



**Natural Healing Secrets
Of Native Americans**

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Healing Arts to Learn from Native Americans

Native Americans are, perhaps, the best example on the planet of a people who lived solely off the land while protecting it for future generations. They held the belief that we don't own the land; we are simply borrowing it from our children.

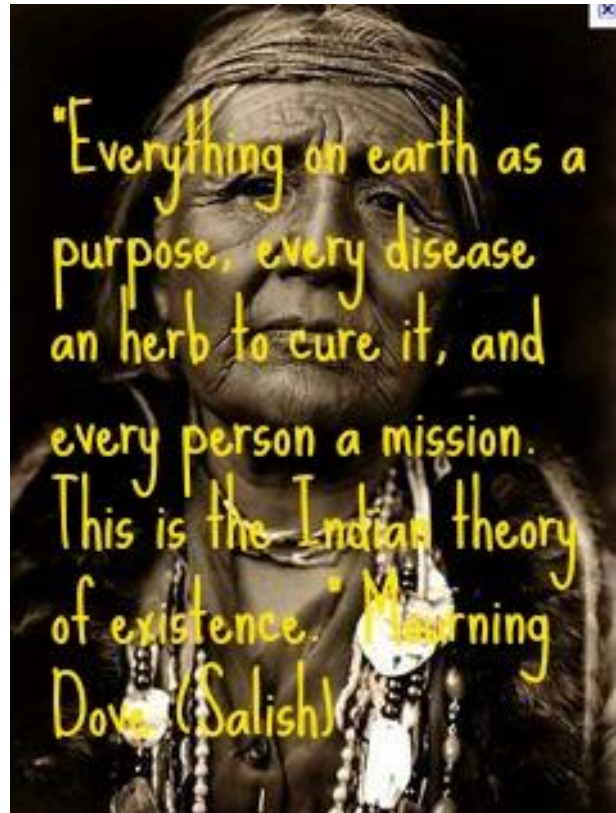
In other words, they lived sustainably, protected their resources, and survived (and thrived) while doing no harm to the planet. This made them survivors of the highest order.

Before you get too involved with learning just the physical aspects of Native American healing, you need to understand that their approach to wellness is holistic.

That is, they believe that your mind and spirit has as much (or more) to do with whether or not you heal as the medicine does. To oversimplify the concept, you need to approach the entire process with positive energy, whether you're the healer or the patient.

There are, however, some practices that we can learn from Native Americans that are extremely practicable and logical to a person who is accustomed to Western medicine and that's what we're going to discuss today.

Herbal Remedies before Medicine



To say that Native Americans didn't have doctors is incorrect, but they didn't have access to "modern" medical practices and medications. They had medicine men and women who made it their craft to know about [the medicinal properties of plants](#). Much of this was learned by trial and error and passed down orally from one generation to the next through training and practice.

Plants were also used in spiritual ceremonies to invite the spirits or to attain the proper state of mind in which to speak with them.

Today, you can purchase books about Native American healing practices that pertain to plants and we'd recommend purchasing one.

Combine that knowledge with what modern medicine has learned about each plant and you may just have a survival plan that doesn't involve modern pharmaceuticals.

Native Americans knew how to utilize the natural products around them to heal wounds, treat illnesses and remain healthy and it wasn't hocus pocus. As a matter of fact, one Incan practice gave way to modern pharmacology. They standardly used Peruvian Bark, aka quinine, to treat cramps, chills, digestive issues and heart disorders, just to name a few.

It the early 1600's, quinine was used to treat malaria, which was arguably the beginning of modern pharmacology.



Another example of effective herbal treatments is the Amazonian use of ipecac to cure amoebic dysentery, an intestinal infection that's lethal if left untreated. Ipecac makes you vomit, which expels the toxins that are making you sick. It's still used in cases of poisoning and ingestion of toxic substances today.

Native Americans used herbs for everything from disease and injury treatment to flavoring foods. We recommend picking up a book on herbal remedies because in many cases, they're successful. If you don't have access to medications, herbs are going to be what you need to know about.

Cleanliness

We now know that disease thrives in filthy conditions. All of the major plagues, as well as influenza, small pox and all of the other catastrophic communicable diseases did the damage that they did because of poor hygiene.

People were literally killed by their own filth. Native Americans didn't have this problem for a few reasons.

First, they didn't live in a manner that allowed them to become overpopulated. They also didn't throw their own filth and waste right outside the doors of their lodges where it could attract vermin or contaminate the water supply.

