glycosylated hemoglobin levels, as well as blood sugar control.

While we wouldn't recommend tossing your diabetes medication while it's available to you, in a survival situation in which you can't get to a doctor or pharmacy, you should have all of the resources available to you to keep you healthy. These natural remedies are easy to find, and they offer a great alternative in a disaster situation. In addition to using these, you can also increase your chances of survival by avoiding foods that will raise your glucose levels. Any foods with high glycogen indexes should be avoided if at all possible, especially if you don't have access to your regular medication and are relying only on natural remedies.

Natural Topical Anesthetics

Long before the advent of modern medicine, people were using all kinds of different natural remedies to dull or completely eliminate pain. With so many natural alternatives for pain relief, you might be wondering, “Why don’t we use all of those old methods today instead of using pills, injections, and other medications?”

Well, remember what we said earlier in this chapter about how “natural” doesn’t always mean “safe”? Just because something occurs naturally doesn’t mean you should use it on your skin or eat it to feel better. After all, poison ivy and arsenic occur in nature, and you don’t want anything to do with either of those, do you?

In this section, we’re going to focus on safe anesthetics that you can find, even if you’re in a disaster situation. In the world of pain relief, there are two types of anesthetics – topical and internal. Topical anesthetics are applied directly to the skin to relieve the pain or irritation of a wound. You might use this kind of anesthetic for burns, cuts, scrapes, rashes, toothaches, and other external pain or discomfort. Internal anesthetics are used for general pain, muscle aches, headaches, and other conditions that can’t be treated with a topical anesthetic.

Because we’ve already covered foods and herbs that can help with headaches and general inflammation, and because anything you take internally in the wrong dose or with the wrong preparation has the chance to kill you, we’re going to focus on topical anesthetics.

Clove Oil

For centuries people have used clove oil to numb the pain associated with dental problems. This natural remedy is just as effective at relieving tooth pain as benzocaine, so if you have a toothache and you can’t get to a dentist, clove oil could be a great (temporary) solution for you.

Of course, clove oil can help with more than just toothaches. It's also very effective at relieving pain and itching in rashes and burns. If you have dry skin, you've been exposed to poison ivy or poison oak, or you have a sunburn, then clove oil can help. To apply it, you can either make a gel to spread onto the affected area or you can dab clove oil directly onto your skin (or tooth).

Keep in mind that clove oil is only an anesthetic. It will not heal the infection or condition that's causing you pain or discomfort. With a poison ivy rash, that may not be a problem, as you can soothe the skin and wait for the effects of the rash to wear off. With a toothache, though, you will eventually need to find help to treat the decay or infection that's causing the pain.

In small doses, clove oil can be used as an internal anesthetic to treat stomach pain. However, higher doses can be toxic, so it's crucial to know exactly how much you can take. It may be a better idea to stick with some of the natural remedies for indigestion or an upset stomach that we mentioned earlier in this chapter.



Cayenne Pepper

This might sound a little bit counterintuitive, but capsaicin – the chemical that makes cayenne pepper and other peppers taste hot – is actually a very effective topical anesthetic for conditions like psoriasis, muscle pain, nerve pain, arthritis, and bursitis. Basically, when the capsaicin comes in contact with your skin, it triggers your body to release Substance P, which carries pain signals from your nerves to your brain. As this

chemical is released, those signals won't make it from your nerves to your brain, and you'll feel the pain in the affected area start to dull.

Capsaicin isn't the only thing in cayenne pepper that helps with pain relief, though. It also contains salicylates, which are actually the same active compounds that you'll find in Aspirin. The two work together to reduce inflammation and pain for a number of topical conditions.

Of course, if you want the best results, you won't want to just rub cayenne peppers or cayenne powder on your skin. Instead, you'll want to mix it together with coconut oil, lotion, or another natural base so that you can spread it on the skin in the affected area.

Upon first applying the cayenne pepper, your skin will feel hot as the capsaicin starts to release the Substance P. After a few minutes, the heat will dissipate, and you'll feel pain relief as your body's supply of Substance P is temporarily depleted.

Lavender

Have you ever wondered why you see so many essential oils, aromatherapy, and other natural products with lavender in them? It's because this beautiful flowering herb is a proven sedative and topical anesthetic. Not only that, but it's safe for use by adults, children, and even pets. While it's often found in products that help with relaxation and as cures for insomnia, for our purposes, we're interested in its uses as a topical anesthetic.

In addition to helping to numb pain on cuts, scrapes, and burns, it's also known to help stop bleeding and prevent scars from forming, as well. Plus, you can use a lavender salve for sore muscles and joints, as well as to relieve the pain of strained or sprained muscles and cramps. You can make a salve using coconut butter or lotion and dried or fresh lavender.

Wintergreen

Wintergreen may not be a strong anesthetic, but it can be used for mild tooth pain and for stomachaches, as well. Because wintergreen is so easy to grow, it's a great natural alternative when you don't have access to regular over-the-counter medications. If you have a sensitive tooth, you can make a gel with crushed wintergreen leaves and coconut oil.

If you have an upset stomach or you're experiencing hunger pangs and can't eat a full meal, you can dull the pain with a few wintergreen leaves. They're safe to chew up and eat on their own, or you can make them into a tea.



Mild Internal Anesthetics

As we mentioned earlier, most internal anesthetics can be dangerous if you don't know your dosages, so we don't recommend trying to use them without guidance from a medical professional. That said, there are some mild internal anesthetics that can help with stomach pain, digestive issues, itching, inflammation, and/or general discomfort.

