

## **Unit Three: Medicinal Herbs: Part 3 Wrap Up!**

**Learning Objectives:** In unit three we will cover the last 25 of the 75 different herbs and their medicinal properties discussed during this three part class.

### **Medicinal Herbs covered in Unit 3, Wrap Up**

#### **Parsley**

Parts Used: Root, Seeds

Habitat: Parsley is native to the Eastern Mediterranean.

Description: Parsley is a short-lived perennial with bright green leaves. Tiny, yellow-green flowers are produced, followed by small ribbed and oval seeds.

Uses: The fresh herb is a rich source of vitamin C. It is said to inhibit tumor-cell growth while stimulating the digestion and the uterus. The leaves have some itch relieving properties if applied externally. It helps to cleanse the blood and boosts circulation and eases muscle spasms (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

#### **Passion Flower**

Parts Used: Leaves and whole plant

Habitat: The plant is native to North, Central, and South America.

Description: Passionflower is a perennial climber with deeply lobed, finely toothed leaves, with fragrant lavender to white flowers appearing in summer. Edible fruits follow the flowers of passionflower.

Uses: Passionflower is used internally to treat nervous restlessness, sleep disorders, anxiety, neuralgia, irritability and overcoming the difficulty in falling asleep. The ripe passion fruits are eaten raw and can be made into jellies, jams, wines and fruit based drinks, while the flowers are made into syrup. Its narcotic properties cause it to be used in diarrhea and dysentery, neuralgia, sleeplessness and dysmenorrhea (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

#### **Patchouli**

Parts Used: The complete herb

Habitat: Patchouli is found in East and West Indies and Paraguay.

Description: Patchouli is a fragrant herb which grows to height of 2 to 3 feet. The plant has egg-shaped leaves, which when rubbed gives a characteristic odor of patchouli. The plant possesses whitish flowers, tinged with purple and grows in both axillary and terminal spikes.

Uses: Patchouli leaves are dried and packed in bales and are exported for distillation of oil. The oil is used in perfumes and in soaps. It is believed to have prophylactic properties (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

#### **Peppermint**

Parts Used: Herb

Habitat: The plant is found throughout Europe, in moist conditions, along stream banks and in wastelands.

Description: The leaves of this kind of mint are short but distinctly stalked, 2 inches or more in length, their margins finely toothed, their surfaces smooth, both above and beneath, or only very slightly, hardly visibly, hairy on the principal veins and mid-rib on the underside. The stems, 2 to 4 feet high, are quadrangular, often purplish.

Uses: Used to treat morning sickness, nausea, and spastic complaints of the gastrointestinal tract, gallbladder, bile ducts, dyspepsia, flatulence, intestinal colic, flatulence, gastritis and enteritis. It is

furthermore used for indigestion, cramping, stomach ulcers, spastic colon and irritable bowel syndrome and is also used for its stimulant properties (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Ragwort**

Parts Used: Herb

Habitat: It is distributed over Europe, Siberia and Northwest India.

Description: Ragwort grows about 2 to 3 feet high, with a much branched, furrowed stem, without hairs, and deep, glossy, green leaves, irregularly divided and toothed. The root-leaves are broader, jagged at the base, those on the stalk deeply divided down to the rib. The flowers are arranged in rather large, flat-topped bunches

Uses: It is used with success in relieving rheumatism, sciatica and gout, a poultice of the green leaves being applied to painful joints and reducing the inflammation and swelling. It makes a good gargle for ulcerated throat and mouth, and is said to take away the pain caused by the sting of bees. A decoction of the root is good for inward bruises and wounds (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Red Raspberry**

Parts Used: The leaves and fruit

Habitat: Red Raspberry is found in many parts of Europe.

Description: Red Raspberry has thorny, erect stems and it reaches a height up to 2 m. The plant bears alternate leaves which are imparipinnate with ovate-lanceolate leaflets. The flowers are formed in the leaf axils or at the apex of the branches.

Uses: Red Raspberry is used as astringent and as a stimulant. Raspberry leaf tea is used as a gargle in sore mouths, canker of the throat and is a perfect wash for wounds and ulcers. An infusion of Raspberry leaves is used in the regulation of the bowels. It helps during parturition also (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Rosemary**

Parts Used: Leaves and Flowers

Habitat: Native to the Mediterranean region, cultivated widely elsewhere.