They bathed regularly, washed, and didn't expose themselves to outsiders who carried any kind of disease, at least not until they were forced to be exposed to Western diseases. The lesson? Keep your area and your body clean. Don't leave waste or refuse lying around and don't void your bowels or bladder near the water or food supply.

To take it a step further, don't get cozy with strangers. In a post-SHTF situation, you're going to need to be wary of others who may be dragging disease to your door.

Whether you practice total avoidance, diligent hand washing and sanitation or quarantine, you need to have a plan in place to keep your area free of disease.

Stay Natural

Native Americans used only what they had available to them for healing, but that wasn't a bad thing. When the first settlers arrived, they were surprised to see that many illnesses that they considered fatal were being effectively treated with herbal remedies. Of course, Native Americans weren't immune to Western diseases and a few, such as smallpox, was devastating to their population.

The side effects of modern pharmaceuticals have become a major concern to most tribes and as a result, many Native Americans are now reverting to herbal remedies as the only source of medicinal products.

Don't be fooled by thinking that just because a product is natural, it's safe because that's most certainly not the truth. As a matter of fact, arsenic is a natural metal but it'll kill you in the right dose. That's why we recommend buying a book about herbal remedies; so that you can look up the proper amount to use in your treatment.

Nutrition for Healing

Because the body is sacred, Native Americans were extremely conscious of what they put into it.

Of course, refined sugars and processed foods weren't an option, but there were still dietary issues that could have arisen if

they were simply gluttons. Whole foods, including fruits, vegetables and lean meats, were the total sum of the Native American diet. Of course, that includes roots and herbs, too.



Food Preservation without Electricity or Refrigeration

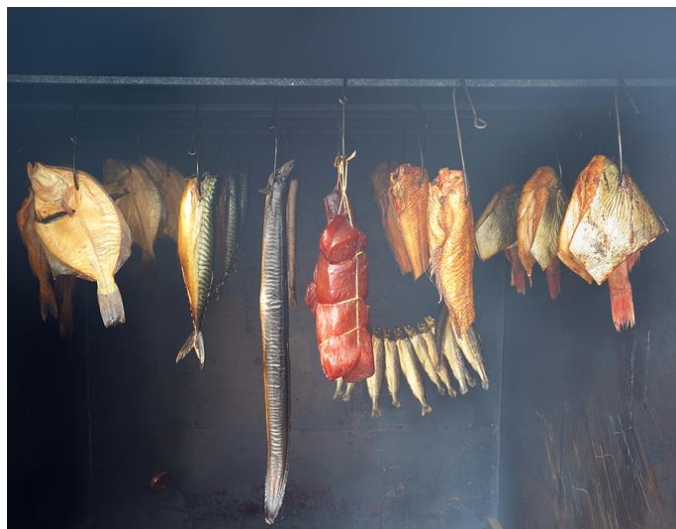
This was a major skill that would be extremely useful in a survival situation. Nothing was wasted if it could be helped because that animal gave up his life for the meal, and it would be disrespectful to that sacrifice to waste the meat.

Also, winters were tough and letting meat go bad would have been extremely wasteful when the dead of the season arrived and you were out of meat.

To preserve food, several methods were used.

Drying meat and produce was probably the biggest method of preserving meats, vegetables and fruits. One huge benefit of drying food is that it's extremely lightweight but still delicious and packed with nutrients.

Smoking many foods, including meat and fish preserves it well, too. This process



can take anywhere from a few hours to several days. Smoking also adds a pleasant taste and is traditionally done in a smokehouse, where the meat is hung and fires are built. The meat is then left in there for the required amount of time.

Salt Curing - This method is exactly what it sounds like – you use salt to draw the moisture out of the meat so that it doesn't spoil.

Pickling - We've all had that deliciously crunchy pickled cucumber that makes any sandwich better. Pickling is done by putting salt and flavoring spices in with water. It kills bacteria and other nasties. Typically, there's heat involved, which is another part of the process that kills viruses and bacteria that could make you sick.

The Native Americans had the whole healing thing down; they knew what herbs, roots or plants to use for whatever ailed you and they knew how to prevent disease.



Native American Remedies We Can Benefit From

The Native Americans were masters of holistic treatments; they knew what was available to them and they knew how to use those resources.

Though we're going to discuss some of the most common treatments (many are Cherokee) for top ailments, be extremely careful. What can cure you in a teaspoon can kill you in a cup.

