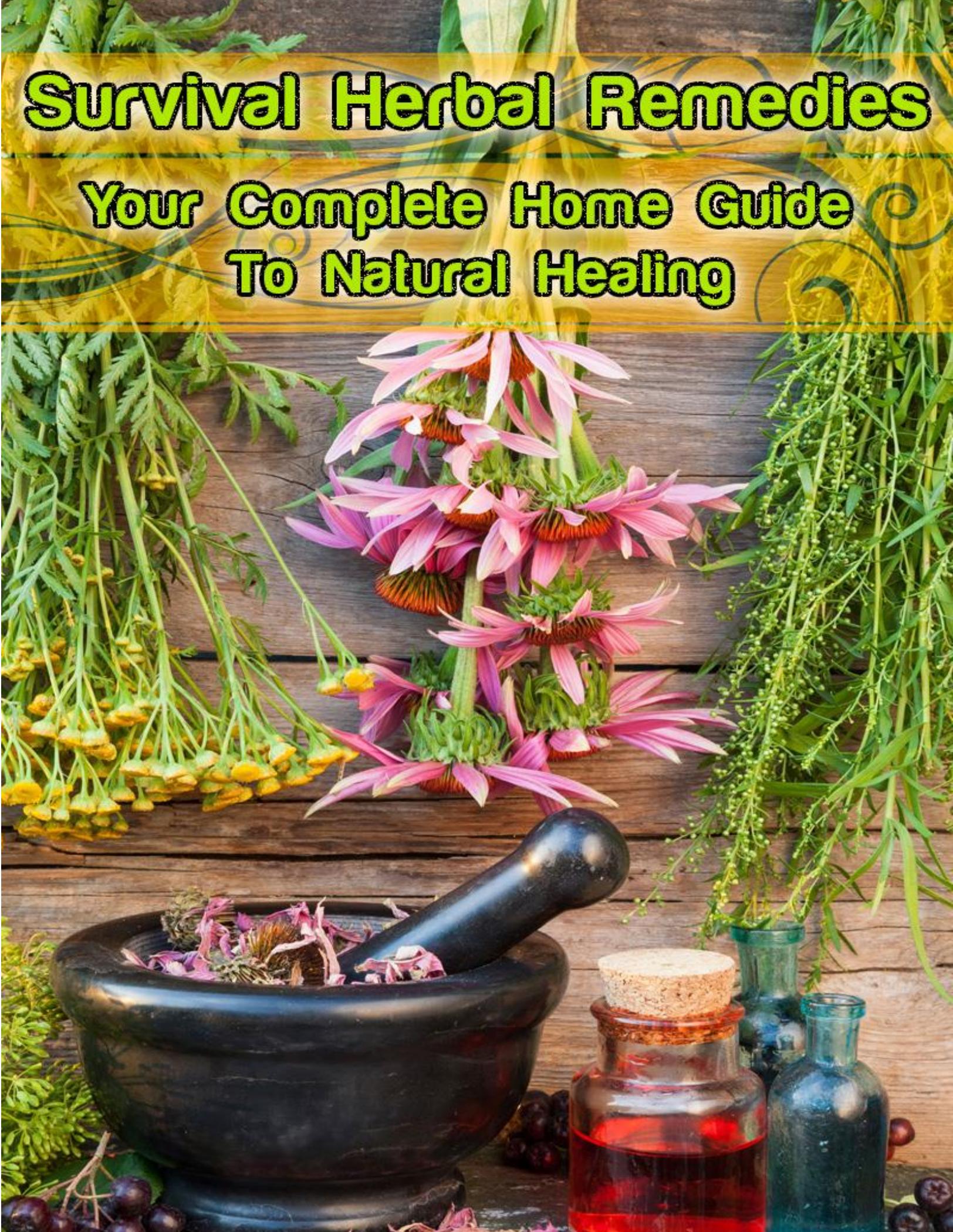


Survival Herbal Remedies

Your Complete Home Guide
To Natural Healing



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Healing

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I. How to Use Nature for Replacing Common Meds

How to Replace Different Types of Meds When They Disappear

There are a lot of natural remedies for a number of ailments which could work as substitutions for specific medications. So, let's talk about some natural alternatives for different types of meds that you can use in a post-SHTF survival situation.

Just remember that "natural" doesn't necessarily mean "safe." Use these remedies with just as much care for dosage as you would standard chemical meds. For this purpose, we've put up a short list of plants that you should definitely use with precaution, considering that they might kill you if used wrong.

Aspirin, NSAIDs and Anti-Inflammatories

There are a few different reasons why you may take these meds; you may take it to relieve pain or as a blood thinner to reduce your odds of having a heart attack or stroke.

