



Verdigris Market Garden Field Guide Herbal First Aid

**A Practical Guide to Plant-Based
Remedies for Common
Injuries & Ailments**

Verdigris Market Garden

Field Guide

Herbal First Aid

A Practical Guide to Plant-Based
Remedies for Common Injuries

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Educational Disclaimer:

The information in this guide is intended for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent disease. Always use good judgment and seek appropriate medical care when needed.

Design and production by Kenneth Wright.

Welcome to the Verdigris Market Garden

Field Guide to Herbal First Aid.

For generations, people have turned to plants for comfort and support during everyday injuries and minor illnesses. Long before modern pharmacies existed, gardens, forests, and fields provided many of the remedies used to care for cuts, burns, digestive upset, and seasonal illness.

Herbal first aid is not complicated medicine. In many cases it involves only a small number of well-known plants, prepared simply and used thoughtfully. A handful of herbs—such as calendula, plantain, chamomile, and yarrow—can support the body in many common situations.

The purpose of this guide is to introduce these plants and the practical ways they can be used for everyday care.

At Verdigris Market Garden, we believe herbal knowledge begins with the plants themselves. Learning to recognize, grow, and prepare herbs builds confidence and deepens our connection to the natural world.

This field guide offers a practical introduction to herbal first aid, including:

- simple herbal preparations
- remedies for common injuries
- a quick-reference materia medica of essential herbs
- guidance for building a small herbal first aid kit

The information here is meant to support everyday situations—not replace professional medical care when it is needed. Knowing when to seek medical attention is an important part of responsible herbal practice.

Whether you are just beginning to explore herbal medicine or already keep herbs in your home apothecary, this guide is designed to be a useful companion.

Over time, the plants described here may become familiar allies—growing in your garden, stored in your cupboard, and ready when simple care is needed.

Ken and Will
Verdigris Market Garden

How to Use This Guide

This book is designed as a **practical field reference** for herbal first aid. Each section is organized to make information easy to locate when it is needed.

Sections

[Part I](#) introduces the foundations of herbal first aid, including how herbal remedies work and how to build a simple herbal first aid kit.

[Part II](#) explores common injuries and everyday health concerns, along with herbs traditionally used to support recovery.

[Part III](#) provides a concise **materia medica**, offering quick reference profiles for the core herbs used throughout the guide.

[Part IV](#) concludes with guidance for growing a small herbal first aid garden and continuing your exploration of herbal medicine.

Field Notes

Throughout the guide you will find **Verdigris Field Notes**, short observations highlighting traditional knowledge, plant characteristics, or practical insights gathered from herbal practice.

Herbalist / Verdigris Tips

Herbalist Tips provide simple guidance for preparing or using herbal remedies effectively.

Quick Reference Charts

Charts summarize helpful herbs and preparations for common situations. They are designed for quick consultation when time is limited.

A Note on Safety

Herbal first aid is appropriate for many minor injuries and everyday situations. However, some conditions require professional medical care.

When in doubt, always seek appropriate medical attention.

PART I

Herbal First Aid Basics

Chapter 1

The Role of Herbs in First Aid



Minor injuries and everyday discomforts are a normal part of life. Small cuts, burns, insect bites, and digestive upset occur frequently during daily activities.

In many cases the body is capable of repairing these issues on its own. Herbal remedies can support this process by soothing irritated tissues, encouraging circulation, and helping maintain a healthy environment for healing.

Unlike highly targeted pharmaceutical drugs, many herbs work gently by supporting the body's natural responses.

Plants contain complex combinations of compounds that interact with the body in subtle ways. Rather than overriding the body's healing processes, herbs often create favorable conditions for recovery.

Many herbs traditionally used in first aid share several qualities.

They may:

- calm inflammation
- soothe irritated tissue
- support circulation
- discourage unwanted microbes
- encourage tissue repair

Because of these qualities, herbs have long been used for situations such as cuts, burns, rashes, and digestive discomfort.

Learning to work with these plants allows people to respond calmly and confidently when minor injuries occur.

A Simple Principle for Herbal First Aid

When caring for most minor injuries, a simple sequence is helpful:



Clean

The first step is always to clean the affected area. Removing dirt and debris helps prevent infection and allows tissue to begin healing properly.

Protect

Next, protect the injured area from further irritation. This may involve covering the wound, reducing movement, or applying a soothing preparation.

Support Healing

Finally, herbal remedies can support the body's natural healing process. Oils, salves, teas, compresses, and poultices all provide gentle support for recovery.



When to Seek Medical Care

Herbal first aid is appropriate for many minor injuries but not for serious or life-threatening situations. Seek medical care immediately if:

- bleeding is heavy or will not stop
- wounds are deep
- burns are severe
- fractures are suspected
- allergic reactions occur
- breathing becomes difficult
- injuries involve the eyes or head.

Herbal remedies can still play a role in supporting recovery, but serious injuries require professional evaluation.

Chapter 2

Building an Herbal First Aid Kit



A well-prepared herbal first aid kit allows you to respond calmly when minor injuries occur. Whether at home, traveling, or spending time outdoors, having a small collection of herbs and supplies on hand can make everyday situations easier to manage. Treat this section as a checklist to assemble your kit.

An herbal first aid kit typically includes three categories:

- core herbs
- prepared remedies
- basic supplies

Core Herbs



Several herbs appear repeatedly in traditional herbal first aid.

These may appear in any form, fresh, dried, powdered, and even essential oils can provide a level of comfort.

Prepared Remedies

Helpful preparations include:



Calendula 🌿

Plantain salve



*Yarrow
Tincture*

*Echinacea
Tincture*



Chamomile tea



Lavender oil 🌿

Basic Supplies

A practical herbal first aid kit may include:



- gauze
- adhesive bandages
- medical tape or self adhesive bandage
(also known by the
brand name Coban)
- clean cloths for compresses
- small jars
- dropper bottles
- scissors
- tweezers

Chapter 3

Essential Herbal Preparations

Only a small number of herbal preparations are needed for most first aid situations. These simple forms allow herbs to be applied effectively depending on the type of injury or discomfort.

