

## UNIT ONE: HERBAL MEDICINE FOR WOMEN SELF-STUDY ANSWER GUIDE

**Lesson 1:** Coming soon!

**Lesson 2:** Coming soon!

**Lesson 3:** Coming soon!

**Lesson 4:** Coming soon!

**Lesson 5:**

**1. What is the importance of a woman understanding her sexual/reproductive anatomy?**

Some examples include:

- Understand the ways in which a woman's cycle works, hormones, as well as how it shifts from menarche through to menopause. Preparation for the shifts can enhance empowerment, and wellness.
- Health monitoring on a regular basis, what signs indicate a balanced state as well as those that do not.
- Greater sense of self-esteem, empowerment.
- Making choices about her reproductive health.
- Knowledge of anatomy can help enhance the female sexual response!

**2. Ask 3 women if they perform BSE regularly, how often, and if not, why not? Summarize their responses below.**

**3. Look through “women’s” or fashion-magazines and identify 3 articles either on the use of herbs and dietary supplements, or “women’s health problems.”**

**REFLECTION: Did the article convey a sense of respect and empowerment regarding women’s bodies and health?**

**4. Observations on how your hormones affect you throughout your cycles, both your monthly and larger life cycles. Talk about your emotions, physical sensations, mental space, creativity, energy levels, etc.**

Student to address monthly and at least 1 other life cycle (menarche, pregnancy/nursing, perimenopause or menopause). Touch on at least several of the above listed sensations, mental states in these cycles.

**5. Make a list (do not submit) of all the words you can think of for women’s and men’s genitalia-both medical and slang, as well as a list of questions related to sexuality/gynecologic conditions. Ask yourself these questions and a few choice words in front of a mirror until you can repeat them comfortably. Submit a summary of experience and what came up for you as you did exercise.**

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### Lesson 6:

**What models, individuals, or philosophies have influenced your approaches to health and healing? What models described in this lesson most resonate with your vision for your own work with herbal medicines?**

Models described in lesson include: the community herbalist, the modern herbalist (or phytotherapist), the integrative, the wise woman traditional model, the heroic model, or the scientific model. Students should touch on at least one of these in their personal reflection.

- 1. Why are colonics, restrictive diets, and cleanses exemplary of the heroic tradition?**
    - Approaches to healing and cleaning of the body with the belief that the body can be flushed, cleansed or deprived into health.
    - Disease is viewed in the context of a result of toxins, and one needs to purge oneself of toxins to be healed
    - Restriction/deprivation are involved in the “punishment” aspect of Heroic tradition
    - Focuses on the negative; may increase stress in the body
    - Colonics, cleanses and sometimes restrictive diets assume endless cycles and repetitions of treatment as is a core belief of heroic tradition
  
  - 2. Can the Wise Woman model be applied in any context? Why or why not?**
    - Not only a way of using and applying medicines, but also a way of looking at people and the world and healing
    - Non-exclusive
    - Can include doing nothing (allowing the innate wisdom of the body to heal itself), to nourishing (with herbs, etc.), to surgery
    - Focus is on the person as an individual, not the disease. Disease is recognized, diagnosed, but focus is not on disease entity
    - Includes appropriate use of all tools available for healing, therefore can be applied in any context
    - It is a core group of principles that can be applied to administering herbs or seeking out aggressive therapy for cancer
  
  - 3. What controls, guidelines or educational requirements, if any do you think there should be regarding the practice of herbal medicine? Should this vary in any context (i.e. Should anyone be able to treat pregnant women? people with cancer?) If you do not believe any guidelines are appropriate, please explain why and what can be done to protect public safety.**
- Reflective
- 4. Based on what you have learned so far in this course, and in your personal journey with herbs and healing, if you had to create or define 3 guiding principles for your herbal practice or work, what might they be?**

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Reflective

## Lesson 7:

1. **Sample exercise with bulk herbs: one from the tannin rich, alkaloid rich, and mucilage rich herbs and prepare into a tea. Steep for 30 min. Strain and taste all 3. Record sensations, quality. Repeat experiment with tannin rich herb and steep only for 10 min. Is there a difference between this and first batch?**

Student should record observations on each of the three tea types and also comment on the difference between steeping times.