The problem is that aspirin and many NSAIDs damage the stomach lining, liver and kidneys.

As a matter of fact, aspirin causes gastrointestinal bleeding and new research indicates that it may actually increase some people's risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Aspirin taken long-term may also increase your risk of developing macular degeneration and cataracts by as much as 44%.

In any event, it may not be available in a survivalist situation so you need a natural alternative to aspirin if SHTF. Here are some alternatives:

Blood thinners

- Natural vitamin E – 100 IUs of natural (not synthetic!) vitamin E is at least as effective as aspirin, according to some research.
- Ginkobiloba – ginko has been used for centuries to inhibit clotting and improve circulation
- Water – yes, it sounds like a cop-out but water is the best natural blood thinner there is.



Pain killers and anti-inflammatories

- Devil's claw – this has been used as an anti-inflammatory and pain killer for successful treatment of arthritis, tendonitis and muscle pain.
- Turmeric – used for pain and inflammation.
- Ginger – pain and inflammation

Statins

Statins, including Lipitor and Zocor, are used to lower cholesterol in order to avoid heart attacks and cardiovascular disease. There are many natural alternatives to these medications that you can use now and in the case of a survivalist, SHTF scenario.

- Red wine – the resveratrol and other antioxidants in red wine work well to keep cholesterol down.
- Garlic
- Olive oil (those omega-3's again!)
- Fiber-rich foods such as oats and vegetables
- Dark chocolate
- Coconut oil and other medium-chain triglycerides instead of regular fats that can raise bad (LDL) cholesterol



Blood Pressure

Though high blood pressure can be genetic, it's mostly a dietary issue. However, once you develop it, it's a life-threatening condition that requires daily treatment.

In addition to losing weight, there are some natural remedies that will work as natural blood pressure medications in a survivalist SHTF scenario.

- Increase potassium! Bananas, potatoes, tomato juice and coconut water are all high in potassium, which can help lower blood pressure.
- Coenzyme Q10 works well to lower blood pressure
- Garlic
- Hawthorn
- Foods containing magnesium and calcium

- REDUCE sodium intake. This directly affects your blood pressure!

Antacids

Heart burn, acid reflux and stomach upset don't have to plague you, even in a SHTF situation.

When you're making your survivalist list, include these natural alternatives to antacids.

- Almonds – they naturally reduce stomach acid. Take a handful of 15-20 and your heartburn will disappear in a half-hour or so.
- Aloe vera juice – long used to heal ulcers and soothe upset stomachs. Make sure that if you're making your own, you follow proper procedure. Aloe is super-easy to grow.
- Apple cider vinegar – though it may sound counterproductive to throw acid on heartburn, ACV has been used forever to cure stomach ailments. Stir 2 tablespoons into a few ounces of water and drink it immediately following a meal.
- Apples – a slice of apple can reduce stomach acid and have you feeling better in 5 minutes or so.
- Baking soda – mix a teaspoon in a few ounce of water and drink. Don't use it regularly though because it can increase sodium levels.
- Bananas
- Basil leaves – 2-3 will do the trick.
- Buttermilk
- Chamomile
- Cinnamon
- Fennel
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Grapes
- Peppermint



The list for natural antacids goes on and on but these are some of the best.

Type-2 Diabetes

Though there is no real approved alternative treatment for type-2 diabetes, there are some interesting research studies taking place that suggest that the following may be effective in helping to control it in the future.

In a SHTF situation, an alternative treatment for diabetes may be necessary, though, so having these on hand certainly can't hurt. Also, it should go without saying that any food that raises glucose levels should be eaten with extreme care.

- North American ginseng – may help with blood sugar control and glycosylated hemoglobin levels.
- Chromium – this essential trace mineral plays an important role in carbohydrate and fat metabolism and helps cells respond correctly to insulin.
- Magnesium – found naturally in green leafy veggies, nuts, seeds and grains. It's an essential mineral for everything from blood sugar metabolism to sodium uptake.
- Cinnamon – studies are showing that as little as 1 gram or as much as 6 grams of cinnamon may improve blood glucose control in people with type-2 diabetes.

Topical Anesthetics

Way before the invention of Advil and Percocet, there were many different natural anesthetics used to dull or block pain.

But just because something is natural, that doesn't mean that it's safe or that you can take as much as you want. Remember, arsenic is natural, too! So, before you use any kind of natural anesthetic, make sure that you know what you're doing!

There are two primary types of natural anesthetics: **topical** and **internal**.

