Session 8

Integumentary System (Skin-topical) Part I:

- Materia Medica (from Traditional literature & research):
  - Arnica montana
  - Calendula officinalis
  - Capsicum minimum
  - Commiphora myrrha
  - Hamamelis virginiana
  - Stellaria media
Integumentary System

Please watch the video
Integumentary System

Click here: https://search-alexanderstreet-com.ezproxy.endeavour.edu.au/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cvideo_work%7C2065713
Integumentary System
Herbal medicine provides 2 unique approaches to the treatment of skin conditions:

• Application of pharmacological principles for the treatment of skin disorders (i.e. mucilages, emollients/demulcents, antibacterials/antimicrobials, astringents/styptics, vulneraries, etc)

• Medicinal strategies for treating skin problems as manifestations of internal disease (e.g. alteratives, immune regulators, gastrointestinal tonics, lymphatics, circulatory tonics)

Skin diseases are amongst the most complex and difficult conditions to treat – generally because they are the result of something more complex involving other organs or body systems.
Skin conditions can be treated using:

1. Topical herbal treatments (lotions, creams, ointments, gels, poultices, compresses)
2. Ingested herbal preparations (infusions, decoctions, fluid extracts, tinctures, glycetracts, tablets, capsules)

Chronic skin conditions usually require treatment with both (topical & internal)
Arnica montana

Plant family: Asteraceae

Parts used: Flower

- Only used topically

Actions:

- Antiechymotic (prevents & alleviates bruising)
- Analgesic, anti-inflammatory (sesquiterpene lactones)
- Counter-irritant
- Antimicrobial

(Blumenthal et al. 1998; Bone 2003; Fisher 2018; Mosby, 2010)

Arnica montana

Historical & Traditional Prescribing

• Used for fevers, paralytic affections, slow healing wounds, leg ulcers, and as gargle for sore throat, pharyngitis and smokers cough.

• Bruises, painful swellings, cuts, lacerations, insect bites, strains, sprains, unbroken chilblains. (Bone, 2003)

• Arnica is mentioned by Hildegrade of Bingen (12th Century) and has been used extensively in European folk medicine. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) apparently drank Arnica tea to ease angina pain. (Fisher 2018)
Arnica montana

Cautions and Contraindications:
• Not for internal use or on broken skin. External use only. Internally arnica irritates mucous membranes, causes hypotension, tachycardia, dyspnoea, coma
• Sensitivity or allergy to the Asteraceae family

Warnings and Precautions:
• Prolonged use can cause dermatitis and skin irritation

Pregnancy and Lactation Data:
• No adverse effects are expected for topical use
  (Bone 2003; Fisher 2018; Leung, 2010)
### Arnica montana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Adult mL/g</th>
<th>Dosage directions &amp; considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Only</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tincture 1:5 (45%)</td>
<td>Dilute with 5x amount of water (5mls:25 mls water)</td>
<td>Apply 2-3 times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ointment</td>
<td>10-25% tincture</td>
<td>Apply 2-3 times per day</td>
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</tbody>
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**Energetics:** initially warming – secondary cooling, diffusive

(Bone 2003)
Calendula officinalis

Plant family: Asteraceae
Parts used: Flower
Actions:
• Vulnerary, styptic/haemostatic, antimicrobial, antifungal (topical), antiviral (topical)
• Anti-inflammatory (topical)
• Lymphatic
• Mild circulatory tonic, diaphoretic
• Hypoglycaemic, hypolipidaemic

(Bone, 2003; Fisher 2018; Leung, 2010; Wood, 2008)
Calendula officinalis

Historical & Traditional Prescribing

- Enlarged and inflamed lymph nodes, sebaceous cysts, gastric or duodenal ulcers and chronic inflammatory skin lesions.
- Spasmodic conditions, fever, chronic suppuration, varicosities.
- Pelvic conditions – dysmenorrhea, emmenagogue
- Topically for wounds, acne, chaffed skin in infants
- Protect against wind & chill

(Bone, 2003; Wood, 2008)
Calendula officinalis

Cautions / Contraindications:
- Allergy / hypersensitivity to the Asteraceae family.

