

THE 80 SQUARE-FOOT MEDICINAL GARDEN





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Disclaimer

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This book does not claim to contain and indeed does not contain all the information available on the subject of natural remedies.

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Introduction

Do you ever worry that you may not always be able to find the medicines that your family depend on? This is a constant problem in countries where drug supplies are not always reliable and could become a dangerous situation in a disaster situation. Herbal medicines can do as good a job as many modern pharmaceuticals if you only know what to take and how much. This book briefly describes a small plot medicinal garden that can provide medicines to treat the entire body.

This garden plan is designed to provide plants to treat the most common problems while occupying the smallest amount of space. Each plant has its own needs, and they are listed here. Most of these plants will grow with very little care, but some may need to be brought in during the winter or replanted each spring.

I've designed the garden to fit in a small space. Therefore, some of the most effective cures must be left out due to space. Trees and larger bushes must be left out, as well as plants that require more space.

I do not provide any information on how to use the herbs; please consult a herbalist or medical professional about how to use all medicinal herbs and learn about them before you need to use them.

How I Chose the Plants

I have chosen plants that will grow together, but some will need constant trimming to keep them within the allowed space. If you have a large family, or a patient that needs continuous medication, you should plant more than the amounts recommended here. This garden is meant to provide you with a selection to choose from should a need arrive. If you have an urgent need, expand the plants in that category.

I have tried to choose plants with different therapeutic uses while covering all the categories. Some plants overlap in many categories but have one specific use that I felt justified adding them anyway. Likewise, I prefer plants that have multiple uses over single-use plants.

I chose plants that will grow well in most of the United States. If you live in extreme cold, you may need to substitute some plants or grow many inside during cold weather. While many of the plants are perennials, they could be grown as an annual if necessary.

I did not include plants like garlic, onions, and cabbage in the medicinal garden plan, even though they have tremendous benefits. I did mention them at the end of the article. My thoughts were that these plants would be readily available in your herb garden or vegetable garden. This medicinal garden plan is intended to supply plants that might be harder to find.

Is 80 Square Feet Enough?

It is a very small garden, and if you have space or a large family, you should definitely enlarge it. Most urban lots are small. If you are already growing herbs and vegetables, then you may think that 80 square feet is too large for your lot. Only you can decide how much of each herb to plant for your needs. Much will depend on the specific needs of your family. I grow many plants in containers on my patio to give me more room in the garden plot. This garden plan is designed to provide the minimum, feel free to grow more.

Most of the plants listed prefer full sun or partial shade. Plants that need partial or full shade can be planted down-sun of the larger plants to provide a sun screen. I have designed the garden to be two beds, each 10 feet long. You could plant one long bed, if you like. In my design, the taller plants are at the back edges; you can change the alignment to fit your own garden space.

Where to Get Seeds

Most of the plants listed here can be grown from seed. A few require roots, but even those are available on the internet. Whenever possible, choose organic, heirloom seeds. You may choose different varieties of the plant, if necessary, to better suit your local environment.

Heirloom seeds are necessary because hybrid seeds do not reproduce well. They do a great job the first year, but should you need to replant the following year, your yield may not be good, or the seeds may not even germinate. With heirloom seeds, you can harvest seed every year to produce new plants next year.

Bones

Evening Primrose, *Oenothera biennis*

- 4 square feet
- Hardiness zones 3 through 11
- Soil pH 5.5 to 7
- Full sun; partial shade
- Height 16 to 36 inches

Evening primrose is useful for increasing bone density, regulating hormones, gastrointestinal problems, cardiovascular problems and more. I've chosen it for its effectiveness and usefulness.

Evening Primrose is a biennial that grows rapidly in most areas of the United States. It produces fragrant flowers that open in the evening.

I use evening primrose as a tea and as an oil. You can express the oil or use a perfume still to distill it. The seeds are high in oil and can be ground and taken as a supplement.

Growing Evening Primrose

I've reserved 4 square feet in my garden for evening primrose. It will spread out and could take over if you allow it, but I try to harvest the seeds for their oil, instead of allowing them to fall and sprout.

I plant evening primrose seeds in a sunny location. It will grow in partial shade, but for maximum flower and seed production, it needs lots of direct sun. I plant it in acidic soil with good drainage.

Evening primrose prefers warm weather, so I sow my seed after the last frost. If you live in a cold climate, you can start the seeds indoors. Plant or transplant the seedlings approximately 8 inches apart. Add mulch to the retain water if you are in a dry area.

Evening primrose grows well when neglected. Water is when the soil dries out and prune it back when needed to keep it from taking over the garden and you should have a successful crop.



Harvesting Evening Primrose

Evening primrose is best picked young for edible purposes, but for medicinal purposes, it can be harvested spring through fall for use in tea. Roots can be dug in the winter. And the seeds are harvested when the pods dry out. Save the tiny black seeds from the pods and use them for their oil, they contain 28% oil by weight. I store them whole and grind them as needed.

Red Clover, *Trifolium pretense*

- 4 square feet
- Hardiness zones 3 to 8
- Soil pH 6.2 or higher
- Full sun to part shade
- Height 20 inches

Red clover is a natural hormone replacement and is useful to slow the bone loss in osteoporosis and can even increase bone density in women. It is also helpful to treat skin diseases and combatting heart disease. It can be taken as a tea made from the flower blossoms, as a tincture, and as a dried herb.

Growing Red Clover

Sow seeds 8 to 10 inches apart and ¼ inch deep, after the last frost. They need warmth and moisture to germinate. Give them regular water until the seedlings are established. Once established it is relatively drought tolerant and will grow vigorously with the addition of nitrogen throughout the season. With good management, you will get 2 to 3 crops per year, depending on your location.