Understanding when to use each preparation makes herbal first aid more practical and approachable.

Compress

A compress is a cloth soaked in an herbal infusion and applied directly to the skin.

Compresses are especially useful for:

- swelling
- insect bites
- rashes and irritated skin
- minor infections

Warm compresses help encourage circulation, while cool compresses are often used to calm inflammation and heat.

Poultice

A poultice is made by crushing fresh plant material and applying it directly to the skin.

This method allows the plant's juices to come into immediate contact with the affected area.

Poultices are especially useful for:

- insect bites and stings
- splinters
- localized irritation
- minor wounds

Plantain is one of the most widely used herbs for this preparation.



Tincture

A tincture is a concentrated extract made using alcohol or glycerin.

Tinctures are valued because they are:

- long-lasting
- portable
- easy to use in small amounts

They may be taken internally or diluted with water for external use as a wash or compress.



Infused Oil

Infused oils are created by steeping herbs in a carrier oil such as olive or almond oil.

These oils are especially useful for:

- dry or damaged skin
- minor burns
- irritated tissue

Infused oils form the foundation for many first aid salves.



Salve

A salve is an infused oil thickened with beeswax to create a semi-solid preparation.

Salves form a protective layer on the skin and are commonly used for cuts, scrapes, minor burns, and chapped or irritated skin.



Verdigris Field Note

Most herbal first aid situations can be addressed with just a few preparations. A simple combination of a salve, a tincture, and the ability to make a compress or poultice is often enough to respond to everyday needs.

PART II
Herbal Remedies for
Common Injuries

Cuts and Scrapes

Minor cuts and scrapes occur frequently during everyday activities.

First Aid Steps

Clean

Gently clean the wound using water or a prepared herbal wash to remove dirt and debris.

Apply Pressure

If bleeding is present, apply gentle, steady pressure with a clean cloth or gauze until it slows or stops.

Support

Apply an appropriate herbal preparation, such as a salve or wash, to support the body's natural healing process.



Calendula



Yarrow



Plantain

Calendula Healing Salve

Helpful for:

Cuts, scrapes, cracked skin, minor wounds

Ingredients

½ cup calendula infused oil

1 tablespoon beeswax pellets

Optional: 5–10 drops lavender essential oil

Instructions

Place the calendula oil and beeswax in a heatproof jar or double boiler. Warm gently until the beeswax melts completely.

Remove from heat and stir well. Add lavender essential oil if desired. Pour the mixture into small tins or jars and allow it to cool and solidify.

Apply a small amount to clean skin as needed.

Herbal Wound Wash

Helpful for:

Cleaning minor cuts and scrapes

Ingredients

1 tablespoon dried calendula flowers

1 tablespoon dried yarrow

1 cup boiling water

Instructions

Pour boiling water over the herbs and cover. Allow the mixture to steep for 10–15 minutes.

Strain the liquid and allow it to cool until warm or room temperature.

Use the infusion to gently rinse or clean minor wounds.

Fresh preparations are best, but the wash may be stored in the refrigerator for up to 24–48 hours.



Verdigris Tip

A Ready-to-Use Wound Wash

For a more practical, shelf-stable option, a **tincture-based wash** can be prepared in advance.

Combine equal parts **calendula tincture** and **yarrow tincture** in a small bottle. To use, add a few drops of the mixture to a small amount of clean water and use it to rinse or cleanse the wound.

This method provides a convenient way to keep a ready-to-use herbal wash in a first aid kit without the need for fresh preparation.

Burns (Minor)

Minor burns affect only the outer layer of the skin.

First Aid Steps

Cool

Cool the burn with cool running water to reduce heat and discomfort.

Protect

Protect the skin from further irritation or friction.

Support

Apply a soothing herbal preparation to support the skin's natural recovery.

Lavender Burn Oil

Helpful for:

Minor burns, sunburn, irritated skin

Ingredients

1 tablespoon carrier oil (olive or almond oil)

2–3 drops lavender essential oil

Instructions

Combine the oils in a small container and mix gently.

Apply a small amount to cooled skin to soothe irritation. Reapply as needed.



Plantain



Calendula



Lavender



Verdigris Tip

Plants vs. Essential Oils

If you grow lavender, use it to infuse your carrier oil for a few weeks and keep the strained, infused oil on hand for months. Essential oils do part of the job, but plants like lavender contain a multitude of skin benefits that essential oils alone cannot duplicate!

Sunburn

Sunburn occurs when the skin is overexposed to sunlight, leading to redness, heat, and irritation. Even mild sunburn can leave the skin sensitive and dehydrated for several days.

Limiting direct sun exposure during the hottest part of the day, wearing light protective clothing, and using physical barriers such as hats or shade can help reduce the risk. Many people also choose simple, mineral-based sunscreens as an alternative to synthetic formulations.

Cooling Aloe & Lavender Skin Gel

Helpful for:

Sunburn, overheated skin, mild skin irritation

Ingredients

2 tablespoons aloe vera gel
2 drops lavender essential oil

Instructions

Combine the aloe gel and lavender essential oil in a small bowl and mix well.

Apply gently to sunburned or irritated skin as needed.



Verdigris Tip

Harvesting Fresh Aloe Gel

Many store-bought aloe gels contain unnecessary additives. Fresh aloe gel is simple to harvest and use.

Cut a mature outer leaf at the base and allow the yellow sap (latex) to drain for a few minutes. Slice the leaf open and scoop out the clear inner gel.

Apply directly to sunburned skin. Store any extra in a sealed container in the refrigerator for several days.

Bites and Stings

Insect bites and stings cause irritation and swelling.

First Aid Steps

Remove

Remove the stinger if present, taking care not to squeeze additional venom into the skin.

