



Herbal First Aid for Large Groups

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This handout is an overview of conditions and medicines that can be used in first aid, especially those with large gatherings of people. This list is mainly made for experienced first aid workers. Some of the medicines listed below are toxic and should only be used by experienced hands, and any medicine can cause complications, so please use caution whenever treating people. There are many safety issues that one should be aware of, which are not specific to herbal first aid (such as hand-washing and sanitation) and can be learned in programs such as Wilderness First Responder classes.

Conditions You May Encounter

These are some of the wilderness, street or home first aid situations that may arise. Study the ones that seem pertinent to circumstances you find yourself in most often. Bring books and ask others as new situations arise.

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|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Allergies | 18) Emotional crises | 34) Parasites |
| 2) Altitude sickness | 19) Eye irritation | 35) Drug use-“too high” |
| 3) Anaphylaxis | 20) Fever/Chills | 36) Pet problems |
| 4) Animal bites/scratches | 21) Food poisoning | 37) Plant dermatitises |
| 5) Asthma | 22) Prescription drugs
forgotten | 38) Rashes |
| 6) Bleeding | 23) Headache | 39) Respiratory disorders |
| 7) Broken bones | 24) Heat exhaustion | 40) Scabies |
| 8) Burns | 25) Hypochondria | 41) Seizures |
| 9) Chiggers | 26) Hypothermia | 42) Shock |
| 10) Constipation | 27) Infections | 43) Staph infections |
| 11) Contagious diseases | 28) Injuries | 44) Sunburn |
| 12) Coughs | 29) Insect bites/stings | 45) Ticks |
| 13) Dental | 30) Lethargy | 46) Toothaches |
| 14) Diarrhea | 31) Menstrual disharmonies | 47) Water-born pathogens |
| 15) Drug overdose | 32) Nausea/Vomiting | 48) Wounds |
| 16) Dysentery | 33) Pain | |
| 17) Earache | | |

Considerations

1. Use disposable plastic/latex gloves, especially when encountering blood, mucous, saliva, pus or any open wounds.
2. Take care of yourself – take rest and immune strengthening herbs.
3. Legalities – be aware of possible legal implications
4. Label everything carefully
5. Be cautious using remedies with infants, children and with pregnant and nursing women
6. Know your limits
7. Learn emergency phone numbers, the closest radio or telephone and nearby health care practitioners and doctors.
8. Know herbs for pain
9. Avoid powdered herbs in deep cuts
10. Learn to identify and use common first aid plants
11. Improvise as needed – Be inventive, but note #6
12. Cleanliness – Wash your hands often with soap and water. Have a separate bag for medical waste (use red tape to make a red cross on it). Check sanitary conditions of patients. Have just a few people administer the medicine so that messy hands are kept to a minimum (especially with salves and oils). Sterilize equipment.
13. Be instructive, but not condescending with patients, and teach prevention. Help them help themselves. Education is key.
14. Organization of medicine saves a lot of time and frustration
15. Don't forget to bring your own personal medications
16. Check first aid bag occasionally, to replenish empty medicines and check freshness.
17. Learn how to take charge when needed and practice calmness. These two together remote a healing atmosphere.
18. Have stimulant herbs on hand (i.e. Guarana, Cola, 'Tea') for all-nighters
19. Learn to 'Volunteer' people
20. Check for allergies, sensitivities and current medications before administering any treatments
21. Discriminate between acute and chronic disorders
22. Have plenty of good fresh water available
23. Rehydration fluid – 1 quart water, ½ tsp sugar, pinch of salt
24. Learn some triage skills
25. In a firm but friendly manner, let people know if they have communicable or contagious vectors (i.e. staph, lice). Make efforts to minimize these problems spreading as early as possible.
26. Know your fellow health care workers. Learn each other's strengths. Work cooperatively.
27. Before administering any internal medicines, initially check patients for any reactions by trying very small amounts.

Commonly Found First Aid Plants

These plants can be found growing in a variety of habitats in the United States, (depending on region), and may be useful for first aid.

