

HERBS: *The Root of Medicine*

Crystal Maceira, LMT, MH

I have been a Master Herbalist for over 35 years and have seen much good in herbs. I personally have benefited from their use, which has kept me from getting sick, by using the Formula KVA, for instance, because its main herb is Garlic. (I even hugged friends of mine who had the West Nile Virus!) I have healed sprains, cuts, big open wounds (on my previous husband) and so much more. I have seen people healed of many diseases using herbs, along with dietary changes.

I personally make many herbal formulas and single herb tinctures, several of which I use. The favorite ones I am taking now are Turmeric and Boswellia for arthritis. They both help inflammation in my joints. I also use a couple of salves (Hot Tamale and Comfrey) on the clients I massage and personally on an old injury.

The other formula I take on a regular basis is the Lower Bowel Tonic. When I was 15, I had an Iridology Analysis and through that I found out that my colon is inherently weak. I have been taking care of it ever since, and so, when I had my colonoscopy a few years ago, the doctor said I had a colon as pink and healthy as a 16 year old! A good herbalist knows that death starts in the colon.

Herbs have been used for medicine since creation began. It has only been since the 1800s when scientists discovered that medicinal components of herbs could be extracted and used more potently. Single ingredients derived from herbal extracts can no longer be considered herbal medicine, as by definition, herbal medicines are based on the whole plant.

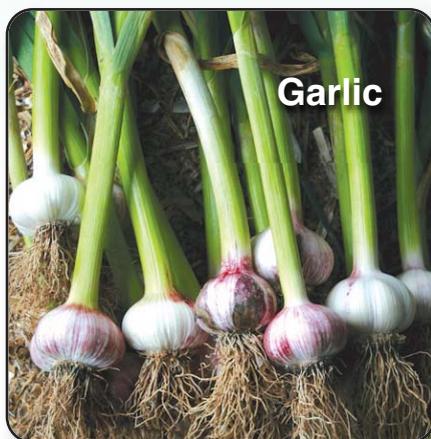
There are an estimated 600,000 plant species, but only a mere 5% have been investigated chemically or

pharmaceutically, which equates to just over 12,000 compounds, or phytochemicals, that have been used for long-term effect on health. They are divided into primary metabolites (sugars and fats) and secondary metabolites, like toxins and pheromones. It is these that have the therapeutic actions and can be refined to produce drugs. I will only talk about a couple of common ones.

One of the first to be extracted and used as a drug was Ephedrine, which comes from the plant with several names: Ma Huang, Brigham Tea, or Mormon Tea. The uses of Ephedrine and its side effects if you take too much are listed here (Rx.com): Ephedrine is a central nervous system stimulant used to treat breathing problems (as a bronchodilator), nasal congestion (as a decongestant), low blood pressure problems (orthostatic hypotension), or myasthenia gravis. Ephedrine is also used to treat narcolepsy, menstrual problems (dysmenorrhea), or urine-control problems.

Ephedrine is available in generic form. Common side effects of Ephedrine usually occur with larger doses and include: nervousness, anxiety, dizziness, spinning sensation (vertigo), headache, nausea, loss of appetite, insomnia, fast heart rate or palpitations, sweating, vomiting, weight loss, and difficult or painful urination.

Using the plant in its original, whole form will do more good than taking this pill. There are many herbs and herbal formulas that will strengthen the respiratory, urinary or nervous system. I would not want to damage my body when I know that there are herbs that can do no harm, but only heal and strengthen.



Another constituent discovered in the 1800s was digitoxin found in Foxglove. John Heinerman, states in his book: *Science of Herbal Medicine*, that, "When the leaves are dried there is an enzyme deterioration, a splitting off of glucose and forming the triglycosides, digitoxin and gitoxin, which are the important ingredients of the dried leaves." It is used mainly as a heart medicine, but according to [Everyday Health.com](http://EverydayHealth.com), look at the common side effects of Digoxin:

- Weakness or dizziness
- Changes in mood and mental alertness, including confusion, depression and lost interest in usual activities
- Anxiety
- Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- Headache
- Rash
- Growth or enlargement of breast tissue in men (gynecomastia)
- Changes in heart rhythm, including irregular heartbeat
- Fast or racing heartbeat
- Heart stopping or flat-lining (asystole)
- Problems with electrical functioning of the heart known as heart block
- Visual problems, including blurry vision and yellow halos
- Low platelet count

All pharmaceutical drugs have mild to serious side effects, but are still widely used today. I would not want to take these pills when there are worse causes that could happen to me. Instead, I would use the Hawthorne Berry Syrup or other herbal formulas that would strengthen my heart and get rid of stressors that could be harmful.

Drug formulations from herbs that are familiar to us are White Willow (from which salicylic acid, or Aspirin, is derived), as well as Morphine from Poppy and Quinine from Cinchona. Here are several more compounds coming from familiar, and not-so familiar, plant sources:

- Garlic ~ monoamine oxidase inhibitor
- Konjac ~ glucomannan
- Alder buckthorn ~ anthraquinone
- Snowdrop ~ galantamine
- Witch Hazel ~ hamamelitannins
- Yerba mate ~ polyphenols
- Star anise ~ shikimic acid
- Mullein ~ glycyrrhizin
- Wild Tansy ~ cyclotides

There are many more, and not all compounds are used in drugs. The main point is that although there may be a little upside to extracting these active primary and secondary metabolites, herbs work so much better in their whole state. They were not meant to be pulled apart and used on the body individually. Drugs usually treat the symptom but not the cause, and more serious side effects can take place, including drug deposits that damage other organs and weakening the body. Plants work with the

body synergistically to create healing and balance.

A good herbalist knows this and can teach the person how to use the precious herbs in their original form. I am here to help in any way I can by teaching others what I know. That is why I have created many videos on *YouTube* and other social media sites like *Pinterest*, and on my website. ■



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over 18 years. She has been teaching and practicing iris analysis and herbology locally and abroad. She currently lives in Helena. Find out more at PositiveLifeChange.info, where she blogs almost daily and on social media platforms. Email her at crystalclearhealth@gmail.com or call (541) 971-6781.

Read Crystal's other articles about Iridology, Sclerology and Bowenwork in the Archives at NaturalLifeNews.com.



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IIPA Certified Iridologist, Master Herbalist & Licensed Massage Therapist, Trained in many modalities including: Bowenwork, Pregnancy Massage and Sports Massage. *Quiet home studio.*

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