

# Understanding Nature's Pharmacy: Mastering the Unique Properties of Herbs

## Why Herbs?

Herbs have a long history of safety.

Herbs, like foods, are whole substances.

Herbs are cost effective and convenient.

Herbs have a long history of efficacy.

Traditional herbal medicine is holistic.

## Sources of Herbal Wisdom

•Observation of nature (where a plant grows, how it grows, etc.) tells what kinds of obstacles a plant has to overcome in its environment.

•Taste, smell, texture, color and appearance give clues to basic chemistry.

## Seven Kinds of Herbs

1.Aromatic (Ar) /Pungent (P)

2.Bitters (B)

3.Salty (Sa)

4.Sour (So)

5.Astringent (As)

6.Mucilant (M)

7.Sweet (Sw)

### 1. Aromatic/Pungent

Examples: Chamomile, Peppermint, Rosemary, Thyme, Lavender, Capsicum, Ginger, Horseradish

#### **Aromatic Properties**

- Digestive (stimulate digestion)
- Carminative (eliminate intestinal gas and colic)
- Antiseptic (help fight viral, bacterial and fungal infections)
- Nervine (relaxing or invigorating to the nervous system)
- Diaphoretic (promote sweating to reduce fever)
- Expectorant and Decongestant (breaks up congestion and expels excess mucus)
- Stimulant (promotes circulation)
- Traditional cold, flu and fever remedies

### 2. Bitter

Examples: Goldenseal, Oregon grape, Yellow dock, Milk thistle, Cascara sagrada, Burdock, Dandelion root, Chocolate

#### **Bitter Properties**

Digestive Tonic (stimulates hydrochloric acid and enzyme production and bile flow)

- 🎬 Laxative
- 🎬 Blood Purifying (help the body eliminate toxins via the liver and kidneys)
- 🎬 Hepatoprotective (protects liver from toxins)
- 🎬 Antiparasitic (helps destroy parasites)
- 🎬 Antibiotic (helps fight bacterial infection)
- 🎬 (Historical uses: Skin conditions (acne, rashes), Swollen lymph nodes, Cysts, tumors, Blood poisoning)

### **3. Salty**

Examples: Red clover, Nettles, Alfalfa, Chickweed, Mullein, Parsley, Celery, Horsetail

Properties:

- 🎬 Vulnerary (supplies minerals and nutrients for healing bones and other tissues)
- 🎬 Non-irritating diuretic (helps kidneys flush fluids)
- 🎬 Lymphatic (improves lymphatic flow and softens masses)
- 🎬 Blood Tonic (nourishes the blood)

### **4. Sour**

Examples: Lemon, Hawthorn, Schizandra, Elderberry, Bilberry, Mangosteen, Willow bark

Properties: (Thai Go)

- 🎬 Antioxidant
- 🎬 Anti-inflammatory and anodyne (pain relieving)
- 🎬 Cardiovascular tonics

### **5. Astringent**

Examples: White oak bark, Uva ursi, Bayberry, Red raspberry leaf, Yarrow, Eyebright

Properties:

- 🎬 Styptic (controls bleeding)
- 🎬 Reduces sinus drainage
- 🎬 Arrests diarrhea and fluid discharge
- 🎬 Reduces swelling

### **6. Mucilant**

Examples: Psyllium hulls, Slippery elm, Marshmallow, Dulse, Fenugreek, Okra, Guar gum

Properties:

- 🎬 Vulnerary (helps injured tissues to heal)
- 🎬 Anti-inflammatory (especially for intestinal and digestive problems)
- 🎬 Bulk laxatives
- 🎬 Expectorants and decongestants (dry cough)

## **7. Sweet**

Examples: Licorice, Ginseng, Stevia, Dong Quai, Eleuthero, Astragalus, Bee Pollen

Properties:

- Adaptogenic (helps body respond to stress)
- Tonic (enhance energy production, strengthen the body)
- Immune Stimulants (enhance the immune system)

We hope this experience has given you a good feel for the unique properties of herbs, their types, and some of their many traditional benefits.

IMPORTANT: This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended for diagnosing or treating disease. If you have a serious illness we recommend you to consult a competent practitioner before beginning a course of treatment.

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