1. **Beavertail cactus**-pads- Opuntia spp.- burn remedy
2. **Beggars ticks** – whole plant- Bidens spp.- decongestant
3. **California poppy**- whole plant Eschscholtzia spp.- nervine, sedative
4. **Cattail**- rhizome- Typha spp.- demulcent, food
5. **Catnip**-herb- Nepeta cataria- nervine
6. **Chaparral**- leaf- Larrea spp- antimicrobial, wash
7. **Chickweed**- whole plant-Stellaria media- poultice, food
8. **Cinquefoil** – whole plant- Potentilla spp- astringent
9. **Cleavers**- whole plant- Galium aparine- lymphagogue
10. **Comfrey** – leaf, root- Symphytum spp- vulnerary, poultice, demulcent
11. **Cudweed**- whole plant- Gnaphalium spp.- demulcent, antiinflammatory
12. **Dandelion** – leaf- Taraxacum officinale- diuretic, food
13. **Eucalyptus**- leaf- Eucalyptus spp.- antiseptic, respiratory, inhalation
14. **Geranium** – root-Geranium spp- astringent
15. **Goldenrod** – leaf- Solidago spp- diuretic eyewash, allergy medicine
16. **Gumweed** –leaf, flowers- Grindelia spp- poison ivy remedy, expectorant
17. **Jewelweed** – whole plant- Impatiens spp- poison ivy remedy
18. **Lobelia** – herb- Lobelia inflata- asthma remedy
19. **Mallow** – root, leaf-Malva spp- demulcent
20. **Meadowsweet** – leaf- Spiraea spp- antiinflammatory
21. **Mint**- herb- Mentha spp- flavor, stomachaches
22. **Mugwort** – leaf-Artemisia spp- antiseptic, drying
23. **Mullein** – leaf-Verbascum thapsus- expectorant
24. **Nettles** – leaf, seed-Urtica spp- diuretic, food
25. **Oak**- bark-Quercus spp- astringent
26. **Oatstraw** – herb-Avena spp- nervine
27. **Oregon graperoot**- root-Berberis spp- antimicrobial, antiprotozoal
28. **Pine** – sap-Pinus spp- antiseptic, wound sealer
29. **Plantain** – leaf- Plantago spp- drawing poultice, demulcent
30. **Purple loosestrife**- herb- Lythrum salicornia- demulcent, astringent, digestive aid
31. **Ragweed** – leaf-Ambrosia spp- allergy medicine
32. **Blackberry** – root- Rubus spp- astringent
33. **Rose** – whole plant-Rosa spp- astringent
34. **Sagebrushes**- leaf-Artemisia spp.- antiseptic, vermifuge, wash
35. **Shepherd's purse** – herb-Capsella bursa-pastoris- styptic
36. **St. Johnswort** – leaf, flower- Hypericum perforatum- trauma medicine, vulnerary
37. **Willow**- bark-Salix spp- antiinflammatory
38. **Witch hazel** – bark, leaf-Hamamelis virginiana- astringent
39. **Yarrow** – whole plant-Achillea millefolium- antiinflammatory, antiseptic, vulnera

Kitchen Herbs and Household Remedies

Many plants commonly found in homes and kitchens can be used in first aid. These can often be used to make other medicines taste better. The few medicinal words per medicine are to help foster further research into their attributes.

- **Aloe**- burns
- **Anise**- stomachaches
- **Basil**- headaches, relaxing
- **Black pepper**- warming, digestive
- **Cardamom**- digestive
- **Cayenne**- heating, counterirritant, styptic
- **Cinnamon**- digestive, reproductive
- **Clove**- warming, toothaches
- **Coffee**- stimulant
- **Fennel seed**- stomachaches, eyewash
- **Garlic**- antimicrobial
- **Ginger**- warming, antiinflammatory, nausea
- **Honey**- vulnerary, sore throats
- **Onions**- antimicrobial, warming plaster
- **Salt**- leeches
- **Tea** (green and black)-stimulant
- **Turmeric**- warming, antiinflammatory

Single Herbs for First Aid

These are useful single plants to carry in a first aid kit. They are used raw, which is they are not in any prepared form, so they can be used as either as a chew, tea, wash, poultice or another form.

- **Cayenne** powder- *Capsicum* spp.-styptic, counterirritant
- **Chaparral** leaf- *Larrea* spp.- antimicrobial, wash
- **Comfrey** leaf, root- *Symphytum* spp.- injury repair, demulcent
- **Fennel** seed- *Foeniculum vulgare*-eye washes, stomachaches, colic
- **Garlic**- bulb- *Allium sativum*- antiparasitic, antimicrobial
- **Golden seal**- *Hydrastis canadensis*-antimicrobial
- **Licorice**- root- *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, *G. uralensis*- demulcent, antiinflammatory, poison ivy remedy, sore throat, toothache, dry mouth, flavor
- **Ma huang**- stem- *Ephedra* spp.- anti-asthmatic, stimulant, decongestant
- **Osha**- root- *Ligusticum porteri*- high-altitude sickness, antimicrobial, antivenomous, sore throat
- **Slippery elm**- inner bark powder- *Ulmus rubra*- demulcent- drawing poultice (insect bites) dryness, eyewash, heat conditions, nutritive, restorative
- **Tea** (green or black)- *Thea sinensis*- stimulant
- **Tobacco**- leaf- *Nicotiana* spp.- insect bite and sting relief