If you're having problems with your stomach or digestive tract, you might want to try some peppermint or apple cider vinegar. If your skin is itchy and irritated, try chamomile, jasmine, yarrow, or calendula.

These are just a few of the herbs and spices that you can use as internal or topical anesthetics, but we must reiterate how important it is to be careful with these. If you plan to use these natural anesthetics as part of your survival plan, you absolutely must educate yourself on how to use each one, how much you can safely take, and which applications are the best for different ailments. In addition to using trusted, reputable sources to learn about these, you should probably pack a guidebook of safe uses for herbs for both people and pets.

Now that you have a pretty good idea of some natural remedies to replace your regular medications, in the next chapter, we'll go into a little bit more detail about some common injuries and how you can treat them using herbs instead of store-bought meds.

Chapter 2 – Treating Common Injuries with Herbs



In a disaster or survival situation, your health is going to be essential to you because you can actually avoid a lot of injuries and illnesses just by being in good shape. So, one of the most important things we can tell you about staying alive and in good condition in a survival situation is to get plenty of exercise and eat a good diet now.

Basically, if the power goes out for your entire grid, there's no gas available for your car, the stores have all been emptied, and/or any other disaster situation has occurred, you won't be able to access a lot of the medications that you take for granted today. If you're in good health, though, you won't need most of those meds on a daily basis. They say an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and that couldn't be more true in a situation where you literally cannot reach the cure or treatment for what ails you.

Unfortunately, you can't avoid all injuries and illnesses. Sometimes life just happens, and you stumble into a hornets' nest, get stuck out in the sun too long, or fall and cut yourself on a sharp rock. If you're in pretty good health, and you know the natural remedies for treating these injuries, though, you'll be in a good place to survive and thrive until things get back to normal or until you can get to a safer, more stable place.

So, with that in mind, let's take a look at a few of the most common injuries that occur during disaster situations and how you can treat them without heading to the pharmacy for Band-Aids and Neosporin.

Soothing Stings and Bites Naturally



As careful as you might be when you're outside, at some point or another, you're probably going to get bitten by a few mosquitoes and/or stung by a bee, wasp, or hornet. If you have an herb garden with the right plants, you'll have everything you need to relieve the pain and/or itch of these kinds of bites and stings. However, you should be careful when growing your garden to avoid spraying your plants with insecticides and other chemicals, as you never know when you'll need to use those plants for a salve or a tea and those chemicals can be irritating, harmful, or even deadly.

Plantain is a common weed in a lot of gardens that people try to dig up. We recommend keeping some around, though, as it's great for treating bites and stings. You'll just need to pull a few plantain leaves, chew them up to make a poultice, and then mix them with olive oil, coconut oil, vegetable oil, or a carrier oil. Then directly apply that poultice to the affected area. For even more relief, add some lavender to your poultice.

And, if you don't have any plantain leaves, you can actually use **lavender** as a substitute for your salve. Just chop the flowers up (instead of chewing them up), mix them with an oil, and apply the mixture to the burn or sting. If you have any left over after you're done treating the wound, you can put it in a bottle, pour in about a quarter

inch of vegetable oil, and apply heat until it's warm to the touch. This will keep it fresh for up to six months, so you'll always have a handy bite or sting ointment whenever you need one.

Natural Burn Remedies

Think of how inconvenient burns can be in your everyday life. Now think of how painful a burn would be in a survival situation, and consider how much it might hinder you from doing the things you need to do to stay alive and healthy. Not a pretty picture, is it? Fortunately, there are a few very effective natural remedies that can soothe burned skin and get you back on your feet in no time.



One great remedy is actually the same **lavender oil** that we just discussed. In addition to bites and stings, you can also use it for burns, rashes, and scrapes. Just apply it to the burned area at least once a day (or every few hours if you can) and watch it heal faster than you would've thought possible.

In addition to your lavender oil, or if you don't have access to lavender, you can also make a fantastic tincture for burns from **aloe vera**. Aloe plants are very easy to care for,

but they don't do well outside in a lot of climates. So, instead of planting your aloe in the garden, we recommend potting it and keeping it inside.

If you're treating a minor burn with aloe, just break one of the smaller inner leaves off of your aloe plant and squeeze its gel onto the burned area. If the burn is larger and/or more severe, you'll want to take one of the larger outer leaves and squeeze out all of its gel. For minor burns that cover a larger area of skin, you can use the gel alone or mix it with a natural lotion or coconut oil. If you're treating a more severe burn, we recommend mixing in some natural vitamin E to make the tincture more powerful and to help speed up the healing process.

Treating Cuts with Herbs

Cuts are another common injury that you will likely have to deal with in a survival situation or in your everyday life. We've all accidentally cut ourselves at one point or another, but did you know that you can treat minor cuts with natural herbs, spices, and other products that are easily found around your house and just outside your door?

Before we get into a few of the best ways to treat cuts naturally, we should note that severe, deep cuts should not be treated with herbal remedies and oils. Deep puncture wounds from animal bites, cuts from rusty metal, and other serious cuts pose some significant health threats, including tetanus, and should be treated by a medical professional as soon as possible.

If you have a smaller, more minor cut, though, you don't have to go running to the doctor, and you don't need store-bought ointments, either. Just like with burns, bites, and stings, **lavender oil** is also highly effective at giving immediate relief from pain and accelerating the healing process. In addition to being a healing agent, when applied to a

cut once a day, lavender can also greatly reduce the chances that it will leave behind a scar, too.

