



# Advanced Herbal Medicine

## Course booklet

# Welcome

Hello and welcome to the advanced herbal medicine course,

If you've joined this course you will have already completed my Year Long Herbal Medicine course or an equivalent.

This is a more advanced course but is still for home use and is not a practitioner level course.

Kind regards

Laura

Sam

# Safety

## Herbs and medications

Herbs are often seen as 'safe' because they are natural but that is not the case, and when someone is taking medications they can interact with herbs (as well as a wide range of supplements and vitamins).

If you are taking any medication I do not recommend you take any herbs internally without first consulting a medical herbalist to check for interactions.

## Herbs and particular medical conditions

In these courses we will only be looking at self limiting conditions, things that you would generally not seek medical attention for. e.g. coughs and colds.

It is important to seek medical attention when appropriate, either through a local doctor or local medical herbalist.

## Herbs and pregnancy

While there are some herbs that are beneficial in pregnancy they must be strictly controlled and for that reason I recommend anyone who's pregnant to see a medical herbalist for advice before taking any herbs (internally) at any stage of pregnancy.

External preparations can be used for pregnant women but if you are ever in doubt check with a local medical herbalist.

Sample

## Posology – Dosage

### What is posology?

#### Posology (Dosage)



Posology is often used to describe the amount of a substance that is given for an effect. In herbal medicine that is the dosage, e.g. 2 tsps three times a day.

Dosage is an area where people get very worried and rightly so as we know the wrong amount of something can cause harm. For example water is good for us in certain amounts but if you were to suddenly drink a very large amount you could die.

It's important to know what the lethal dose is of a herb and also the dose that it becomes effective. The great thing about herbs is that actually you don't need that much to have an effect.

Most of the herbs that I cover in my courses don't have a maximum or lethal dose. This means that when studied it was not found that it could kill at any dosage. This is often the case with foods too.

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**For more details see the full course.**

## How to combine herbs

### Using simples



A 'simple' is a term that is often used to mean one herb used as a medicine, but it can also mean simple as in very easy and quick to make.

### Indigestion

There are many herbs that can aid digestion and they are best taken as a tea. If you are using tea bags of the herb you may need to add several tea bags to a mug of hot water to get a good strength. If you are using dried herbs the general rule of thumb is 1 – 2 tsp of dried herb to 1 cup of boiling water. If you are using fresh herbs double that.

**Herbs to try for indigestion:** Peppermint, chamomile, fennel, cinnamon, caraway, ginger.

### Improving circulation

Taking ginger tea is an excellent way of gently improving circulation.

Other herbs to aid circulation: chilli and rosemary

### Sore throats

Sage tea with a tsp of honey is an excellent gargle and it can then be drunk.

### **Coughs and colds**

Thyme is an excellent herb for coughs as it not only fights any infection it also reduces the strength of the cough and helps to move any mucous.

### **Headaches**

Rosemary tea is an age old recipe for headaches, as is peppermint and lavender. A strong tea or infused oil can also be applied to the temples and wrists.

### **Natural sleep**

Chamomile is a lovely tea to take before bed to aid relaxation and natural sleep.

Additional herbs for restful sleep: lime flower, lavender and valerian

## What happens when herbs are combined?



When herbs are combined some really amazing things happen biochemically.

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**For more details see the full course.**

### How to taste herbs



Watch my video on [how to taste herbs](#).

## How to choose herbs for tea

Once you tasted a few herbs you will know which ones you personally would prefer in a tea. Although if you're looking for a medicinal tea rather than an everyday tea that is going to influence the ingredients you choose.

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**For more details see the full course.**

## Advanced tincture making

### Professional tincture making - how do they make them so strong?

The answer is in both the method they use and the strength of alcohol.

Most professional tincture makers use percolation to create their tinctures, put simply this is where the alcohol is trickled through the herb material for a long time.