2. **Using *Botanical Medicine for Women's Health* and the model printed on the Lesson 7 Assignment page, choose 2 conditions (not UTI) and separately fit their symptoms, as you think they should be categorized, into the scheme of the model. If you feel you have the knowledge to do so (you can use the herbal actions section, for example), try to also place herbs with the symptoms. Use the categories: Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry.**

Students must be specific with which herbs they are using for each of above categories and must provide 2 examples.

### **Examples:**

Condition: Genital Herpes Outbreak

#### **Hot:**

Burning pain (analgesic: St. John's wort)

Inflammation (anti-inflammatory: Comfrey - cooling)

Infection (antiviral: Echinacea - cooling)

#### **Moist:**

Weeping lesions (astringent: Plantain - drying, cooling)

#### **Cold:**

N/A

#### **Dry:**

N/A

Condition: IBS with chronic constipation - 44 years old, cold and dry constitution.

**Dry:** stagnation, chronic constipation - useful herbs: slippery elm, marshmallow root (moistening, anti-inflammatory, mucilage-rich). Note: due to their cooling nature warming herbs should be used

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**Cold:** Slow digestion and intestinal movement, spasms, flatulence - useful herbs: ginger, cinnamon, oregano oil (antispasmodic, anti-microbial, warming and carminatives)

**Moist:** N/A

**Hot:** N/A

Condition: Menorrhagia (heavy menstrual bleeding) - the client is 56 years old, premenopausal, phlegmatic temperament, highly stressed and anxious

**Hot:** excess bleeding, inflammation, increases anxiety and stress, hormonal imbalance - useful herbs: vitex (for hormonal balance), lady's mantle tea and cramp bark (for the inflammation, pain and cramps)

**Moist:** excess bleeding, inflammation - useful herbs: nettles (drying and replenishes minerals), raspberry leaves tea (astringent), sage tea (drying), cramp bark (cooling and drying antispasmodic)

**Cold:** N/A

**Dry:** N/A

3. **Have you ever had a health-related experience, or something else significant, that demonstrated for you the power of intuitive, or body-centered knowing? If yes, please describe. Did you listen to your instinct? If yes, what did you learn? If not, what prevented you from doing so?**

Reflective

### Lesson 8:

1. **List 5 key points you learned about herbal safety in this lesson.**

Some examples:

- Know for each of the herbs you recommend: allergic reactions, idiosyncratic reactions, sensitivities, contraindications and all their common and not so common symptoms.
- Know your limitations. Refer your client when appropriate. Consult with more experienced herbalists when needed.
- Adverse events are not monitored effectively in the US.
- Research herb-drug interactions.
- Herb-drug interactions are less common, and often less severe than drug-drug interactions.
- Reactions to herbs can include herb-drug interactions, or simply allergic or idiosyncratic reactions
- Know your sources: where the plant came from and how 'clean' it is.
- Know your resources for information on the safety of herbs.

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- Crucial to have clear communication with your client about their condition and medical history, their contact with health care professionals, and all medications they are using, including allergies to medications/foods.
  - Herbal medicines have a remarkable track record of safety
2. **Name 3 important ways that modern herbal use has changed or eliminated some of the safeguards to herbal medicine safety that were more likely to be inherent when herbal medicine was more community based.**

Student must relate the example to how the difference between community herbalism of the past and compared to modern herbal use relates to safeguards.

Examples include:

- People grew their own herbs. They knew the specific plants, when and how to harvest them. The risk of adulterated herbs or lesser quality herbs was reduced in the past.
- 'Clients' had a relationship with the herbalist. Positive (or negative) effects could be observed. Adverse reactions might have been better monitored. It was a primary way herbalists learned about how to advise.
- Plants were local, and in the past, less subject to chemicals, pesticides and unseen adulterations.
- Standardization of herb constituents have changed the safety of some herbs. Herbs were primarily used in their whole forms, and when herbs are standardized, some of the constituents that provide safety buffers in our body are missing.

3. **What are the most common symptoms of an ADR?**

Drowsiness, dizziness, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and nausea.

