ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

GOLD STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 7

EO C424.04 – PREPARE REMEDIES FOR COMMON AILMENTS USING MEDICINAL PLANTS

Total Time: 60 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-704/PG-001, *Gold Star Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

This instructional guide is to be used as a guideline. Refer to the reference book, approved by the Regional Cadet Support Unit, specific to the local area for further information on locating, identifying and processing plants, preparing remedies and treating common ailments.

This lesson shall be instructed by a guest speaker with specialist knowledge in preparing remedies.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil.

APPROACH

A practical activity was chosen for this lesson as it is an interactive way to allow the cadet to prepare a remedy using medicinal plants in a safe and controlled environment. This activity contributes to the development of survival skills and knowledge in a fun and challenging setting.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

Nil.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall have prepared a remedy using a medicinal plant.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to know how to identify medicinal plants that are safe and some that may be poisonous. In a survival situation, some plants can be prepared to make a remedy for a common ailment that may aid in the overall health and survival of a person.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

Teaching point 1 **Have the cadets, in pairs, prepare a remedy.**

Time: 50 min Method: Practical Activity

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE



This TP is intended to describe the many common ailments that may be treated with medicinal plants.

Ensure the cadets exercise extreme caution when identifying and preparing medicinal plants as some plants are poisonous.

Refer to the approved reference book that is specific to the local area for further information on identifying plants, preparing remedies and treating common ailments.

DESCRIBE MEDICINAL PLANTS

Natural Remedies

When it comes to medicine, natural medications and remedies can be better for the human body than their synthetic counterparts, which may cause side effects.

Natural plant remedies are available for treating many human illnesses and ailments; however, it is important to know what medicinal plant to look for, as well as where to find it. Although many plants grow in abundance across the country, there are some areas where a particular plant will not flourish.

Historical Practices

For thousands of years, drugs and treatments have been derived from various herbs, plants and natural substances. Many of the drugs still in use today are derived from plant sources. However, extracting the required remedy from some plants is not very easy.

Ancient herbalists did not just randomly mix a concoction and give it to patient—herbology is an exact science. The gathering, preparing and storing of medicinal plants had to be precise and the mixing of the final remedy had to be exact. Herbology science is exactly matched to the patient's lifestyle, body condition, size and need.



Herbalist. A person who specializes in the use of medicinal herbs to treat disease.

Herbology. The use of herbs to treat disease.

DESCRIBE HOW TO TREAT COMMON AILMENTS USING MEDICINAL PLANTS



Infuse. Steep herbs in liquid to extract the content.

Decoction. A process of boiling down so as to extract some essence.

Poultice. A soft medicated heated mass applied to the body and kept in place for relieving soreness and inflammation.

Express. Squeeze out liquid.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.



Consider the following when preparing medicinal plants for a common illness or ailment:

- To make an infusion, cut and crush the specific part of the plant so that the juices and oils are readily available. Mix with boiling water, stir, let cool and either drink or apply to the affected area.
- To make a decoction, cut, scrape and mash the specific parts of the plant, soak them in water and then boil. Consume as a hot drink.
- To make a poultice, mash the roots or leaves into a flat pad. Apply to the affected area and bind in position.
- To express juice, reduce the plant into a juicy mush. Squeeze the juice into the wound, spread the pulp around the infected area and keep it in place with a leaf and bind.

The following is a list of some of the medicinal plants and treatment(s) for common ailments.

Cold and Flu

Fever. These plants will induce perspiration to break a fever:

- camomile: Infusion of leaves and flowers.
- elder: Infusion of flowers and fruit.
- elm: Decoction of bark.
- feverfew: Infusion of whole plant, except bark.

Headache. These plants can be taken internally:

- willow: Leaves and bark make a decoction containing Salicin, an ingredient in Aspirin.
- elderberry: Infusion of flowers.
- wintergreen: Help with treating headaches.

Aches and pains. These plants can be taken internally:

- balm: Infusion of leaves.
- birch: Infusion of leaves.
- Borage: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- burdock: Decoction of roots.
- cattail: Infusion of leaves.
- chickweed: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- cowberry: Infusion of leaves and fruits.
- elm: Infusion of bark.
- horsehound: Expressed juice or leaves applied to earache.
- poplar: Infusion of leaf buds.
- solomon's seal: Decoction of roots, to be used externally.
- willow: Decoction of bark.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.



