



Big Tree News

The world gets better when we do.....

Big Tree Herb Farm

January 2023

Hello Everyone,

Hope this winter is treating you well, January in New England is a tough one, but it is almost over and February is a short month and then spring comes in March! Maybe we are over the worst of it—and you can already notice that the days are getting longer so a little more light in our days always helps greatly!



As many of you know, I have M.S. so I am no stranger to pain and inflammation (which are the topics of this month's newsletter). In the herbal world there are many that help with both of these challenges so I am very grateful for that. As a person who can't tolerate prescription drugs and most over the counter medicines, I rely on herbs and supplements for my healing and they don't disappoint. One of the herbs featured here is Comfrey—one of my earliest herbal healing experiences. Many years ago I had a very severe burn on my inner calf from a motorcycle pipe and my dear friend, Sally, who had an herbal garden way before I even thought of one, cut a few of her Comfrey leaves and suggested that I place these on my leg wrapped with an ace bandage. I did and the very next day my burn was almost healed, I continued with fresh leaves and this bad burn healed completely within a few days and left absolutely no scar! I was amazed and hooked! Herbs do heal....

On another note, we have an exciting new opportunity at the Big Tree Herb Farm, we have been invited to participate with our products in a new store opening soon in Kennebunk ME—it's called Tip Toe! I am very excited about this new adventure and will let you all know more about it very soon.....Hope you all stay well this winter.

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THIS MONTH'S Featured Herbs are Comfrey And Turmeric



Inflammation/Pain:

Inflammation is a double-edged sword:

Inflammation is part of the body's natural defense mechanism. It is the process by which the immune system recognizes and removes harmful and foreign stimuli and begins the healing process. This is called acute inflammation and it works well. When you bang your knee or cut your finger. Your immune system dispatches an army of white blood cells to surround and protect the area, creating visible redness and swelling. The process works similarly if you have an infection like the flu or pneumonia. So in these settings, inflammation is essential—without it, injuries could fester and simple infections could be deadly.

However, we can develop chronic inflammation which is not good. The most common reasons for chronic inflammation include: Autoimmune disorders, such as lupus or M.S., where your body attacks healthy tissue. These can be caused by exposure to toxins, like pollution, cigarette smoke or industrial chemicals or untreated acute inflammation, such as from an infection or injury, or an excess of fat cells (especially in the belly area). Inside arteries, inflammation helps kick off atherosclerosis—the buildup of fatty, cholesterol-rich plaque. Your body perceives this plaque as abnormal and foreign, so it attempts to wall off the plaque from the flowing blood. But if that wall breaks down, the plaque may rupture. The contents then mingle with blood, forming a clot that blocks blood flow. These clots are responsible for the majority of heart attacks and most strokes.



Did you know...

Next time a headache sets in, place your thumbs on the back of your head where the base of your skull meets the top of your neck.

Then press upward toward the skull and massage for 2 minutes.

Acupressure experts say this stimulates the release of pain-relieving endorphins for instant relief!



Comfrey (Symphytum Officinale):

- Speeds wound repair (burns, sprains, strains, swelling, osteoarthritis, etc.)
- Helps to alleviate joint pain and muscle aches
- Boosts bone and injury healing
- Relieves pain of injuries and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Speeds the healing process
- Reduces swelling due to insect bites and stings
- As a compress or poultice for varicose veins and chest congestion
- Contains three phytochemicals:
 - Allantoin—promotes cell replication, structural support to cells, protector to the skin’s connective tissue, promotes growth of bone and cartilage
 - Rosemarinic Acid—has anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties, helps with neutralizing damaging free radical cells with it’s antioxidant properties, prevents cellular damage to the skin.
 - Choline—boosts blood flow, speeds healing of injured blood vessels and nerve endings, soothes inflamed and painful tissue.

CAUTIONS:

Comfrey is not recommended for internal use.

Comfrey should not be used during pregnancy.

This herb can be used on open wounds but it is very important to clean the wound thoroughly first due to the rapid healing which could trap dirt under the skin.

A Few Words About CBD Oil:

Cannabidiol or CBD is derived from the Hemp Plant, research has shown that it may help ease pain and anxiety and improve sleep. It has also been shown to reduce Migraines. You can either put a few drops under your tongue daily or mix it with a lotion and apply to the temples when pain strikes.

CBD oil should be without the THC (the hemp compound that produces the high). CBD is absorbed through the skin or under tongue and acts on the body’s natural endocannabinoid system (a cell-signaling system that regulates processes such as sleep, mood and pain sensation) to blunt the transmission of pain-producing messages.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) contains two rare compounds—oleocanthal and hydroxytyrosol—that switch off a pain-triggering enzyme as effectively as Ibuprofen. Savor 2 TB of EVOO each day and you will heighten your joint comfort, flexibility and mobility by 35%. Olive Oil is also rich in Polyphenols, which inhibit signaling pathways involved in the process of inflammation. They are also powerful antioxidants which reduce free radicals in the body that exacerbate arthritis pain.

Got a toothache?



Bite into a whole clove stick until you can see your dentist. This herb has numbing compounds that knock out mouth/tooth pain so effectively, dentists routinely used it before the invention of Novocaine!