Harvesting Red Clover for Medicinal Use

Red clover blossoms are at their best medicinal value about one to two weeks after the blooms open. I usually harvest several crops a year and dry them for future use. I remove the blossom head only and leave the rest of the plant. I also harvest leaves to use in salads and soups or dried to use in tea. The leaves are best before the flowers appear.



Other Plants for Bone Health

Greater burdock and leeks are also beneficial for treating osteoarthritis. Their information is found below.

Cancer

White Mustard, *Sinapis alba*

- 2 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 5 to 9
- Soil pH: 6 to 7
- Full sun
- Height 12 to 16 inches

I grow white mustard seed for its use in preventing cancer, but it is also useful for treating infections and respiratory diseases. The leaves are edible as a green, and the seeds are used medicinally. The seeds can also be used to make tea and as a poultice.

Growing White Mustard

White mustard is adaptable to a wide range of growing conditions, but for the best results, give it moist soil and a pH of 6.5 to 6.8. It will grow fine in a range of 6 to 7, however. It likes the addition of composted manure.

Plant the seeds about 1/8-inch deep and about 4 inches apart. Thin them to 1 plant per square foot when they begin to overlap and compete for space. You can eat the thinned plants as a green. Keep them moist and weed free and they should do well.



Harvesting White Mustard

The leaves can be harvested throughout the growing season to use as a green. Allow the flowers to stay on the plant and develop into seed pods. Watch the plants and harvest the seed pods when they begin to turn brown. If they dry out too much, they will open and scatter the seeds.

Once cut, open the pods and spread the seeds on a fine mesh screen to dry. Store in a cool, dry place.

Leeks

- 4 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: all
- Soil pH 6 to 6.8

- Full sun

Leeks have multiple cancer-fighting properties. Eating them on a regular basis decreases your risk of cancer. They are also useful to treat heart disease, infections, Urinary tract infections, arthritis, and anemia.

Growing Leeks

Leeks appreciate a sunny spot with well-drained, fertile soil. They need lots of nitrogen and moist soil to thrive. Plant the seedlings 6 inches apart and 6 to 8 inches deep or so that the soil comes up to the bottom of the green leaves. Mulch the bed with organic material to retain moisture.

Once the leeks are about one inch thick, begin mounding the soil around the stems to blanch the leeks and increase the desirable white part.



Other Plants for Treating and Preventing Cancer

Red clover, cabbage, cleavers, greater burdock root, and sheep sorrel are all included in this planting plan and are useful to treat and prevent cancer.

Dental Care

Plantain, *Plantago Major*

- 3 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 3 through 12
- Soil pH 4.6 to 7.8, tolerant to pH 9
- Full sun to partial shade

Plantain has many medicinal qualities, including anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antioxidant, moderates the immune system, and a weak whole-body antibiotic. I use it to treat auto-immune diseases, infections, and for toothaches and dental infections. I usually either juice the leaves or make an infusion from them. They can also be used as a leafy green vegetable.

Growing Plantain

The plantain that we are planting here is the herb, not the banana-like plant. It can take the abuse of being walked on and even mowed occasionally, so I use it as a spacer in the garden where I walk between other plants.

Plant plantain directly in the garden when the weather begins to warm. No need to wait for the last frost. Sow three seeds per hole at a depth of 1/16 of an inch, just barely covered. Keep the seeds consistently moist until they germinate and space them about 12 to 18 inches apart. Once they sprout, they need very little care.



Harvesting Plantain

Plantain leaves can be picked by hand as needed. The roots are best collected with a spade or garden fork. The plant produces lots of seeds that mature in late summer. They are ready to harvest when the seed head turns tan.

Other Plants for Dental Care

Feverfew, which I recommend for growing for muscles, joints, and tendons is also good for treating some dental problems, as are the dill, rosemary, and thyme that you probably have growing in your herb garden.

Digestive Problems

Peppermint, *Mentha piperita*

- 3 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 3 to 11, depending on variety, roots are hardy in zones 5 through 11
- Soil pH 5.6 to 7.5, ideal: 6.5 to 7.0
- Full sun to partial shade

Peppermint is useful for treating the symptoms of a wide range of digestive upsets. It also relieves headaches and migraines, itchy skin, and its numbing qualities are useful to relieve pain from arthritis, gout, neuralgia, and sciatica.

Growing Peppermint

Mint is a fast-growing plant that spreads rapidly. You will probably want to keep it cut back to prevent its spread from taking over the garden. I prefer to grow mine in a large container, which makes confining it easier. It also makes a good groundcover along walkways where the scent is released as you walk by.



Plant mint in the spring, setting seedlings or plants 18 to 24 inches apart. Mint likes moist soil but it will not tolerate soggy soil.

Harvesting Mint

Mint leaves are harvested by pinching off the leaves or stems and can be removed as needed. When the plant has matured and is beginning to bud, cut back the entire plant to just above the second set of leaves. At this point, the plant is at its highest potency for flavor, scent, and medicinal use. Dry the leaves for future use. The plant will grow back and allow several harvests each season.

Sheep Sorrel, *Rumex acetosella*

- 2 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 1 to 9
- Soil pH 5.5 to 6.8
- Full sun to partial shade
- Height 16 inches

Sheep sorrel is useful for treating digestive problems, parasites and worms, gastrointestinal problems, kidney problems, Urinary tract diseases, and skin cancer. It is a good whole-body detoxifier. I use sheep sorrel as a juice, tea, and powder or capsules.



Growing Sheep Sorrel

Sheep sorrel grows like a weed because it is one. Sow the seeds in the spring in a sunny spot with loose, loamy soil that is well-drained. Spread the seeds on the soil surface and lightly cover them with approximately 1/4 inch of soil. Tamp them down and water. Don't fertilize or add compost; sheep sorrel prefers poor soils.