Description: Rosemary is a hardy bushy perennial shrub with aromatic, evergreen leaves and pale-blue flowers around the stem. There are silver and gold striped varieties, but the green-leaved variety is the kind used medicinally.

Uses: It is used for headaches, as well as for nervous complaints. Rosemary is used widely in Mediterranean cooking, sausages, stuffing, soups and stews and to make tea. The flowers can also be added to salads. Rosemary is an effective treatment against scurf and dandruff. It can also be used in mouth rinses and gargles; and is applied topically to stimulate circulation (Medicine Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Rosewood**

Parts Used: The essential oil is extracted from the wood.

Habitat: It is a native of Britain and Europe.

Description: Rosewood is a short tree with leaves having stipules. Flowers are solitary having white and yellow color with maroon center. Fruits are having a capsule with multiple seeds.

Uses: Rosewood is mostly used in aromatherapy and not really as an herb as such. It helps to relieve headaches. It has good antibacterial properties and boosts the immune system. On the skin, it acts as a cell stimulant and tissue rejuvenator, making it ideal for mature skin, but it is also well suited for dry,

sensitive and inflamed skin. It has anti-depressant, antiseptic, deodorant, insecticide, stimulant and tonic properties (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Saffron**

Parts Used: Flower pistils

Habitat: Saffron is mainly grown in France, Spain, Sicily and Iran.

Description: Saffron is a small perennial plant. In spring the plant produces an onion-like corm that produces basal and linear gray-green leaves. The leaves have hairy margins and are 1 or 1-1/2 feet in length. The plant bears reddish-purple flowers.

Uses: Saffron has carminative, diaphoretic and emmenagogue properties. It is used to cure coughs, stomach gas, gastrointestinal colic and insomnia. It is effective in treating fevers, melancholia, enlargement of the liver and asthma. It is used in perfumes and dyes also (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Sage**

Parts Used: Leaves and Whole Herb

Habitat: It is a native of Spain along the Mediterranean coast.

Description: Sage generally grows about a foot or more high, with wiry stems. The leaves are set in pairs on the stem. An evergreen perennial shrub with pale green leaves. Flowers are borne in summer.

Uses: Sage is used internally to treat indigestion and flatulence. It is also used to reduce excessive lactation in nursing mothers and night sweats (especially in menopause), anxiety, depression, female sterility. It also has supportive properties for the liver and is used to boost the functionality of the liver. Sage is also used for insect bites, throat, mouth, gum and skin infections (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Spearmint**

Parts Used: Herb

Habitat: Native to Europe.

Description: It is a creeping, sweetly scented, perennial with bright green leaves. Stems rise to a height of about 2 feet. The small flowers are densely arranged in rings in the axils of the upper leaves, forming cylindrical, slender, tapering spikes, pinkish or lilac in color.

Uses: Spearmint is chiefly used for culinary purposes. It is used for indigestion, gas and colic, as well as hiccups, fever and upper respiratory tract infections in children. Used as blended massage oil or diluted in the bath, spearmint oil helps with headaches, migraines, stress, fatigue, sinusitis, asthma, bronchitis, nervous conditions and to relieve itching (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Southernwood**

Parts Used: Leaves or flowering tops.

Habitat: Native to Europe, N. Africa and Western Asia.

Description: The plant grows from 2 to 4 feet in height. The numerous flower heads are short-stemmed and hang in a many-flowered panicle. The capitula are small, globular, inclined and 3 to 4 mm wide and almost as long. The bracts are gray, silky-pubescent with a rounded tip. The flowers are yellow and fertile. The fruit is about 1.5 mm long.

Uses: The chief use of Southernwood is as an emmenagogue. It is a good stimulant tonic and possesses some nervine principle. Used for indigestion, especially when due to a deficient quantity or quality of gastric juice. It is a powerful remedy in the treatment of worm infestations, especially roundworm and pinworm. It may also be used to help the body deal with fever and infections. It benefits the body in general (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Tarragon**

Parts Used: Dried aerial parts of the plant

Habitat: The plant is indigenous to Russia (Russian Tarragon) and Mongolia.

