

EXTERNAL USE OF MOTHER TINCTURES AESCULUS AND HAMAMELIS

Piles

A combination of these two herbs in an ointment or cream provides relief from painful piles, but you should seek professional help so that they can be treated 'from the inside' to prevent their recurrence (see page 222).

ARNICA

Never apply *Arnica* externally to open wounds, cuts or grazes — that is, to broken skin — as it can cause a nasty rash.

Bed sores

Use for the first stage of pressure sores caused by a long confinement in bed.

Bruises

Apply the ointment, cream or lotion directly to the affected part (remembering to use it only on *unbroken* skin) as soon as possible. If you can do this before the bruise has started to discolour (even if it has already swollen), it will simply be re-absorbed by the body, especially if you take *Arnica* internally as well. Rub ointment or cream in gently, or if you are using lotion apply it on a piece of lint or gauze and keep in place until the swelling has subsided — usually a matter of several hours.

Corns

Apply the ointment two or three times a day for relief.

Sore muscles

Rub *Arnica* ointment or oil into sore, bruised muscles after exertion (such as gardening or skiing) and take the appropriate internal remedy if your symptoms are severe.

Sprains/strains (first stage)

Rub in *Arnica* ointment or cream, or wrap the sprained joint in a lotion-soaked bandage. This will deal with the initial swelling.

Wasp stings

Dab the wound with neat tincture immediately after being stung.

CALENDULA

Warning: *Calendula* helps the layers of the skin (the epithelium) to 'knit' back together and will mend a clean wound in a matter of hours. It heals so rapidly that it can seal dirt *into* the body, so always clean the wound very carefully before applying *Calendula*.

Burns/scalds (second degree)

Use *Calendula* cream or lotion for the later stages of a burn once the pain has passed. *Calendula* will promote new skin growth and is especially useful where blisters have broken.

Childbirth

Massage *Calendula* oil into the perineum during labour to soften the area and to help make an episiotomy unnecessary.

Cracked nipples

If *Phytolacca* has failed to help, apply *Calendula* ointment, or cream if sensitive to lanolin, to heal cracked, painful nipples.

Cuts/wounds

Apply ointment or cream to minor cuts, and bandage if necessary. For serious wounds apply lotion on a piece of lint or gauze and keep in place. Use a plant spray filled with lotion to keep the dressing damp but do *not* remove the dressing until the bleeding has stopped and healing is well under way.

Eczema/rashes

Calendula lotion or cream is especially useful for soothing eczema or rashes where the skin has cracked or been scratched raw. It will not treat the underlying cause of the eczema; you should seek professional help for this.

Handcream

Calendula cream makes a marvellous handcream after gardening or working on the car when there may be little cuts in the skin.

Mouthwash

Use a strong lotion after tooth extractions or after any sort of dental work where the gums have been cut.

Nappy rash

Use ointment or cream several times daily, making sure that the whole area is clean and dry first (wash with water and a mild, unscented soap). See also *Symphytum*.

Sunburn

Use the lotion or cream (see Burns above).

Thrush

For vaginal thrush douche with the following mixture to relieve soreness and itching: make one pint of chamomile tea (one pint of boiling water to one tablespoon of dried chamomile leaves or one chamomile teabag). Leave to cool, strain, add 40 drops of *Calendula* tincture and douche twice daily for up to a week only. You can buy a re-usable douche from larger chemists (not the disposable type which comes with its own solution). Douching will not cure the complaint; it will only help during the acute phase, and you should seek professional help.

EUPHRASIA

Eye infections/inflammations/injuries

Use *Euphrasia* whenever the eye needs bathing — whether it is sore after the removal of dirt or grit, after swimming in a chlorinated pool, when irritated by hayfever or when actually infected or inflamed.

If *Euphrasia* doesn't help, use *Hypercal* tincture (see opposite). Some people find it more effective, especially in the case of infection.

It is essential to use cooled, boiled water in an eyebath, and to clean the eyebath itself with boiling water after *each* eye is bathed to prevent the spread of infection.

HAMAMELIS

Hamamelis, or witch hazel, is widely sold in chemists as distilled witch hazel, but it is neither as astringent nor as effective as the tincture available from homeopathic pharmacies. Use the distilled form if this is all you can find.

Bruises

Hamamelis is useful for bruises where the skin has been broken (*Arnica* is for use on unbroken skin and is therefore inappropriate). Use *Hamamelis* in the same way as *Arnica*, as an ointment, cream or lotion.

Piles

Apply a compress of the lotion (you can use a small sanitary towel or a strip of cotton wool) to provide instant relief from pain. Keep in place for a while (up to an hour, twice daily) to reduce inflammation.

Alternatively, *Aesculus* and *Hamamelis* ointment or cream may be applied as often as necessary. It is essential that the correct internal homeopathic remedy is given so that the piles are treated from the inside and real healing can take place.

