



Four Herbs For Common Sports Injuries

Herbs provide very practical, effective, easy-to-acquire remedies for common sports pains and discomforts. This article will explain the actions and uses of four powerful herbs to have on hand as an herbal first aid kit for such issues as bruises or injuries, sore and overexerted muscles, or even strengthen the immune system for the winter season. These herbs are all easy to find at organic or natural food stores.

Arnica - This herb is used externally to alleviate pain, from bruises, injuries, sprains, or aches, where the skin has not been broken. It has a stimulating and warming energy that helps to circulate blood at the site of an injury and promote healing. This herb is also an analgesic, meaning it will alleviate the pain and discomfort as it heals. It is best used as an oil or a liniment and can be easily found, most commonly as an oil. When taken internally, this herb is taken in extremely minute, homeopathic doses, as it is toxic in larger doses.

Astragalus - This is a Chinese herb that is becoming popular in the western world. Although this herb is used externally in combination with other herbs in martial arts liniments, it is most commonly used internally. Astragalus is an energy tonic that helps to strengthen the immune system, as well as strengthen digestion and improve metabolism. It is best used in fall and winter and when taken regularly, and can help prevent colds and flus. The dry herb can be made into a tea (1 ounce to 1-2 cups of water) or cooked in foods like soups and stews. It can also be taken as a tincture (10-60 drops, 1-4x/day).

Fresh Ginger Root - This is an amazing, multi-purpose herb with both internal and external uses, making it an essential herb to have on hand. Taken externally, it is used for sore and painful muscles and inflamed or stiff joints. Simply boil 1-2 ounces of fresh ginger root in a 2 cups of water and soak a cloth in the tea and apply to the sore area, replacing it regularly. Taken internally as a tea, it alleviates nausea, indigestion, and cramps. Adding lemon and honey make it effective for treating colds and flus and relieving mucus congestion. Use one ounce of the fresh, grated root to 2 cups of water.

St. John's Wort - This herb, best known for relief of mild depression, is another multi-purpose and extremely effective herb. Taken externally, this herb relieves inflammation, and is used traditionally to help nerve pains (like sciatica or neuralgia) and chronic pain. This is a great herb for healing wounds, such as burns, open cuts, ulcers, and skin irritations and is anti-viral. The oil, which is a deep, rich shade of red, is easy to find in natural food stores.



These herbs can be an effective first step in addressing such issues as sore or painful muscles. However, you may also need to consult a practitioner, such as a doctor, for more comprehensive assessment and treatment. In the case of sports injuries, an herbalist could also recommend herbs for internal usage that could complement these remedies and aid the body's healing process.

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