Useful Remedies to have on hand

*The herbs marked with * should be used only by experienced hands*

1. **Anemone tincture**- drop doses for panic, acute anxiety, ungroundedness. An excellent trauma remedy. For shock, stress and trauma

2. ***Arnica tincture-** antiinflammatory, useful immediately after injury and trauma to speed recovery. Internal (caution, use drop doses) and external use. For wounds and injury
3. **Echinacea tincture-** immune strengthening tonic, useful in the early stages of colds and influenza. Also good to increase immunity after venomous critters and poison ivy. Large doses may be helpful. For allergies, viruses, food poisoning, wounds, infections
4. ***Ephedra tincture-** helps bronchoconstriction, decongestant. May be helpful in asthma. Caution, stimulant action, may raise blood pressure and cause headaches and worse. For allergies, trouble with breathing.
5. **Eyebright tincture-**antihistamine-type action. See Ragweed. For allergies.
6. **Goldenseal tincture-**antimicrobial- Useful in a variety of situations where antibacterials are helpful. Internal and external use. For colds, food poisoning, wounds, infections.
7. **Herbal hot sauce vinegar-** a combination of herbs usually including cayenne, garlic, horseradish, ginger and the like. Tangy and hot for those long cold days outside. Use to tolerance.
8. **Immune combination tincture-** a combination of immune-boosting herbs for immune fortitude, especially as a preventative. For colds, viruses, infections.
9. **Kava kava tincture-** sedative, good for frayed nerves and relaxing after a hard day. For pain, stress, trauma
10. **Licorice root pieces-** antiinflammatory, moistening. Helps inflammatory internal mucosal conditions. For allergies, asthma, dehydration, diarrhea, food poisoning, indigestion, pain, sun overexposure.
11. ***Lobelia tincture-** for bronchoconstriction, to ease breathing from allergic asthma reactions. Also a relaxant. For allergies, asthma, pain, stress, trauma.
12. **Meadowsweet tincture-** all-purpose antiinflammatory, stomachaches, congestion, injuries. Larger doses may be useful. Well tolerated. For allergies, colds, food poisoning, indigestion, wounds
13. **Neutralizing cordial-** antacid, stomachaches. Sweet, useful for nausea. Well tolerated. For diarrhea, food poisoning, indigestion.
14. **Oregon grape root tincture-** antimicrobial, antiprotozoal. Wide range of antibacterial uses. Large doses may be useful. For viral and bacterial infections, diarrhea, food poisoning and wounds.
15. **Osha tincture-** antibacterial, antivenomous, sore throats, allergies, warming. Wide range of antimicrobial uses. Useful in combinations with other antibacterials. For allergies, viruses and bacteria infection, food poisoning, wounds
16. **Pain formula-** a combination of sedative and anodyne herbs to cover a few bases in one medicine. For pain, trauma, shock
17. ***Peppermint spirits-** digestive aid for nausea, stomachaches, indigestion. Reduces sense of pain in stomach, useful in many situations. Use small doses, as it is prepared from an essential oil. For indigestion.

18. **Propolis tincture**- antiseptic wound covering for skin and oral mucosa. Stickiness helps it hold bandages to skin. For viral and bacterial infections, wounds.
19. **Ragweed tincture**- antihistamine-like action for hypersensitivity (allergic) reactions; hives, hay fever; food, drug and insect allergic responses. For allergies.
20. **Skullcap tincture**- sedative, nervine, pain reliever. Good with skeletal muscle pain. Well-tolerated and useful in a wide variety of situations with pain and anxiety. For pain, shock, stress, trauma
21. **Tobacco raw herb**- drawing (spit) poultice, anodyne. For insect bites and stings
22. **Valerian tincture**- sedative, hypnotic, anodyne, nervine. A very useful sleep aid. Contradictory effects common, test individuals for reaction. For pain, stress, trauma
23. **Wild lettuce tincture**- sedative, relaxant, anodyne. Good for pain with anxiety. For pain, stress, trauma