Varicose veins

Apply the lotion to varicose veins, especially painful ones, by wrapping the leg in lotion-soaked bandages. Leave in place for as long as possible, until the discomfort eases and then use only when needed. An elastic (tube) bandage over the top will keep bandages in place.

HYPERCAL ®

This is a mixture of *Calendula* and *Hypericum*; the combined healing qualities of the two plants make it especially effective in soothing and healing wounds.

Childbirth

After childbirth *Hypercal*® will help to heal a cut or torn perineum. Apply a strong lotion on a small pad or compress to the affected area, keeping it in place for up to an hour at a time, and repeating every four hours for several days.

Cold sores

Dilute one part tincture to three parts cooled, boiled water and apply this strong lotion frequently to cold sores as soon as they appear, or use ointment. Take the appropriate internal remedy at the same time.

Cuts/wounds

Use ointment, cream or lotion to heal wounds just as you would use *Calendula* or *Hypericum* on their own.

Soak cut fingers, toes or elbows in a basin of water into which a teaspoon of *Hypercal*® tincture has been added and gently remove any bits of dirt. The clean wound can then be dressed with a smear of the cream or ointment.

Eye infections/inflammations/injuries

As an alternative to *Euphrasia*, use 2 drops in an eyebath to help clear inflammation caused by dust, foreign bodies, infection or injury. Seek professional help if the soreness persists.

Mouth ulcers

Use the mouthwash below frequently, as well as taking the appropriate internal remedy.

Mouthwash

This mouthwash is good for mouth ulcers, inflamed, sore or spongy gums. Make a strong lotion by diluting 40 drops of tincture in $\frac{1}{2}$ pint and swoosh it well around the mouth after brushing your teeth, then massage it into the gums with your fingers.

Sore throat

Dissolve one teaspoon of sea salt in $\frac{1}{4}$ pint of hot water. Add 40 drops of *HyperCal* tincture and gargle as frequently as necessary.

HYPERICUM

Hypericum soothes and heals wounds, especially where nerves have been damaged and the injury is painful. The pains of a '*Hypericum wound*' are typically shooting and/or severe.

Boils

Apply the lotion externally as a compress (on lint or gauze) and renew it every four to six hours to relieve pain and encourage healing. It is important to treat a tendency to boils from the inside so seek professional help if you have a recurring problem.

Burns (second degree with blistering)

Soak gauze strips or lint in *Hypericum* lotion, wring out and lay over the burned area. Keep the bandages damp by spraying the area with the lotion. Do not remove the cloth until the pain has ceased. *Hypericum* is also useful in the first stage of a burn on a nerve-rich and therefore very painful part. Give the appropriate internal remedy.

Cuts/wounds

Use lotion to bathe and clean dirty cuts/wounds, and apply ointment before bandaging. *hypericum* is especially good where there are shooting pains in or around the wound and for injuries to nerve-rich parts (crushed fingers and toes). If a compress is applied to a crushed finger or toe and kept damp for a few days, a damaged nail can be prevented from taking an odd shape once healed.

Insect bites

Use neat *hypericum* tincture on any insect bite. If swelling persists apply the lotion as a compress and keep in place for as long as it takes for the swelling to diminish.

Piles

Use a compress of *hypericum* lotion (or ointment if preferred) for bleeding piles with severe shooting pains. Repeat as necessary, but seek professional help.

Sunburn

See Burns above.

LEDUM

Insect bites/& stings

Use *Ledum* tincture neat on insect bites and stings to prevent swelling and itching.

Many homeopathic pharmacies have their own preparations for relieving bites and stings. These are generally mixtures of a number of remedies and are applied neat as above.

If you are often bitten and are sensitive to insect bites, you will benefit from constitutional homeopathic treatment (see page 205), especially if your response is extremely severe.

PHYTOLACCA

Cracked nipples

Apply the tincture neat for speedy healing of nipples that are sore and/or cracked through breastfeeding.

Sore throat

Use a strong lotion as a gargle (40 drops to $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of cooled, boiled water to which a teaspoon of sea salt can also be added). Take the appropriate internal remedy.

PLANTAGO

Earache

Dilute a few drops of tincture with equal quantities of warm almond oil (or cooled, boiled water) and drop into the painful ear. Follow these guidelines:

- 1 Heat a spoon by dipping it in boiling water, then pour the oil and the tincture into it and wait 2 seconds for the spoon to cool and the oil to warm.
- 2 Tip the head on one side.
- 3 Drop the liquid into the ear.

4 Pull the lobe of the ear down and round and out very gently so that the liquid goes right into the ear. Some children will not allow anything to be put in their ears when they are in pain. Do not force this them. Offer instead a warm hot water bottle wrapped in a soft towel for them to lie on; if that doesn't help an ice pack (crushed ice in a plastic bag in a thin, towel). Or wrap the head tightly with a scarf. On these measures might offer temporary relief and guide you to the correct internal remedy.

Toothache

Apply neat tincture to the affected tooth or swoosh the mouth out frequently with a strong lotion (40 drops tincture with _ pint cooled, boiled water).