Clean

Wash the area gently to remove debris and reduce irritation.

Support

Apply an appropriate herbal preparation to soothe the skin and support recovery.



Plantain



Chamomile



Lavender

Plantain Fresh Leaf Poultice

Helpful for:

Insect bites, splinters, minor skin irritation

Ingredients

Fresh plantain leaves

Instructions

Wash the leaves if needed and crush them gently between your fingers or with a mortar and pestle until the plant juices begin to release.

Apply the crushed leaves directly to the affected area and cover with clean gauze or cloth if necessary.

Leave the poultice in place for 15–30 minutes and repeat as needed.

Verdigris Tip

Finding Plantain

Plantain is one of the most common and useful first aid plants, often found growing in lawns, along paths, and in disturbed soils. Its low rosette of ribbed leaves makes it easy to recognize once familiar. Because it grows abundantly, many herbalists gather fresh leaves from clean areas when needed. Always harvest from places free of pesticides, roadside runoff, or heavy foot traffic.

Bruises and Sprains

Bruises occur when small blood vessels break beneath the skin.

First Aid Steps

Rest

Rest the injured area and avoid further strain.

Cool

Apply a cool compress to reduce swelling and discomfort.

Support

Elevate if possible and apply herbal preparations once swelling begins to subside.



Arnica



Ginger



Yarrow

Arnica Bruise Oil

Helpful for:

Bruises, sore muscles, minor sprains

Ingredients

Arnica infused oil

Instructions

Apply a small amount of arnica oil to unbroken skin around bruised or sore areas.

Massage gently into the skin once or twice daily.

Do not apply to open wounds.



Verdigris Tip

Arnica for Sore Muscles

Arnica has long been used to support circulation and ease discomfort from bruises, strains, and sore muscles. At Verdigris Market Garden, we include arnica in our Sore Muscle & Joint Balm, where it works alongside other botanicals to provide topical support after physical exertion or minor injury.

Minor Skin Infections

Minor infections may occur when bacteria enter small wounds.



First Aid Steps

Clean

Gently clean the wound using water or a prepared herbal wash to remove dirt and debris.



Support

Apply an appropriate herbal preparation, such as a salve or wash, to support the body's natural healing process.



Calendula & Thyme Cleansing Wash

Helpful for:

Minor skin infections, irritated cuts, inflamed wounds

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon dried calendula flowers
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 cup boiling water

Instructions

Place the herbs in a heat-safe jar or cup and pour the boiling water over them. Cover and allow the infusion to steep for 15 minutes. Strain the liquid and allow it to cool to a comfortable temperature. Use the infusion to gently rinse or cleanse the affected area once or twice daily.



Verdigris Tip Making a Shelf-Stable Herbal Wash

If you prefer to keep a ready-to-use preparation on hand, the infusion can be preserved with alcohol. After straining and cooling the herbal wash, stir in **1–2 tablespoons of vodka or another high-proof alcohol** per cup of liquid. Store the mixture in a clean glass bottle in the refrigerator. Dilute with water before use.

Rashes and Irritated Skin

Rashes and irritated skin can arise from contact with plants, environmental irritants, minor fungal imbalances, or sensitivity to chemicals and fabrics.

First Aid Steps

Clean

Gently cleanse the area.

Soothe

Cool and calm the skin.

Support

Apply herbal preparations to ease irritation.



Chamomile



Oats



Plantain

Chamomile & Oat Skin Soothing Compress

Helpful for:

Rashes, itchy skin, irritated or inflamed areas

Ingredients

1 tablespoon dried chamomile flowers

1 tablespoon rolled oats

1 cup hot water

Instructions

Place the chamomile and oats in a bowl and pour hot water over them. Cover and allow the mixture to steep for 10–15 minutes. Strain the liquid and allow it to cool slightly. Soak a clean cloth in the infusion and apply it to the irritated skin for 10–15 minutes. Repeat as needed.



Verdigris Tip When a Rash Needs More Attention

If a rash spreads rapidly, becomes very painful, develops blisters, or is accompanied by fever or swelling, it may require medical evaluation. Rashes involving the eyes, mouth, or large areas of the body should also be assessed by a healthcare professional.

Nosebleeds

Many minor nosebleeds occur when delicate blood vessels inside the nose become irritated from dry indoor air, repeated nose blowing, or a light bump to the nose.



First Aid Steps

Position

Sit upright and lean slightly forward to prevent blood from flowing down the throat.

Apply Pressure

Gently pinch the soft part of the nose and hold steady pressure until bleeding slows or stops.

Cool

Apply a cool compress to the nose or back of the neck to support constriction of blood vessels.

Yarrow Nosebleed Compress

Helpful for:

Minor nosebleeds caused by irritation or dryness

Ingredients

½ teaspoon powdered dried yarrow
2–3 tablespoons cool or lukewarm water

Instructions

Stir the powdered yarrow into the water to create a simple herbal solution. Soak a small piece of clean gauze or cloth in the mixture and gently apply it inside the nostril while maintaining light pressure on the nose. Remain leaning slightly forward until the bleeding slows or stops.



Verdigris Tip A Ready-to-Use Option

A small bottle of **yarrow tincture** makes a convenient shelf-stable first aid remedy. A few drops diluted in a small amount of water can be used to moisten gauze or cotton for a quick compress when a nosebleed occurs.

Digestive Upset

Digestive discomfort may include nausea, bloating, or occasional stomach upset. These situations are common and often respond well to simple herbal support.



Ginger Digestive Tea

Helpful for:

Digestive discomfort, nausea, stomach upset

Ingredients

1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger or

½ teaspoon dried ginger

1 cup hot water

Instructions

Pour hot water over the ginger and allow it to steep for 5–10 minutes.

Strain if needed and sip slowly.