An example of preparing a cattail for a toothache is to rub the sticky juice between the leaves on the gums.

Colds and sore throats. These plants can be taken internally:

- agrimony: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- bilberry: Infusion of leaves and fruits.
- bistort: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- borage: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- burdock: Decoction of roots.
- camomile: Infusion of flower, to be used as a gargle.
- colt's foot: Infusion of leaves and flowers.
- comfrey: Infusion of whole plant.
- great mullein: Infusion of whole plant, except roots and decoction of roots as a gargle.
- horsehound: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- lungwort: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- mallow: Infusion of flowers and leaves.
- marsh mallow: Decoction of roots and infusion of leaves and flowers.
- mint: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- mountain avens: Infusion of whole plant, to be used as a gargle.
- nettle: Infusion of leaves.
- oak: Decoction of bark, to be used as a gargle.
- plantain: Infusion of leaves and stems.
- poplars: Infusion of leaf buds.
- roses: Decoction of hips.
- sanicle: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- self-heal: Infusion of whole plant, except roots, to be used as a gargle.
- St. John's wort: Infusion of flowers and shoots.
- thyme: Infusion of leaves and flowers.
- willow: Decoction of bark.
- yarrow: Infusion of whole plant, except roots, to be used as an inhalant.

Skin Ailments

Bleeding. These plants are to be used externally:

- dove's foot crane's bill: Expressed juice.
- giant puffball: Packed as poultice.
- periwinkle: Expressed juice of leaves.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

- plantains: Pounded leaves as poultice.
- self-heal: Expressed juice.
- stork's bill: Expressed juice of leaves.
- woundwort: Expressed juice.

Sores and wounds. These plants can be used externally to bathe the skin or taken internally:

- bulrush: Pounded acorns as poultice.
- camomile: Expressed juice of flowers or as poultice, applied to swelling.
- cattail: Pounded flowers as poultice.
- chickweed: Expressed juice of leaves.
- cleavers: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- comfrey: Decoction of roots or as poultice, applied to swelling.
- dead-nettle: Infusion of flowers and roots.
- dock: Crushed leaves applied to bruises.
- dove's foot crane's bill: Infusion of whole plant, except roots, applied to swelling.
- elder: Expressed juice of leaves.
- elm: Infusion of bark.
- figwort: Decoction of whole plant, except roots, to be used externally to draw bruises.
- garlic: Expressed juice applied to swelling.
- horsehound: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- horseradish: Decoction of roots.
- mallow: Infusion of leaves and flowers or decoction of leaves and flowers as poultice.
- marsh mallow: Decoction of roots and infusion of flowers and leaves as poultice.
- oak: Decoction of bark.
- plantain: Pounded leaves as poultice.
- sanicle: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- scurvey grass: Crushed leaves.
- shepard's purse: Infusion of whole plant, except roots, as poultice.
- spicebrush: Pounded as a poultice.
- solomon's seal: Decoction of roots as poultice.
- sorrel: Crushed leaves applied to bruises.
- St. John's wort: Infusion of flowers and shoots applied to bruises.
- tansy: Crushed leaves applied to bruises.
- thyme: Infusion of leaves and flowers.
- watercress: Expressed juice.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

- woundwort: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- yarrow: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.



An example of preparing a cattail for cuts and burns is to mash ripe cattail flowers and apply to the skin to soothe cuts and burns.

Itching and stings. These plants are to be used externally:

- amaranth: Infusion of leaves.
- birch: Infusion of twigs and applied to area.
- black alder: Infusion of bark and applied to area.
- bunchberry: Pounded berries as poultice.
- burdock: Decoction of roots crushed raw and salt for some animal bites.
- cattail: Pasty starch of the root has a soothing effect on poison ivy.
- chicory: Pounded leaves and flowers as poultice.
- colt's foot: Infusion of leaves and applied to area.
- goldenrod: Infusion of flowers and applied to area.
- jewelweed: Pounded leaves and stems as poultice.
- reed: Pounded roots as poultice.
- sumac: Pounded seed heads and leaves as poultice.
- thistle: Pounded roots as poultice.

Digestive Ailments

Constipation. These plants can be used externally or internally:

- agrimony: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- barberry: Expressed juice of fruit.
- common cleavers: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- couch grass: Decoction of root.
- dandelion: Infusion of whole plant.
- elder: Expressed juice of fruit.
- feverfew: Infusion of leaves and flowers.
- rowan: Expressed juice of fruit.
- roses: Decoction of hips.
- walnut: Decoction of bark.