For even more healing power, grab a couple of cloves of **garlic**. Why? Garlic is rich in allicin, a naturally occurring chemical that can be as effective at preventing infections as penicillin. Just crush a clove of garlic and apply its juice to the cut for a natural antiseptic.

Be warned, though – when you apply the garlic juice to a cut, it's going to sting, and it can actually cause damage to the skin if it's left on for too long. You can easily prevent this, though, by washing the affected area with cold water a few minutes after applying the garlic juice.

For best results, start by washing the cut as well as you can. Then apply the lavender oil, followed by the garlic juice. After you wash the garlic away, if you need some pain relief, you can apply more lavender oil or use one of the topical anesthetics we discussed earlier in this book.

Soothing Itchiness

Itchy skin can occur for all kinds of reasons – from allergies to dry skin to exposure to poison ivy, and many other triggers. Unfortunately, when we feel itchy, our instinct is to scratch the affected area to get relief. While this gives us a temporary respite from the itching, it also adds to the inflammation in the itchy area and can increase the risk of infection. In the case of itching from poison ivy, scratching can also lead to the rash spreading over more of your skin, making you even more miserable.

If you feel like your entire body is itching or you have an itchy area that's hard to reach, you can find real relief by soaking in a bath of **oatmeal** and/or **baking soda**. Draw a

warm bath and pour in a cup of finely ground oatmeal, a cup of baking soda, or both to the water. Then soak in the bath for about 15-30 minutes to feel relief from your itching.

Of course, as much as you might want to, you won't always be able to stop everything and go sit in the bath. For localized itching, there are more convenient solutions that will let you continue to go about your daily tasks without constant itching.

For this, we recommend growing juniper plants in your garden, as **juniper berries** have a number of medicinal properties and can be very useful in soothing itchy or dry skin. Unlike some of the other remedies we've discussed so far, though, you'll need more than one ingredient for this natural remedy for itching. In addition to your juniper berries, you'll also need **butter**, **beeswax**, and **cloves**.

- Melt three ounces of butter in a pain.
- In a separate pan, melt two tablespoons of beeswax.
- Once they've melted, stir the two together.
- Using a mortar and pestle or any grinding tool you have available, grind up the cloves. Then grind the berries separately.
- Add about three tablespoons of ground cloves and five tablespoons of ground berries to your butter and beeswax mixture.
- Allow the mixture to cool and then apply it liberally anywhere you're itching.

This mixture will help you get real relief from itching while it soothes and protects your inflamed skin from potential infections. It's great for all kinds of localized itches, and – once you've made a batch of it – it doesn't require you to take any time out of your day to get relief.

Sunburn Treatments



Sunburns are never any fun, but they're an unfortunate fact of life for people who do a lot of work outside. They're also something you'll have to worry about if you're in a disaster situation and you're stuck outside with no shade for an extended period of time. Fortunately, dealing with sunburns naturally is actually pretty easy.

If you want to relieve the pain of a sunburn, you'll just need one or two **potatoes**. Follow a few simple steps, and you'll have a very effective paste that you can apply to your sunburn for relief.

- Rinse the potatoes in warm or cold water.
- Cut them up into small pieces.
- Grind them into a paste (if you have a blender, we recommend using it because doing this by hand is possible but can be tedious).
- If the paste is too dry, add some water and mix well.
- Apply paste directly to sun-burnt skin and allow to dry.
- Take a cold shower to rinse away the paste.

This method can be pretty messy, so if you want to contain the paste and keep it from getting on furniture, clothing, etc., just cover the paste in gauze. For more severe sunburns, keep applying new paste and gauze once an hour.

Now that we've discussed many of the ways that you can replace regular, store-bought medication with natural remedies, in the second part of this book we'll move on to talk about the different types of medicinal plants you can find, grow, and use for survival.

Part 2 – Medicinal Plants to Find, Grow, and Use for Survival

Chapter 3 – The Top 30 Plants That Every Survivalist Should Know



For thousands of years, all over the world, people have been practicing herbalism for their health and survival. In fact, many people who study and practice herbal and/or holistic medicine agree that herbalism is the root of and precursor to modern pharmaceutical medicine. And, when you remember that most modern day pharmaceuticals are developed from and contain a large number of extracts from plants, we'd tend to agree.

Ancient medicinal practices used natural cures a long time before modern doctors ever considered synthesizing a pill. And, while many of these medicinal plants aren't as potent as the drugs your doctor would prescribe for you, it's a good idea to know them and what they can do for you if you ever find yourself in a survival situation. These are just the top 30 medicinal plants that can help you stay alive and healthy in a number of situations.

1. Althea – Great for treating sore throats, ulcers, and skin irritation, althea thrives in well-drained soil and can grow in either shade or sun.

2. American ginseng – Brewed in a tea and taken orally, this root is wonderful for treating respiratory disorders and for reducing fevers. It grows best in cooler climates.

3. Barberry – Used for stomach upset and diarrhea, as well as for treating skin conditions, barberry is a hearty plant that grows to a full nine feet tall!

4. Belladonna – A very effective sleep aid in small doses – don't use too much, as an overdose of belladonna can be deadly.

5. Bilberry – Used to improve eye conditions, treat kidney disease, and relieve painful symptoms of diabetes, you'll want to grow your bilberry plant in full sun and eat the berries it produces.

6. Borage – Used to ease pain and discomfort from joint pain, arthritis, and skin conditions like eczema, borage should be planted in moderately moist soil in an area with full sun.

7. Catnip – It's not just great for making your cat go crazy! Catnip is wonderful for treating swelling, fever, and cold symptoms, and it can be applied topically to help stop bleeding or infused to soothe migraines, stomachaches, and gas.