Keep the soil moist until the plants are well established. When the seeds start to mature, cut off the seed heads to prevent them from spreading. This plant can easily take over part of your garden if you let it.

Harvesting Sheep Sorrel

With good management, you can get three crops a year. Harvest young, smaller leaves at any time and cut the plant back for a larger crop of leaves. At the end of the season, pull the entire plant to get the roots as well, as they are valuable medicinally.

Other Plants That Treat Digestive Problems

Other plants included in this garden plan that treat digestive problems include St. John's Wort, Aloe Vera, and Wooly Lamb's Ear.

Ear Problems

Black-Eyed Susan

- 3 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 3 to 9
- Soil pH 6.8 to 7.7
- Full sun and partial sun
- Height 3 feet

Black-eyed Susan is a traditional Native American herb used for treating earaches, colds, flu, infections, swellings, and snake bite. It is also used to boost immunity, treat parasites, skin irritations, and even tuberculosis.

Planting Instructions

Plant black-eyed Susans when the soil has warmed to 70 degrees or more. Alternately, plant the seeds in late fall. The plant prefers full sun and moist to moderately-dry soil, but keep it moist until the seeds have germinated. Germination can take from 7 to 30 days.

Prepare the soil by loosening the top two to three inches and removing weeds. Sow the seeds and rake the soil. Walk over the area to press the seeds in.



The plants prefer fertile soil, but they can grow in poorer soils. Size will depend on the soil. Expect them to grow to 3 feet tall and form a clump that spreads to between 12 and 18 inches. They need very little care, just water them when necessary to prevent drought conditions.

Harvesting Instructions

I use the root for medicinal purposes; the seeds are poisonous, save them for the next planting. After the flowers have bloomed and the plant has produced the seeds, the root is at its most potent. I dig deeply to get the entire root. Each plant has one tap root. Use it fresh when possible and dry the remainder for future use.

Other Plants for Ear Problems

Anemone pulsatilla is used to treat cataracts, conjunctivitis, glaucoma, and tics. It can also treat earaches, inflammations of the ear and loss of hearing.

Eye Problems

Wooly Lamb's Ear, *Stachys byzantina*

- 3 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: Perennial in USDA Zones 4 to 8
- Soil pH 6.0 to 6.5
- Full sun to partial shade
- 18 inches tall

I use Wooly Lamb's Ear to make an eyewash. It treats pinkeye and sties. It is also useful as an antibacterial wash for all kinds of wounds. Wooly Lamb's Ear is an alternative, antibacterial, antiseptic, anti pyretic, antispasmodic, and astringent. It is also a diuretic, carminative, febrifuge, stomachic, styptic, tonic, hypotensive, vermifuge and vulnerary with many medicinal uses.

Growing Wooly Lamb's Ear

If your soil is well-drained, you should have no problems growing wooly lamb's ear. You can find both seeds and plants to start your garden. If you choose seeds, start them indoors about 8 to 10 weeks before the last frost day, they can take about a month to germinate.

Transplant the seedlings in the spring while the weather is still cool and moist. Space them about 18 inches to 2 feet apart for a lush bed. Mulch under the plants to protect the lower leaves.

Wooly lamb's ear is mostly maintenance free, other than removing dead flowers. You'll probably need to dig them up and divide the plants every few years.

Harvesting Wooly Lamb's Ear

Wooly Lamb's Ear is easily harvested by plucking leaves as you need them. I pull leaves from the bottom of the plant and use them for salad and tea.



Gall Bladder, Liver, and Spleen

Both wooly lamb's ear and evening primrose are good treatments for the gall bladder, liver, and spleen. Wooly Lamb's ear is a good general tonic, that is especially beneficial for the liver. Evening Primrose is used by mouth to treat liver cancer, hepatitis B, alcohol-induced damage to the liver, and other diseases of the organs.

Glandular Problems and Balancing the Hormones

St John's Wort

- 4 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 5 to 10
- Soil pH 5.5 to 7
- Partial shade
- Height: about 3 feet

St. John's Wort is effective in the treatment of hormonal problems of many types. It regulates the female hormones and treats problems associated with menopause and menstruation. It helps balance the hormones, relieves depression and increases the tone of the uterus. It is also useful for treating anxiety, nerve and muscle pain, inflammation, skin wounds, and burns.



Growing St. John's Wort

St. John's wort needs a location that gets morning sun but has shade during the hottest parts of the day.

Till the soil before planting and spread approximately 2 inches of compost or rotted manure over the area. Dig the organic matter into the soil to a depth

of at least 8 inches. Plant the shrub in the center of the 4 feet square. Water the soil deeply after planting and keep it moist until the shrub is well established.

Harvesting St. John's Wort

Cut the top off the shrub in mid-summer and dry the flowers and leaves for future use. Allow the plant to continue to grow, then harvest again in the fall.

Cleavers, *Galium aparine*

- 3 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 3 to 9
- Soil pH 5.5 to 8.0
- Full shade to partial shade

Cleavers is an alternative, astringent, antiphlogistic, diuretic, diaphoretic, depurative, tonic and febrifuge. It is effective both internally and externally. I grow it for its benefits for glandular problems like tonsillitis, glandular fever, and prostate problems and prostate cancers. It is also beneficial in treating skin diseases, urinary tract infections, and cancer.



Growing Cleavers

Cleavers grow best in a shady part of the garden with moist, rich soil. Sow seeds directly into the garden soil in spring or in late summer. Once established, it will tolerate some dry soil and needs little maintenance. Cleavers grown in direct sun needs moist soil, or they will quickly become burned.