Verdigris Tip

A Simple Ginger
Remedy

Candied ginger is one of the easiest ways to keep ginger available for digestive support. A small piece chewed slowly can help settle the stomach when nausea, bloating, or mild digestive discomfort begins.

Because it stores well and travels easily, many herbalists keep candied ginger on hand at home or while traveling.



Verdigris Tip

Peppermint on
the Go

Keeping a high-quality peppermint tea bag in a purse, travel bag, or even the glove compartment of a car makes it easy to prepare a soothing cup of tea when needed. Peppermint tea is widely used to ease bloating, gas, and mild stomach discomfort, and a single tea bag takes up very little space in a small travel kit.

Cold & Flu Support

Colds and flu are common viral illnesses that affect the respiratory system and are typically self-limiting. In most cases, the body is capable of working through the illness with time, rest, and supportive care.

Unlike bacterial infections, these illnesses are not treated with antibiotics. Gentle, supportive measures can help maintain comfort while the body moves through its natural recovery process.



First Aid Steps

Rest

Allow the body time and energy to recover by reducing activity and prioritizing sleep.

Hydrate

Drink fluids regularly to support hydration, comfort, and normal body function.

Support

Use appropriate herbal preparations to support the body's natural response to illness.



Simple Precautions Go A Long Way

Simple precautions such as rest, limiting close contact, and good hygiene can help reduce the spread within the household.

In public settings, additional care may be appropriate while illness is active.



Verdigris Tip **When to Seek Additional Care**

If symptoms become severe, persist beyond several days, or involve difficulty breathing or high fever, additional care may be needed.

Cold & Flu Support Glycerite

Helpful for:

Immune support, early cold symptoms

Ingredients

½ cup dried echinacea root or herb

½ cup dried elderberry

½ cup dried ginger root (not powdered)

1 1/2 cup vegetable glycerin

½ cup water

Instructions

Combine the vegetable glycerin and water in a small saucepan and warm gently until just warm, not boiling. Place the botanicals in a clean glass jar and pour the warm glycerin mixture over the herb until fully covered. Seal the jar and store it in a cool, dark place for 3–4 weeks, shaking the jar occasionally. After the extraction period, strain the liquid through cheesecloth or a fine strainer and store the finished glycerite in a dark glass bottle.

Take small amounts as needed during seasonal illness or when immune support is desired



Verdigris Tip **Glycerites vs. Alcohol Tinctures**

Because glycerin is a milder preservative than alcohol, glycerites typically keep for about 1–2 years when stored in a cool, dark place. Alcohol-based tinctures are more strongly preserved and often remain potent for 3–5 years or longer.

Fever

Fever is a natural response of the body, often occurring during illness as part of the immune system's effort to restore balance. Mild fevers are common and may be accompanied by fatigue, chills, or body aches.



Chamomile



Elderflower



Peppermint

First Aid Steps

Rest

Allow the body to rest and conserve energy while the fever runs its course.

Hydrate

Drink fluids regularly to support hydration and prevent dehydration.

Support

Use gentle measures such as light clothing, a comfortable environment, avoiding heavy coverings if overheating occurs and appropriate herbal preparations to maintain comfort.

Observation

Observe the person regularly to ensure they remain alert, comfortable, and responsive. Periodic temperature checks can be helpful, but constant monitoring is not necessary if symptoms remain mild.

Gentle Support Tea

A warm (not overly hot) herbal tea made with chamomile or peppermint may help support relaxation and comfort during mild fever.

Encourage fluids and rest as the body works through the process.

Fever Comfort Bath Sachet

Helpful for:

Supporting comfort during fever, easing body aches, and gently refreshing the skin

Ingredients

½ cup Epsom salts

¼ cup baking soda

1 tablespoon dried elderflower

1 tablespoon dried white willow bark

Instructions

Combine the Epsom salts and baking soda in a bowl. Place the elderflower and white willow bark into a small cloth bag or muslin sachet and tie securely.

Fill a bath with water that is comfortably warm—neither hot nor cold. Add the salt mixture to the water and place the sachet in the bath, allowing it to steep as you soak.

Soak for 15–20 minutes, keeping the body relaxed and supported. The bath is intended to gently ease aches and provide a comforting, slightly cooling effect on the skin, especially after periods of sweating.



Verdigris Tip Seeking Additional Care

Fever is part of the body's natural response. Persistent, very high, or concerning symptoms should be evaluated by a qualified healthcare provider.

PART III

The Herbal First Aid

Materia Medica

Calendula

Supports skin repair and wound healing.

Botanical Name

Calendula officinalis

Common Names

Pot marigold, garden
calendula

Parts Used

Flowers



Overview

Calendula is one of the most valued herbs in traditional skin care and herbal first aid. Its bright orange blossoms have long been used to support the skin's natural ability to repair and protect itself.

Gentle and widely used, calendula is often one of the first herbs herbalists reach for when caring for everyday skin concerns.

Key Actions

- supports healthy tissue repair
- soothes irritated or inflamed skin
- supports wound healing
- helps maintain a clean environment for damaged skin
- encourages gentle circulation to injured tissue

First Aid Uses

Calendula is most commonly used for skin-related concerns and minor injuries. Traditional first aid uses include:

- Cuts, scrapes, and abrasions
- minor burns
- rashes and irritated skin
- slow-healing wounds
- dry or cracked skin

Calendula preparations are particularly helpful during the later stages of wound healing when the skin is rebuilding and restoring its protective barrier.

Preparations

Calendula is most often used externally in herbal first aid.

Infused Oil

Calendula flowers steeped in oil create a soothing preparation used for skin irritation, burns, and healing wounds.

Herbal Salve

Calendula oil thickened with beeswax produces one of the most widely used herbal first aid remedies for cuts, scrapes, and dry skin.

Herbal Wash

Calendula tea may be used as a gentle rinse or compress for minor wounds and irritated skin.

Compress

A cloth soaked in calendula infusion can help calm inflammation and soothe damaged tissue.

