

Romany Remedies, Hints & Tips from Paul Petulengro

For centuries the Gypsy life has always been about living side-by-side with Mother Nature. She was the life-blood of these nomadic people. They relied on her to supply their food and drink, light and heat, shelter, toiletries and of course medicines when they were ill. The fields and hedgerows provide a treatment for all everyday ailments such as Colds, Flu, Coughs, Sprains, Arthritis, Acne, Hair Loss and most kinds of Pain, in fact the list is endless.

In the 21st Century we are being bombarded with medications containing a host of natural ingredients, implying new discoveries when in fact many of these were mentioned in my Grandfathers book *'The Open Road to Health -Mother Nature Knows Best'* and *'Romany Remedies & Recipes'* both published way back in the 1930's. Copies are available from my website.



MEDICINAL HERBS FOR ECZEMA



Liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) – not the soft Black stuff found in sweet shops, liquorice is actually a great leafy plant from which the root is harvested for use in food and herbal medicine. It contains a compound called glycyrrhizin, which has been shown to have anti-inflammatory activity. In 2003 a clinical trial was undertaken to look at the effects of applying a liquorice gel to people with dermatitis. After two weeks, redness, swelling and itching had decreased significantly in the 100+ people studied as part of the trial. The study found that liquorice extract could be considered an effective herb for the treatment of eczema. Something the Gypsies have been doing for centuries.

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) – in recent years studies have reported that drinking dandelion juice can stimulate the liver and help clean up dyshidrotic eczema (the kind which causes tiny bubble-like blisters paired with intense itching). However, applying dandelion externally can also help with eczema. Dandelion sap, otherwise known as dandelion milk, is used in treating skin diseases caused by microbial or fungal infection. Its flowers are a fantastic natural source of lecithin, which is a moisturising nutrient often used in skincare. Dandelion root contains a number of different compounds including inulin which, as we saw with burdock, draws moisture up to the skin. To date, no studies seem to have been undertaken on the topical benefits of dandelion for eczema, but its compounds suggest that it may be useful in treating this common skin disease.

With the increasing availability of Dried herbs today it's much easier to prepare a natural remedy. I don't recommend you go out and gather fresh wild herbs from the hedgerows because these days they could be contaminated with pesticides and herbicides, it's much safer to go to a reputable health shop or herbalist for your supplies.

ANTI-SMOKE AID This is a combination of the herbs, Lupulus, Scullcap, Gum Asafoetida, Valerian, and Vervain, given by the Romany people the world over as a magic potion to stop folk smoking. Although there is nothing magic about it, it certainly works. It will assist anyone who has decided to put a stop the habit of smoking and is finding it difficult, it will not work without your assistance but it will certainly help you in your quest

BLUE FLAG COMPOUND Blue Flag is a plant has been used the world over to treat skin conditions such as psoriasis and eczema, and is a favourite among the Romany people. It works from the inside, stimulating the Liver and purifying the blood. But rather than using it alone I much prefer to combine it with Red Clover and Stillingia, to form my "Blue Flag Compound" for greater effectiveness. This can either be brewed into a 'tea' taking a mixture of equal parts of each herb mentioned. (2 teaspoons of dried herbs to a breakfast cup of boiling water, allow to brew for 5 mins.)



ECHINACEA This is one of my favourite herbs. It is both antibacterial and antiviral, cleansing the blood of impurities and bringing relief from boils, acne, internal and external ulceration and other skin conditions. Sinusitis, catarrh, tonsillitis. This is excellent when combined with Garlic for chest infections. Boil 30g. Echinacea Root in 500mls of water. Take a wine glassful twice a day. A little of the solution can be dabbed on the external affected part. **ECHINACEA TABLETS** in the cupboard will make sure you are never caught out in an emergency.

FORTY PLUS FORMULA When we get over the magic age of 40 no matter how fit we are, we all start to feel a little jaded at times especially in the mornings. This recipe of mine will give your energy the boost it needs to get you 'up-and-running'. It's a mixture of Kola Nut extract and Chlorophyll and although an old secret of the Gypsies for many years has in recent times been marketed by one of the large patent medicine companies at vastly inflated prices. Make this for your self using 1 part chlorophyll to 3 parts ground kola nut and brew a herbal tea with 1 teaspoon per cup of boiling water. This is a real 'pick-me-up', I call this my FORTY PLUS formula.



HERBCALM This is my pet-name for a herbal mixture I prepare to calm those suffering from Nervous Tension, Restlessness, Nervous Excitement, Irritability, Stress, Etc. These problems appear to be getting more common these days. It is in fact a simple but effective remedy which has no side effects nor is it habit forming, so therefore very useful for those people who are trying to stay clear of, or recover from modern habit-forming drugs. Mix 4 parts of dried rubbed Hops, 2 parts Scullcap, 1 part Valerian and 2 parts Vervain. Into a breakfast cup put 2 teaspoons of the herbal mixture above and pour on boiling water and cover with saucer for 4 mins. It is important to cover whilst brewing to keep in the active constituents otherwise they will evaporate off.

RASPBERRY LEAF This is a traditional Romany remedy used for hundreds of years to give relief to women from painful periods, excessive menstrual flow and to ease childbirth. It also has been used by many women throughout the world where difficulty is experienced in conceiving.



This I have to admit is not a Romany Remedy but one I have used myself and recommended to others now for some 15 years. I came across it on my travels through the Kent countryside. Village folk visiting my Wife and I at a local fair were keen to tell us about this local remedy, its a plant extractive called Rutin which is obtained from many plants but the best source of this is Green Buckwheat. It has shown quite remarkable results in helping such things as: Poor circulation, High Blood Pressure, Varicose veins, Phlebitis and where fragile veins are a problem. Rutin will not thin the blood so there is no danger of going too far or taking too much, it helps the blood vessels to be more elastic and flexible, plus there have been no reports of side-effects even when taken alongside modern prescribed drugs. You can brew yourself a rutin tea from the dried Green Buckwheat leaves or take it as RUTIN tablets available in health stores.

We all know how effective Baking Soda is in the kitchen when making those delicious fruit scones for Sunday afternoon tea or the succulent Soda Bread I enjoy so much at breakfast time. But Baking Soda (Bicarbonate of Soda) has so many other uses in the home, I use it to freshen and clean many spots in the house. It's a super-effective (but gentle) abrasive and is a great natural deodorizer, so it's helpful in all sorts of trouble spots. All of these are reason enough to stock up now.

1. Excellent for removing those stubborn stains from plastic food containers especially the one's left by raw carrots. Many food leftovers have a way of leaving their mark. To freshen your containers, wipe with a clean damp sponge sprinkled with baking soda. For really tough stains soak in a solution of four tablespoons of baking soda and a litre of warm water.

2. Fresh smelling Fridge

I'm sure you've seen those things to hang in your fridge to help keep it nice and fresh and aroma free, well I never buy such things just wipe out the fridge interior once a week with a solution of warm (NOT Hot) water and Baking Soda, it works perfectly.

Cleaning naturally with Bicarbonate of soda...

Baking soda will absorb strong food odours so they don't linger or change the taste of neighbouring foods too.

3. Fruit and Veggies

Mixed up a solution of warm water and Baking Soda and rinse your fruit and veg. in it, this will remove any dirt and waxy coating which is often used to preserve the freshness, it will also get rid of any remaining insecticides too.

4. Spotless Kitchen

It's a fact that almost everywhere in your kitchen will benefit from a baking soda treatment. With water, use it to clean your work surfaces, stainless steel sinks, microwaves, cooker hoods, and cooking utensils.



NOTE: Do Not confuse this with 'Baking Powder' they are two completely different things.