Cleavers are a climbing or crawling plant that grasps nearby plants and climbs. Place them near plants that can tolerate

the invasion.

Harvesting Cleavers

Harvest cleavers leaves in May and June as they begin to flower. Use the leaves fresh for juicing and dry some for future use. Store dried leaves in a cool, dry place.

Evening Primrose for Hormone Regulation

Evening primrose has many benefits for balancing hormones and hormone regulation in both men and women. It balances the female hormones and treats symptoms of PMS, menopause, and polycystic ovarian syndrome. Evening primrose treats infertility and some hormonal causes of hair loss in both men and women.

Heart and Circulatory System

Stinging Nettle, *Urtica dioica*

- 4 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 4 to 8
- Soil pH 5 to 8
- Full sun and partial shade
- 3 to 7 feet tall

I grow stinging nettle for its benefits to the circulatory system. It stimulates blood flow and improves circulation, especially when combined with plantain (discussed above.) It also treats cardiac insufficiency, anemia, and edema, as well as other health problems.



Growing Stinging Nettle

I have allowed 4 square feet for growing stinging nettle in my garden, but you may need more space. On average, I recommend six plants per person in the household.

Start seeds indoors about four to six weeks before the last frost date. Put one to three seeds in each peat pot and cover them with about 1/4 inch of soil. For a later start, you can sow directly into the garden after the last frost date.

They prefer alkaline soil and will grow thick and tall when the conditions are right. Transplant the seedlings into the garden, spaced about 12 inches apart. Keep the soil moist in the spring. This not only benefits growth, but it also makes the greens sweeter and tastier.

In the fall, when the leaves start to yellow, cut the plants back to about 4 inches tall. Cover the ground with a layer of compost. Your plants will come back thicker in the spring.

Harvesting Stinging Nettle

You can begin harvesting stinging nettle when the plants are about a foot tall. Pick the first two or three sets of leaves at the top of the plants. Lower leaves are very fibrous.

When harvesting, wear gloves and protective clothing. The tiny hairs can embed themselves in your skin and cause much discomfort. They were named stinging nettles for a reason. I prefer to use kitchen scissors to cut off desired leaves and handle the leaves with tongs. Once cooked, the hairs are no longer a problem.

Pulsatilla, *Anemone pulsatilla*

- 3 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 4 to 8
- Soil pH: tolerates acid, neutral and alkaline soils
- Full sun to light shade
- Height: 2 to 10 inches

Pulsatilla is beneficial for heart problems including thickening of the heart muscle and venous congestion. It relieves inflammation in the circulatory system and helps restore normal function. It is also beneficial for treating skin problems, headaches, sleep problems, childbirth, nervous conditions, drug withdrawal and other conditions.

Growing Pulsatilla

Pulsatilla seeds need a period of cold before germination, so I mix mine into a little soil and place them in the refrigerator for five to six weeks before planting. Keep the soil lightly moist during this time.

Plant the seeds in peat pots of potting soil and cover with a thin layer of soil, approximately 1/8 inch. Tamp the soil to firm it over the seeds. Water the pots by spraying lightly and cover the pots with a loose layer of plastic wrap. Keep the seeds at about 65 degrees, and they should germinate in about three weeks. Check them regularly and mist with water as needed to keep the soil uniformly moist.



Remove the plastic wrap and move the pots to a sunny window. Thin the seedlings as needed to encourage the stronger plants. Harden the plants over a week or so before transplanting them into the garden.

Transplant the seedlings to a sunny area of the garden. In hot climates, look for an area that offers protection from the afternoon heat. Plant them about 9 to 12 inches apart and water immediately. Mulch the plants with compost. Keep the soil moist

until they are established in the garden. Once established, water as needed, they are drought tolerant.

Harvesting Pulsatilla

Pick the flowering stalks of pulsatilla when the plant is in full bloom, between March and April. I usually harvest near Easter. Dry the flowers for future use.

Other Plants for Heart and Circulatory System

Wooly Lamb's Ear, St. John's Wort, and Evening Primrose all have benefits for the heart and are part of this medicinal garden plan.

Immune System

Greater Burdock, *Arctium lappa*

- 8 Square feet
- Hardiness zones 2 to 10
- Soil pH: Tolerates pH from 4.6 to 7.8, but 6.6 to 7.5 is ideal
- Full sun to partial shade
- Height: 6 feet or more
- Burdock is a detoxifying herb with beneficial effects on the immune system. It is a diuretic, helping to flush toxins out of the body along with excess water. It treats infections caused by bacteria, fungus, and parasites. In addition to medicinal use, it is edible.



Greater burdock is a large plant and takes up a large amount of space in the garden plan. I prefer to plant it on the outer edge or a corner of the garden, but it could also work in the center. Plan on it shading nearby plants when you choose its position.

Plant greater burdock in well-tilled soil, preferably light sandy soil. You will be harvesting the roots, and it is much easier to dig it up in a well-tilled sandy soil.

Sow the seeds outdoors after the last frost or indoors, four weeks before the final frost date for improved germination. Cover the seeds with about 1/4 inch of soil. Keep the soil moist, but not wet. Expose the indoor seedlings to sunlight and

harden them before transplanting outdoors. Burdock is very easy to grow and can take over if left untended. Cut off the flowers before they make seeds to help control the spread of greater burdock.

Harvesting Greater Burdock

Harvest greater burdock leaves for eating as needed. The root must be dug up before it shrivels at the end of the first year. Once it has produced seeds, I dig the roots. In late autumn, the roots become very fibrous and less desirable.