Accessories

- Ace bandage
- Acidophilus
- Alcohol/Antiseptic wipes
- Aloe Vera gel
- Aspirin/Ibuprofen
- Band-Aids
- Betadine (Povidone-iodine)
- Black tea/Instant coffee
- Books/resources
- Candles
- Castor Oil
- Charcoal
- Clay
- Clean cloth (rags)
- Clean applicators
- Cloth tea bags
- Condoms
- 'Disposable' cups
- Electrolyte replacement
- Extra batteries
- Eyecup
- Flashlight/Headlight
- Gauze pads
- Gauze strips
- Grapefruit seed extract
- Honey
- Hot water bottle
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Insect repellent
- Instant cold pack
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Jars to infuse tea
- Matches/Lighter
- Non-adhesive dressing
- Paper towels
- Paper/pens
- Plastic bags
- Plastic gloves (disposable)
- Pots to cook tea
- Q-tips
- Razor blades (Lancet)
- Scissors
- Small containers
- Smudge stick
- Soap
- Spirulina
- Stretcher
- String/rope
- Sun block
- Surgical tape (duct tape in a pinch)
- Tampons/Sanitary pads
- Throat lozenges (herbal)
- Towel for hot compress
- Toys/baubles-for children
- Trash bags-heavy duty (medical waste)
- Tweezers
- Vitamins

Herbal Combinations and Formulas

Tinctures

- ♦ **Acute Tonic** – Echinacea, Goldenseal, Osha, Horseradish, Poke
- ♦ **Antimicrobial Throat Spray**- Calendula, Echinacea, Osha, Baptisia, Goldenseal, Propolis, Thyme essential oil, Vegetable glycerine
- ♦ **Antiseptic Wash** – Propolis, Myrrh, Goldenseal, Witch hazel
- ♦ **Bitter Tonic** – Wormwood, Yarrow, Blessed thistle, Calamus, Southernwood, Dandelion
- ♦ **Cold and Flu** – Echinacea, Baptisia, Osha
- ♦ **Decongestant Aid** – Yerba santa, Lycium
- ♦ **De-Stress** – Damiana, Oatstraw, St. Johnswort, Vervain, Rosemary, Lavender, Valerian
- ♦ **Digestive Aid** – Fennel seed, Marshmallow, Irish moss, Meadowsweet
- ♦ **Echinacea and Goldenseal**
- ♦ **Garlic and Cayenne Vinegar**
- ♦ **Good Morning Tincture** – Cola, Guarana, Black pepper, Schizandra, Cayenne, Vegetable glycerine
- ♦ **Hormonal Vitality** – Raspberry leaf, Dong quai, Vitex, Wild yam, Nettles, Hawthorne, Licorice, Cayenne, Veg. Glycerine
- ♦ **Pain Relief Tincture** – Passionflower, Meadowsweet, Valerian, Motherwort, St. Johnswort
- ♦ **Peppermint Spirits** – Peppermint essential oil, Ethanol
- ♦ **Respiratory Tonic** – Yerba santa, Mullein, Osha, Grindelia
- ♦ **Staph Dismissed** – Chaparral, Licorice, Propolis, Witch hazel
- ♦ **Tooth and Gum Tonic** – Yerba mansa, Echinacea, Goldenseal, Rhatany, Myrrh, Self-heal, Vegetable glycerine
- ♦ **Un-Headache** – Feverfew, Skullcap, Blue vervain, Chamomile, Valerian
- ♦ **Warming Lung** – Horehound, Elecampane, Wild cherry, Licorice, Ma huang, Ginger, Cayenne, Vegetable glycerin

Teas and Powders

- **Anti-Infection Tea** – Chaparral, Thuja, Echinacea, Yerba mansa, Yellow dock, Ceanothus, Goldenseal
- **Composition Powder** – Bayberry, Ginger, Cloves, Cayenne
- **Nervine Tea Blend** – Lemon balm, Skullcap, Oatstraw, German chamomile, Passionflower
- **Nutritive Tea Blend** – Nettles, Alfalfa, Red Clover, Dandelion leaf, Oatstraw
- **Tooth powder** – Clay, Myrrh, Krameria
- **Trikatu powder** – powdered Black pepper, Long pepper, Ginger
- **Pre-Asthma Tea** – Osha, Ma huang, Licorice
- **Urinary Tract Tea** – Juniper leaf/berry, Yarrow, Mallow, Uva-ursi

Oils

Key: EVOO – Extra Virgin Olive Oil; SSO – Sesame Seed Oil (raw); SAO – Sweet Almond Oil; BW – Bee’s Wax