8. Cayenne pepper – May help prevent heart attacks and heal hemorrhoids and ulcers. Cayenne peppers grow well in partial shade or full sun and do best in moderately moist to fully moist soil.

9. Cranesbill – Known for aid in stopping diarrhea and bleeding, as well as healing canker sores, cranesbill grows best in semi-dry soil in warm climates.

10. Echinacea – Great for treating cold and flu symptoms, as well as boosting your immune system. Echinacea can be grown in almost any climate – just don't overwater it.

11. Fo-ti – Used to treat constipation, fatigue, erectile dysfunction, and high cholesterol levels. Doesn't do well in extreme heat, but will grow in either shade or sun.

12. Ginger – In addition to adding great flavor to a wide variety of foods and beverages, ginger is also known for its incredible healing properties. It's great for improved circulation, preventing blood clots, lessening nausea and motion sickness, and southing migraines. You can eat it or brew a tea out of it, and it grows well in partial shade with moderately moist soil.



13. Goldenseal – Brewed in a tea, goldenseal is wonderful for treating fungal infections, bladder infections, and sinus congestion. It does best in moist soil in a shady area.

14. Lady fern – Use lady fern topically to ease pain from burns, stings, and minor cuts. It grows best in moist, rich soil.

15. Licorice root – Can be eaten or brewed in a tea to soothe sore throats and treat ulcers and respiratory problems. Will grow

well in shade or sun in rich soil.

16. Marijuana – Can be useful in treating depression, glaucoma, high blood pressure, anxiety, and nausea, and you can make rope from the hemp plant. Does best in high sun with moderately moist soil.

17. Milk thistle – Rich in antioxidants, milk thistle can be used to treat kidney and liver issues. It grows best in temperate, semi-dry climates.

18. Parsley – Helps cleanse and detoxify the bloodstream, and has been shown to be helpful with kidney stones. Parsley grows best in full sun or partial shade with moist soil.

19. Peppermint – Take orally to treat heartburn, acid reflux, gallstones, and/or headaches. A hearty plant, peppermint grows very well in moist soil in a temperate climate. Be aware that if the conditions are right, it will grow rapidly and will try to take over your garden if you're not careful.

20. Rosemary – Proven to help with headaches and upset stomachs, rosemary may also help treat some forms of cancer. It grows in a variety of climates and soils, and it doesn't need a lot of care or attention to thrive.

21. Saw palmetto – Can be used to treat bronchitis, nausea and other stomach problems, and bladder infections. Thrives in moderately moist soil in full sun.

22. Skullcap – Can be useful in treating high blood pressure. Grows best in full sun with well-drained soil.

23. St. John's wort – This wonderful plant has been used for years to treat depression and anxiety, and it's a good sleep aid, as well. It may also help slow

the progression of HIV to AIDS. It grows best in moist soil in mild to warm climates. It won't tolerate cold, so it may be a good idea to grow it indoors.

24. Tart cherries – May help prevent some forms of cancer. Used to treat diabetes and arthritis. Tart cherries grow best in moderate to warm climates and cannot grow in extreme cold.

25. Tea tree oil – A powerful anti-viral, anti-fungal, and antibacterial agent, tea tree oil is incredible for treating acne, vaginal infections, athlete's foot, and a number of other problems. It's hard to grow, though, so we recommend stocking up on it in case of an emergency.

26. Valerian – Treats anxiety and insomnia. Valerian is best grown in moderate to warm climates, and you should always remove the flowering stems as soon as they start to grow.

27. Vinpocetine – Used for treating Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, and stroke, vinpocetine is derived from lesser periwinkle.

28. White Willow – The origin of modern day Aspirin, white willow is great for treating inflammation, pain, aches, and fevers.

29. Wild yam roots – Can treat nausea, menstrual cramps, and pain from rheumatoid arthritis. Native to China, wild yam roots grow best in temperate climates.

30. Witch hazel – A known antiseptic and mild anesthetic (helps with pain from bruises), witch hazel is also known to soothe irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and

other bowel problems. It grows best in full sun but can grow well in partial shade, and it likes moist, acidic soil.



This guide should help you get your garden started as you prepare to have medicinal plants on hand when and if you need them. Be aware, though, that this is only a guide and that you should do thorough research on any medicinal plants you intend to use. Find out the best methods to use them (e.g., internally or topically), what doses are safe, any interactions they may have with other plants or medications, and any potential allergies that you or others may have to them. Be as thorough as you can in your research before using any of these plants to help treat any disease, injury, or other condition.

Now that you have a better idea of some of the most effective and powerful medicinal plants that you may want to keep in your garden and/or in your home, in the next chapter we'll focus on some of the most essential herbs that any herbalist will tell you to plant in your garden for better health and wellness in everyday life or in a survivalist situation.

Chapter 4 – The Most Important Herbs to Grow in Your Garden



As we mentioned in the last chapter, herbalism is an ancient practice that has helped countless people live through numerous conditions, diseases, and injuries. While you might not be able to get the same potency from herbs that you can from modern pharmaceutical drugs, in a survival situation you may not be able to access the drugs and medications that you need to stay alive, to soothe pain, or to feel comfortable enough to do the things you need to do to survive.

That's why it's important to know the most essential herbs to grow in your garden (from an herbalist's perspective). With the right herbs and knowledge of how to use them, you may be able to survive far longer and live a healthy life, even if you cannot get your normal medications.