Topical anesthetics are used directly on your skin, and **internal** anesthetics are ingested and work from the inside out. You'd want to use a topical anesthetic to treat issues such as toothaches, cuts, rashes, and burns. Internal anesthetics are used to treat conditions such as general pain, headaches and muscle aches.

Since anything taken internally can quickly kill you, we're going to stick to topical anesthetics for this article.

Clove Oil

Clove oil has been used for centuries to relieve toothaches and now studies show that it's basically as effective as benzocaine for topically numbing pain.

You can make a gel with it or simply dab some of the oil straight onto your gum and let it sit.

Keep in mind though that this is only going to numb your tooth, not cure the problem. You're eventually going to need to take care of the bad tooth that's causing the pain because the infection can spread to your heart and kill you.

Clove oil can also be used to relieve itching and burning related to dry skin, poison ivy and poison oak. It's also used to treat upset stomach but you need to know how much to take because high doses are toxic.



Cayenne Pepper



In addition to many other health benefits, the capsaicin in cayenne pepper is also great to use to treat arthritis, bursitis, psoriasis, eczema, muscle pain, and nerve pain.

Capsaicin is the chemical in peppers that makes them hot but when used topically, it causes your body to release a chemical called Substance P.

This is the chemical that carries pain messages from your nerves to your brain.

In addition to capsaicin, cayenne also contains salicylates, the same compounds found in aspirin.

The best way to apply the cayenne to your skin is to make a gel or cream out of it using coconut oil or other natural bases. When you first apply it, you'll feel hot. That's because the capsaicin is causing the Substance P to flood through. Once your supply is depleted within a couple of minutes, you'll get relief.

Lavender



This pretty purple flower has been used for centuries as an antiseptic, topical anesthetic and sedative and is safe for use on your pets, too. You'll often find it as an ingredient in essential oils created from relaxation or to treat insomnia, but we'll talk about its use as a topical anesthetic.

It's great to use to treat cuts and scrapes too because in addition to relieving the pain, it also helps prevent scarring and stop bleeding. If you

make a lavender salve, you can rub it on your muscles and joints to relieve sprains and other muscle pain as well as cramps and sore feet.

Wintergreen

Wintergreen is just a mild anesthetic that's good to treat toothaches or stomach aches, but since it's so easy to grow, we thought we'd throw it in.

Other anesthetics that have been used throughout history include onions, garlic, ginger, tea tree oil, and Epsom salts.



Peppermint and apple cider vinegar are typical natural remedies for upset stomach and other digestive issues. Calendula, Jasmine, Yarrow and Chamomile are great for relieving itching caused by just about anything and can also help with inflammation.

There are many different herbs and spices that have various uses as anesthetics but you need to be careful when using them. If you plan to incorporate natural pain killers as part of your survival plan, you need to educate yourself well using trusted sources because, though a little may help, too much of an herb or spice may kill. It may be a good idea, to include in your bag an herbalism guide book for both people and pets.

Common Injuries You Can Treat Using Herbs

Many of the illnesses can be avoided by proper exercise and eating a healthy diet. In this case, an ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure because in a SHTF situation, it's probably not going to be easy to find medications to keep you alive. Your body might be tough enough to fight a disease or an injury, but sometimes you need to look for alternatives and help him with natural remedies.

Let's see what to use if common injuries appear, and meds are not available nor at your hand.

Stings and Bites

You only need a few plants in order to deal with all of the stings and bites from bees, mosquitoes and all the other pesky insects. In fact, keeping an herb garden is one of the best ways to ensure that you have access to quality ingredients for natural remedies.

Whenever you are preparing such a remedy, it is important to remember not to use the plants that have been recently sprayed with chemicals.



For the most common bites and stings, **plantain** is the most accessible resource.

It is a very common weed found in many gardens, whether it was planted there or not. Simply take a few plantain leaves and make a poultice by chewing them up and applying them to the affected area. An alternative to this would be an oil made from lavender, another common plant.

All you have to do is take a few lavender flowers and chop them up finely. Afterwards you can cover them in a quarter inch of vegetable oil and heat the mixture slowly until it is warm to the touch. Now it is good to apply to the affected area. The best part is that the remaining mixture can be strained and stored for later use. It should still be good for around six months.

Burns

Burns can be extremely painful and also render us incapable of performing common tasks. However, they can be treated with natural remedies.

One good example is the aforementioned **lavender oil** which is also good for burns and scalds. All you need to do is apply it gently to the damaged area and it will help reduce inflammation and speed up the skin healing.

Another useful tincture can be made from **the aloe plant**. This is another plant with vast healing properties so it should be part of your collection. Just remember not to plant it in the garden as it needs to stay indoors.