Description: It grows to a height of about 2 feet and has long, narrow leaves, which, unlike other members of its genus, are undivided. The small flowers, in round heads, being yellow mingled with black, and rarely fully open. The roots are long and fibrous, spreading by runners.

Uses: It is used to temper the coolness of other herbs in salads. The leaves, which have a fragrant smell in addition to their aromatic taste, make an excellent pickle. Fresh Tarragon possesses an essential volatile oil, chemically identical with that of Anise, which becomes lost in the dried herb. The root of Tarragon was formerly used to cure toothache (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Tea Tree**

Parts Used: Essential oil, the leaf

Habitat: Native of Australia.

Description: Tea tree is a small tree, growing to a height of 22 feet, with narrow, soft, alternate leaves and yellowish flowers the shape of bottlebrushes. The capsule-like seeds follow the flowers.

Uses: The oil can be used neat on minor wounds and small infections, as well as plantar warts, as well as rubbing it into the scalp to get rid of nits (the eggs of head lice), but for other applications must be diluted in a suitable carrier oil. Wounds and scrapes can be washed out with a mixture to disinfect the area. It also helps to soothe sore muscles and generally fortifies the body (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Turmeric**

Parts Used: Rhizomes

Habitat: Southern Asia. Cultivated in China, Bengal and Java.

Description: This is a perennial herb with a large rhizome and large leaves with yellow flowers and is a close relative to the ginger plant.

Uses: Turmeric has many health benefits. This herb can be used internally to assist with digestive problems and skin complaints, circulatory disorders as well as tumors in the uterus and menstrual problems. It is also indicated to help with painful menstruation. Furthermore it is used to treat liver disease and jaundice as well as colon cancer (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Uva Ursi**

Parts Used: Leaves

Habitat: Uva Ursi is found in the northern latitudes and high mountains of Europe, Asia and America.

Description: Uva Ursi is a woody shrub, covered with a pale brown bark, which reaches a height of about 5-30 cm. The leaves are evergreen with a length of 1/2 inch to an inch. These are rounded at the apex but tapers gradually towards the base to a very short stalk or petiole. In spring the plant bears white or pink flowers. The fruit of the plant is a red berry which ripens in autumn

Uses: The dried leaves of Uva Ursi are the only part of the plant which is used in medicine. The infusion of it has a diuretic action. So the leaves are used in inflammatory diseases of the urinary tract, urethritis and in cystitis (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Valerian**

Parts Used: Root and Rhizome.

Habitat: Valerian is a perennial flowering plant native to Europe and Asia.

**Description:** It is a perennial erect plant, which can be 4 feet high. It has a short, conical, erect yellowish rootstock with multiple long thin roots. Only one stem usually grows from the root. It is round and hollow, with hairs near the base.

**Uses:** It is used as a sedative for insomnia or other sleeping disorders, to smooth the nervous system, and to slow the heart rate. For all these reasons the dried roots of the plant are taken to prepare teas or tinctures (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Verbena**

**Parts Used:** Leaves and flowering heads.

**Habitat:** It is native to Brazil and Argentina.

**Description:** Verbena is an erect, clump-forming perennial with stiff, widely branched stems. It can reach 3-6 ft (0.9-1.8 m) in height with an open, airy spread of 1-3 ft (0.3-0.9 m). The scabrous (sandpapery) stems and branches grow in an upright pattern and are square in cross section. Most of the leaves are clustered in a mounded rosette at the base of the plant.

**Uses:** It is said to be useful in intermittent fevers, ulcers, ophthalmia, pleurisy, etc and to be a good galactagogue. It is still used as a febrifuge in autumn fevers (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Vitex**

**Parts Used:** Roots, root, flowers, leaves, bark

**Habitat:** This plant is indigenous to the Mediterranean countries and Central Asia.

**Description:** A deciduous shrub, having an airy and spreading habit, grows up to 10 feet. It has five-fingered leaves, which begin to bud as late as June, and eight-inch lilac flower spikes.