If you're faced with a disaster in which pharmaceuticals cannot be produced or distributed to your area, it doesn't have to be a death sentence. As a race, humans have survived for thousands upon thousands of years without the luxury of modern medicine, and your herb garden could help you do the same. Because this traditional herbalist knowledge has been passed down over thousands of years, we still know how to treat ourselves when we need to.

Not only has this information been passed down, though, but many recent studies have given us even more knowledge about these herbs, their healing properties, and why

and how they work. Thus, we have the combined knowledge of ancient healers with modern researchers and scientists to give us the best options for natural remedies today.

In other words, there's never been a better time than right now to learn about herbalism and to become a bit of an herbalist yourself. An herb garden and a bit of basic knowledge of herbalism could prove to be very useful if one day a disaster strikes and you aren't able to get the pharmaceuticals that you rely on today.

So, whether you want to live off the grid, you're interested in being prepared for a survival situation, or you just want to know a bit more about how certain plants can help your health, you can use the information in this chapter to make your life better.

Before we move on to discuss the specific herbs you'll want in your herbalist garden, though, we should once again reiterate that these herbs may not have the same effect as modern medicine. You should not try to replace your current medications with herbal remedies without first consulting with your doctor. They may be very helpful in an emergency, but always be careful when using them and do your research.

Now, let's look at your herbalist's garden and which plants you should include.

Mint Plants (Peppermint, Spearmint, etc.)

You're probably most familiar with mint for its taste and smell. It makes a great addition to a lot of recipes for foods and beverages, and mint tea is wonderfully refreshing. Did you know, though, that mint is also often used in balms, tinctures, and poultices? It's been used for literally thousands upon thousands of years to soothe pain and inflammation, and to treat a number of conditions.

Peppermint is rich in menthol, and it contains significant amounts of flavonoids and terpines. Because it contains these soothing ingredients, mint has been used for as long as anyone can remember to soothe the pain of nausea, IBS, vomiting, and other stomach issues. If you're having any of these problems, you can brew some mint leaves into a nice tea (with some honey and/or lemon if you like), and you'll feel much better in very little time.

Chamomile and/or Feverfew



You likely already know that chamomile can be made into a nice tea to help you relax and get a good night's sleep. Did you know, though, that chamomile and its close cousin feverfew are both in the daisy family and that feverfew is particularly good for treating headaches?

Both chamomile and feverfew have been shown to have noticeable anti-inflammatory effects, and they're both rich in terpenoids and flavonoids. If you suffer from migraines and you have to choose between growing chamomile or feverfew, we'd recommend going with feverfew. If you're more likely to suffer from anxiety and insomnia, chamomile is probably the better of the two for you.

Beware, though, that those who have allergies to ragweed may show allergic reactions to chamomile, feverfew, and other related plants in the daisy family, as well. Also,

pregnant women may want to avoid chamomile, as it is known to induce uterine contractions.

Hawthorn

Technically speaking, hawthorn isn't actually an herb, but it's found in a lot of herbalists' gardens because it's wonderful for cardiovascular health. Hawthorn leaves can be brewed in teas, and berries can be made into teas, jams, and other recipes for a healthy heart and cardiovascular system. Like chamomile and mint, hawthorn is rich in terpenes and flavonoids, but that's not where its healthy properties end. You'll also find vitamin C, B-complex vitamins, saponins, and a number of other naturally occurring anti-inflammatory factors in hawthorn, as well.

According to recent studies, hawthorn may be effective in treating or preventing a number of conditions, including but not limited to arrhythmia, hypertension, congestive heart failure, angina, and other cardiovascular problems.

It should be noted, however, that hawthorn has been shown to have interactions with some prescription heart and blood pressure medications. Consult with your doctor or physician before adding hawthorn to your diet.

Ginger

Ginger isn't just a delightfully spicy herb to add to your meals, and it's not just a palate cleanser for sushi dishes. It's one of the most celebrated medicinal herbs in the world, and its health-improving properties are almost boundless.

Want to soothe a sore throat or ward off the flu or a cold? Drink ginger tea with a little bit of local honey and lemon. It's also fantastic for soothing an upset stomach and is especially great for relieving pregnant women with morning sickness, as well. As we discussed earlier, ginger has a wide range of healing properties, so it's always a good one for any herbalist's garden.

Rosemary

Another popular herb for seasoning culinary concoctions, rosemary is also used in a lot of traditional healing practices. Modern science has shown why rosemary is so effective, as it is packed with iron, vitamin B6, and calcium. It can be cooked in a number of different foods, or you can steep it with other herbs for a fragrant and delicious tea, as well.

Be Aware When Planting Your Herbalist Garden

These are just a few of the many medicinal herbs that can help you improve your health and stay alive during a disaster when you cannot get your regular medication. They should get you started on planting a garden that will help you in a number of wonderful ways, and you can add to that garden with a few of the medicinal plants we discussed on the last chapter, as well.

Before you run out the door to buy seeds and start your herbalist garden, though, please remember, once again, that natural does not mean harmless. Just because you're working with herbs from your garden doesn't mean that you can take large doses or mix herbs and medication without consequences. Whenever you can, always consult

with a qualified medical doctor before adding any new medications (natural or not) to your diet or your regular routine.

Many of the medicinal herbs and plants we've discussed here can interact with prescription medications and pharmaceutical drugs. They may enhance these drugs' efficacy, or they may counteract them. These interactions may also be affected by how much of a certain herb you've been adding to your diet. If you're on any prescription medications, you should always talk with your doctor and make sure that you and your doctor both have all of the information necessary to know whether or not adding herbal medicines will be a good idea for you.

