

A background image of a field of yellow flowers, possibly Black-eyed Susans, with green foliage. The image is split diagonally by a dark purple band that contains the text.

RESILIENCE IS IN OUR BLOOD.

**AN HERBAL GUIDE TO COLLECTIVE
PROTECTION AND HEALING
DURING COVID-19**

HERBAL RESILIENCE GUIDE

Prepared for the Sitting Bull College community by SBC community members, herbalists and herbalism teachers & students

Our teacher and mentors have compiled this list of herbal medicines to support our communities through this coronavirus pandemic. The capitalist systems set up across our world right now are being forced to slow down and stop. The people who are hoarding, taking much more than they need, and grabbing only for themselves are missing the whole point. Now is the time for mutual aid, love for your community, and care of your whole self. May you all be safe, loved, protected, and divinely held.

How to use this guide:

This moment we are in has the potential to bring up feelings of anxiety and worry. As students, teachers, and herbalists, and creators, we believe that we, our communities, and the land around us already possess many of the tools, knowledge, and resources necessary for healing. Think of this guide as a resource -- an opportunity to identify which plants are already growing in your garden, stored in your home, or abundant in your community that you can turn to for support. Though your first instinct may be to head straight to your local herbal store, and purchase all of the items listed below, more is not necessarily better. We hope this guide lets you take a moment to reflect on what healing gifts already surround you and your home. Remember, an herb or two can go a long way!

Disclaimer: We have put this guide together quickly in order to share what we have learned, and support our communities through COVID-19. We thank you for your patience, as we are still learning. If you see something here that you believe is incorrect or should not be shared publicly, please contact us and let us know. We are fortunate to have excellent teachers, both plants and humans. All errors here are our own, and should not reflect on our teachers.



GUIDE NOTES

Medicine Making: a few quick definitions

1) Infusion: Tea made by pouring boiling water over plant material. This is best for plants with softer tissues (most leaves and flowers).

2) Decoction: Tea made by simmering plants/mushrooms in water for at least 20 minutes. This is best for plants with harder tissues (roots, bark, tough leaves, and woody mushrooms).

3) Tincture: Plant medicine that has been extracted (usually into alcohol, glycerine, or vinegar) over weeks or months. This usually comes in a bottle.

On Language:

We have included all the common names that we know for every plant/medicine listed here, as well as their scientific names. Sometimes, several plants have the same common name. If you want to Google any of these plants, the scientific name (in parentheses) will get the most accurate results. Where no Lakota name is given, the plant/medicine is not originally from North America, but it is widely available here. If we have gotten any names wrong, or if your community uses a different name for any of these plants, we invite you to reach out to you with corrections and additions.

We have divided this guide into 2 sections:

1. Preventative Care: Part 1 of this guide

2. COVID-19 Patient Care: Part 2 of this guide



PART 1: PREVENTATIVE CARE

FOOD AS MEDICINE

Common foods as anti-viral medicine:

1. Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

1. This versatile plant is a great example of “food as medicine.”
2. We recommend cooking with garlic, making garlic honey, or even eating a clove raw, or swallowing it like a pill.
3. You can slice it up and steep it for twenty minutes in a jar of hot water with lemon and ginger slices.

2. Rosemary (*Salvia rosmarinus*):

Add it to your food as an herb, or make a tea (infusion) or tincture.

3. Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*):

Add it to your food as an herb, or make a tea (infusion) or tincture.

4. Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*):

Add it to your food as an herb, or make a tea (decoction) or tincture.



WIDELY AVAILABLE PLANT MEDICINES

These plants are widely available and have strong anti-viral properties. We suggest you sit with them, eat them, drink them, steam with them, bathe with them.

1. Elderberry / Čhán Phuté Hu (*Sambucus canadensis* & *Sambucus nigra*)

- A. Elderberry is one of the most commercially available, widely known anti-viral plant medicines. You can take it as a syrup/cordial, or decoction (simmer dried or fresh berries in water for at least 30 minutes on low heat), or as a pill or gummy.
- B. Elderflower (the flower of the Elderberry bush) is another good antiviral and lung support tea (infusion), although the berries are stronger.
- C. Some sources claim that only the European elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) has medicinal properties, but many herbalists successfully use the North American species (such as *Sambucus canadensis*), too.
- D. If you are preparing your own Elderberry medicine, be careful to avoid eating the seeds, stems, leaves, or roots -- they are [toxic to humans](#). If you don't know how to safely prepare it, get some from a trusted source, or ask elders and knowledge-keepers in your community for help.

