OHLONE CENTER
FOR HERBAL STUDIES
BERKELEY·CALIFORNIA

WHOLISTIC HERBAL LETTER

News you can use!

Welcome to the debut of our Ohlone Herbal Center *Wholistic Herbal* newsletter! We are delighted to feature articles about healing topics designed to deepen our readers' understanding of preventive sustainable medicine as a central way to advance wellness. While herbal medicine is usually marginalized by mainstream medicine as an alternative, it is actually the fundamental form of healing used by 75% of the world. When used skillfully it is inexpensive, earth friendly and highly effective.

The Ohlone Center of Herbal Studies is a leading educational and clinical center for sustainable systems of Western herbal-based healing. Based in Berkeley, Calif., the Center offers the most comprehensive, integrated education in Western herbal medicine and practice, and is one of very few schools nationwide with clinical internships in Western herbalism.

In *Wholistic Herbal*, the Ohlone faculty, staff and students will offer features and helpful information four times a year - one issue for each season. This first edition provides information about dealing with health challenges often arising in the fall and winter, plus recipes for wellness, a calendar of upcoming events, classes for community and professional herbalists, and more.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments and suggestions, or just to say hello. I can be reached Monday through Thursday at (510) 540-8010 or at ohlonecenter@gmail.com. Thank you for your support; and enjoy the natural wonders of winter.

—Pam Fischer, executive director and founder of The Ohlone Center for Herbal

Featured Herb: Yarrow

Many of us in the Bay Area are lucky in that we have garden space around our homes. In fact, many people already have medicinal plants in their garden and don't even know it. One of the most versatile plants growing in my garden is yarrow. This wound treating plant grows wild in many parts of California. I also see it being grown in people's gardens here in town.

The traditional medicinal variety is the common variety and has either white or light pink flowers. Other colors have been cultivated for their ornamental value and are not used medicinally. Fortunately, the traditional white yarrow or *Achillea millefolium* can be easily found in local nurseries.

Story continues to Page Two

Health is Wealth: Protecting your well-being despite financial concerns

For all the economic doom and gloom talk that's forced itself upon us since September, there has been little mention of the most precious investments of all: health and well-being. It's very difficult to maintain an even keel when some of us aren't sure from where money will come to pay the bills.

In these times one of the best things we can do is to invest in ourselves so that these challenges won't seem insurmountable or become permanent. It may sound trite, but think about it: If your mind wants to go somewhere but your body won't comply, then you aren't going anywhere. Fortunately the Earth gives us all we need to counterbalance daily tensions that can turn the kindest, most conscientious person into a hot ball of nerves and anger.

In time–if stressors are allowed to ride roughshod on the body-- the ability to rebound from tiny intrusions and upsets will wear out. And this can open the door to little symptoms such as malaise, weight gain and acne that, if remained unchecked, can grow into larger concerns such as insomnia, high blood pressure and heart disease.

Story continues on page four

IT'S COLD AND FLU SEASON...

BLOOMING SALLY
Epilobium angustifolium (L.) Scopoli
EVENING-PRIMROSE FAMILY

Stave off Illness with these Flu Fighters and Helpful Tips...

Transitioning into winter can give your body more stress and make you more vulnerable to catching colds or the flu. The good news is that it only takes a few simple acts to help build your resistance against these annoying illnesses.

Strengthen the Immune System

The temperature flux from warm days to cold is ever changing. When you are cold, your body shifts its resources into keeping your body warm, and takes energy away from your immune system. In addition, new school seasons bring more bacteria and viruses to be traded among people as a group. You are also indoors more of the time where these pathogens get trapped and swapped more easily.

Wear a Scarf—Protect your Neck!

It is a good idea to use scarves to keep your neck warm, because it will help to stabilize your body temperature. This is known in Chinese Medicine as protecting the "Wind Gate".