Black-Eyed Susan for the Immune System

Black-eyed Susan is an immune-stimulant that is equivalent and sometimes superior to echinacea. It is excellent for treating minor illnesses and for strengthening the immune system to prevent infections.

Infectious Diseases

Your choice of plant for treating an infectious disease will depend largely on the disease. I choose to grow a variety of plants that are effective against infections of all kinds. Black-eyed Susan, Cleavers, St John's Wort, Boneset, and Goldenseal, are my main choices in this category.

Boneset, *Eupatorium perfoliatum*

- 3 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 2 to 10
- Soil pH 5.8 to 6.8
- Full sun to partial shade
- Height: 2 to 4 feet

Boneset is an Antispasmodic, Cholagogue, Diaphoretic, Emetic, Febrifuge, Homeopathy, Laxative, Purgative, Stimulant, and Vasodilator. It is useful for treating fevers, respiratory infections, and ordinary colds and flu. It is named for its ability to treat Dengue Fever, also known as Break Bone Fever. It also has been used to treat malaria, yellow fever, and typhoid fever, mainly for its ability to reduce the accompanying fever.

Growing Boneset

Boneset prefers partial shade, though it can handle full sun. It likes moist, fertile soil, and requires 30 days of stratification before planting the seeds.



Start by mixing the seeds into some moist potting soil in a plastic bag. Seal the bag and place it in the refrigerator for 30 days. Check the bag regularly to keep the seeds moist, but not wet. If the seeds start to germinate, plant them immediately, either outdoors if the last frost has passed, or in pots indoors.

Plant the seeds in the garden with a very thin covering of soil. The plants need light to germinate. Water them by misting with a spray bottle until

they have become established.

Cut Boneset back to the ground in the fall after the flowers have produced seed. Divide the roots every three years to keep them from becoming overcrowded, or more often if you desire more plants.

Harvesting Boneset

Boneset leaves can be harvested as needed throughout the season. I harvest leaves and flowering stems in the summer before the buds open and dry them for later use. The seeds ripen and can be collected when the heads are dry and split. The fluffy seeds will float away once the heads split. You can collect them earlier and dry the seed heads for one to two weeks in an open paper bag.

Goldenseal, *Hydrastis canadensis* L

- 2 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 5 to 8, grows as an annual in other zones
- Soil pH 5.5 to 7.0
- Partial shade to full shade
- Height: 12 inches

Goldenseal functions as an immune booster as well as an antibiotic, antiviral, and antifungal. It is a good treatment for infections of all kinds, both internally and externally. It is also beneficial for diabetics in lowering the blood sugar, for detoxing the body and treating respiratory problems.



Growing Goldenseal

Goldenseal can be grown from seed, from rhizome pieces, and from root cuttings. The most reliable method is to plant rhizome pieces of one-half inch or larger, keeping the fibrous roots attached. Each piece should have at least one big bud present. Plant the pieces just below the soil surface with the budding point up. Space them approximately 6 inches apart and cover with one or two inches of mulch. Add more mulch in the winter months.

Plant goldenseal in rich, moist, loamy soil on a slope or other spot with good drainage. In areas with poor soil or high levels of clay, plant in a raised bed and add plenty of compost or other organic material.



Keep the bed free of weeds, especially in the early years until the goldenseal is well established.

Harvesting Goldenseal

Harvest goldenseal in the fall after the foliage has died back. Roots from older plants are more medicinally active, so harvest older plants with large rhizomes and leave younger plants and pieces of the harvested plant behind to establish new plants.

Kidney Problems

For kidney problems, I use greater burdock and goldenseal. Growing both of these has already been discussed here. Goldenseal helps purify the kidneys and urinary tract and is beneficial for treating urinary tract infections. I combine it with greater burdock. The two herbs work together and are more effective than using one alone.

Greater burdock stimulates the kidneys and helps remove toxins from the body. It is a diuretic, removing excess fluids, reducing edema and increasing urine output. It is also beneficial for the spleen, blood purification, liver health and other organs and bodily systems.

Lung Problems

For lung problems, this garden plan offers plantain, St. John's Wort, white mustard, goldenseal, and horseradish. With these herbs, you will be able to treat most lung problems that you should encounter.

Plantain for Lung Problems

For calming inflammation of the mucous membranes, including the respiratory tract, plantain juice or plantain tincture does the job. It is an immune booster, anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antioxidant, and a weak whole-body antibiotic.

St. John's Wort for Lung Problems

St. John's Wort is also anti-inflammatory and beneficial for the respiratory tract. It is also an expectorant that helps bring up phlegm and clear chest congestion. St. John's Wort helps heal respiratory infections and treats common colds and the flu. It can also be used to treat tuberculosis.

White Mustard for Lung Problems

White mustard is antibiotic, anti-inflammatory, and an expectorant. It contains sulfur compounds which combat infections and work together with other herbs for maximum benefits.

Goldenseal for Lung Problems

Goldenseal reduces inflammation and irritations of the mucous membranes, including the respiratory tract. It is anti-microbial and anti-viral. It is an effective remedy for colds, flu, and other respiratory problems. For serious lung infections, use goldenseal in combination with other herbs.



Horseradish, *Armoracia rusticana*

- 4 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 3 to 7
- Soil pH 6 to 7.5
- Full sun or partial shade
- Height: up to 3 feet

Horseradish is antiseptic, asperient, digestive, diuretic, stimulant, rubefacient and an expectorant. It controls bacterial infections and can be used internally or externally. It is of great value in the treatment of respiratory problems, colds, flu, and fevers. It reduces mucus and excess fluids and treats the underlying infection.

Planting Horseradish

Horseradish is best planted in the spring from crowns or roots from the grocery store. For most families, two or three plants is sufficient.