For a minor burn, all you need to do is take a leaf and squeeze out the juice onto the burn. If you have something more serious, use one of the bigger, outer leaves of the plant. Take it and slice it lengthwise and squeeze out all of the gel inside of it. Now you can use the gel on its own or, for added power, mix it with a little vitamin E oil in order to get a more potent tincture.

Cuts

Just like burns, cuts are not only painful, but pretty common for people working around the house. It is very useful to have easy access to ingredients that can deal with them.

However, before anything else, it is important to know that severe, deep cuts cannot be treated with herbs and oils. There is a very large risk of tetanus in these cases and medical attention is recommended as soon as possible.

For smaller cuts, though, lavender oil proves to be useful yet again. It works as a good antiseptic and decreases the chances for infection.

For increased healing power, **garlic** is very useful against cuts. It contains allicin, a substance which can be as potent as penicillin.

What you need to do is to take one clove of garlic and to crush it hard and apply the juice to the damaged area.



There is a drawback, though. When the garlic juice is applied to the cut, it will sting. It can even damage the skin if left on too long.

In order to prevent this, wash the cut with cold water after a few minutes.

A combination of **lavender oil** and **garlic** juice will yield the best results – first the lavender, then the garlic.

Itchiness

Itchiness can occur for various reasons and it is quite unpleasant. Many of us cannot fight the uncontrollable urge to scratch. While this might provide temporary relief, it does more harm than good. Not only will it damage the skin, but also leave you prone to infection.

The standard remedy for itches is a bath with **baking soda** and **oatmeal**. All you need to do is prepare a warm bath and add a cup of baking or a cup of finely ground oatmeal.

However, these remedies are good when you itch all over the place or in hard-to-reach areas. For more localized problems, there are easier solutions.

Take **juniper berries**, for example. They have many medicinal properties and would make a fine addition to your garden.

The recipe, though, is a bit more complicated and will also require **cloves**, **beeswax** and **butter**.



- Take about 3 ounces of butter and begin melting them in a pan.
- In another pan, melt about 2 tablespoons of beeswax.
- Combine them when they are both melted.
- Take the berries and the cloves and ground them up well.
- Take about 5 tablespoons of ground berries and 3 spoons of ground cloves and add them to the mixture.
- First allow the concoction to cool down then apply it to all itchy areas.

Sunburn

For someone who works outside in the sun all day, sunburn is a common problem. However, it is also one which can be dealt with quite easily.

One simple technique of relieving the pain of sunburn involves just using **potatoes**. Take one or two potatoes, wash them thoroughly and cut them into small pieces. Next they need to be ground up into a paste which is easiest in a blender. If the result is too dry, it is ok to add some water to the mixture. This paste should be applied directly to the burned area and left there until it dries up. Afterwards a cold shower is recommended.

If this technique is too messy or if the sunburn is localized to a smaller area, it is ok to take the potato paste and simply apply it to gauze. The gauze should then be placed on top of the burn, making sure to change the dressing every hour.



II. Medicinal Plants To Use For Survival

Herbalism, found and practiced throughout virtually every region and people of the world, has been practiced with quite some success for thousands of years.

Many modern practitioners and patients of herbal or holistic medicine consider it to be the precursor of modern pharmaceutical medicine. And, considering that most modern pharmaceuticals are comprised of, or have been developed from, extracts of various plants, they may not be wholly incorrect.

Top 30 Medicinal Plants To Learn For Survival

Eastern medicine, as well as [Native Americans](#) and many other cultures, used natural cures long before Western medicine even thought about a pill.

Here's a list of medicinal plants to learn for survival.

1. **Althea.** Grows in well-drained soil in either sun or shade. Great for skin irritations, ulcers and sore throats.

