

White Oak



By Ingri Cassel White Oak

The Miraculous Healing Properties of Oak Bark

There are “oh, so many” fabulous herbs that God put on this planet. However, most people would not know about their properties if it were not for the many dedicated herbalists throughout history sharing their successful experiences administering these herbs therapeutically. Dr. John Christopher was such an herbalist whose wealth of testimonies inspired me to apply these same herbs in the treatment of health issues as they appeared in my life. Recently, my daughter called to say she is experiencing gingivitis and was finding that her gums were not only bleeding but had receded as a result. Having quite a lot of experience successfully

treating this condition, also known as pyorrhea, I told her a few stories of several women who had this condition when I was pregnant with her in Tempe, Arizona. Needless to say, dealing with this issue in the present has inspired this month's column.

The leaves, inner bark and the cups of the acorn from the white oak tree (*quercus alba*), are the parts used in a variety of herbal treatments. John Christopher and other herbalists such as Jethro Kloss used the inner bark of the oak tree specifically in the treatment of hemorrhoids, thrush, pyorrhea, and varicose veins. These are also the primary ailments our family uses white oak bark for and we are always pleased with the results of this simple yet effective herbal treatment.

Historical uses

The oak tree is common in deciduous forests throughout the world. The white oak is native to England and has been naturalized in the U.S. Their steady growth and large stature is the reason this tree has been used in religious and patriotic symbols. While the Romans dedicated the oak to Jupiter, the Greeks held it as sacred and the Druids venerated it. The generic Latin name is from the Celtic "quer" meaning handsome and "the cuez" meaning tree. "Alba" refers to the whitish appearance of the bark.

All species of the oak tree are medicinal with some trees getting as high as 150 feet while others are small by comparison, such as the relatively scraggly "live oak" that is common in the western U.S. One of the largest and most valuable trees in a deciduous forest, the wood of the oak tree is used for the finest of furniture and flooring because it is close-grained, hard, and tough. The early American colonists used the oak tree for barrel making because the wood held liquids such as rum.

Acorns, the fruit of the oak tree, were a food staple for some Indian tribes. Being very high in protein, acorns were ground into a coarse flour and were a mainstay for the Pomo Indians of California. Several Indian tribes used thin strips of the inner bark, placed them between the gum and lips, and left it there over night to heal sores of the gums and to tighten loose teeth. The crushed bark was also used in a poultice for gangrene.

Medicinal Properties

The active ingredients in oak bark are tannin and quercin. Quercin is similar in effect to salicin and is used along with bioflavonoids to strengthen the capillaries and veins. White oak bark also contains ample amounts of calcium, manganese, potassium and magnesium. Its primary therapeutic properties are astringent and antiseptic. A few of oak's other properties—haemostatic (arrests internal bleeding), febrifuge (reduces fever), diuretic, anti-emetic (relieves malarial-type fevers and chills), and anti-venomous (antidote for poisonous plants, insects and snake bites.)

Pyorrhoea/Gingivitis

When I lived in Tempe, Arizona, 20 years ago, I met a couple of women who had pyorrhoea. One lady was told that she needed to have all her teeth removed and was scheduled for surgery in two weeks. She was in her early 40s and desperate to save her teeth when she came to the herb section at Gentle Strength Coop where I was working. I instructed her to drink a tea made from equal parts of white oak bark, taheebo and lemon grass, telling her to drink large quantities of this tea in place of water. She was also instructed to put powdered white oak bark in between her gums and teeth each night before going to bed, keeping it in her mouth all night. She also decided to buy some 4 oz. bottles of concentrated taheebo extract to add an extra measure of surety. Needless to say, when she went to her dentist, he canceled the surgery since there was no longer any

sign of pyorrhea and her gums were totally healed.

My other friend did the same routine and had the same success story. With both women I mentioned that indecisiveness is the emotional counterpart to gingivitis or pyorrhea. Both women admitted that this was an issue in their lives and worked to clear this up, one of the women getting a divorce from an abusive husband and father of her two young boys.

Dr. John Christopher's countless success stories using herbs was my inspiration in trying them myself and recommending them for others. So the rest of the stories of the successful application of white oak bark are from his writings.

Thrush

Dr. Christopher tells us of a case in Utah where an 18-month-old boy had thrush so bad that the stench could be smelt from across the large living room:

"Quickly we made oak bark tea and concentrated it down to half its original volume. With the little fellow on my knee, an atomizer was used to spray oak bark tea into his mouth through his swollen lips, white sores and swollen tongue. Since he could not swallow well because of the sores and the swelling in the throat, it was necessary to tip him over, so that the liquid wouldn't run out of his mouth. This procedure was repeated several times. This child could swallow only small amounts of fluid that would seep down his throat. Instructions were given to the parents to give him only red raspberry leaf tea to drink and as much oak bark tea as possible until he healed. I was called back the next day because of an injury to an older boy and, as I stepped in the house, the little boy who had been treated for thrush came rushing over, threw his arms around my leg and looked up with a big smile. His lips were down to normal size, the white sores showing a healing pink. He was happy."