Plant the crowns two to three weeks before the last frost date in your area. Plant in well-drained soil with plenty of organic matter. Plant the roots with the pointed end down and the flat end up.

Keep the plants moist, especially in the fall while the storage roots are developing. Remove weeds as they appear. Plants that remain over the winter might send up flower spikes in the spring. Remove the seeds before they become mature to help control the spread of the plant. Allow the plant to grow through the summer and begin harvesting in late fall.

Horseradish roots grow away from the original plant and will sprout new plants from root buds. These can be dug and removed to control the plant or replanted in 3-inch pieces. Once horseradish is established, it is difficult to get rid of, so choose its spot in your garden carefully. You can always plant it in a large container or raised bed to make control easy.

Harvesting Horseradish

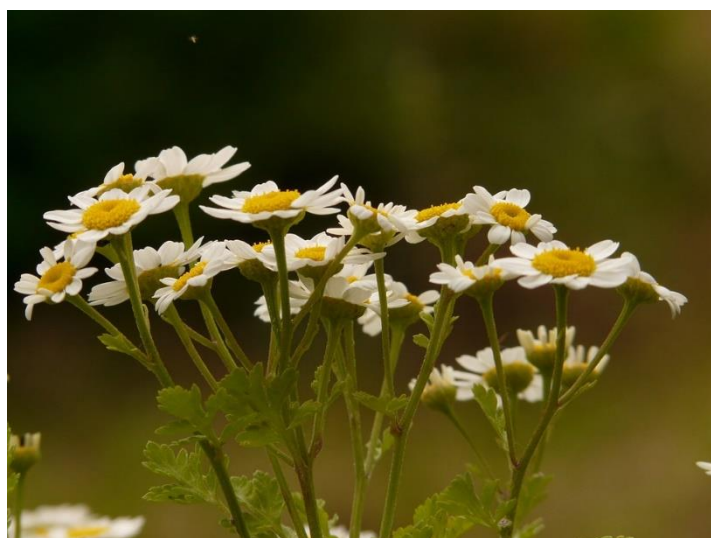
Harvest the roots after frost has damaged the leaves. Use a digging fork to loosen the soil surrounding the plant and remove the root. Replant thin root pieces and store the larger pieces in the refrigerator for future use. Horseradish can be left in the ground and dug throughout the winter if the ground is not frozen. For medicinal use, the root should be grated fresh. The medicinal properties begin to diminish once the root is grated.

Muscle, Joint, and Tendon Problems

Feverfew, *Tanacetum parthenium*

- 2 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 5 to 10
- Soil pH 6 to 6.7
- Full sun to partial afternoon sun
- Height: 20 inches

Feverfew is useful for treating arthritis and rheumatism. The leaves and flowers are anti-inflammatory and help reduce the pain and inflammation associated with these diseases. For best results, feverfew needs to be taken daily. For immediate relief, it can also be used as a poultice over the affected areas. Feverfew also prevents migraines when taken daily, and kills intestinal parasites.



Growing Feverfew

Feverfew prefers a sunny location with rich, well-drained soil. Till the soil to loosen it. You can sow the seeds directly in the garden after the last frost date and when air temperatures are above 60 F. Keep the soil evenly moist until the seeds germinate.

Once the plants are established, water regularly, never letting them completely dry out. But do not allow the soil to be wet or soggy, plants will die if overwatered.

Feverfew can be grown as an annual or perennial depending on your location. The plants need care in winter during periods of extreme cold. Mulching helps protect the plant from severe weather in the winter and conserves moisture in the summer.

Harvesting Feverfew

You can harvest feverfew leaves as needed and the flowers when they begin to bloom. Dry the leaves and flowers for future use, but use within 4 months for maximum potency.

Lemon Verbena, *Aloysia triphylla*

- 4 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 7 to 10
- Soil pH: 6.1 to 7.8
- Semi-shade or full sun
- Height up to 6 feet tall and 8 feet wide under good conditions when mature

Lemon verbena provides significant pain relief for people with rheumatism, arthritis, bursitis, and other joint pain. By taking it daily over the long term, significant improvement is made in the condition and pain is gradually reduced.

Lemon verbena is a wonderfully fragrant plant that grows as a perennial in frost-free areas. In areas with cold winters, try growing lemon verbena in a container and move it indoors in the winter.

It does not grow from seed, but can be readily propagated by cuttings. If you know someone with a lemon verbena tree, you can take a cutting. Some nurseries sell rooted plants. Size and growth rate depends on the soil and growing conditions, but lemon verbena is a small tree. I recommend planting it in a large pot in cold climates or in the yard or in a corner of the garden.



Lemon verbena prefers loose, well-drained soil with plenty of added organic matter. The plant will die if the roots stay wet, so plant it on a slope or other well-drained area. It also prefers full sun, but benefits from light afternoon shade in hot climates. If the plant does not receive enough sun, the leaves will have lower levels of the beneficial essential oils.

When temperatures drop below 40 F, the plant drops its leaves and goes dormant. In zone 8 and above, it usually does well outdoors over the winter. In cooler climates, bring it indoors once the leaves drop and reduce watering.

Harvesting Lemon Verbena

Harvest lemon verbena leaves throughout the growing season as you need them. Snip a stem, and new growth will emerge at the whorl of leaves below. Trim regularly to keep the stems from becoming leggy. You can also cut the tree back by



half to harvest a large number of leaves at once. Dry the leaves and store sealed in a dark, dry place.

Other Herbs for Treating Muscle, Joint, and Tendon Problems

Many herbs are useful for treating muscle and joint pain. In this garden plan, I have also included stinging nettle, St. John's Wort, Greater Burdock, and Evening Primrose. All are beneficial for these aches and pains and help the muscles and joints to heal.