Antiseptic Herbs



Finally, remember that a lot of these herbs have potent antiseptic properties. Mint, rosemary, and garlic can all be used to clean wounds, bathe, or clean your home. So, if you're in a survival situation, even if your doctor advises you not to use these herbs as medicine, you can keep yourself and your home clean to avoid unnecessary infections and other complications.

Not only that, but having a clean space to live can help you feel like things are more normal and can help you feel more calm and stable. This way you can keep your wits about you and do what you need to do to survive and thrive, even if the you-know-what hits the fan. And you know what they say – cleanliness is next to godliness!

Chapter 5 – 5 Healing Plants You'll Find in Your Kitchen



An apple a day keeps the doctor away, right? We've seemingly always known that incorporating fresh vegetables and herbs in our diets is essential to a healthy lifestyle and good overall health and wellness. Did you know, though, that some of the most common vegetables, plants, and herbs that you almost always stock in your kitchen actually have medicinal value, as well? If you ever need (or want) to live off the grid for any period of time, you should know how you can use these common household plants and vegetables for healing.

Onion

Though you won't often hear onions included in lists of common superfoods, they really should be. They're absolutely packed with nutrients, including vitamin B6, vitamin C, flavonoids, folic acid, and other powerful nutrients and antioxidants. Plus, onions have anti-inflammatory properties and have been associated with fighting high cholesterol and potentially preventing some forms of cancer.

And that's not all – onions also contain 25 active compounds that may help prevent or inhibit strokes, combat heart disease, and boost your immune system, as well. Plus, it's

a diuretic, which can help reduce water retention and may be helpful in reducing fevers, as well.

In addition to the many health benefits of eating them, onions can also be used topically. Place a raw onion on burns, bee stings, and bruises to get instant relief. Tape a fresh slice of onion over a splinter overnight, and it will be far easier to remove the next day. And you can heat onion juice to a lukewarm temperature and use it as eardrops to relieve an earache.

Add onion juice to tea to soothe a sore throat. Apply it to acne-ridden skin to clear up blemishes and reduce the appearance of acne scars. Use it as a moth repellent or apply it to your skin to prevent mosquitoes and other insects from biting you. Onion is also great for polishing metal, cleaning bath sponges, and cleaning grills and stovetops, too.

And, if you're looking for a fun craft for Easter, you can paint Easter eggs using boiled onion skins.

Mustard Seeds

Mustard seeds naturally have antibacterial properties, so you actually never have to worry about refrigeration, but that's not the only reason that we love mustard and mustard seeds. In addition to being a great condiment and a wonderful cooking ingredient, mustard seeds can also relieve pain. After reading this, you might want to put some mustard seeds in your bug-out bag.

Packed with carotenoid antioxidants, flavonoids, selenium, magnesium, vitamin B3, and niacin, you can use mustard seeds to relieve pain from sore or damaged muscles, as well as rheumatoid arthritis. The antioxidants in mustard seeds are also known to potentially prevent gastric cancer, and many experts believe that they can actually

decelerate the aging process. At the same time, the vitamin B3 and niacin in mustard seeds are known to help reduce cholesterol levels and may actually protect your arteries from atherosclerosis, as well as preventing hypertension.

Mustard seeds' antifungal properties can also help clear up acne breakouts and other common skin infections, and they can help your body fight diseases more effectively. Mustard seeds are also good for reducing constipation, improving digestion, and relieving painful symptoms of anal fissures and hemorrhoids. Plus, they work really well as a deodorizer – they even work to remove the odor of skunk spray, which you might need if you find yourself trekking through the woods in a survival situation!

Garlic

Whether or not you're worried about vampires, garlic is a great addition to any survivalist or herbalist's kitchen. It might not be the miracle plant that some garlic enthusiasts claim it to be, but it does have a wide variety of helpful and healthy properties.



For thousands of years, ancient healers used garlic to fight cold and flu symptoms and to relieve and heal infections, and modern science has confirmed that garlic is just as powerful today as those healers believed it to be in years past. With high concentrations of B-complex vitamins, vitamin C, saponins, flavonoids, enzymes, proteins, and the compounds allicin and

alliin, garlic is wonderful for cardiovascular health. In fact, medical researchers have extracted the allicin from garlic and used it as treatment for hypertension and regulation of blood pressure. You can see, then, how adding garlic to your diet could help to lower your blood pressure and improve your cardiovascular health.

Regularly eating garlic (or drinking it in tea) can help reduce cholesterol levels and improve your heart health. In World War I and II, it was often used as an antiseptic to heal infections and prevent gangrene from forming in soldiers' wounds.

With lots of antioxidants, garlic is known to kill bacteria and boost the immune system to help with coughs, congestion, and chest infections. To relieve symptoms of any of these conditions, chop up four to five garlic cloves and steep them in hot water. Strain it and drink this hot garlic tea, and you'll notice a significant difference.

Because garlic is associated with a reduction in LDL cholesterol and enhanced insulin levels, it is a natural aid for people living with diabetes and/or heart disease, and it may help prevent or reduce the occurrence of impotence, as well.

You can also use garlic topically to take advantage of its anti-inflammatory properties. Doing this can help treat cold sores, acne, and psoriasis outbreaks. Not only that, but did you know that fish are actually attracted to the smell of garlic? That's right – you can mince some garlic cloves and use them with food scraps as bait to catch fish to eat if you ever need to live off the grid or if you're catching dinner for a family camping trip.