Cautions

Individuals with known sensitivities to plants in the **daisy family (Asteraceae)** should test a small amount first before widespread use.



Verdigris Field Note

Calendula flowers should be harvested when fully open and vibrant in color. The sticky resin found at the base of the petals contains many of the compounds responsible for calendula's skin-supporting properties.

Because calendula blooms continuously through much of the growing season, it is one of the most productive and rewarding medicinal plants to grow in the garden.

Plantain

Draws out irritation and soothes bites and splinters.

Botanical Name

Achillea millefolium

Common Names

Common yarrow, soldier's woundwort, milfoil

Parts Used

Leaves (fresh or dried)



Overview

Plantain is one of the most useful and widely available first aid plants in the natural landscape. Often growing unnoticed along paths, in lawns, and at the edges of gardens, this humble plant has long been valued as a remedy for irritated skin and minor wounds.

Because it grows abundantly across much of North America and Europe, plantain is considered one of the most practical herbs for outdoor first aid, especially when fresh leaves can be gathered and used immediately.

Key Actions

- soothes irritated tissue
- reduces inflammation
- helps draw out splinters and irritants
- supports skin repair.
- calms itching and minor swelling

First Aid Uses

- insect bites and stings
- splinters
- minor cuts and scrapes
rashes and irritated skin
- minor burns
- itchy or inflamed skin

Fresh plantain leaves are often used directly on the skin as a poultice, making the plant especially valuable during outdoor activities such as hiking, gardening, or camping.

Preparations

Plantain is versatile and can be used both fresh and dried.

Fresh Poultice

Crushed fresh leaves applied directly to the skin help soothe irritation and draw out splinters or insect venom.

Infused Oil

Plantain leaves infused in oil create a soothing preparation used for bites, rashes, and irritated skin.

Herbal Salve

Plantain-infused oil combined with beeswax produces a convenient salve for everyday skin care and first aid.

Compress

Plantain tea can be used as a soothing compress for irritated or inflamed skin.



Verdigris Field Note

Plantain is sometimes called “nature’s bandage” because its leaves can be used immediately in the field. Simply crushing the leaf between the fingers releases soothing plant juices that can be applied directly to bites, stings, or irritated skin.

Because plantain grows so readily in disturbed soil, learning to recognize it can provide a reliable source of first aid medicine almost anywhere.

Yarrow

Traditional wound herb that supports circulation.

Botanical Name

Plantago major

Plantago lanceolata

Common Names

Broadleaf plantain, narrowleaf plantain, ribwort plantain

Parts Used

Leaves and flowers



Overview

Yarrow is one of the most respected herbs used in traditional wound care. Its delicate, feathery leaves and clusters of small white or pink flowers have long been valued in herbal medicine for supporting the body during minor injuries.

The plant's long association with wound care is reflected in its botanical name. According to classical tradition, the Greek hero Achilles used yarrow to treat the wounds of soldiers during battle. While partly legendary, this story reflects yarrow's enduring reputation as a trusted herb for cuts and injuries.

Key Actions

- supports clotting in minor wounds
- encourages healthy circulation
- calms inflammation
- supports tissue repair
- helps maintain a clean environment for healing skin

First Aid Uses

- cuts and scrapes
- minor bleeding
- nosebleeds
- bruises
- minor wounds

Fresh yarrow leaves have traditionally been applied directly to small wounds to help support the body's natural clotting response. Herbal washes made from yarrow are also used to gently cleanse minor injuries.

Preparations

Yarrow can be used in several forms for first aid support.

Fresh Herb Application

Crushed fresh leaves may be applied directly to minor cuts to help slow bleeding.

Herbal Wash

A strong infusion of yarrow can be used as a rinse or compress for minor wounds.

Tincture

Yarrow tincture is often included in herbal first aid kits and may be diluted in water for use as a wash.

Compress

Cloths soaked in yarrow infusion may be applied to bruises or irritated skin.

Cautions

Individuals with known sensitivities to plants in the **daisy family (Asteraceae)** should test a small amount first before widespread use.



Verdigris Field Note

The species name *millefolium* means “thousand leaves,” referring to the plant’s finely divided, feathery foliage.

Yarrow grows easily in meadows, gardens, and open fields. Because it is both hardy and beautiful, many herbalists include it in first aid gardens where its leaves and flowers can be harvested throughout the growing season.

Lavender

Soothes irritated skin and promotes relaxation.

Botanical Name

Lavandula angustifolia

Common Names

English lavender, true lavender

Parts Used

Flowers and Oils



Overview

Lavender is one of the most widely recognized aromatic herbs in traditional herbal medicine. Its fragrant purple flowers have long been valued for their calming scent and their gentle presence in both skin care and everyday wellness.

Known for its versatility and pleasant fragrance, lavender remains a familiar and trusted herb in first aid kits and home apothecaries.

Key Actions

- soothes irritated or inflamed skin
- promotes relaxation and calm
- calms minor burns and insect bites
- helps reduce discomfort associated with minor skin irritation
- supports gentle skin repair

First Aid Uses

- minor burns, including sunburn
- stress or anxiety during injury
- insect bites and stings
- rashes & irritated skin

Lavender preparations are particularly helpful when skin is inflamed or overheated, as the herb's soothing qualities help calm irritated tissue.

Preparations

Lavender is commonly used in several forms.

Essential Oil (Diluted)

Lavender essential oil is often diluted in a carrier oil and applied gently to irritated skin, burns, or insect bites.

Infused Oil

Lavender flowers infused in oil create a soothing preparation used for skin care and mild irritation.

Compress

Lavender tea or infusion can be used as a calming compress for inflamed or sunburned skin.

Aromatic Use

The scent of lavender may help calm stress and support relaxation during minor injuries.

Cautions

Individuals with sensitive skin may wish to test a small amount before wider application.