Diarrhea. Most remedies are to be taken two or three times daily, until symptoms subside.

- amaranth: Infusion of leaves.
- bilberry: Decoction of fruit.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

- bistort: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- bramble: Infusion of leaves or decoction of fruit.
- cattail: Infusion of root.
- cowberry: Decoction of fruit.
- elm: Infusion of bark.
- elderberry: Infusion of flowers
- great burnet: Infusion of leaves and shoots.
- hazel: Infusion of leaves.
- hemlock: Infusion of inner bark.
- marsh mallow: Infusion of leaves and flowers or decoction of roots.
- mint: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- mountain avens: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- mulberry: Infusion of rootbark.
- oak: Decoction of bark.
- plantain: Infusion of leaves and stems.
- periwinkle: Infusion of leaves.
- silverweed: Infusion of whole plant, except roots.
- sweet fern: Infusion of leaves.

Gas and cramps. These plants can be used externally or internally:

- balm: Infusion of leaves.
- bilberry: Decoction of fruit.
- bracken: Infusion of leaves.
- bramble: Infusion of leaves.
- comfrey: Infusion of roots.
- dandelion: Decoction of whole plant.
- evening primrose: Infusion of leaves.
- horseradish: Infusion of root.
- mint: Infusion of whole plant, except roots, with crushed charcoal.
- mullein: Infusion of flowers.
- solomon's seal: Decoction of root.
- sanicle: Infusion of root.
- yarrow: Infusion of leaves and flowers.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.



An example of preparing a dandelion for stomach cramps is to steep a small amount of the plant into a cup of hot water. One-half cup in the morning and one-half cup in the evening will aid in digestion and the relieving of stomach cramps.

ACTIVITY

Time: 50 min

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to have the cadets, in pairs, prepare a remedy by locating and processing a medicinal plant.

RESOURCES

- Survival knife (one per cadet),
- Pots (one per group),
- Bowls (one per group),
- Stone mortar and pestle (one per group),
- Fire safety equipment, and
- Approved reference book for resources required.

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

Nil.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Conduct a safety briefing.
2. Divide the cadets into pairs.
3. Describe ways to treat common ailments using medicinal plants.
4. Have the cadets, in pairs, locate one medicinal plant.
5. Inspect the chosen plant(s).
6. Issue each pair resources required to process their plant.
7. Have the cadets process the medicinal plant by:
    a. making an infusion;
    b. making a decoction;
    c. making a poultice; or
    d. expressing juice.
8. Ensure each pair refers to the approved reference book when preparing their remedy.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

9. Circulate and assist the cadets as necessary, offering suggestions and advice.

10. Conduct a debriefing.



The cadets shall not use their remedy.

SAFETY

As some remedies call for boiling water, ensure the local fire regulations are followed when constructing a fire.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

The cadets' participation in the activity will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' preparation of a remedy using a medicinal plant will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK / READING / PRACTICE

Nil.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Nil.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Being able to prepare medicinal plants within the surrounding environment is essential when looking for a remedy for an illness or ailment in a survival situation. This knowledge will provide a better understanding of the many remedies that can be prepared and how to prepare each plant.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES / REMARKS

This lesson shall be instructed by a guest speaker with specialist knowledge in preparing remedies using medicinal plants.

Select an area where the natural resources required are easily accessible.

When locating and processing medicinal plants, a reference book specific to the area shall be used. This book shall be approved by the Regional Cadet Support Unit.

Fire safety equipment to prepare, light, maintain and extinguish a fire includes the following:

1. 4-lb axe (36-inch handle),

2. 24-inch bow saw,

3. shovel,

4. pail filled with sand or water,

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.

5. tinder, and

6. kindling.

REFERENCES

C2-008 ISBN 0-00-653140-7 Wiseman, J. (1999). *The SAS survival handbook*. Hammersmith, London: HarperCollins Publishers.

C2-226 ISBN 0-425-10063-4 Brown, T., Jr., & Morgan, B. (1985). *Tom Brown's field guide: Wild edible and medicinal plants*. New York, NY: The Berkley Publishing Group.

Unofficial convenience copy of A-CR-CCP-704/PF-001, cached 2026-11-08 from https://app.cadets.gc.ca/cadet-publications/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001/A-CR-CCP-704-PF-001.pdf.
Verify against the official publication.