PYRETHRUM

Insect repellent

Apply the lotion to all exposed areas of skin, and carry a spray bottle of the lotion with you to renew the applications. Some pharmacies sell *Pyrethrum* in a spray, otherwise buy the tincture and make a fresh batch of lotion daily. Some homeopathic pharmacies also produce their own 'anti-bite lotion' which can be diluted and used as above. Experiment to see which suits you best.

RHUS TOXICODENDRON

Joint pain

Rhus toxicodendron ointment rubbed into joints can provide relief for sufferers from rheumatism and arthritis.

Sprains (second stage)

After the swelling has subsided (with applications of *Arnica* ointment or cream), apply *Rhus toxicodendron* ointment twice daily to the sprained joint, and bandage tightly. Use the joint/limb as little as possible and keep it elevated to give it a chance to heal. *Rhus-t.* is especially useful where ligaments are torn.

Strains

After lifting or over-exertion, the ointment can help enormously, especially if you have the typical *Rhus* symptoms: stiffness on beginning to move (on getting up, for example), improvement with continued movement, but a return of the painful stiffness if you overdo it or sit down again.

RUTA GRAVEOLENS

Bunions/corns

Apply the ointment twice daily to ease pain.

Bruises

This is for when bony parts of the body are sore after a knock, after *Arnica* has reduced the swelling, but the soreness persists. Shinbones, elbows and kneecaps are all parts that have little protective muscle and the covering to the bone can take longer to heal. *Ruta* can speed up the process. Apply the ointment two or three times daily until the pain eases.

Eye strain

Dilute two drops of *Ruta* tincture with an eyebath of cooled, boiled water, to help eyes strained by too much study, reading, or working at a VDU.

Sprains

Use *Ruta* where *Rhus-t.* hasn't helped and the covering to the bone may have been damaged. I have found a mixture of *Rhus-t.* and *Ruta* in an ointment wonderful for sprains and strains.

Tennis elbow

Apply ointment or cream as necessary to relieve the pain. Do not further stress the joint by more strenuous activity.

SYMPHYTUM

Cuts/wounds

Symphytum is a good all-purpose ointment or cream.

Use on minor cuts once you have cleaned them.

Nappy rash

Where *Calendula* hasn't helped, *Symphytum* ointment often will. If it doesn't, your baby will need constitutional treatment from a professional homeopath.

It is worth asking your midwife or health visitor for simple practical measures to help this complaint.

For instance, drying a baby's bottom with a warm hair-dryer (at a safe distance) before applying ointments helps to clear a stubborn rash. *Caution* Test the hair-dryer on your own inner forearm first and take *great* care.

Sprains

Apply *Symphytum* ointment to sprains that don't respond to *Ruta* or *Rhus-t.* within 48 hours. Also take *Symphytum* internally, as there may be damage to the bone itself.

TAMUS

Chilblains

Apply the ointment two to three times daily *before the chilblains break* to stop itching and to speed up healing. **Warning:** *never* apply to a chilblain where the skin has broken

THIOSINAMINUM

Scars

Thiosinamine reduces the swelling of a badly healed scar — where there are lumps and bumps (keloids) — as long as it is used soon after the event (within three months), but it is still worth trying on older scars. It is useful for lumpy scars following appendicectomies, episiotomies, and so on. A professional homeopath will also treat these with internal remedies.

THUJA

Warts/verruucas

Neat *Thuja* tincture can be applied twice daily and *Thuja 6* taken orally for up to ten days.

Warning: if this remedy has no effect seek the advice of a professional homeopath. The continued use of *Thuja* is not advisable as the symptoms from the proving are unpleasant and difficult to get rid of. It is a deep-acting remedy that should not generally be used in a first-aid kit for self-prescribing. However, since it is part of the range stocked by many chemists I have included the minimum indications for safe administration.

It is now accepted that you do not 'catch' verrucas in swimming pools as was commonly believed until recently. Homeopaths believe that warts and verrucas are part of an overall symptom picture and need to be treated with respect. They are cured successfully with constitutional homeopathic treatment, so do not surpress them with acids from the chemist or have that cut out. Homeopaths have found again and again that suppressing warts in this way can lead to the development of more serious complaints.

URTICA URENS

Bee sting

Dab on neat tincture and take the appropriate intern. remedy.

Burns (minor)

For minor burns with redness but no blistering, apply cream, ointment, or a compress soaked in lotion. Take the appropriate internal remedy if needed.

Eczema/rashes

Urtica cream or lotion can relieve the itching of eczema or any rash, especially if it itches *and* stings and the burns. It is essential to seek professional help for the condition.

Sunburn

Apply lotion or cream to sunburned areas, repeat according to the severity. Use a mixture of *Hypericum* and *Urtica* tinctures in the lotion if there are severe shooting pains (20 drops of each tincture in $\frac{1}{2}$ pint water) and take the appropriate internal remedy.

VERBASCUM OIL

Earache

Drop the warmed oil into the ear to relieve pain and promote healing.