All that, and pests and insects are naturally repelled by garlic. Just dab some on your skin, and you'll notice a lot fewer mosquito bites when you're working outside. It's also great as a natural adhesive for thin cracks in glass, too.

Cabbage

Want to reduce your risk of developing certain cancers? Load up on cabbage! It's been found that getting enough beta-carotene, vitamin C, and fiber can help you fight some cancers, and cabbage is packed with all three.

For those suffering from constipation, cabbage is a good natural laxative, and it's been used for years to heal mushroom poisoning. It can also be used as a topical balm to relieve sore eyes. Other topical uses for cabbage leaves include relieving pain from sore feet and rheumatism, and they can be used to treat abscesses and warts, as well as sunburns.

If you have an upset stomach or are suffering from acid reflux or heartburn, try eating a few leaves of cabbage to reduce the acid in your stomach and calm your belly. This is also recommended for those who suffer from ulcers, as well, and cabbage is recommended to help reduce asthma symptoms and to relieve morning sickness in pregnant women.

Fennel

Fennel isn't native to North America, but after being cultivated in kitchen gardens along the east coast, it quickly became an invasive species and can now be found up and down the eastern seaboard and well inland, as well. A lot of people keep fennel in the kitchen to spice up meats, salads, and other dishes, but that's not all that fennel is good for.



Fennel is especially beneficial to women, as you can brew fennel tea to suppress menstrual cramps and relieve pain from swollen breasts. It's also good for

increasing breast milk production and can treat colic in babies, as well.

Because of its diuretic qualities, fennel can also be used to treat stomach issues in both animals and humans. It can reduce gas and flatulence, and it's known for aiding in relief of symptoms of asthma and bronchial disease. If you suffer from frequent or chronic coughs, use fennel syrup to soothe your throat and suppress your coughs.

Fennel also repels fleas, so it's a great addition to natural cleansers for kennels and stables. If you want a natural way to keep fleas and other vermin away from your animals, fennel could be the solution for you without turning to harsh chemicals.

Now that you know a few great things to keep around your kitchen for easy, natural healing and healthier living, in the next chapter we'll move on to talk about a few plants that could be very dangerous – or even deadly – if used improperly.

Chapter 6 – 7 Healing Plants That Can Kill You if You Misuse Them

Hopefully we've been very clear throughout this book that it's incredibly important to know exactly how to use these natural and herbal remedies. Yes, they're all "natural", but that doesn't mean that you can eat or drink as much of them as you want without feeling any negative consequences.

Consider it this way. If you have a headache and take two Aspirin tablets, you'll feel at least some relief after a few minutes. If you take a half a bottle of Aspirin tablets, you'll likely vomit and/or pass out, and you could easily die from an overdose. The same is true if you take too much of certain natural remedies or if you use them improperly.

In the proper dosages, a lot of plants have really incredible healing properties, but overdosing on them can result in severe illness, poisoning, organ failure, abortion, or death. These seven plants aren't the only ones that you'll need to look out for, but they are at the top of the list.

Wolfsbane

Also known as monkshood or aconite, wolfsbane was first thought to have formed from the dripping jaws of Cerberus, the mythical three-headed dog. In fairytales and legends, it's said to be toxic to werewolves, but mythical beasts aren't the only ones who can be poisoned by wolfsbane.



In fact, wolfsbane is incredibly toxic to humans and animals alike, even in very small doses. However, under controlled circumstances, it can be used to reduce fevers, as well as cold and flu symptoms, and it can be used as a sedative. While these benefits may sound good, we do not recommend attempting to use wolfsbane for internal purposes because it has a significant negative effect on respiration, circulation, and the central nervous system.

In other words, it's just not worth the risk to try to use wolfsbane when you have other natural and pharmaceutical options available to you for these purposes. If you don't have any experience with working with wolfsbane and/or if you are not in complete control of the circumstances, things can go terribly wrong.

Belladonna

It may surprise you to see belladonna on this list, as we mentioned its use as a sleep aid earlier in this book. However, you may remember that we also mentioned that using too much could be deadly.

Italian for "beautiful woman", belladonna is also known as deadly nightshade, which should tell you something about its potentially fatal properties. When it was first discovered, this herb was actually used to dilate women's pupils to make them look more glittery and attractive, despite the fact that it could possibly kill them.

Today, medical professionals call belladonna atropine and use it to treat arthritis, bradycardia (slow heartbeat), hyperhidrosis, stomach cramps, for sore throats, to treat cold and hay fever symptoms, and as a sedative. While it's extremely effective for these treatments, it should be noted that even a fairly small dose can be deadly.

People who have suffered from congestive heart failure, pregnant women, and women nursing babies should never take belladonna unless under the direct supervision of a qualified medical professional. Even then, most doctors and physicians will strongly recommend against its use. In fact, they may actually warn against even coming in physical contact with the plant.

Like wolfsbane, belladonna has some strong healing properties, but if you are not aware of the proper dosage, taking any belladonna at all could be harmful or even fatal.

Stinging Nettle



Alternative medicine experts use stinging nettle for a number of things, including treating allergies, rashes, asthma, kidney stones, and problems with urination. In addition to internal use, it can also be used topically for relief from muscle pain and achy joints.

Unlike belladonna and wolfsbane, ingesting a small dose of stinging nettle on a single occasion likely won't kill you. Some experts consider it safe to use stinging nettle in appropriate doses for no more than six months if you're in good health. However, even when used in these doses and in this short period of time, taking stinging nettle may still result in a stomachache or sweating.