Verdigris Field Note

Lavender has been cultivated in herbal gardens for centuries and is widely loved not only for its medicinal qualities but also for its beauty and fragrance. When grown in sunny, well-drained soil, lavender produces abundant flowers that can be harvested for oils, teas, and aromatic preparations.

The scent of lavender drifting through a garden is often enough to remind herbalists why this plant remains one of the most cherished herbs in traditional medicine.

Chamomile

Calms inflammation and digestive discomfort.

Botanical Name

Echinacea purpurea

Echinacea angustifolia

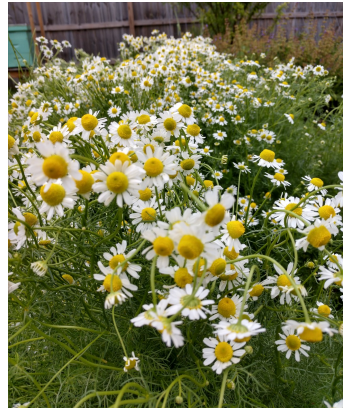
Echinacea pallida

Common Names

German chamomile, Roman chamomile

Parts Used

Flowers



Overview

Chamomile is a gentle and widely used herb known for its soothing qualities and long history in traditional herbal care. Its small, daisy-like flowers have been valued for their calming presence and their role in supporting comfort during times of irritation or restlessness.

Often associated with quiet, everyday care, chamomile remains a familiar and trusted herb in both first aid preparations and home apothecaries.

Key Actions

- calms inflammation
- soothes irritated skin and tissues
- relaxes digestive tension
- supports gentle digestive comfort
- promotes relaxation and calm

First Aid Uses

- rashes and irritated skin
- minor burns
- inflamed or itchy skin
- digestive upset
- stress-related tension
- mild stomach discomfort

Chamomile is especially useful when irritation or inflammation is present and most commonly used as an infusion of the dried flowers.

Preparations

Herbal Tea

Chamomile tea is widely used for digestive discomfort, mild nausea, and relaxation.

Compress

Chamomile tea can be applied externally as a compress to calm irritated or inflamed skin.

Bath Infusion

Chamomile flowers may be added to bathwater to soothe widespread skin irritation or rashes.

Eye Compress (Traditional Use)

A cooled chamomile infusion is sometimes used as a gentle compress for tired or irritated eyes.

Cautions

Individuals with known sensitivities to plants in the **daisy family (Asteraceae)** should test a small amount first before widespread use.



Verdigris Field Note

Chamomile flowers release their distinctive apple-like fragrance when crushed or brewed into tea. This gentle scent reflects the calming nature of the plant itself.

Because chamomile grows easily in gardens and containers, many herbalists cultivate it as a household remedy. Harvesting the small blossoms throughout the growing season provides a steady supply of flowers for teas and soothing preparations.

Echinacea

Supports immune response

Botanical Name

Matricaria chamomilla

or

Chamaemelum nobile

Common Names

Purple Coneflower, Coneflower

Parts Used

Root, leaves, and flowers



Overview

Echinacea is one of the most widely recognized herbs used to support the body’s natural defenses. Native to North America, this striking prairie plant with its distinctive cone-shaped flower head has a long history in traditional herbal medicine.

Valued by Indigenous peoples and later adopted into Western herbal traditions, echinacea has long been used to support the body during times of illness. Today, it remains a familiar and trusted herb in the home apothecary.

Key Actions

- | | |
|--|---|
| • supports healthy immune response | stages of infection |
| • encourages the body’s natural defenses | • promotes resilience during seasonal illness |
| • supports the body during early | • supports recovery during minor infections |

First Aid Uses

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • early cold symptoms | • puncture wounds (traditional external support) |
| • minor infections | |
| • immune support during illness | • supporting recovery during seasonal illness |

Echinacea is most often used when the immune system needs support. Many herbalists recommend beginning echinacea at the earliest signs of illness, when the body's immune response is just beginning.

Preparations

Tincture

The most common preparation for first aid kits. Tinctures are concentrated, long-lasting, and easy to use.

Herbal Tea

Dried leaves or roots may be brewed into tea, though this preparation is less concentrated than tincture.

Extracts

Liquid extracts are also widely available and used in small amounts.

Cautions

Individuals with autoimmune conditions should consult a qualified healthcare professional before using echinacea internally.

Echinacea is generally used for short-term immune support rather than long-term continuous use.



Verdigris Field Note

Echinacea is native to the prairies and open grasslands of North America, where it grows in sunny, well-drained soils. Its distinctive cone-shaped flower head attracts pollinators and has made it a favorite in both medicinal and ornamental gardens.

Because of its beauty and usefulness, echinacea is often included in herbal gardens where it provides both ecological value and traditional medicinal support.

Arnica

Traditionally used for bruises and sore muscles.

Botanical Name

Arnica montana

Common Names

Mountain arnica, leopard's bane

Parts Used

flowers



Overview

Arnica is one of the most widely recognized herbal remedies for bruises, sore muscles, and minor injuries involving soft tissue. The bright yellow flowers of this mountain-growing plant have been used in traditional European herbal medicine for centuries.

Long valued for its role in supporting recovery after physical strain or injury, arnica remains a trusted and essential herb in both home and travel first aid kits.

Key Actions

- supports healthy circulation in injured tissue
- helps reduce bruising and discoloration
- soothes sore muscles and joints
- calms localized swelling
- supports recovery after minor physical trauma

First Aid Uses

- bruises
- sprains
- sore muscles
- minor strains
- bumps and falls

Arnica preparations are typically applied to the skin after the initial injury once the area has been cleaned and swelling has begun to settle.

Preparations

Infused Oil

Arnica flowers steeped in oil create a preparation commonly used for massage of bruised or sore areas.

Cream or Salve

Many herbal first aid kits include arnica creams or salves for convenient application.

Compress (Traditional Use)

A diluted preparation may sometimes be used in compresses to support circulation around injured areas.