Shiitake Mushrooms

Shiitake have been used medicinally for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. They can be used to increase stamina, improve circulation and control cholesterol, and are also great for improving immune function and protecting against viruses

Shiitakes—also known by their Latin name *Lentinula edodes*— are a good source of protein and have high levels of antioxidants.

What else to do for colds or flu?

If you do come down with a cold or a flu, you want to continue eating and drinking your immune strengthening Shiitake and Elderberry tea. In addition, it is important to drink lots of fluids, and sweat out your fever if you have one or feel one coming on.

To sweat out a fever, take a very hot bath (or shower if you don't have a bath), and drink tea while in the tub.

Soak as long and as hot as you can then jump into bed with as many covers or layers as possible. Have water by your bedside; you will get thirsty. Many people use hot tubs regularly during the winter to avoid getting sick.

—By Jennifer Adams, western clinical herbalist and Ohlone Center for Herbal Studies faculty member

Got Shiitake, Onions and Garlic?

Cut up a few mushrooms and add them to your soup. Or stir-fry the morsels with tofu, snap peas and onions, and add raw garlic at the last minute before serving.

Onions and garlic are anti-microbial—they attack bacteria and viruses. Cooked onions retain these features, but you want your garlic as raw as possible to reap their medicinal benefits.

The Healing Power of Western Herbalism

Western herbalism has emerged to provide critical healing solutions to physical, mental and spiritual challenges in this rapidly changing health care environment. Based on ancient traditions practiced worldwide, Western botanicals offer highly effective and affordable healing methods primarily using native North American plants ingested as teas, tinctures and alcohol extracts. They also can be used topically as salves, oils and liniments.

With the skyrocketing cost of mainstream medicine and a deepening awareness that it may not address many pressing health concerns, holistic approaches to healing using safe, low-cost, natural medicine are becoming central.

Throughout history plants have been fundamental to all forms of medicine: Worldwide there are 20,000 documented species are currently used for medicinal purposes. In fact, our ancestors for centuries used healing plants! According to the World Health Organization, approximately 75 percent of the world's population depends on botanicals for their health needs.

Yet herbalism is far from well known in the U.S., and Western herbalism remains obscure to many. Most people haven't learned about the healing power of local plants. Few understand that local plants can enhance the effectiveness of prescription drugs and their side effects. Sometimes herbs can replace prescription medicines. What's more, these herbs are environmentally sustainable, affordable, and support local growers. They are geared for holistic long-term health by creating a body/mind balance rather than simply eliminating the physical symptoms of disease. By ingesting and applying natural remedies, we develop inner harmony that supports our healing and prevents our bodies from breaking down.

In order to create effective remedies tailored to each client's needs the clinical practitioner examines the whole person in addition to understanding their current health issues that may include their emotional life, stage of life and spiritual directions. Practitioners respond by creating herbal medicines harvested from local plants for clients to apply topically or ingest.

I have worked as a clinical herbalist for more than 20 years in helping thousands of clients resolve their health challenges. I have seen the profound healing effects of Western herbs, and I am convinced that our local plants conspire to give us good health, especially when we also address core emotional and spiritual issues that deeply affect our well being.

My clients come from every socioeconomic and ethnic background, and range in age from pre-natal to 87 years old. They deal with everything from ingrown toenails to allergies to Stage Four cancer. In addition to helping people deal with an array of issues, I have seen Western herbs help in recovery from surgery, damaged tissue repair, clearing various toxic loads in our bodies, and protect their organs from damage such as secondary cancer that can result from chemotherapy.

Plants are truly radiant beings with pure essences that heal the world. Simply being in their presence has a natural balancing effect on the human psyche and spirit. From drinking herbal tea in the afternoon, to inhaling lavender essential oil at bedtime, we maintain our essential humanity by ingesting and infusing our bodies with the wilderness.