4. **What is an allergic reaction? What are the common symptoms? Who is especially at risk? Are allergic reactions always predictable?**

Part 1: Examples include:

- An allergic reaction is an immune mediated reaction where drug antigen antibody complexes form leading to release of histamines and other inflammatory cytokines.
- An allergic reaction is an immunologic hypersensitivity that occurs when there is unusual sensitivity to a substance.
- An allergic reaction is the body's reaction to a 'foreign' substance to which it is particularly sensitive.

Part 2: Examples include:

- contact dermatitis (minor skin reactions)
- itchy eyes
- runny nose
- severe reactions (less common) include constriction of airway, swelling, difficulty breathing, fatal anaphylactic shock

Part 3: Examples include:

- pregnant women

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- young children
- the elderly
- those on immunosuppressive drugs
- those with a known sensitivity to certain plant families.

Part 4: Examples include:

- Allergic reactions are often not predictable and can occur spontaneously.

5. **Consider and briefly comment on how this lesson affected your perspective on herb safety, if at all? What do you feel are the most important ideas and tools you gained? How might this chapter affect your clinical/educational counseling?**

### Lesson 9:

1. **Why is proper identification of raw plant material essential to herbal safety and efficacy?**
  - Important to ensure you are working with the herb you have chosen.
  - Misidentification, mislabeling, and adulterations can put the client at risk.
  - The client could have an adverse reaction or unintended side effect if the wrong herb is used.
  - Having the wrong herb can mean you are giving something ineffective for the condition you are treating.
  - Unexpected herb-drug interactions could occur if the wrong herb is used.
2. **What is standardized product and why are they sometimes used?**
  - The process of consistent methods of manufacturing and processing materials to ensure the product contains the desired ingredients and reliable quality.
  - Marker compounds are specific chemical constituents in plants known to have physiological effects. Sometimes considered the "active constituents" within a plant.
  - Certain "marker compounds" may be used to ensure the identity of the plant, quality and strength.
  - They might be used in research to ensure consistency across groups.
  - Allows for some control over batch to batch variability.
  - May assist with maintaining consistent dosing.

#### **Hands-on 1: Herbal infusion, herbal decoction, and herbal syrup**

**Make the infusion, decoction and then a syrup from each of the Nervine Tea and Alterative, Aperient Decoction.**

**Compare the tastes, palatability feelings, and other noticeable qualities and record your observations.**

**Why is the nervine blend typically made as a tea and not a decoction? Why is the alterative, aperient blend intended to be a decoction? Does making either blend in the non-intended way affect the value of the medicine? What about when you turn the decoctions into syrup?**

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- The nervine tea is usually made as a tea as it only contains above ground parts of the plants like leaves, flowers and aromatic seeds which contain the highly water soluble constituents and volatile oils.
- If one made a decoction with these ingredients you would destroy many of the desired constituents.
- A decoction is made using the tougher plant materials like roots, bark and non-aromatic seeds. We heat these for longer at prepare differently because the medicinal constituents in these dense materials are not as easily and quickly released into the water.
- If one made a tea out of these ingredients instead of a decoction you would not extract the full potential of medicinal constituents into the preparation.
- Turing the decoctions into syrups should not affect the value of the medicine and can make it more palatable.

### Hands-on 2: Herbal oil and herbal salve

1. **Prepare a sample of calendula oil and smell and apply a small amount to your skin.**
2. **Prepare as salve from this oil. Record your general experience, results, and any problems you encountered in the oil-and salve-making processes.**

Reflective. Students to comment on both the oil and salve.

### Lesson 10:

1. **In your own words, briefly describe the most important factors that go into the development of an herbal formula.**
  - Is the issue acute? Chronic? What organs or systems are involved?
  - Does her constitution or condition need warming or cooling herbs? Slow acting mucilaginous herbs, or quick, spicy aromatics?
  - Formulate using the fewest herbs possible to address the underlying health concerns for my client from a constitutional perspective
  - Being clear about what you are trying to achieve with the formula.
  - Do you have a clear goal in mind based on an accurate diagnosis, and/or a thorough assessment of the condition and symptoms as they present in the particular individual?
  - Consider the form of preparation that is suited to the client's lifestyle and personal preference, as well as cost, frequency of use, and taste.
  - What is the priority for healing, the first thing to address
  - Is the person on any other medications or have more complicated health issues?
  - Knowing the client's entire history including past health issues, surgeries, medications as well as knowing the entirety of their current condition.
  - Knowing the changes and protocol that the client is capable of incorporating and maintaining is essential.
2. **What is meant by "exquisite formulating" and why is it important?**
  - Exquisite formulating aims to use the fewest herbs possible to achieve the desired results in a formulation.