**Uses:** The extract of all the Vitex fruit constituents affects the activity of the pituitary gland. It helps increase progesterone production, which can be beneficial for women's health in many cases, as it gives the opportunity to regulate menstrual cycles, reduce the symptoms of menopause and PMS (irritability, breast tenderness, mood switches, menstrual cramps), and even fight women infertility, caused by hormone imbalance (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Wild Carrot**

**Parts Used:** Dried aerial parts and seeds

**Habitat:** It is a native of Europe, Asia, North America and N. Africa

**Description:** Its root is small and spindle shaped, whitish, slender and hard, with a strong aromatic smell and an acrid, disagreeable taste, very different to the reddish, thick, fleshy, cultivated form, with its pleasant odor and peculiar, sweet, mucilaginous flavor. It penetrates some distance into the ground, having only a few lateral rootlets.

**Uses:** It is useful in the treatment of cystitis and prostatitis. It has been considered a specific in the treatment of kidney stones for a long time. In the treatment of gout and rheumatism it is used in combination with other remedies to provide its cleansing diuretic action. The seeds can be used as a settling carminative agent for the relief of flatulence and colic (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Wild Cherry**

**Parts Used:** Dried bark.

**Habitat:** Although native to North America, wild cherry trees now grow in many other countries.

**Description:** This tree grows from 50 to 80 feet high, and 2 to 4 feet in diameter. The bark is black and rough and separates naturally from the trunk. Leaves deciduous, 3 to 5 inches long, about 2 inches wide, on petioles which have two pairs of reddish glands.

Uses: Wild Cherry Bark is used mainly in the treatment of irritating coughs, bronchitis and whooping cough. It is used with other herbs in the control of asthma. This herb may also be used as a bitter where digestion is sluggish. The cold infusion of the bark may be helpful as a wash in cases of inflammation of the eyes (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Witch Hazel**

Parts Used: Bark and leaves

Habitat: Witch Hazel is found in the Eastern United States and Canada.

Description: Witch Hazel is a shrub which grows to a height 10 to 12 feet and 4 to 6 inches in diameter. The leaves are 3 to 5 inches long and about 3 inches wide. The leaves drop off in autumn which is followed by yellow flowers which occur in clusters from the joints. Then black nuts follow which contain white seeds.

Uses: Witch Hazel's leaves and bark are used as astringent, tonic and sedative and are valuable in checking internal and external hemorrhage. They are quite effective in curing piles, diarrhea and dysentery and are useful in bruises and inflammatory swellings (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Yarrow**

Parts Used: Aerial parts

Habitat: This herb grows in Europe, North America and Asia.

Description: It is a hardy herbaceous pungent perennial and 6-24 inches in height. Finely feathered, bright gray-green leaves and flat heads of small white, pink or red flowers midsummer to autumn. Grows in grassy places, including lawns.

Uses: This herb is used for cold, flu and measles as well as to clear gastric excess mucus and dyspepsia. The flowers are used for loss of appetite and mild, spastic problems of the gastrointestinal tract and to protect against strokes and heart attack. It is also used for wounds, nosebleeds, ulcers, inflamed eyes and hemorrhoids. It is also useful for slow healing wounds, as well as opens sores and it has an astringent action on the skin (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Yohimbe**

Parts Used: Stem or Smaller branches

Habitat: Yohimbe is a tall evergreen forest tree native to southwestern Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon and the Congo.

Description: It is a large tree with yellow-ochre wood and dark green glossy leaves. Capsules, containing winged seeds, follow the Umbel clusters of white to pink tubular flowers.

Uses: Yohimbe bark was used in western Africa for fevers, leprosy, and coughs. It has also been used to dilate pupils, for heart disease, and as a local anesthetic (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

### **Yucca**

Parts Used: Stalk and Roots

Habitat: They are native to the hot and dry parts of North America, Central America, and the West Indies.

Description: Yucca usually occurs as dense clusters of stems to 8 feet (2.5 m) tall, tipped with rigid bluish to yellowish leaves. The lower half of the wide inflorescence is typically concealed within the leaves.

Uses: It is useful for the treatment of Cancer, Osteoarthritis and Rheumatoid arthritis (Medicinal Herbs Guide, 2015).

## Reference

Herbs Guide. (n.d.). *Medicinal Herbs Guide*. Retrieved August 10, 2015, from <http://www.herbsguide.net>