—By Pam Fischer

Featured Herb: Yarrow *...from Page One.*

The first part of yarrow's botanical name refers to Achilles who was reported to have treated soldiers on the battlefield with this herb. The tradition continued, and the Romans referred to it as *herba militaris*. It became known as *soldier's woundwort*. Here in the US, the Teton Dakota tribe has a name for this plant, which means "medicine for the wounded". It was even used to aid in dressing battlefield wounds during our Civil War.

Yarrow is considered not only an antiseptic but also a styptic plant, which means that it stops bleeding. Fresh leaves, washed and either chopped or left whole, can be applied as a poultice on wounds to stop bleeding and aid in healing.

This herb can also be used for a variety of other conditions. Made into an infusion or tea, the fresh or dried flowers can cause a person to break out into a sweat which will break a fever. A number of Native American tribes still use it for this purpose today. Dried yarrow combined with dried elderflowers and dried peppermint leaves in equal parts can be infused to treat colds, flu and hayfever. A compress can also be made with yarrow infusion to help soothe varicose veins. Taken internally, it improves venous circulation and tones the veins. In addition, it can be used as a bitter digestive tonic to encourage the flow of bile.

Because yarrow treats a variety of ills, it is one of the top herbs in my herbal garden. It also has an extra advantage because it will flourish with almost no attention. Plant it in a corner and it will grow into a patch, waiting to be used as part of your herbal pharmacy whenever the need arises.

—By Marion Souyoultzis, clinical herbalist, aromatherapist, and an instructor at Ohlone Center for Herbal Studies

Health is Wealth...*from page one*

Make Time For Tea

As we celebrate the holiday season, our planet slowly turns toward the spring renewal in late March. From now until June, the days will grow slightly longer and our nights will become shorter.

Teas offer a perfect bridge between the cold winter nights that will, sooner than we know it, give way to crisp and new spring days. Sipping steamy cups of nettle leaf, chamomile and lavender tea before bedtime can be most relaxing.

Easy preparations and a relatively inexpensive cost make herbal teas that much more wonderful. Indulging in a cup or two as often as you can should enhance practices of stretching, exercise and deep breathing, along with getting more than seven hours' rest every night, and drinking more than eight cups of water each day.

—By Jennifer Dant, Wholistic Herbal Writer and Editor

Upcoming Events

February

1st – Herb Walk at Huckleberry Preserve, 10 AM - 5 PM, rain or shine!

15th - Ohlone Center Open House, 2 - 5 PM

20th - Curanderismo– Indigenous Medicine of Mexico Class begins (continues through November,) 7 - 10 PM

March

1st - Herb Walk at Grizzly Peak, 10 AM - 5 PM, rain or shine!

9th - Research Design and Evaluation Class Begins (continues through April,) 7 - 9 PM

15th - Ohlone Center Open House, 2 - 5 PM

17th - 8 Month Herbal Apprenticeship begins (continues through October,) 9 AM - 3:30 PM

26th through 30th - Desert Plant Camping Trip

Tasty Tea Recipes to Help Get into Winter's Groove

Drink Elderberry Tea

Elderberry makes an enchanting tea that strengthens your cell walls to resist invasion of bacteria and viruses.

An immune system stimulant, it also comes to the rescue when you get sick. One tablespoon of dried berries steeped in hot water makes one cup of tea and will help ease aches, pains, nasal congestion, coughing and fever. Enjoy several times daily. Add a wedge of lemon and some raw honey, and you'll have a very tasty tea.

Flu-Fighting Blend

Put equal parts Sage, Peppermint Yarrow, and all the Ginger you can tolerate, together with a sprig of Thyme. Brew one pot of this at a time and drink every few hours. Raw Honey is also great to add as it is anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-fungal and is a great anti-oxidant. This blend increases circulation to assist with sweating, muscle spasm relief, and clearing of mucus. All these actions help your body to feel better and clear the fever sooner. Make sure you are covered in layers when drinking this tea as it opens up your pores. ***—J.A.***