

Traditional remedies for summer

EASY STEP BY STEP RECIPES

From hay fever, to sun
burn gel and insect
repellents



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About me

My name is Laura Carpenter and I am a herbal educator.

I love bringing 'lost herbal knowledge' back into the everyday,

I run courses at all levels, from the absolute beginners, right up to professional development for herbal practitioners.

You can find out more about me on my website. www.lauracarpenter.co.uk





Before we get started we need to take a moment to talk about safety

It is important to remember that just because herbal medicine is natural **does not mean that it is automatically safe.** Some people can have reactions to herbal medicines, and although this is rare it is important to bear in mind.

Are you taking any medication?

If you are taking any form of medication it is important to check that it is safe to take a particular herb with that medication before proceeding. Some herbs can directly interact with a drug and some can stop the drug working altogether.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant or there is a chance you might be, you must only use herbal medicine with the supervision of a medical herbalist.

If you are unsure about a herbal medicine and how you might react to it, the safest thing to do is not take it and consult a medical herbalist for more information.

It is important to recognise when a condition is more serious, and to know your limits. If you become ill with something you'd normally go see the doctor about, it is important that you still go as normal.

Hay fever and allergies

Summer is the key time for hay fever but it can also be a difficult time for other types of allergies as well.

Hay fever (allergic rhinitis) is an allergic condition with symptoms such as itchy eyes, sneezing and a runny nose. It is estimated that 1 in 5 people will be affected by hay fever at some point in their lives. Some people are only affected as a child whereas some adults develop the condition later in life.

Hay fever is usually triggered by a type of pollen, and lasts while that pollen is in the local environment. Tree pollen is released in the spring, grass pollen at the end of spring beginning of summer and weed pollen from spring to autumn.

The main treatment for hay fever is antihistamines, which counteract the effects of histamine which is produced by the immune system to protect the body from infection. In the case of hay fever there is too much histamine as the pollen is seen by the immune system as a threat.



Natural anti-histamines

There are medicinal plants that have antihistamine effects, **nettle** (*Urtica dioica*), for example, has been shown to reduce the symptoms of hay fever and is recommended to take as a preventative before the hay fever season. As little as 600mg or 5ml per day has been found to be effective. This can be taken as a tea, tincture or capsule.

Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) is a traditional remedy for hay fever and has been used for hundreds of years by Native American Indian's. It is particularly used for reducing inflammation in the eyes and membranes in the nose. This can be taken as a tea, tincture or capsule.

Eyebright (*Eupharasia officinalis*) is another traditional remedy for sore eyes that has been used for hundreds of years and is a keen favourite of medical herbalists. Often given in the form of drops but can be taken as a tea, tincture or capsule.



Sun burn gel

Obviously ideally you wouldn't get burnt in the first place but accidents do happen.

For mild sun burn a great after sun is a mixture of aloe vera and lavender essential oil. You can either use the fresh juice and pulp and add a couple of drops of lavender before you apply to the sun burn. Or you can use aloe vera gel and make a pre made after sun.

Here are some of my favourite summer gel blends to try:

- Chamomile and aloe vera - another great one for sun burn and heat rash

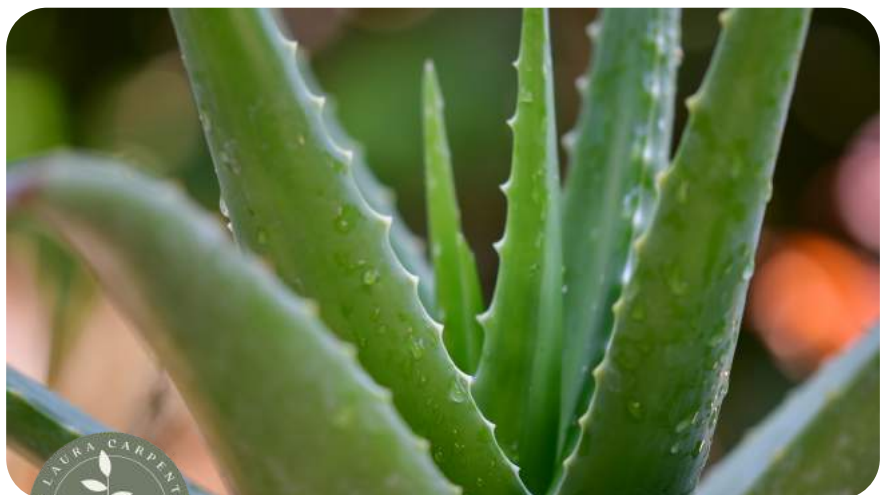
Basic recipe

Fill a jar with aloe vera gel, add 20 drops of lavender essential oil to 30g of gel. Mix together and you're ready to go (it's that easy!).