2. **American Ginseng.** This root grows best in cool climates and is used to treat respiratory disorders and reduce fevers. It's used orally, often in a tea.
3. **Barberry.** This grows to as high as a whopping 9 feet tall! Use it to treat skin conditions and diarrhea.
4. **Belladonna.** Great to use as a sleep aid but be extremely careful; too much belladonna will kill.
5. **Billberry.** Grow these berries in full sun. Use them to ease diabetes pain, and to treat kidney disease and eye conditions. Eat the berries.
6. **Borage.** Grows well in full sun and moderate to moist soil. Helps with arthritis, joint pain and skin conditions such as eczema.
7. **Catnip.** Grows well in many soils. Treats cold symptoms, swelling and fever. It also helps stop bleeding when applied topically and soothes gas, migraines and stomach aches when infused.
8. **Cayenne Pepper.** Grows well in moderate to moist soil and full sun to partial shade. Can help prevent heart attacks and heal ulcers and hemorrhoids.
9. **Cranesbill.** This grows best in warm, semi-dry soil. It helps stop bleeding and diarrhea and is also good for canker sores.
10. **Echinacea.** Grows well in nearly any climate as long as you don't overwater it. Treats colds and the flu.
11. **Fo-Ti.** Grows in sun or shade but doesn't like extreme heat. Treats high cholesterol, erectile dysfunction, constipation and fatigue.
12. **Ginger.** Not only is it delicious, it's also great for migraines, nausea, motion sickness and circulation, including blood clots. Eat it or make it into a tea.
13. **Goldenseal.** Grows best in a shady area in rich, moist soil. Use it to treat bladder and fungal infections as well as sinus congestion. Use it in teas.
14. **Lady Fern.** Grows well in moist soil. Eases the pain of minor cuts, burns and stings.
15. **Licorice Root.** Grows best in rich soil in either sun or shade. Can't take extreme cold. Treats sore throats, ulcers and respiratory issues such as bronchitis.

16. **Marijuana.** Grows well in moderate to moist soil and high sun. Treats glaucoma, depression, anxiety, high blood pressure and nausea. The hemp plant makes great rope as well.
17. **Milk Thistle.** Grows best in semi-dry soil in temperate climates. It's a wonderful antioxidant and can be used to treat liver and kidney problems.
18. **Parsley.** Grows well in moist soil with sun or partial shade. Helps cleanse the blood and also helps with kidney stones.
19. **Peppermint.** Grows best in temperate climates in moist soil. Helps treat acid reflux, heart burn, headaches and gallstones.
20. **Rosemary.** Grows well in many different soils and climates and doesn't require much attention. Great for upset stomach and helps with headaches. May even help treat cancer.
21. **Saw Palmetto.** Grows great in full sun with moderately moist soil. Treats bladder infections, stomach problems including nausea and bronchitis.
22. **Skullcap.** Needs well-drained soil and full sun. Used to treat high blood pressure.
23. **St. John's Wort.** Grows well in warm, moist soil and can't tolerate the cold. Works well to treat depression and can also slow the progression of HIV.
24. **Tart Cherries.** Grows on trees in moderate to warm climates. Can't take extreme cold. Helps treat arthritis and diabetes and may help prevent cancer.
25. **Tea Tree Oil.** This is tough to grow so we suggest that you stock up on it. It's a powerful antibacterial, anti-viral and anti-fungal and works wonders to treat athlete's foot, vaginal infections, acne, and many other conditions.
26. **Valerian.** Easy to grow in many moderate to warm climates. Remove the flowering stems as soon as they appear. Great for insomnia and anxiety.
27. **Vinpocetine.** This comes from lesser periwinkle and helps to treat people with stroke, Alzheimer's and vascular dementia.
28. **White Willow.** Grows best in moist soil. It's the mother of modern aspirin and is used to treat fever, inflammation and aches.

MEDICINAL PLANTS TO LEARN FOR SURVIVAL



Althea



Borage



Milk Thistle



Parsley



Rosemary



Valerian

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29. **Wild Yam Roots.** Native to China, these roots grow best in temperate climates. It's great for rheumatoid arthritis, menstrual cramps and nausea.

30. **Witch hazel.** Grows best in moist, acidic soil and full sun but it isn't too particular. It will even grow in partial shade. It's an antiseptic and also helps make bruises feel better. Also used to treat IBS and other bowel issues.

We recommend taking the time to learn about medicinal plants if you plan to use them, otherwise they might hurt you instead of helping you.

Vital Herbs from The Herbalist's Garden

Herbalism, found and practiced throughout virtually every region and people of the world, has been practiced with quite some success for thousands of years.

Many modern practitioners and patients of herbal or holistic medicine consider it to be the precursor of modern pharmaceutical medicine. And, considering that most modern pharmaceuticals are comprised of, or have been developed from, extracts of various plants, they may not be wholly incorrect.

In any case, modern pharmaceutical medicines are unfortunately something of a limited commodity. If, or when, a serious disaster or other calamitous event strikes, access to modern medicine is likely to be extremely limited or entirely unavailable. Depending on the range and scope of the disaster, you may be faced with a situation where medicines are out of production or are only available in very small quantities.

Fortunately, the human race has been around, and has managed to survive, for millennia without the aid of modern pharmaceutical medicines. More fortunately still, much of this traditional knowledge has been passed down through the generations, orally and in written form.