Some studies have found evidence that eating the parts of the plant found above ground (i.e., not the roots) could help decrease blood sugar levels, which is a good thing to know if you have diabetes and cannot access your medication. Likewise, small doses may help lower blood pressure. Again, stinging nettle is only ever recommended for use over a brief period of time. So, while it may be a good substitute for blood pressure medication in a disaster situation, you won't want to just switch to stinging nettle if you can otherwise get your regular medication.

Because stinging nettle can cause increased urination, people with kidney problems should talk to their doctors before using it. And, in general, if you don't absolutely have to use it and you aren't entirely sure about the appropriate dosage and use, you should probably avoid it.

Kava Kava

For centuries, healers in the South Pacific used kava kava root to treat depression, insomnia, anxiety, restlessness, and other disorders. It's very effective at giving temporary relief to these problems because it gives a sense of calm and wellbeing when you take it. However, taking too much kava kava or using it incorrectly can result in depression, liver damage, or even death. Furthermore, while these effects are generally associated with long-term use or overdosing on kava kava, they can occur with a smaller dose and/or use over a short period of time. For this reason, many countries, including the US, Canada, Germany, and Switzerland have all banned the use of the plant.

Devil's Claw

Devil's claw has strong anti-inflammatory properties, and it's often used topically to treat lower back pain and osteoarthritis. It's also been used internally for other issues, such as stomachaches and gout,

While it's generally considered safe to be used for up to a year in small doses if you're a healthy adult, it does have some possibly negative side effects and interactions, which could prove deadly. For example, devil's claw is associated with lowered blood sugar levels, which you might think is a good thing. However, if you're diabetic and you're already taking medication to lower your blood sugar, taking devil's claw could result in your blood sugar levels dropping to dangerous levels.

Likewise, pregnant women are warned against using devil's claw, as it could harm a developing fetus. It's also not recommended for breastfeeding mothers. And it can also be dangerous for people who suffer from gallstones, those with peptic ulcer disease, and people with heart disease or high blood pressure. Even if it doesn't significantly harm you, it can increase the acidity in your stomach, as well as increasing your bile production. Too much of either of these can lead to serious discomfort and medical problems.

Foxglove



Foxglove (also called digitalis) is often used internally to help treat an irregular heartbeat, congestive heart failure, epilepsy, and asthma, and it can be used topically as an aid to treat burns and wounds. However, while it can be very helpful if used correctly, it is listed as being unsafe for use unless under the direct care of a medical professional.

Every part of the foxglove plant is poisonous, and it can cause major health problems if used improperly. Long-term use can result in irregular heart function, upset stomach, visual halos, and yellow-green vision distortion as the toxicity in a patient's blood rises. While it can be dangerous for anyone to use, pregnant women and people with heart disease or kidney disease should especially avoid taking foxglove.

Comfrey

People have been using comfrey for centuries to treat a lot of different ailments and conditions. For example, it's often brewed into a tea to treat diarrhea, stomachaches, ulcers, bronchitis, sore throats, persistent coughs, chest pain, and/or to lessen heavy menstrual flows. When used topically, it's often applied to the skin to treat gout, phlebitis, cuts and scrapes, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis. That all sounds great, but unfortunately, comfrey can be incredibly dangerous to your health.

Basically, comfrey contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids, which are chemicals that have been associated with liver damage, lung damage, and some forms of cancer. In fact, comfrey is dangerous enough that the FDA has actually recommended that it be removed from products sold in the United States.

In general, comfrey is most likely safe when applied to unbroken skin, but because it does absorb through the skin, this may still be dangerous, as it exposes you to pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

Be Aware When Using Natural Remedies

These are just seven of the many plants available to you that can be healthy when used correctly but deadly when used improperly. Honestly, you can think of most plants the same way you think of pharmaceutical drugs and medications. At certain dosages and with certain patients, they can be very helpful, but if you don't know the correct dose, any potential interactions with other plants, medications, or conditions, or you use them incorrectly, they can be extremely harmful or even lethal, even in a tiny dose.

The bottom line is this – before you take any kind of herbal medication, do your research and find out exactly what the benefits and risks are of the plants you're using. If you're pregnant, always assume that whatever you take will pass directly from you to your baby. If you have heart disease, pay special attention to any plant that could change your heart rate, blood pressure, or that could act as a blood thinner.

The same drugs that can cure you also have the ability to kill you, so always be aware of everything you put on or in your body.

Conclusion – Know Your Herbal Remedies Before You Try Them



Congratulations! Now you should have a better understanding of medicinal plants and herbal remedies. You can use this book as a starting point for your research so that you can learn about the specific plants that could help you or a loved one with a disease, disorder, or condition that you need regular medication to treat.

Whether you're looking for herbal alternatives to pharmaceuticals or you're interested in being prepared for a disaster, you should first get to know the medicinal plants we've discussed here before trying them on yourself or others. Furthermore, we highly recommend that you talk to your doctor before changing anything about your regular medication or adding any kind of herbal remedy to your regular diet. Your doctor will likely be able to tell you about potential interactions and side effects that you might never have known about and that could be fatal.

Before we leave you, we want to reiterate one more time how important it is to know exactly how these plants work, what they contain, and how much to use when treating wounds, illnesses, and other conditions with them. In general, topical use is safer than internal use, but this can be dangerous, too, as you saw in our discussion of comfrey in the last chapter.

It's very possible to survive in a disaster situation using just your wits and nature's bounty, but never take a risk on your health if you don't absolutely have to. Now, go out

and get to know your herbal remedies even better so that you can incorporate them safely into your daily life or your survival plan!