For children between 6 years and 3 years: use aloe vera gel with 5 drops of lavender per 30g of gel.

For children under 3 years: use aloe vera gel without the lavender.

For severe sun burn you can apply lavender essential oil directly to the affected area. This can be repeated every few hours. **Not for children under 10 years old.**



Insect bites and stings

For a mild insect bite or sting there are quite a few options regarding a cream or ointment.

The main actions required as antibacterial to prevent an infection, something soothing to reduce the inflammation of the bite or sting, and if possible a pain reliever.

The sun burn gel can also be used on bites and stings.

Here are some of my favourite alternatives to try:

- Chickweed infused oil and lavender essential oil
- Chamomile infused oil and lavender essential oil



Basic recipe

- 6.25g beeswax/plant wax (e.g. soy)
- 25ml herbal infused oil (e.g. plantain)
- Clean glass pots (mixture makes approx 30ml)

In a glass bowl over a saucepan of boiling water, melt the beeswax/plant wax and herbal infused oil together. Once the beeswax/plant wax has dissolved, remove from the heat and allow it to cool slightly.

Add in 10 drops of peppermint essential oil

Beat the mixture until it cools down and becomes thick, you may find it easier to spoon the mixture into the pots while it is still quite runny, that way it can cool in the pot and there will be fewer air pockets and less mess.

Allow these to cool and then label. This balm will usually last for 1 year, although it may last longer.



Natural insect repellent

There are many recipes for insect repellents and they all share one particular property, they are very high in essential oils.

Which plants do you know that contain essential oils?

Plants with natural insect repellent essential oils are as follows:

Yarrow, feverfew, tansy, pine, juniper, elder, lavender, thyme, rosemary, cedar, cypress, citronella, bog myrtle.

Due to the high essential oil contents of these insect repellents they are not suitable for children under 10 years or pregnant women.



My all time favourite natural insect repellent (adult recipe):

- 20ml Feverfew tincture
- 20ml Tansy or Yarrow tincture
- 20 drops eucalyptus essential oil
- 5 drops of bog myrtle essential oil
- 10 drops of thyme essential oil
- 20 drops of pine essential oil
- 20 drops of juniper essential oil

Combine all ingredients in a spray bottle and spray after sun block. It should be the top protective layer and will naturally 'sweat off' every few hours.

Child recipe (6 years and up):

20ml Feverfew tincture
20ml Tansy or Yarrow tincture
4 drops of eucalyptus essential oil
1 drop of bog myrtle essential oil
4 drops of pine essential oil
4 drops of juniper essential oil

Please consult a herbalist for if you are looking to use an insect repellent in children under 6.

Here are some of my favourite insect repellents to try:

- 20 drops peppermint and 20 drops pine EO in 50ml water or carrier oil
- 50ml wormwood tincture, 50ml mugwort tincture, 20 drops rosemary EO, 10 drops sage EO.



Summer headache remedies

If you're someone prone to headaches in hot and humid weather then you might want to try a couple of these natural remedies.

Rosemary is a great herb and very prolific so easy to harvest from. It's the leaves that used medicinally (the same as in cooking).

Rosemary increases circulation, especially to the brain, which makes it great for reducing headaches and increasing memory.

A really easy headache recipe that you can try is simply making a rosemary infused oil (see my **Kitchen pharmacy eBook** for recipe). Apply to temples and back of neck for headache relief.

Lavender is a fantastic herb and another that is very prolific and easy to harvest. It's the flower heads that are medicinal.

The best time to harvest lavender is on a warm day at 12pm as this increases the essential oil content.

Lavender can also be used for headaches in the same way as described for rosemary. It can be used on cuts and scrapes as a wound healer, as well as on burns (in essential oil form).

People often think of lavender as relaxing and a mild sedative, and for some people it can have that effect either from the oil or as a tea. Unfortunately this only works for about 50% of people, the other 50% get the opposite effect!

Here are some of my favourite wrist sprays for headaches:

- Lavender and bay leaf hydrosol.
- Chamomile and rosemary hydrosol.