Nervous System and Brain

Valerian, *Valeriana edulis*

- 4 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 4 to 9
- Soil pH 6 to 7
- Prefers partial shade, but will also tolerate full sun or shade
- Height: 4 to 5 feet

Valerian has a calming effect on the body and is useful for alleviating panic attacks, anxiety disorders, and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders. It improves the brains activity and calms the spirit when used in small doses. It is also useful for treating epilepsy and lowering blood pressure and the heart rate.



Growing Valerian

Sow valerian seeds in early spring or start them indoors. Place them on the soil surface and press them in, do not cover with soil. They need light to germinate within 7 to 14 days. Space the plants 12 inches apart. You can also propagate valerian by taking root divisions in the spring or fall.

Keep the plants weeded and give them water when needed to keep the soil moderately moist.

Harvesting Valerian Root

Harvest the root in the fall. Cut the plant tops off and dig the roots when the soil is moist, but not wet. Dry the root for future use.

Other Plants for Nervous System Problems

St. John's Wort is well known for its effect on the nervous system, and I discuss it above. It is worth noting here that the Bottle Gourd, discussed below, has a beneficial effect on the brain. Daily doses of bottle gourd improves memory, including memory problems related to age-related senility and Alzheimer's Disease.

Pancreas Problems, Including Diabetes

Bottle Gourd, *Lagenaria siceraria*

- 4 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 2 to 12
- Soil pH: 6 to 6.7 is ideal, but will tolerate pH up to 8
- Full sun
- Height: Climbs to 9 feet

Use bottle gourd to help lower blood sugar readings. A Chinese remedy for Diabetes is to take 3 grams of bottle gourd daily; this is only about two large bites of the vegetable pulp.



Growing Bottle Gourd

Bottle gourd needs warm weather, so start the plants indoors in cold climates or after the weather is warming in warm climates. Till the soil in a well-drained site and add about 6 inches of organic matter such as compost or aged manure.

Set up a sturdy trellis where you will plant the gourds, they will climb, and the gourds do best off the ground. Mound the soil into 12-inch hills approximately every 18 inches to 2 feet along the trellis.

Sow three or four seeds in each hill and cover them with 1 1/2 inches of soil. Thin to one plant per hill. Water the gourds frequently and deeply. A drip or trickle at

the base of the plant is best. Gourds can be susceptible to powdery mildew and other disease problems caused by wet leaves.

Harvesting Bottle Gourds

Harvest bottle gourds by cutting them off the vine with a sharp knife when the stem end turns brown or when a cold snap causes the vine to die.



Other Plants for the Pancreas

Leeks, greater burdock, aloe vera, and golden seal are all beneficial for treating diabetes and other pancreatic problems.

Skin Diseases and Infections

Aloe Vera

- 2 Square feet
- Hardiness zones: 9 to 11, bring indoors in winter in other zones
- Soil pH 7 to 8.5
- Prefers Full sun, but will tolerate low light
- Height: 2 to 3 feet

Aloe vera gel is soothing on the skin and is an excellent remedy for burns, sunburn, skin abrasions, skin infections, and mild skin irritations. It keeps skin hydrated and combats blemishes and scars. Use it as a moisturizer and pain reliever. It also has uses for digestive problems and for lowering blood sugar in diabetics.



Growing Aloe Vera

Aloe vera prefers hot weather, so you may need to grow it in a container to move indoors in the winter. A large pot will grow plenty of aloe since it grows in tight clumps. It is very easy to grow and thrives on neglect. The plant tolerates drought very well and is far more likely to die from overwatering than anything else.

Aloe needs well-drained, sandy soil or a potting mix of half sand, half potting soil. It will also do well in an organic succulent and cactus mix. I prefer to grow mine in an unglazed terra cotta pot placed on my patio, but it can survive in the garden or indoors. In very low light levels, the plant may go dormant, but it will bounce back when the light returns.

Water the plant heavily when planting, then allow it to dry out completely before watering again. Do not water daily; the soil needs to dry out between watering. When bringing the plant outdoors at the end of winter, harden it off in the shade before returning it to full sun.

Harvesting Aloe Vera

Harvest one leaf at a time as needed. Remove the leaf from the plant and split it long ways with a knife. Scrape the gel from the interior and discard the outer leaf.



You can also cook the entire leaf, the meat and gel inside are both edible and lose their slimy texture when gently cooked.

Other Plants for Skin Conditions

Evening primrose, stinging nettle, cleavers, greater burdock, and golden seal are all valuable in treating skin diseases, infections, and other skin conditions. These are discussed else where in this garden plan.

Emergency Care

White Mustard for Poisons

When taken in quantity by mouth, ground white mustard seed causes vomiting. This is helpful to bring up poisons and other undesirable things which have been swallowed. It is not an antidote.

Wooly Lamb's Ear as a Wound Dressing

The soft, fuzzy leaves of wooly lamb's ear makes an excellent dressing for stopping bleeding and protecting wounds. The leaves absorb blood and help the wound to clot. It is antibacterial, antiseptic, and anti-inflammatory. Lamb's Ear Tea can also be used as an antiseptic wash to clean wounds and infections.

Cleavers Help Stop Bleeding and Treat Burns

Fresh cleavers leaves are useful to help stop bleeding in cuts and wounds of all kinds. Apply the leaves directly to the wound or use as a poultice for larger wounds. It also reduces inflammation and helps the wound heal.

Stinging Nettle

A tincture made from stinging nettle is useful as a compress on sprained and strained muscles. An infusion of stinging nettle is also useful as a wash for cleaning wounds. Powdered nettle leaf is useful for treating nosebleeds and other small bleeds.

