

Herbal First Aid with Yarrow

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) is a perennial prairie plant that is helpful to get to know. Its medicine helps with bleeding, fever and digestive upset. Yarrow is known for its ability to quickly stop bleeding which makes it an important first aid herb. When applied to fresh wounds as an herbal poultice, yarrow will also help to reduce inflammation and prevent infection.

An herbal poultice is a mixture of fresh, dried or powdered herbs that is applied to an affected area. Poultices are used to stop bleeding, reduce inflammation, heal damaged tissues, draw pus from infected wounds and ease nerve or muscle pains.



Preparation:

1. Gather yarrow and dry the flowering tops away from direct sunlight.
2. Clip the dried flowers and strip the dried leaves from the stems. Compost stems.
3. Grind dried herb into a powder and sift through a metal screen to remove any large particles.
4. Mix with equal parts clean, sifted clay.
5. Store in small baggies and label.

To use:

1. Mix poultice with a small amount of water to achieve a paste-like consistency.
2. Apply paste to wound.
3. Apply pressure with a clean bandage and elevate if possible.
4. When bleeding has stopped remove poultice with a wet cloth that has been soaked in warm soapy water or herbal wound wash (salt water with 1-3 drops of lavender or tea tree essential oil), then rinse any remaining poultice off with clean water.
5. Bandage wound as necessary.