They also use varying strengths of alcohol depending on the herb they are tincturing. The alcohol strengths used are 45%, 60% and 90%.

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**For more details see the full course.**

**How to use tinctures at home – linked course**



**Please see separate course.**

# Medicinal mushrooms

## What are medicinal mushroom?



Well the answer is any edible mushrooms are also medicinal mushrooms. There are obviously some that have more effects than others, as with herbs and foods, but even the humble button white mushroom has some medicinal properties.

Medicinal mushrooms are quite trendy and you may well have [read my blog about chaga](#) and the problems with sustainable harvesting.

Mushrooms have been used as medicines across the world in many cultures for thousands of years.

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**For more details see the full course.**

## Cooking with medicinal mushrooms



A great way to gain some of the medicinal properties of mushrooms is to eat them.

You do still gain their medicinal properties once they've been cooked, and in fact some of the biochemicals are only released when mushrooms are heated. If you can try to cook them as little as possible.

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**For more details see the full course.**

## Making mushroom tinctures



Tincturing medicinal mushrooms uses the double extraction method (more about this in the **Tincture at home course**).

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**For more details see the full course.**

## Foraging for mushrooms – is it safe?

Well that really depends how good you are at identifying mushrooms. If you are 100% sure that you can identify a mushroom then go for it.

But if you're only 99% sure then leave it.



There are some great mushroom foraging courses that you can go on to teach you how to gain experience and how to be confident in your foraging.

Here are three I highly recommend as I have taken them myself!

[Fred Gillam](#)

[Jesper Launder](#)

[Wild food UK](#)

## Medicinal mushrooms and their uses

The great thing about medicinal mushroom (and why they are used so extensively in hospitals in China and Japan) is that they do not interact with any medications. None at all, not even chemotherapy and other similar drugs.

### **Reishi** (*Ganoderma lucidum*)

Reishi is a 'bracket fungus' that grows on deciduous trees. It's found across the world and has been used as a medicine for thousands of years in different cultures.



## Medicinal uses

- Cancer preventative properties
- Anti-inflammatory
- Protective of the liver
- Boosts immune function

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**For more details see the full course.**

**Learn to make your own herbal supplements –  
linked course**

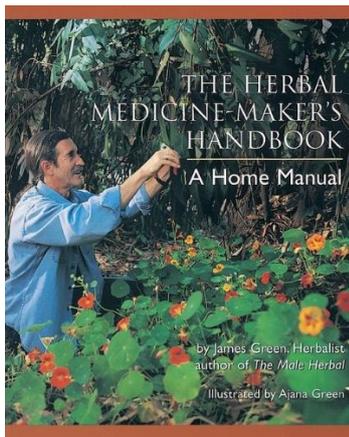


Please see separate course booklet.

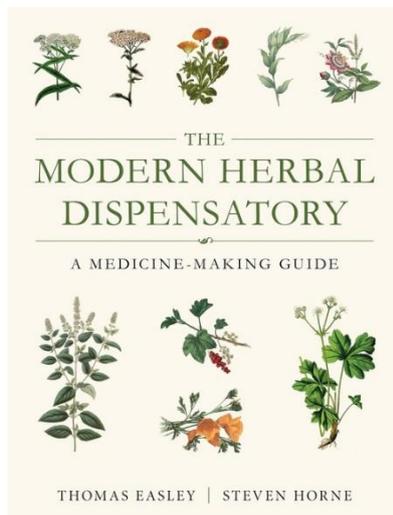
## More advanced reading list and resources

### Home pharmacy

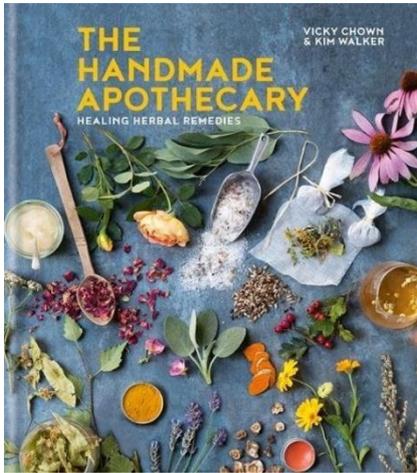
Here are some of my favourite home pharmacy books:



The herbal medicine makers handbook by James Green

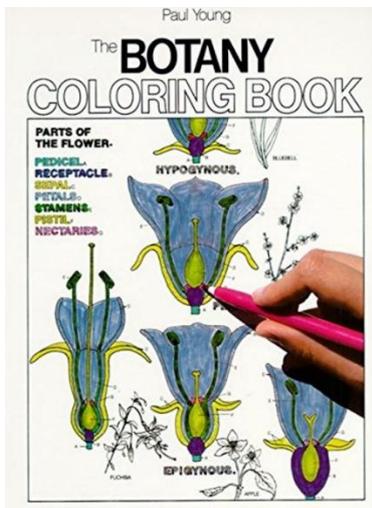


The herbal dispensatory by Thomas Easley and Steven Horne



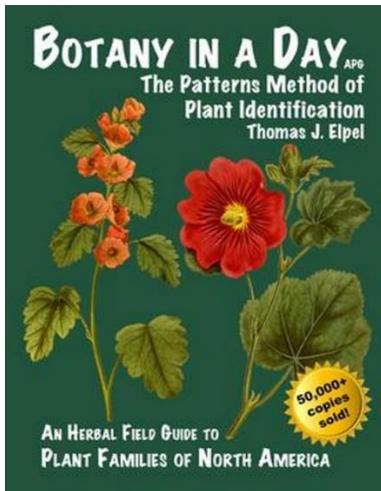
The handmade apothecary by Vicky Chown and Kim Walker

Here are some of my favourite botanical books:



The botany colouring book

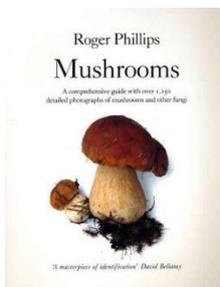
Botany in a day by Thomas Elpel



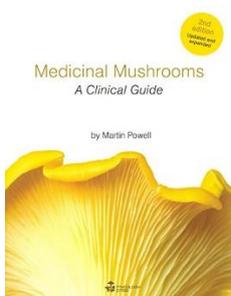
Thomas Elpel also has a [video on YouTube](#) all about it which I highly recommend.

## These are my favourite mushroom books:

Mushrooms by Roger Phillips



Medicinal mushrooms by Martin Powell



## Herbs from the Year Long Course

If you joined from a different course here is a list of the herbs covered in the Year Long Herbal Medicine course. You may want to read up on them at your leisure:

- Meadowsweet
- Dandelion
- Elder
- Plantain
- Hawthorn
- Calendula
- Chamomile
- Limeflower
- Cleavers

**Please see the following separate monographs:**

- Birch
- Borage
- Cramp bark
- Elecampane
- Ginkgo
- Ground ivy
- Horse chestnut

- Marshmallow
- Milk thistle
- Mullein
- Wood betony
- Rosemary

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**For more details see the full course.**

# Setting health goals

## What are health goals?

For some people having a health goal helps to keep things in perspective, it shows them what they are working towards. For example someone with eczema might want to stop using a steroid based cream.

Quite often I hear people say "I just want to feel better." And while that's a perfectly valid goal it can be difficult for you to see that when it happens.

What does **better** mean to you?

Maybe you want to be able to feel confident travelling without having to pop to the loo constantly with IBS.

Your health goals are going to be individual to you and what you are experiencing. But it's important to look at what you are looking do and how you want to feel.

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**For more details see the full course.**

# Creating your health plan

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**For more details see the full course.**

## What next?

### **Other courses you may enjoy**

If you've enjoyed this course you might like my other courses, please see my [website](#) for more details.