Pregnancy and Lactation Data:
- No adverse effects are expected (Bone 2003)
Calendula officinalis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Adult mL/g</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tincture 1:2 (90%)</td>
<td>10-30 mL/week</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infusion dried herbs</td>
<td>1-4gm /dose</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>External</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ointment (2%-5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply 3-4 times /day as required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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(Bone, 2003; Fisher, 2018; Davis, 2011)

**Taste:** sweet, bitter, pungent, salty. Warming. resinous, astringent.

(Wood, 2008)
Capsicum minimum

Plant family: Solanaceae
Parts used: ripe fruit
Actions:
• Circulatory & metabolic stimulant, counter-irritant (capsaicin)
• Analgesic (topically)
• Diaphoretic
• Digestive stimulant and antispasmodic, carminative
• Antiseptic/antimicrobial
• Adjuvant

(Bone, 2003; Fisher, 2018)
Capsicum minimum

Historical & Traditional Prescribing

To ‘move the blood’, a diffusive, to equalise circulation (Samuel Thomson, 1841)

Marked depression and debility; atonic dyspepsia of drunkards; delirium tremens; colic, with abdominal distension; congestive chills; cold extremities, with blanched lips and small, weak pulse; congestion, with capillary atony; tongue dry and harsh, and buccal and salivary secretions scanty, in fevers; chronic haemorrhoids, from relaxation (Felter & Lloyd, 1898)

Used as a condiment in food preparation & to prevent food spoilage (antimicrobial)

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Capsicum minimum

Description:

- A vaso-stimulant to the cardiovascular system, restoring circulatory dynamics throughout the body and resolving congestion/stagnation of circulation, & a general stimulant to all bodily tissues.
- Stimulates prostaglandins, sweating & potentiates the effects of other remedies.
- Topically stimulates substance P reducing pain - topical applications act for up to 6 hours. Stimulate substance P release from nerve endings which depletes substance P leading to reduced pain (pain impulses cant be transmitted to brain).
- Stimulates endorphins & cerebral opioid system

(Menzies-Trull, 2013)
Capsicum minimum

Cautions / Contraindications

• Acute inflammation, acute gastritis, peptic ulcers, urticaria, topical applications to sensitive or damaged skin

Drug / Herb Interactions:

• Additive effect: antiplatelet & anticoagulants, corticosteroids, NSAID’s, analgesics

• Protective effect: against NSAID induced ulcers
  (Brinker, 2010; Bone, 2003)
## Capsicum minimum

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tincture 1:3 (60%)</td>
<td>0.5 - 3mL/ week</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oleo-resin</td>
<td>Up to 5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaster</td>
<td>Oleum, capsicum base</td>
<td>Apply on gauze then cover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Menzies-Trull, 2013)

**Energetics/Taste:** hot, pungent, diffusive, drying

(Thomsen & Gennat, 2009; Wood, 2009)
Commiphora myrrha

**Plant family:** Burseraceae  
**Parts used:** Oleo-resin  
**Actions:**  
- Astringent, anti-inflammatory, vulnerary  
- Antimicrobial, anthelmintic  
- Anticatarrhal  
- Hypolipidaemic  
- Hypoglycaemic  

(Braun & Cohen, 2015; Leung, 2010; Mosby, 2010)
Commiphora myrrha

Historical & Traditional Prescribing

- Extremely long history with Commiphora being used as an anti-microbial, Antibiotic for keeping wine. To treat wounds and sores, mouth ulcers; as an embalming agent; for infected teeth; worms; infections of mouth and skin; acute & chronic catarrh, coughs; TB. Was also considered an emmenagogue and so used for amenorrhoea. Commonly used in incense.

(Bone, 2003; Fisher 2018)
Commiphora myrrha

Herb/Drug Interactions:
• None known

Pregnancy and Lactation Data:
• Contraindicated in pregnancy and lactation

(Bone, 2003)

## Commiphora myrrha

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal use should be restricted to short term duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tincture 1:5 (90%)</td>
<td>10 - 30mL/week</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gargle</td>
<td>5mL in a glass of warm water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powdered resin (10%)</td>
<td>2 teaspoons in 250ml of boiling water &amp; steep for 15 minutes</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>1-4mL of tincture applied neat Or combined (powder/tincture) with distilled Witch hazel</td>
<td>Allergic contact dermatitis has been reported with myrrh usage. (Bone 2003; Fisher 2018; Mosby, 2010)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Energetics/Taste:** warming, stimulating, drying  
(Wood, 2008)
Hamamelis virginiana