Some herbalists are recommending against using Elderberry and Elderflower to prevent/fight COVID-19. There is a concern that this medicine may cause a [cytokine storm](#) (or "severe immune overreaction") in the body. However, we have not found sufficient research to back up this claim



2. Licorice Root (*Glycyrrhiza species*) / Wínawizi Čík'ala:

Recommended as a tea (decoction) or tincture. You can also suck on a piece of the root.

3. Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*)/ Čhaŋnákpa: Recommended as a tea or soup broth (do an extra long decoction -- simmer for 4-12 hours) or tincture.

4. Usnea lichen / Old Man's Beard /Čhaŋ Wíziye (*Usnea species*): Recommended as a tincture -- not very water soluble.

5. Olive Leaf (*Olea europea*): Recommended as a tea (decoction) or tincture.

6. Heal All/Self-Heal (*Prunella vulgaris*): Recommended as a tea (infusion) or tincture.

7. Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*): Recommended as a tea (infusion) or tincture.

8. Rhubarb Root (*Rheum palatum*): Recommended as a tea (decoction) or tincture.

9. Rue (*Ruta graveolens*): Recommended as a tea (infusion) or tincture.

10. Star Anise (*Illicium verum*): Recommended as a tea (decoction) or tincture.

11. St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*): Recommended as a tea (decoction) or tincture.



PART 2: PATIENT CARE

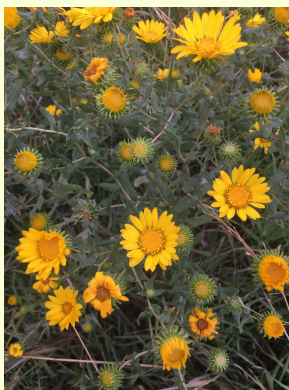
If you or your loved ones get COVID-19, you can continue the preventative care described in Part 1. For COVID-19 patients, you would add liver, kidney, and lung support. Here are some herbal supports you can add to the above:

1. Osha/Bear Root/ Mathó thaphtëžuta (Ligusticum porteri):

Good for lung support. Suck on a piece of root, or brew as a tea (decoction), or take as a tincture.

2. Bitterroot / Rat Root/ Muskrat Root / Sweet Flag / Calamus root /Siŋkphtë Thawóte/ Siŋkphtë / Wiike (Acorus americanus):

This plant, which is popular in Indigenous North American traditional medicine systems (as well as its Asian cousin, *Acorus gramineus*, and its European cousin, *Acorus calamus*) provides good lung support, and keeps bronchial passages healthy. Suck on a piece of root, or brew as a tea (decoction), or take as a tincture.



3. Curlycup Gumweed/ Pteičhiyuħa (Grindelia squarosa):

Good lung support. Tincture is best, but a decoction can also work.

4. Willow / Ćhoħwánžiča (Salix species):

The bark can be decocted into a tea to treat fevers and pain.

5. Mullein / Apé Hiŋšmá (Verbascum thapsus):

An infusion from the leaf of this plant can be used for lung support and reducing mucus.

6. Siberian Elm (Ulmus pumila) or Slippery Elm (Ulmus rubra) / P'éčhaŋ:

A decoction of the inner bark can help relieve chest congestion and coughing.





7. Wild Mint/ Čheyáka (Mentha arvensis):

An infusion made from the leaves is helpful in relieving nasal congestion and other virus symptoms.

8. Yarrow / Tǎaópi Pǎézúta / Ĥanté Čanǎlóǵan (Achillea millefolium): An infusion of the flowers and leaves can help with sore throat symptoms and coughing.

9. White Spruce/Black Hills Spruce/Waziǎčaka (Picea glauca):

An infusion of the leaves can ease coughing, colds, and flu symptoms.

10. Prairie Sage/Ceremonial Sage / Pǎeziǎhota apé blaská (Artemisia ludoviciana):

An infusion of the leaves can help reduce many virus symptoms including sore throats and diarrhea. In addition to the spiritual uses, smudging with this plant can also kill bacteria in a home where someone is sick.