Varicose veins

“One of our students in the Provo, Utah area visited a lady who was suffering from varicose veins so severely that she had difficulty walking or standing for even a few moments, or even sitting down with her feet on the floor. At night, the throbbing and pain would be so intense that she would have to elevate her legs for relief; then, in 15 or 20 minutes, the throbbing and pain of the elevated legs would become so painful that she would have to lower her legs again. Consequently, the woman could get no more than 20 to 30 minutes of sleep at a time. Upon seeing such suffering, our student told her friend about the healing properties of oak bark tea... The friend said, ‘Use anything you have to help; this is unbearable.’ So our student went home, prepared the tea and applied it to the victim’s afflicted limbs. Following instructions, she took gauze, daubed on the tea, allowing it to dry. She planned to apply the 10 or 12 coats recommended, lightly bandaging the legs and allowing the oak tea residue to be absorbed into the skin. It has been found that this procedure would give relief, and oftentimes would lessen the dark vein or phlebitis color by 20 percent. However, after only six coats of tea, the patient said she was drowsy and would like to doze for a few minutes, and asked the student to return and finish later. The husband said, ‘Oh, she never sleeps but a few minutes, never over a half hour.’ Upon hearing this, our student went home, with the agreement to return when her patient awakened. That was around 9:00 or 10:00 in the evening. To the surprise of everyone, the woman slept all night and woke up the next morning feeling refreshed. She was given more treatments and received complete relief.”

Dr. Christopher recommends that oak bark be used in a concentrated form by straining the finished tea and slowly simmering it in a double boiler down to half its original amount. An all cotton flannel is then dipped into the concentrated tea and wrapped around the affected area. In the case of varicose veins, the legs are wrapped with the saturated flannel, covered with plastic wrap, and left on all

night. This is done six days a week with one day of rest and then repeated until complete relief is obtained. He also suggests using a wool or cotton stocking with the toe area cut so that the entire stocking can be soaked in the tea and pulled up over the affected area. It is also important to take the tea internally, adding $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of cayenne pepper or more to speed up the action of the oak bark tea.

Hemorrhoids

Although there are many hemorrhoid remedies on the market, I don't know of any over-the-counter hemorrhoid remedy that will give permanent relief. This is why it is important to understand the cause of the problem—sugar in the form of candy, pastries, sodas, coffee and white bread. Refined carbohydrates leech out the calcium from the body. One of the first places to be affected is the venous structure of the body, drawing out the supporting calcium. This will cause varicose veins that, if not treated, can then turn into phlebitis.

“Another serious area for leeching is the bowel area, where old fecal matter has accumulated. The body tried to remove the impaction by draining as much fluid from the body as it can. There is generally enough fluid to cause a bowel movement, but the liquid which is left absorbs the sugar. It then feeds into the veins and leeches out the tensile strength of the veins in the lower bowel area. When straining for a bowel movement, the veins have more pressure exerted, and in turn, the weak walls break and result in a varicose condition called piles or hemorrhoids.

“To correct this condition, follow the mucusless diet [raw fruits, vegetables, sprouted grains, nuts and seeds] and use cayenne regularly. Cayenne aids in strengthening the veins and arteries because it increases circulation and is rich in calcium. Work up to taking a teaspoon of cayenne three times a day by starting with $\frac{1}{3}$ of a teaspoon three times a day in

water ... Do this for three days, and add 1/3 teaspoon each day until up to the one teaspoon three times a day, six days a week... Rest one day; then continue.

“In addition to the above, use a combination of 3 parts of oak bark powder, 6 parts comfrey [root powder] and 1 part lobelia powder. Mix well, and make into a heavy paste with [vegetable] glycerine ... Roll this in the hands to form a tapered suppository and put into the refrigerator or a cool place to harden. At night, first insert a peeled [small clove] of garlic into the rectum, as far as it can be pushed. Then insert the oak suppository and leave both in all night. The garlic and the remainder of the suppository will come out with the first bowel movement the next morning. During the day, if desired, you may use a small syringe to insert $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup to 1 cup of concentrated oak bark tea into the rectum and hold in as long as possible. To make this tea, use three parts oak bark, 1 part lobelia and 1 part marshmallow root. All teas are made with 1 ounce of the herbs to a pint of water. Lie on a slant board with the head down and knead and massage the pelvic and abdominal area 10 to 15 minutes while the liquid is in place. This will tone up weak and sagging muscles in the transverse, descending and sigmoid [areas of the] colon.” [end quote]

The most important aspect of health is a clean and well-functioning digestive tract. The first step with any healing program is to go on a colon cleanse, then a liver cleanse followed by blood purifying teas, such as Essiac Tea.

Superior to Toothpaste

The following tooth powder has saved many people's mouths from excessive dental work:

Tooth Powder

Mix together the following ingredients –

3 parts white oak bark powder
6 parts comfrey root powder
1 part powdered cloves
3 parts peppermint powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ part lobelia powder
3 parts horsetail/shavegrass powder

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