Goldenseal to Control Bleeding

Goldenseal powder applied directly to wounds stops or controls bleeding. It can also be used by mouth for internal bleeding. It constricts the blood vessels to quickly reduce bleeding.

Whole Body Tonics

Stinging nettle and greater burdock are both excellent tonics for detoxing the entire body and allowing it to heal.

Medicinal Plants Found in Most Herb and Vegetable Gardens

In addition to the plants listed above in my medicinal garden, there are also plants found in most herb and vegetable gardens that have medicinal value. If you have space, add these to your garden or use them to replace some of the plants above.

Parsley

Parsley is a highly nutritious plant with a large assortment of vitamins and minerals. It is also anti-inflammatory and has medicinal value in controlling cancer, managing diabetes, relieving the pain of arthritis, and preventing osteoporosis. It provides relief from gastrointestinal problems and strengthens the immune system. The roots are useful for treating kidney stones and other kidney problems. It is a natural antibacterial and antifungal.

Garlic

Garlic is known to boost the immune system and help the body heal from infections, colds, and the flu. It helps lower blood pressure, lowers cholesterol values, and decreases the risk of heart disease. It contains antioxidants that are beneficial to the brain and may help prevent Alzheimer's Disease and senility. It is a detoxifying herb, helping to bind and remove heavy metals from the body and it helps strengthen bones. Garlic gives a lot of health value for something that tastes so good.

Oregano

The best oregano oil comes from Greek oregano, but that doesn't mean that the oregano in your garden is without medicinal value. It is useful for treating respiratory tract infections, gastrointestinal problems, and urinary tract disorders. It is also good for relieving menstrual cramps and treating skin problems.

Basil

Basil treats stomach problems and intestinal gas, kidney conditions, and protects the liver. It helps prevent diabetes, fights cancer, and reduces stresses in the body. This immune-booster is an anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and a powerful adaptogen.

Rosemary

The ancient Greeks used rosemary as a medicine, and it is still effective today. It is high in antioxidants, antimicrobials, anti-inflammatory properties, and is protective of the lungs, liver, intestinal tract, skin, and brain. It can be used to

relieve symptoms of arthritis, prevent blood clots, and increase blood glucose levels in hyperglycemia.

Sage

Sage leaves are used to make medicines for treating digestive problems, controlling perspiration and saliva, and prevents diabetes. It improves brain function, concentration, and memory, prevents chronic diseases, boosts the immune system, and improves bone health.

Dill

Dill weed improves digestion and prevents excess gas. It treats dysentery, boosts the immune system, helps manage diabetes, and prevents insomnia. It stimulates the menstrual cycle and prevents cancer.

Thyme

The flowers, leaves, and oil of thyme are useful in treating stomach aches, colic, diarrhea, flatulence, and as a diuretic. It also treats arthritis, respiratory illnesses, and even bedwetting.

Chives

As a member of the onion family, chives are high in beneficial sulfur compounds, antioxidants, and vitamins. They are beneficial and preventative for cancers, especially colon cancer, esophageal and stomach cancer, and prostate cancer. They contain choline which is helpful for sleep, learning, and memory. They are antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, and antiparasitic.

Cabbage

It is no wonder that cabbage is considered a superfood. Eating significant amounts treats many diseases of the body. Just look at this list of problems that cabbage can treat:

- Headaches
- Skin problems
- Constipation
- Stomach ulcers
- Jaundice
- Scurvy
- Rheumatism and arthritis
- Gout
- Eye problems
- Heart disease
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Helps prevent cancer, including colon, prostate, and breast cancer



- Boosts the immune system
- Builds strong bones and teeth

Fennel

Fennel has a long list of health benefits also. It is useful for treating:

- Anemia
- Indigestion, gas, and constipation
- Heart diseases
- Prevents cancer
- Regulates blood pressure
- Treats sore throats, laryngitis
- Treats colic
- Improves brain function
- Regulates menstrual cycles
- Benefits eyes and eye infections
- Treats respiratory problems
- Beneficial to skin inflammations and skin conditions
- Diuretic
- Detoxifying

Cayenne Pepper

Cayenne is a warming herb, heart tonic, and digestive aid. It releases hormones that improve the mood. It is beneficial for treating sore throats, colds and flu, poor circulation, achy joints, rheumatism, arthritis, and muscle strains. It is a general tonic that boosts the immune system and helps keep blood sugar under control.

Using the Garden

One of the most important points to remember is to preserve the harvest of your medicinal garden. You may go all summer never needing the plants growing here, only to be hit with poor health just as the garden dies for the winter. Having a supply of medicinal herbs stored will protect you through those months when nothing grows.



Design Your Own Garden

Your garden needs may be different from mine, and that is ok. This garden is intended to show you what can be done in a small space to protect your family. Remove the plants that don't do well in your area and add plants to the needs of your family. If your area has poor soil, grow in pots or raised beds. You will probably need to change the plan to fit your space and sun requirements.

I hope this plan will inspire you to plant a medicinal garden of your own. If you feel that this is too big a project for you, choose a few of the plants to put in pots and gradually increase your plantings over time. Once established, these plants need very little care aside from removing weeds and watering during dry spells.



Diagram

2 beds, 4 by 10 each

Evening Primrose	Red Clover	Cleavers	Black Eyed Susan
		-	
White Mustard	Leeks	Pulsatilla	St. John's Wort
		Sheep Sorrel	
	Plantain	Peppermint	Wooly Lamb's Ears

Path

Lemon Verbena	Bottle Gourd Trellis		Golden Seal	Horseradish
	Bottle Gourd			Greater Burdock
Valerian		Aloe	Feverfew	
Stinging Nettle		Boneset		