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- Important because when you formulate with too many herbs, the key action of the formula may be lost in the multitude of other actions of the added herbs.
  - Using the minimal number of exact herbs in a formula keeps it elegant and streamlined, and requires the practitioner to carefully consider herbs that address the most symptoms in using the least amount of herbs.
  - Formula is more customized to the client and their specific needs, and is more potent and effective.
3. Using any herbal for women in your personal library, including the HMW course materials, copy 3 formulas listed in the book, and separately critique/explain the rationale for why you think the herbalist included those herbs in the formula. Use what you learned in the actions lesson to complete this assignment.

### Sample formula

1) Cramp-ease (from the Unit 1 Roots of Healing)

*Viburnum opulus* (cramp bark) 1:3; 30mL

*Dioscorea villosa* (wild yam) 1:3, 20mL

*Cimicifuga racemosa* (black cohosh) 1:3, 20mL

*Matricaria recutita* (chamomile) 1:2, 15mL

*Leonorus cardiaca* (motherwort) 1:3, 15mL

Cramp bark: uterine antispasmodic, musculoskeletal antispasmodic. Contemporary uses of cramp bark include menstrual cramps (thus why it is included in this formula aimed to ease menstrual cramps).

Wild Yam: antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, estrogen modulation. Indications: dysmenorrhea, uterine cramping, estrogen modulation.

Black Cohosh: adaptogen, immunomodulator, antispasmodic, musculoskeletal anodyne. Indicated for dysmenorrhea, ovarian pain, anxiety, and insomnia.

Motherwort: nervine, antispasmodic. Indications: treatment of irritability associated with hormonal changes, dysmenorrhea.

Chamomile: Antispasmodic, mild sedative. Indications: gas and bloating, anxiety.

I think that the author selected these herbs because of their strong antispasmodic actions (particularly useful with menstrual cramps), their affinity for the female reproductive system, as well as their nervine, relaxing/sedative properties.

### Another sample formula

2) Winter tonic (from Herbal Medicine from the Heart of the Earth by Sharol Tilgner)

*Aromoracia rusticana* (horseradish)



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*Allium sativa* (garlic)

*Petroselinum crispum* (parsley)

*Beta vulgaris* (beet)

*Zingiber officinalis* (ginger)

*Capsicum* spp (cayenne)

I think that the author intended to make a warming blend which is also antiseptic and can help clear up congestion.

Horseradish: antiseptic, warming, and relieves congestion

Garlic: antimicrobial, diaphoretic. Indications: respiratory infections, preventative medicine

Parsley: expectorant, nutritive. Indications: eliminating excess water, gas and bloating.

Ginger: warming, antimicrobial, expectorant, antitussive, diaphoretic, stimulant. Indications: bad circulation, sore throats, appetite stimulant.

Cayenne: warming, antiseptic, diaphoretic, stimulant. Indications: stagnation of blood flow, pain relief.

### Another sample formula

3) Formula for IBD

Chamomile: Nervine herb supportive of gastrointestinal issues

Wild Yam: Spasmolytic and Antiinflammatory

Licorice: Antiinflammatory and soothing for the digestive tract

Yarrow: Spasmolytic and antiinflammatory

Peppermint: Spasmolytic

4. **Using the herbs listed below, and referring to the actions lesson, prepare and sample each ½ cup each as a tea, individually, to compare taste and any noticeable effects. Briefly report your findings. (Chamomile, Lavender, Rosemary, Rose petals, Lemon balm, Motherwort, and Oats).**

**Optional alternative: Obtain each of these herbs in tincture form and compare single tinctures and combinations.**

Reflective/observations.