In recent decades, modern science has also been employed to carry out detailed, thorough studies regarding many traditional herbal remedies and recipes. As a result, we now have access to a wealth of knowledge inherited from generations past, as well as the growing scientific knowledge to understand how and why certain traditional remedies have their efficacy.

In short, it's never been a better, or easier, time to become a bit of an herbalist; and some basic botany know-how might one day prove quite useful if the pharmacies should ever start to fail.

So whether you're already off the grid, or you'd just like to start growing something useful in your window boxes, here are some great plants to start your own herbalist's garden.

Mint (including peppermint and spearmint)

Mint is renowned as a culinary herb and for use in teas, but it's also been used in poultices, tinctures, and balms for medicinal use for literally ten thousand years or more.

In addition to large quantities of menthol, peppermint is a rich source of many other terpenes and flavonoids, including limonene which is also found in lemonbalm, lemongrass, limes and lemons.



Tea steeped from the leaves and flowers of the mint plant is a traditional remedy for pain associated with IBS, nausea, vomiting and other stomach ailments.

Chamomile / Feverfew



Chamomile and feverfew are two close relatives in the daisy family.

Popular as a steeped tea to aid in relaxation and as a nighttime sleep aid, chamomile and feverfew tea have also been used to treat headaches.

Feverfew tea, in particular, is a popular traditional remedy for migraine headaches, while both have demonstrated anti-inflammatory effects. Chamomile and its closest relatives are also rich in beneficial flavonoids, terpenoids and numerous other compounds.

Please note that if you have a known allergy to ragweed, you may be allergic to chamomile and other related plants.

Chamomile is also known to be capable of inducing uterine contractions, so pregnant women are advised to avoid consuming it.

Hawthorn

Hawthorn isn't technically an herb, but it is immensely useful for heart and cardiovascular health, and is therefore worth at least an honorable mention.

With natural ACE-inhibiting effects, hawthorn leaves and berries have been used in teas, jams and various decoctions for strengthening the heart and toning the cardiovascular system for many hundreds of years.



Hawthorn is a rich source of flavonoids, terpenes, B vitamins, vitamin C, saponins and many other beneficial constituents with anti-inflammatory properties.

Recent studies have indicated that hawthorn may have varying efficacy in treating and relieving symptoms of angina, congestive heart failure, arrhythmia, and hypertension, among other cardiovascular effects.

Please note, hawthorn has been shown to interact with prescription blood pressure and heart medications; if you are taking any blood thinners or other blood pressure medication, consult with your physician before adding hawthorn to your diet.

Ginger



Ginger tastes great in many dishes, but it's also got a number of health-boosting properties that have made it popular as a medicinal herb for many centuries.

Tea steeped from sliced ginger and honey, and sometimes additional lemon, is one traditional

remedy for soothing sore throats, warding off colds and the flu, and settling the stomach or relieving morning sickness.

Rosemary

Rosemary is popularly used as a seasoning and culinary herb, but it has also traditionally been associated with improving the memory.

From a scientific view, rosemary has been shown to contain several potent antioxidants and it is generally rich in calcium, vitamin B6, and iron.



There are many more plants, both wild and traditionally cultivated, that have a long history of traditional medicinal use; but remember that natural is not synonymous with harmless.

All medicines, herbal and pharmaceutical alike, should be taken in moderation and under the direction and guidance of a qualified doctor whenever possible.

xxx

Many herbal medicines can interact with or enhance the efficacy of prescription or other pharmaceutical drugs, so always exercise caution when taking new supplements or herbs of any kind. Talk to your doctor if you're on any prescription medication, and be sure to keep your doctor informed if you start taking additional herbal medicines.

Finally, remember that many of these herbs, such as mint, garlic and rosemary, have rather potent antiseptic qualities.

That means that if the SHTF, you can use some of the same medicinal herbs to make homemade cleaning products and soaps. After all, cleanliness is next to godliness.

5 Plants from the Kitchen for Your Health

It's been known since ancient times that vegetables and herbs are crucial in maintaining health and improving your well-being. But some of those common plants and herbs have medical properties and can turn into natural medicine when living-off-the-grid.

What else would you use these items for?

Onion

Onion deserves to be called a superfood: it is well packed with vitamin C, vitamin B6, folic acid, flavonoids and some other nutrients, with powerful anti-inflammatory, anti-cholesterol, anticancer and antioxidant properties.

Onions have 25 active compounds that help combat heart disease, inhibit strokes, reduce cholesterol levels, and boost your immune system.

The onion is also known for its diuretic properties. You can relieve bruises, burns and bee stings by placing a raw onion on the affected area. Remove a splinter by tapping a slice of fresh onion on the skin overnight, and use a few lukewarm drops of cooked onion juice to relieve earache.