Cautions

For general purposes, Arnica should only be used externally, unless under close supervision of a qualified herbalist or licensed medical professional. Do not apply arnica to **broken skin, open wounds, or severe injuries**, as it may cause irritation.



Verdigris Field Note

Arnica grows naturally in alpine meadows and mountainous regions of Europe. Because wild populations can be sensitive to overharvesting, many modern herbal preparations are made from **cultivated arnica**.

Its bright yellow flowers resemble small daisies and appear throughout summer in high mountain landscapes, where the plant has long been gathered for traditional remedies used after falls and physical strain.

Thyme

Traditionally used for cleansing and supporting minor infections.

Botanical Name

Thymus Vulgaris

Common Names

Garden Thyme

Parts Used

leaves and flowering tops



Overview

Thyme is a fragrant culinary and medicinal herb long valued for its cleansing and protective qualities. Its small, aromatic leaves have been used in traditional herbal practice to support the body during times of minor imbalance.

Both practical and versatile, thyme remains a useful herb to keep on hand, bridging the kitchen and the home apothecary.

Key Actions

- supports cleansing of minor wounds
- provides traditional antimicrobial support
- helps calm mild inflammation
- supports a balanced environment for skin recovery

First Aid Uses

- minor skin infections
- irritated cuts and scrapes
- inflamed or sensitive skin
- steam inhalations for respiratory discomfort when infection is present
- gargles for throat irritation and oral support

Thyme is most often used when cleansing and supporting irritated or compromised tissue. Preparations are typically used as washes, rinses, steam inhalations, or diluted applications when a gentle but effective cleansing action is desired.

Preparations

Infusion (Wash, Rinse, or Gargle)

Thyme prepared as a strong tea can be used to gently cleanse minor wounds, irritated skin, or as a gargle for throat support.

Diluted Tincture

A small amount of thyme tincture diluted in water may be used as a convenient cleansing wash or rinse.

Steam (Traditional Use)

Thyme may be added to hot water and used as a steam inhalation to support respiratory comfort when needed.

Cautions

Because of its concentrated aromatic compounds, strong preparations may be irritating to sensitive skin and are best diluted before use.

Avoid use on very sensitive or damaged skin without proper dilution.



Verdigris Field Note

Thyme is a familiar kitchen herb with a long history of use beyond cooking. Its strong aroma and resilient nature reflect its traditional role as a protective and cleansing plant.

Easily grown in home gardens, thyme offers a simple way to keep a useful medicinal herb close at hand, bridging the kitchen and the apothecary.

PART IV
Growing & Preserving
Your Own Herbs

Growing Your Own

One of the most rewarding ways to deepen your relationship with herbal medicine is to grow a small collection of first aid plants at home. Many of the herbs used in traditional remedies are also resilient garden plants that thrive in a wide range of climates.

A first aid garden does not need to be large or complex. A few containers on a sunny patio, a small garden bed, or a corner of an existing space can provide a steady supply of useful herbs.

Growing medicinal plants offers more than convenience. It creates a direct connection to the plants themselves—allowing you to observe their growth, seasonal rhythms, and vitality over time. This familiarity builds confidence and a deeper understanding of how herbs are used in practice.

Working with plants from seed to remedy fosters a sense of independence and stewardship in caring for your own well-being. Even a small garden can become a meaningful source of both beauty and everyday support.

Fortunately, many of the most valuable first aid herbs are also among the easiest to grow, making this an accessible place to begin.

The Core First Aid Garden

A small herbal garden built around a few reliable plants can provide remedies for many everyday situations. The following herbs form an excellent foundation for a first aid garden.



These plants are:

- widely used in herbal traditions
- relatively easy to cultivate
- productive throughout the growing season
- useful for multiple herbal preparations

Calendula

Bright orange and yellow calendula flowers are among the most productive herbs for skin care and first aid preparations.

Growing Tips

Calendula thrives in full sun and well-drained soil. Regular harvesting encourages continuous blooming throughout the growing season.

Best Started From:

Seed

Calendula germinates easily and often reseeds itself in garden beds.

Plantain

Plantain is a hardy herb that often appears naturally in lawns, paths, and garden edges.

Growing Tips

Plantain tolerates a wide range of soils and conditions and usually requires little care once established.

Best Started From:

Seed

—or simply allow it to grow where it appears naturally.

Yarrow

Yarrow is a resilient perennial herb with delicate, feathery foliage and clusters of small white or pink flowers.

Growing Tips

Plant in full sun with well-drained soil. Yarrow is drought tolerant and spreads easily once established.

Best Started From:

Seedling or Division

Yarrow can be grown from seed, but young plants or divisions establish more quickly.

Chamomile

Chamomile produces delicate white flowers with golden centers and a gentle apple-like fragrance.

Growing Tips

Chamomile prefers full sun and light, well-drained soil. Frequent harvesting encourages new flowers to develop.

Best Started From:

Seed

Chamomile grows readily from seed and often reseeds itself in garden beds.

Lavender

Lavender is a fragrant perennial herb prized for both its beauty and medicinal use.

Growing Tips

Lavender requires full sun and excellent drainage. Avoid overly wet soils, especially during winter months.

Best Started From: Seedling/ cutting

Lavender is slow to start from seed and is usually easier to grow from young plants.



Tips for Growing Medicinal Herbs

Many medicinal herbs thrive in conditions similar to those found in their native environments—plenty of sunlight, well-drained soil, and moderate fertility. Most herbs prefer soil that drains easily rather than heavy, consistently wet conditions. Good drainage is especially important for plants such as lavender and yarrow, which can struggle in overly moist soil.

While herbs benefit from healthy soil, they generally do not require heavy fertilization. In fact, overly rich soil can sometimes reduce the aromatic qualities that make many medicinal herbs valuable. A garden bed with moderate nutrients, good air circulation, and regular sunlight will support strong, resilient plants. With simple care and observation, even a small garden space can provide a reliable supply of useful herbs throughout the growing season.