- **Arnica /St. Johnswort Oil** – EVOO
- **Arnica Oil** – EVOO
- **Ear Oil** – Mullein flower, Garlic, Vitamin E in EVOO
- **Penetrating Massage Oil** – Prickly ash, Yerba mansa, Arnica, Chaparral, Valerian, Mustard seed, Henbane, Bittersweet nightshade, Lobelia, Cayenne, Wintergreen ess. oil, EVOO, SSO
- **Stimulating Massage Oil** – Arnica, White sage, Prickly ash, Henbane, essential oils of Camphor, Wintergreen, Sweet orange, Cinnamon, Ginger and EVOO
- **Trauma Oil** – St. Johnswort, Arnica, Valerian, Vitamin E, essential oils of Tea tree and Wintergreen in EVOO
- **We Love Insects (but not too close)** – Safflower oil and SAO with essential oils of Citronella, *Cedar*, Eucalyptus, Rosemary, Sassafras, Pennyroyal, Lavender and Cajeput

Liniments

- **Wound Liniment** – Isopropyl alcohol, Myrrh, Goldenseal, Cayenne
- **Belladonna Liniment**
- **Arnica Liniment**

Salves, Balms and Creams

- **Bruise Salve** – Arnica, St. Johnswort, Calendula, Vitamin E, EVOO, BW
- **Big Kitty Balm** – SSO, essential oils of Camphor, Tea tree, Eucalyptus, Cajeput, Wintergreen Cinnamon, BW
- **Garden Salve** – St. Johnswort, Calendula, Sage, Cleavers, Chickweed, Nettles, Comfrey, Vitamin E, EVOO, SAO, BW
- **Infection Salve** – Red clover, Chaparral, Goldenseal, St. Johnswort, Calendula, Sage, Tea tree essential oil, EVOO, BW

Syrups and Honeys

- **Cough Syrup** – Elecampane, Horehound, Wild cherry, Lemon, Ginger & Horseradish in a honey base

Essential Oils

- Clove
- Eucalyptus
- Lavender
- Tea tree
- Tiger balm
- Wintergreen

Selected Categories and Remedies

ADSORBENTS — Capable of attracting and holding onto foreign material

Activated charcoal	Clay
Charcoal	Gauze

ANESTHETICS — Produces a partial or complete loss of nerve sensation

Alcohol	Clove bud essential oil	Tobacco
Cayenne	Heat	Yarrow

ANTI-ALLERGY-Inclusive category for remedies that help reduce allergy symptoms (includes anti-histamine actions)

Ambrosia	Eyebright	Nettles
Anxiolytics	Lobelia	Osha
Echinacea	Ma Huang	

ANTIINFECTIVES (includes antiseptics and antimicrobials) — Helps prevent infection

Calendula	Goldenseal	St. Johnswort
Chaparral	Myrrh	Tea Tree essential oil
Charcoal	Oak	Tree resins
Conifer resins	Oregon graperoot	Urine
Echinacea	Osha	Witch hazel
Garlic	Propolis	Yarrow

ANTIINFLAMMATORIES — Counteracts or reduces inflammation

Aloe	Ginger	Spiraea
Arnica	Licorice	St. Johnswort
Calendula	Meadowsweet	Turmeric
Chickweed	Poplar	Willow
German chamomile	Pussytoes	Yarrow

ANTISPASMODICS — Relieves smooth muscle spasms

Belladonna	Henbane	Skullcap
Black haw	Marijuana	Valerian
Crampbark	Silk tassel	

ASTRINGENTS — Contracts tissue and reduces discharge

'Tea'	Lady's mantle	Witch hazel
Agrimony	Oak	Yellow dock
Blackberry root	Potentilla	Yerba mansa
Canaigre	Rhatany	
Geranium	Rose	

CIRCULATORY STIMULANTS — Excites circulation

Bayberry	Ginger	Rosemary
Cayenne	Prickly ash	Wild ginger

HEMOSTATICS — Arrests the flow of blood

Canadian fleabane	Cinnamon	Yarrow
Cayenne	Shepherd's purse	Yunnan Paiyao

RUBEFACIENT — Stimulates localized blood flow and reddens the skin

Camphor	Friction	Tiger balm
Cayenne	Mustard seed	Topical heat

SEDATIVES — Calms and allays excitement

Alcohol	Kava kava	Skullcap
California poppy	Lobelia	Valerian
Epipactis	Marijuana	Wild lettuce
Hops	Passionflower	

SKELETAL MUSCLE RELAXANTS — Relaxes muscles of the musculo-skeletal system

Black cohosh	Lousewort	Skullcap
Kava kava	Marijuana	Wild lettuce

TRAUMA AID — Aids in recovery of psychic/emotional balance after trauma

Anemone	Lavender essential oil	Vervain
Blue vervain	Lobelia	
California poppy	St. Johnswort	

VULNERARIES (includes Emollients)-Aids recovery of tissue from wounds

Aloe	Comfrey	Plantain
Arnica	Mallow	Slippery elm
Calendula	Marshmallow	St. Johnswort