Onion tea is really useful to calm down sore throat, and also in cleaning out acneic skin. Onion juice is known to be a natural moth repellent, and prevents insect bites, when you rub it on your skin. Plus, you can use onion to clean your grill, to polish metal or clean bath sponges.

And don't forget to paint Easter eggs using hard boiled onion skin.

Mustard



Mustard is one of those items that never needs refrigeration, due to its antibacterial properties.

You could use mustard seeds to spice up your food, but it doesn't only belong in the kitchen... but also in your bug-out-bag: you might need it later to relieve pain.

Mustard seeds are packed with flavonoid and carotenoid antioxidants, selenium and magnesium, and also niacin and vitamin B3. Selenium and magnesium make mustard seeds great in relieving rheumatoid, arthritic and muscle pain.

The antioxidants prevent gastric cancer, and can also slow down the ageing process. Niacin and vitamin B3 help reduce cholesterol levels and protect the arteries from atherosclerosis.

It also gives a big helping hand in protecting the body from hypertension. Due to its antifungal properties, mustard helps clear many common skin infections, and increase the body's ability to fight diseases. Use mustard seeds to improve digestion, reduce constipation, and relieve symptoms of hemorrhoids and anal fissures.

And that's not all, as you can use mustard seeds to get rid of bad smells: it turns into a perfect skunk smell remover, and used bottle deodorizer.

Garlic

Garlic is good for far more than simply warding off pesky vampires.

While some garlic-enthusiasts will tout it as practically the fountain of youth, presenting it as a veritable cure-all, the reality is a little closer to earth.

There is a long traditional use of garlic as a medicinal herb, particularly to fight colds, flues, and infections, and modern science has confirmed some of these traditional uses. Having been shown to contain high levels of vitamin C, several B vitamins, a variety of flavonoids, saponins, proteins and enzymes, and the compounds alliin and allicin.

As a result of its many compounds, garlic can help to promote cardiovascular health and lower cholesterol levels, while during WWI and WWII, garlic was used as an antiseptic to treat infections and prevent gangrene on wounded soldiers. Its antioxidants kill bacteria, and help the immune system fight chest infections, coughs and congestion: make a tea with 4-5 chopped garlic cloves in hot water, then strain and drink.



Some studies have also shown garlic, or allicin extracted therefrom, to be effective in the treatment and regulation of hypertension.

Garlic is a natural help for people with diabetes, as it enhances the level of insulin in the blood. It also reduces LDL cholesterol level and fights cardiovascular diseases and impotency. Due to its anti-inflammatory properties, garlic is a great natural remedy for acne and cold sores, and relieves psoriasis outbreaks.

The high level of allicin (a sulfur compound similar to that found in onions), and also vitamin B6 and vitamin C make garlic useful in so many ways, in as well as outside the kitchen, or when living-off-the-grid. Fish are attracted to garlic scent, so you can make you own bait using food scraps and minced garlic cloves to catch fish.

Garlic is great for keeping bugs and pests away from the rest of your plants, and works as a natural adhesive for fixing hairline cracks in glass.

Cabbage

Cabbage is a good source of vitamin C, fiber and beta-carotene, which may reduce your risks of cancer.

Its laxative properties are widely known from ancient times. Cabbage juice can also be a good antidote for mushroom poisoning and an effective balm for sore eyes.

Cabbage leaves may be a good treatment for rheumatism and sore feet. They relieve sunburns, and treat warts and abscesses. Use cabbage to treat stomach pain, excess stomach acid and intestinal ulcers, but also to reduce asthma and morning sickness.



Fennel

Fennel was widely cultivated for its strongly flavored leaves and fruits, but became an invasive species that can be found from the East Coast to inland hill and mountain areas in North America.

It is great in spicing meat and other dishes, but what else could you use it for outside your kitchen?

Women are the main beneficiaries: fennel tea suppresses menstrual cramps, increases breast milk, relieves the pain associated with swollen breasts, and treats colic in infants.

Fennel is widely used in treating stomach problems, both in human and animals, because it works as a diuretic, and reduces flatulence by correcting the expulsion of intestinal gases. Use fennel tea for those suffering of asthma or bronchial diseases: the syrup is highly effective for chronic coughs.



It is perfect to disinfect kennels and stables, as it is said to be disliked by fleas.

7 Plants that Could Kill You if Used Wrong

Just because a medicine is “natural” doesn’t imply that it’s safe. Herbs are excellent substitutes for pharmaceutical medications as long as you use them properly. If not, some plants could actually kill you if used wrong.