Plant family: Hamamelidaceae
Parts used: Leaf and bark
Actions:
• Astringent, vasoconstrictor, haemostatic/styptic (tannins)
• Anti-inflammatory (topical)
• Antiseptic/antimicrobial
  (Fisher, 2018; Leung, 2010)
Hamamelis virginiana

Historical & Traditional Prescribing

• The bark was used as a febrifuge, tonic and narcotic, in fevers & externally for ulcers.
• The seeds for heart disease, dysentery, fevers, rheumatism, neuralgia, menorrhagia, bronchitis, wounds, chilblains, prostatitis, constipation.
• Leaves for whooping cough. (Fisher 2018)
• “Exerts a special influence upon the veins, facilitating the flow of blood towards the heart. It causes contraction of the veins, & is employed in diseases characterized by venous dilatation. In hemorrhoids, when there is fullness of the part with heaviness & downward pressure.” (Fyfe, 1909)
Hamamelis virginiana

Cautions / Contraindications / Warnings:
Irritation of stomach in susceptible individuals possible; may cause liver damage in rare cases. (McGuffin, 1997)

Herb/Drug Interactions:
- High tannins inhibit absorption, separate drugs & supplements 2 hours away from dose

Pregnancy and Lactation Data:
- No adverse effects are expected

(Mills & Bone 2013)
## Hamamelis virginiana

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<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Liquid Extract 1:2</td>
<td>42 - 84 mL /week</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried leaf or bark</td>
<td>2gm / dose in 150 mL of boiled water &amp; steep for 10-15 minutes</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppository</td>
<td>0.1-1gm leaves/bark combined with cocoa butter</td>
<td>Use rectally or vaginally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witch Hazel Ditillate</td>
<td>Apply directly to skin or combine with other herbs (e.g. Commiphora/Calendula)</td>
<td>Distilled product, majority of tannins excluded but still achieves astringency of tissues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Mills & Bone 2013; Fisher 2018; Davis, 2011)

**Energetics/Taste:** astringent, slightly sweet, slightly sour, cooling, drying

(Wood, 2009)
Stellaria media

Plant family: Caryophyllaceae
Parts used: Aerial parts
Actions:
• Astringent, emollient, demulcent, antipruritic, vulnerary
• Refrigerant
• Antioxidant

(Bone, 2003; Fisher, 2018)
Stellaria media

Historical & Traditional Prescribing

• Cooling, soothing, nourishing & antifebrile
  Subdues heat & lubricates dry conditions
  Helps kidneys to regulate fluid
  (Wood, 2008)

• Rheumatism, constipation, cough & hoarseness of the voice

• Topically for all manner of skin disorders and conditions

• Topically for haemorrhoids
  (Bone 2003)
Stellaria media

Cautions / Contraindications/Warnings:
• None known except for known allergy

Drug / Herb Interactions:
• None known

Pregnancy and Lactation Data:
• No adverse effects expected
  (Bone 2003)

(Pindari Herb Farm, 2004)
Stellaria media

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<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fresh plant succus</td>
<td>20-40mL / week</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried herb</td>
<td>1-5gm / dose</td>
<td>Take up to three times per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ointment 20%</td>
<td>Succus in lard/ paraffin base</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bone 2003; Fisher 2018)
References


References


References


Tutorial: Session 8
Session 8 Tutorial

Organize into groups (1-3 max) and review the herbs that were presented in session 8.

Consider:

• List specific skin conditions that would be indicated for each herb.

• Review symptoms / systems that are implicated in these conditions and discuss the herbs in Session 8 that support these also.

• Consider the herbal energetic requirements of each condition.

• What level/s of therapeutic intervention do the herbs mostly address?

• Discuss with the class.
Recommended Readings


- *Calendula officinalis* p. 136-141
- *Commiphora myrrha* p. 697-703


- *Arnica montana* p. 53
- *Capsicum minimum* p. 120
- *Calendula officinalis* p. 59
- *Commiphora myrrha* p. 123
- *Hamamelis virginiana* p. 215
- *Stellaria media* p. 137
Recommended Readings

American Botanical Society. (2013). Expanded Commision E Online

- Arnica montana
- Capsicum minimum
- Calendula officinalis
- Commiphora myrrh
- Hamamelis virginiana


Monograph on *Arnica*

http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/en/m/abstract/Js14213e/

Monograph on *Calendula*
http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/en/d/Js4927e/6.html

Monograph on *Myrrh*
http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/en/m/abstract/Js14213e/

Monograph on *Witch hazel*
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