5. **Special Formulating Assignment: (Sent in as a PDF attachment)**  
**Select a condition listed in the course, and based on what you have learned so far in Unit 1, develop a generic formula using the “column” method described in this lesson. Show your**

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full chart with all of your columns, bolding the herbs that will go into your formula. Write the formula in the form that it has been written in this lesson. Explain your choices in detail. Must be an original formula.

### A sample answer

1) Condition: Postpartum depression/General “blues” & feeling out of sorts.

Therapeutic Goals:

- \*Alleviate depression/ stress & anxiety
- \*Improve stress response & nourish the nervous system
- \*Support steady hormonal states

Antidepressant:

**St. John's wort**

ginseng

**eleuthero**

Adaptogen:

ashwagandha

ginseng

**eleuthero**

Nervine Tonic:

**St. John's wort**

ginseng

**eleuthero**

**wild oat**

**blue vervain**

Nervine Relaxant:

lemon balm

**wild oat**

**blue vervain**

Hormonal Regulator:

vitex

peony

### Formula Sample 1:

St. John's Wort 25ml

Eleuthero 15ml

Licorice 15ml

Blue Vervain 20ml

Wild Oat 25ml

100ml

Dose: Up to 5ml 3x/day

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Formula Sample 2: Vitex alone 5ml taken in morning.

Choices Explained:

I chose St. John’s Wort as the main herb in this formula because of its antidepressant action. The main concern of the client is alleviating the feelings of “the blues” in my scenario. Eleuthero’s placement in the formula is due to its broad spectrum of action. It is considered adaptogenic & would help to improve the stress response. Alleviates depression, and is considered toning to the nervous system. Licorice, although not included in my chart, is added for a few reasons. As we learned in a previous lesson, it is considered adaptogenic. I have been taught that Licorice is a “harmonizer”, that is an herb that supports the action of other herbs. Furthermore, I am using it specifically in this formula as a corrigent. Blue vervain has been added to the formula based on its nervine actions. It blends well with St. John’s wort when used for postpartum depression. I chose wild oat for this formula based on its tonic role for the nervous system, as well as its well-known nutritive action. I also marked Vitex alone as a separate formula to take in the morning to support steady hormonal states as mentioned in the therapeutic goals.

### 2) Another sample answer

**PMS:** symptoms including water retention, pre-menstrual cramping, irritability

**Therapeutic goals:** relieve retention of water, cramping, and irritability

Diuretic	Nervine	Antispasmodic	Hormonal Regulator	Pelvic Circulatory Tonic
dandelion leaf				
cleavers				
	skullcap	skullcap		
	valerian	valerian		
	black cohosh	black cohosh	black cohosh	black cohosh
		wild yam	wild yam	
				ginger
			chaste tree berry	

### **PMS Formula**

<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i> (black cohosh)	1:3	25ml
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i> (chaste tree berry)	1:3	25ml
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i> (valerian)	1:3	20ml
<i>Taraxacum flos.</i> (dandelion leaf)	1:3	20ml
<i>Zingiber officinale</i> (ginger)	1:3	<u>10ml</u>
		100ml

**Dosage:** 5ml of tincture 2-3 times per day, taken in a small amount of water

**Black cohosh** is chosen for its hormonal regulating, nervine, and antispasmodic properties, to address the

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irritability, and pain associated with the PMS symptoms, as well as hormonal regulation to help prevent and/or decrease PMS occurrences in the future

*Chaste tree berry* is chosen for its wonderful hormonal regulating properties, to help decrease PMS for reoccurring and to lessen the severity of it it does continue to occur

*Valerian* is a wonderful relaxing antispasmodic to help reduce the irritability associated with PMS, as well as relax the body and nervous system, reducing any associated pain and tension

*Dandelion leaf* is a wonderful natural diuretic that does not deplete the body of potassium the way pharmaceutical diuretics can. As a diuretic it helps reduce water retention, as well as providing many minerals to the body which help decrease overall body cramping and muscle tension

*Ginger* is a warming circulatory tonic, bringing blood flow to the pelvic area so to prevent blood from stagnating and thus causing pain

### 3) Another sample answer

Dysmenorrhea (sore breasts, cramping irritability, headaches, estrogen/progesterone imbalance)

Treatment goals:

- To reduce PMS symptoms of irritability, headaches, and sore breasts. Onset of symptoms is generally 1-3 days before the start of the menstrual cycle.
- To reduce the cramps experienced during the first 1-2 days of the menstrual cycle
- Address the underlying estrogen imbalance (estradiol elevated to 113 on day 3 of cycle)

Actions:

Antispasmodic (affinity for reproductive system)	Relaxing nervine	Hormone Regulator	Analgesic	Anxiolytic	Uterine Circulatory Stimulant
angelica	<b>black cohosh</b>	<b>dong quai</b>	<b>dong quai</b>	California poppy	<b>dong quai</b>
<b>black cohosh</b>	California poppy	<b>black cohosh</b>	<b>black cohosh</b>	<b>motherwort</b>	ginger
wild yam	<b>motherwort</b>	wild yam	wild yam	<b>ashwaganda</b>	cinnamon
California poppy	<b>cramp bark</b>	<b>motherwort</b>	California poppy		<b>motherwort</b>
<b>cramp bark</b>	<b>ashwaganda</b>	chaste berry	<b>cramp bark</b>		
<b>motherwort</b>	chamomile		<b>ashwaganda</b>		
ginger					

Herbs chosen:

Cramp bark: Uterine antispasmodic, uterine tonic. Has an affinity for the reproductive system.

Black cohosh: Antispasmodic, indicated for anxiety,

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Dong quai: Antispasmodic, hormonal modulator,

Ashwaganda: anxiolytic, adaptogen, musculoskeletal relaxant.

Motherwort: Antispasmodic, nervine, anxiolytic

I chose these specific herbs because they were found in multiple columns on my chart. Then I went to the materia medica (Unit 13) and further confirmed these selected herbs to meet my therapeutic goals. I chose dong quai over wild yam as a hormonal modulator as dong quai is warming and drying and my client's constitution is cold and damp. I also thought that including both wild yam and dong quai might be too estrogenic for a person who already has excess estrogen. I also chose to add an adaptogen (ashwaganda) to the formula to help modulate stress as well as its other benefits.

### Specific Formula

100mL tincture

Cramp bark: 25mL of 1:2 extract

Black Cohosh 25mL of 1:2 extract

Dong Quai 25mL of 1:2 extract

Motherwort 15mL of 1:2 extract

Ashwaganda: 10mL of 1:2 extract

## LESSON 11:

**Reflective assignment: envision and articulate your work with women's health and botanical medicines and do some goal setting for the remainder of this course. Take 30 minutes to reflect on your ideal manifestation of working with women and herbs. How has this Unit shaped your vision so far? Take notes in a journal or notebook. After 30 minutes, briefly summarize your reflections, insights, and dreams on the form below and write down 3 goals that you are going to work on over the remainder of the course to help you achieve your goals.**

## LESSON 12:

- 1. Interview 2 women. Write a brief (1 paragraph) summary of your experiences performing the intake. Did you face obstacles? If you are already in practice and have done intakes, do you have any reflective comments you'd like to share on how you might improve your intake process to include concepts presented in this lesson?**

Reflect on the experience performing the intakes, obstacles encountered (if any), or reflections if already experienced with intakes.

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- 2. Go on the internet or to a local library, museum, or bookstore. Obtain a copy of a piece of artwork that includes one human subject in detail. Set a timer for 10 minutes and during this time sit and observe the image, listing everything you see. At the end of this time, put down your pen—the exercise is over. Write one paragraph describing your experience doing this exercise.**
  
- 3. Tasting/experiencing herbs exercise:**
  - a) Compare/contrast tastes of raspberry leaf with the different steeping times.**
  - b) Compare and contrast findings with slippery elm; in cold water and hot water.**
  - c) Record urine output after steeping dandelion leaf in water/then as a tea—note urine output for 2 hours. Did you notice increased diuresis with either exercise?**
  - d) For the tinctures (yarrow, Echinacea, and goldenseal) take 10 drops of each either directly in your mouth or in 1/8 cup of water, record the taste and effects in your mouth.**
  
- 4. (OPTIONAL):**

**Have someone else administer the teas and tinctures blindfolded. See if you can identify each of the different tastes.**