Arsenic is natural and so is plutonium, but you’re probably not planning to toss either one onto your cereal in the morning.

Many plants can cure a wide variety of illnesses in the proper dose but will cause poisoning, abortion or organ failure if you take you much. Here are a few of the top plants that you should be careful with.

Wolfsbane



Originally thought to have been gathered from the dripping jaws of the three-headed dog, Cerberus, Wolfsbane, aka Monkshood or Aconite, is wildly toxic, even in mild doses.

It is still used under carefully controlled circumstances as a sedative, fever reducer, and cold/flu medicine.

However, it has a notable effect on circulation, respiration and the central nervous system. Not worth it when there are so many other treatments out there.

Belladonna

Translated from Italian to mean “pretty woman”, belladonna, aka deadly nightshade, was originally used to dilate a woman’s pupils so that they glittered.

Now it's used in the medical field under the name atropine and is used to treat bradycardia (slow heartbeat), arthritis, stomach cramps, hyperhidrosis, as a sedative, and to treat colds, sore throats, and hay fever because of its effects on the respiratory system.

However, though it's extremely effective, it's also lethal in a not-so-large dose.

Pregnant women, women who are breastfeeding, or people with congestive heart failure or ulcers shouldn't take belladonna in any dose, or even come into physical contact with it.



Stinging Nettle

Stinging nettle has many uses in alternative medicine, such as treating urination issues, joint ailments, rashes, allergies, asthma and kidney stones.

It's also applied topically to relieve muscle aches and pains. Though recognized as possibly safe when used appropriately and for less than six months by people in good health, it may cause sweating and stomach upset.

There is some evidence that above-ground parts can decrease blood sugar levels so if you have diabetes, you should monitor your blood sugar levels closely.

It may also lower blood pressure so if you're taking blood pressure medications or are prone to low blood pressure, extreme caution should be used when taking stinging nettle.

Finally, if you have kidney problems, you should talk to you doctor before taking stinging nettle because it seems to increase urine flow.



Kava Kava

Native to the South Pacific, kava kava root has been used for centuries to treat insomnia, depression, anxiety and restlessness, among other things.

It causes a sense of well-being and calm but there are some serious concerns about the side effects that have caused widespread ban of the plant in countries including the US, Switzerland, Germany, and Canada.

Serious illnesses, including liver damage, depression, and death, have occurred with even short-term use at recommended dosages. It shouldn't be taken by pregnant women under any circumstances.



Devil's Claw

This plant is an anti-inflammatory often used to treat osteoarthritis and lower back pain.



Though there's not much research to support using devil's claw for anything else, it's also been used to treat gout, upset stomach, muscle pain, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Though generally recognized as possibly safe in recommended dosages for up to a year by healthy adults, devil's claw shouldn't be used by pregnant women, diabetics, people with heart problems or abnormal blood pressure, or by people with gallstones or peptic ulcers.

It's thought that devil's claw may increase stomach acid and bile production.

Foxglove

Also known as digitalis, foxglove is treat congestive heart failure, irregular heartbeat, asthma and epilepsy when ingested. Topically, it's used to treat wounds and burns.



Foxglove is listed as unsafe for anybody to use without being under the direct care of a healthcare professional because all parts of the plant are poisonous.

It can cause irregular heart function and death. Long-term use can cause visual halos, stomach upset and yellow-green vision because toxicity occurs.

People with heart disease should definitely avoid foxglove as should pregnant or nursing women. Also, people with kidney disease may not eliminate foxglove effectively and may become toxic, so they should avoid it, too.

Comfrey

This plant has been used for centuries to treat a wide variety of ailments. It's brewed into a tea to treat heavy menstrual flow, stomach upset, ulcers, diarrhea, persistent coughs, bronchitis, sore throat, and chest pain.

It's also applied topically to treat arthritis, wounds, rheumatoid arthritis, phlebitis, gout, and broken bones.

Comfrey contains chemicals called pyrrolizidine alkaloids that can cause lung damage, liver damage, and even cancer.

The FDA has recommended that products containing comfrey be removed from US markets. It's likely safe when applied topically to unbroken skin, though it is absorbed through the skin. It's considered unlikely safe when taken orally or when applied to broken skin.



The truth of the matter is that most plants are just like most pharmaceutical medications. Though they may be therapeutic at certain levels, they are toxic when taken at higher doses or for extended periods of time. Some, such as hemlock, are lethal in even the smallest doses.

The bottom line? Know what you're doing before you take anything herbal. If you're pregnant or nursing, assume that what you take will pass to your baby. Remember that the same drugs that cure you can also kill you.