Turmeric (Curcuma Longa):

- An aromatic liver stimulant to alkalize, cleanse the blood and help dissolve sediment
- Has anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, anti-allergic and wound healing properties.
- Helps reduce uterine tumors
- Helps with reduction and clearing of skin cancers
- Soothes menstrual pain
- Remedy for jaundice and gall bladder problems
- External for injuries, skin tumors
- Topically to reduce pain in post-hepatic neuralgia and arthritis (even better when combined with capsicum)
- Powerful anti-inflammatory—Curcumin is the compound in Turmeric that is responsible for this ability to stop inflammation and pain
- Helps to reduce pain of Rheumatoid Arthritis, osteoarthritis, post-operative pain, neuropathic pain, IBS & Lupus pain, migraine and nerve pain and exercise-induced pain.
- It's important to combine Turmeric with black pepper or look for one which contains Turmerones (the compound responsible for transporting curcumin to your cells), otherwise your cells will not have the ability to absorb the curcumin
- Turmeric shuts down an enzyme (COX-2) that churns out pain-triggering hormones when muscles are overworked or injured



OTHER HERBS TO CONSIDER FOR PAIN AND INFLAMMATION RELIEF:

Boswellia—also known as Frankincense—anti-inflammatory herb that works well for both chronic and acute pain—this herb works well with Curcumin.

Ginger—Warming circulatory stimulant and body cleansing herb which also has anti-inflammatory properties, helpful for menstrual cramps, arthritis, chronic stiffness and pain. Healing compounds (Gingerols) halt production of pain-triggering Prostaglandins.

Devil's Claw— works well on reducing pain and stiffness of Arthritis, helps regenerate the natural cushioning of the joints and natural cushioning cartilage between your vertebrae.

White Willow Bark—Nature's Aspirin! Also helps with low back pain, reduces fever without the negative side effects of aspirin.

Pine Bark Extract—(Pycnogenol) Helps with arthritis pain by increasing blood flow to damaged tissues, joints, flushing out pain-triggering wastes and speeding healing.

MIGRAINES:

- Ginger also helps with Migraines without the stomach upset of some medications. By taking 250 mg daily it helps relax and open blood vessels in the brain, preventing painful spasms.
 - Roman Chamomile Essential Oil in the bath soothes pain nerves and tamps down inflammation, preventing the muscle tightness that leads to tension headaches.
- Essential oils of peppermint, spearmint or wintergreen relax spasming neck and scalp muscles, improves oxygen rich blood flow to brain and calms overactive pain nerves, easing headaches as effectively as pain killers. Mix a few drops into lotion and firmly massage temples, neck and forehead
- Omega 3's are also anti-inflammatory and help to reduce pain, try to get 1200-2400 mg per day from supplements or fish (salmon, tuna or trout), walnuts, flaxseeds
- Vitamin D dampens the inflammation that can trigger and intensify migraines. Supplement with 2000 IU daily or spend 15 minutes in the summer sun without sunscreen.
- Lavender Oil Rub has anti-inflammatory properties that increases your brain's production of pain-soothing alpha waves



Big Tree Herb Farm

If anyone has any herbal questions, please let me know.

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Next month's Newsletter will focus on Stress & Sleeping



A few more choices for pain and inflammation....

Capsaicin—this compound found in hot peppers can be very helpful for pain. The compound that gives peppers their heat fakes a sensation of warmth in your body, confusing its chemical messengers so they don't send pain signals. Capsaicin should be combined with a lotion or cream before applying to your skin (such as MSM cream)

MSM (Methylsulfonylmethane) Is a natural compound which boosts joint healing and offsets inflammation triggering genes. It comes in capsule form or in a cream which can be combined with Capsaicin which helps greatly with arthritis and osteoarthritis pain.

Chaste Tree Berry—this herb helps with balancing of the hormones and helps with hormonal headaches/migraines.

Basil—enjoying this herb daily could reduce stiffness and pain by as much as 73%, according to the medical research. Basil contains rich stores of an aromatic compound called Eugenol, which shuts down pain-triggering inflammation.

Rose Hips—this tea works well at easing joint swelling, reducing inflammation and even helps to reverse joint damage and improve flexibility—by blocking the breakdown of shock absorbing cartilage between joints.

Rosemary—Inhaling the aroma of Rosemary can chase away head pain in 15 minutes, recent research suggests. Rosemary's aromatic compounds (camphor and alpha-pinene) calm overactive pain nerves and relax spasming neck muscles. You can also put some of the Rosemary Essential Oil on a compress and apply to forehead.

Citrus—snacking on one orange daily could halve your risk of joint stiffness and pain. The pigment in oranges (beta-cryptoxanthin) nourishes, heals and strengthens the shock absorbing cartilage in joints.

B-Vitamins— If you experience shooting pain in your back or neck, try taking a 50 mg B-Complex supplement daily. B Vitamins heal damaged nerves, easing those stabs of pain. They also significantly lower your risk of migraines by regulating Serotonin, a brain chemical.

Coconut Oil—Consuming 3 TB of coconut oil daily in place of other fats will reduce your pain and also help cut your risk of future back aches in half. It inhibits the COX-2 enzyme known to trigger inflammation, swelling and pain.

We will be at the following Farmers Markets this winter:

Berwick Town Hall

10am to 1:00 pm

Sundays

2/12, 3/12, 4/16/2023

Wentworth Greenhouse

In Rollinsford NH

10am to 2pm

Saturdays

2/18, 3/4, 3/18/2023

Exeter/Stratham

Cooperative Middle School

10am—2pm

Saturdays

2/4/ 4/1, 4/15/2023

Tri-Town at the Central School in South Berwick

10am to 2pm

Sundays

2/5, 2/19, 3/5, 3/19, 4/2/23

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