Harvesting & Preserving

Once herbs are growing well, they can be harvested throughout the season for use in teas, oils, salves, and other preparations.

A few simple guidelines help ensure good quality herbal materials.

Herbs are often harvested:

- on dry mornings after dew has evaporated
- when flowers are fully open
- before plants begin to decline at the end of the season

Many medicinal plants produce more leaves and flowers than can be used fresh during the growing season. Learning a few simple preservation techniques allows you to keep herbs available throughout the year.

These traditional methods require little equipment and help maintain the aroma, color, and usefulness of harvested plants.



Drying Herbs

Drying is the most common way to preserve medicinal plants.

Leaves and flowers can be spread in a single layer on drying screens or loosely bundled and hung upside down in a warm, well-ventilated place out of direct sunlight. Once completely dry, herbs can be stored in glass jars or paper containers in a cool, dark location.

Properly dried herbs often remain useful for **about one year**.

Infused Oils

Many herbs used for skin care and first aid are preserved by infusing them into oil. Fresh or dried plant material is placed in a jar and covered with a carrier oil such as olive or sweet almond oil. Over several weeks, the oil absorbs the plant's beneficial compounds.

Infused oils can then be used directly or turned into herbal salves.

Calendula and plantain are commonly preserved this way.

Herbal Vinegars

Vinegar can extract minerals and aromatic compounds from many herbs while also preserving them for later use.

To prepare an herbal vinegar, place herbs in a glass jar and cover them with apple cider vinegar. After several weeks, strain the liquid and store it in a clean bottle.



Herbal vinegars are often used for digestive tonics, culinary preparations, or diluted herbal washes.

Freezing Fresh Herbs

Some herbs can be preserved by freezing them soon after harvest.

Leaves may be chopped and frozen in small containers or frozen in ice cube trays with water. This method preserves the color and flavor of fresh herbs and can be useful for culinary or tea herbs.

Tinctures and Glycerites

Alcohol tinctures and glycerites extract and preserve many of the active compounds found in medicinal plants.

These preparations can remain stable for **one to several years**, making them especially useful for herbs that are used in small amounts throughout the year.



Verdigris Field Note

Many herbalists preserve only a small portion of their harvest each season. A few jars of dried herbs, a bottle of infused oil, and a tincture or two can provide enough plant medicine to last well into the colder months.

Sourcing Herbs and Supplies

While growing medicinal plants can be deeply rewarding, it is not necessary to grow every herb yourself. Many dried herbs and herbal preparations are widely available from reputable herb companies, natural food stores, and herbal apothecaries.

When purchasing herbs, look for suppliers who focus on medicinal plants and who provide information about sourcing and quality. Fresh aroma, vibrant color, and proper storage are good indicators that herbs have been handled with care.

Basic supplies such as glass jars, dropper bottles, beeswax, and carrier oils can often be found through herbal suppliers, kitchen stores, or natural food markets.

Over time, many herbalists develop a small network of trusted sources for herbs and supplies. Whether herbs come from your own garden or from thoughtful growers and suppliers, quality ingredients help ensure that herbal preparations remain effective and enjoyable to use.

Continuing Your Herbal Journey

Learning herbal first aid often leads to a deeper appreciation of plants and their role in human health.

Over time, the plants described in this guide may become familiar allies—growing in your garden, prepared in your apothecary, and ready when simple care is needed.

Educational Note

The information provided in this guide is intended for educational purposes only. Herbal remedies described here are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent disease. Always use good judgment and seek appropriate medical care when needed.

Verdigris Market Garden began with a simple idea: to grow meaningful plants and transform them into preparations that support everyday well-being.

Our small, off-grid, urban herb and botanicals garden is where that work begins. Throughout the growing season we cultivate a diverse collection of herbs, flowers, and fruits that become the foundation for our bath, body, apothecary, and home preparations. Many of the botanicals used in our products are grown and harvested here, allowing us to work closely with the plants that shape our formulations.

Bees are also an important part of the garden. Their honey and wax find their way into a number of our preparations, connecting the rhythms of the hive to the craft of the apothecary.

Verdigris Market Garden is guided by Master Herbalist Kenneth Wright, whose work with plants has been shaped not only by formal herbal study but also by years of hands-on caregiving in healthcare. That experience—working both with the land and with people—continues to influence the thoughtful, practical approach behind each preparation we create.

Every product we make reflects the same process:

- growing
- harvesting
- infusing
- and carefully crafting botanical preparations in small batches.

Sustainability is also central to how we work. We favor packaging made from recycled materials and prioritize compostable, recyclable, and infinitely reusable options such as glass and metal whenever possible.

At Verdigris Market Garden, our goal is simple—to create botanical products that reflect the quiet partnership between garden, craft, and everyday life.

Kenneth Wright
Master Herbalist, Verdigris Market Garden



A Practical Guide to Herbal First Aid

Minor injuries and everyday discomforts are a natural part of life. Cuts, burns, insect bites, and digestive upset can often be cared for with simple, thoughtful support. This field guide offers a clear and approachable introduction to herbal first aid—designed to help you respond calmly and confidently when these situations arise.

Inside, you will find:

- Simple herbal preparations using familiar plants
- Step-by-step remedies for common injuries and ailments
- A concise materia medica of essential first aid herbs
- Guidance for building and using a small herbal first aid kit
- Practical insight for growing, preparing, and sourcing your own herbs

Verdigris Market Garden is a small, off-grid urban garden dedicated to growing meaningful plants and crafting botanical preparations for everyday well-being. This guide reflects our belief that herbal knowledge begins with the plants—and that simple remedies, prepared with care, can support a more grounded and self-reliant approach to health.

Whether you are just beginning or deepening your practice, this guide is designed to be used, referenced, and returned to often.



www.verdigrismarketgarden.com