11. Wild Raspberry / Tǎakǎǎhéhéčahu šá (Rubus occidentalis):

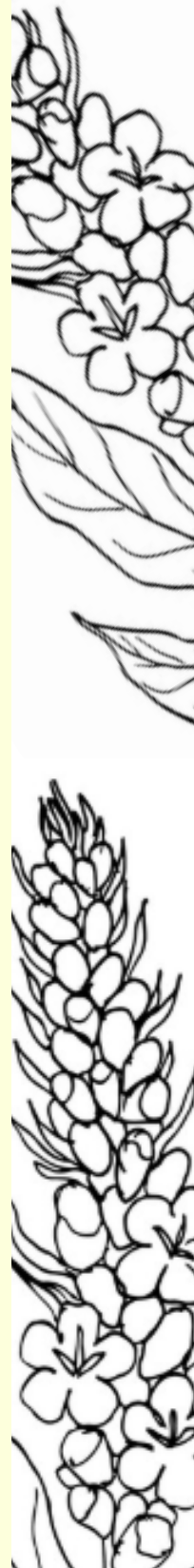
An infusion of the leaves can be a good antidiarrheal tea.

12. Leadplant/Ziǎtkála tǎáčǎǎ (Amorpha Canescens): An infusion of the flowers and leaves can provide lung support.

Not recommended for everyone:

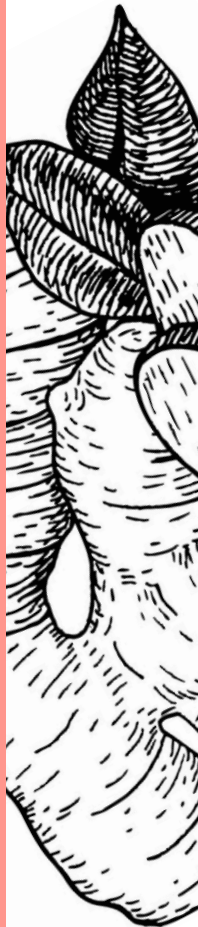
Purple Coneflower/ Čanǎčǎǎpe hú/ úǎǎlakčapi (Echinacea angustifolia & Echinacea purpurea): While the roots and leaves of Echinacea species have antiviral qualities, they may not be safe for people with autoimmune conditions. ([Source](#)) See the “Too Much Boosting Immunity” section of [this article](#) for more information.

Many of these plants also have other traditional uses. To learn more, offer tobacco and ask someone who is knowledgeable in your community.



OTHER WAYS TO STAY HEALTHY

- 1. Wash Your Hands Frequently:** With soap and water, for at least 30 seconds. This is much more effective than hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your face.
- 2. Sleep:** We recommend getting 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Have a nighttime routine to prepare your body for rest. Invite your body to slow down, and let your body teach you how.
- 3. Nourishing Foods:** We recommend eliminating sugar, gluten, and dairy to reduce inflammation. Consider adding fermented foods like sauerkraut and kimchi to your everyday diet. Eat foods that make you feel energized, connected to earth and in tune with your body. That can include: eating vegetables, eating local foods, or eating meat or other proteins, or enjoying a sweet fruit! We all connect to our bodies and wellness in a diverse set of ways.
- 4. Fresh Air:** Spending time outdoors can help, especially if you can get away from crowds and congested areas. Go for a walk out on the land if you can.
- 5. Drink Water:** Mni Wičhóni! We need water to survive. Carry it with you. Drink at least 6 to 10 cups throughout the day.
- 6. Silence and Mindfulness:** Close your eyes, and take in the sounds and smells around you. Allow your heart to fill up with gratitude. Be thankful for all the emotions that stir inside you, and for your life! Just listen.
- 7. Love:** Reach out to your community, chosen family, and loved ones so you all stay connected and can be there for one another. Do what you love. Your gifts live there, and we need your gifts more than ever now.



Philáun̄yayapi! Thank You!

We hope this guide will help you to survive and thrive during these times. As community herbalists in training, we encourage you to try out one new thing you learned here, and to share something you learned with a friend or loved one.

We will get through this together, by focusing on the most important things: caring for our elders, and caring for immunocompromised people and other vulnerable community members, and caring for ourselves.

Tanyán̄ ú̄n̄ we, tanyán̄ ú̄n̄ wo -- Be well!