"Natural" does not necessarily equate to "safe".

Aspiring medicine men and women began studying under experienced teachers at a young age and the craft was passed down from one generation to the next. It wasn't something that was learned in a week, and it wasn't written down in a book.

The information that we've gathered is meant to inspire you to learn more about alternative treatments because some day, that may be all that you have!

Mullein



Mullein is a tobacco-like plant that grows straight up and has (usually) yellow flowers.

It was traditionally smoked, used as a tea, made into an oil or tincture, or made into a poultice, depending upon what it was going to be used for. The leaves, flowers and stems are edible but the seeds contain a natural pesticide and are toxic.

The main traditional use for mullein was for the treatment of breathing issues such as asthma, colds, allergies and bronchitis. This is probably because mullein contains saponins that act as expectorants. To treat coughing, some tribes would smoke it and others would make a tea from it and drink it with molasses or honey.

Mullein is also an anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial, at least partially because of the verbascoside in it, which studies have shown to be especially effective against Staph infections. This makes it useful for many different ailments, including arthritis, stiff joints, sore muscles, burns, rashes, cuts or blisters. To take advantage of these properties, drink it, smoke it or make a topical paste.

Finally, mullein has anti-spasmodic properties that might help with cramps caused by menstruation, gastric distress or muscle spasms. The root is sometimes used to treat bladder issues such as infections.

Mint



This herb is easy to grow and acts almost instantly to relieve upset stomach. It's also good for headache. You can make tea or a poultice from it, chew it raw or add it to food.

Mint oil is great for boosting mood or giving you a burst of energy – some people like to put a drop or two on their pillows at night so that it can act while they're sleeping.

As a skin poultice, mint has anti-inflammatory properties that help soothe irritated skin, bug bites or bee stings. It's often a component of natural bug repellants.

Mint may also help with allergies because it inhibits the release of histamines that trigger the runny nose and other symptoms of hay fever and other allergic reactions.

You're probably most familiar with mint because it's in most toothpastes. That's not just because it makes your breath smell nice. The menthol in mint acts as an anti-microbial to kill the germs that cause bad breath and tooth decay.

Saloli Gatoga, aka Squirrel Tail or Yarrow

The fresh leaves of yarrow can be crushed and applied to an open wound to stop the bleeding. You can also make a tea from it and drink it to stop or slow internal bleeding.

This tea is also good for stimulating digestive functions and helps keep your kidneys and gallbladder functioning properly.



A decoction was often made with the leaves and stems and used as an astringent to treat acne and other skin issues.

Valerian Root



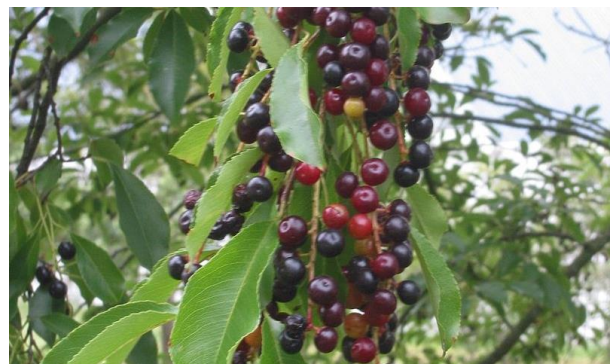
Valerian is easy to grow and the root has been used for centuries to relieve anxiety and to treat insomnia.

It's also used to treat cramps, muscle spasms, gastrointestinal pain and irritable bowel syndrome. Typically, it's boiled into a tea though you can buy it over-the-counter in pill form.

Wild Black Cherry

The bark and the fruit of this plant, aka chokecherry or wild cherry, are edible and are used medicinally. The leaves and seeds are poisonous!

The bark is made into tea and used to treat coughs, colds, flu symptoms, bronchitis, sore throat, laryngitis, asthma, high blood pressure, swollen lymph nodes and arthritis, among other ailments. It's also an appetite stimulant and a mild sedative.



Mohegans allowed the fruit to ferment naturally for a year or so before using it to treat dysentery.

Willow Bark

There are several kinds of willow trees and all of them contain at least trace amounts of salicin, the chemical similar to acetylsalicylic acid, aka aspirin. It also contains some pretty powerful flavonoids that act as anti-inflammatories.

Salicin, like aspirin, has anti-inflammatory, fever reducing and pain relieving properties. White willow, crack willow and purple willow have the highest concentration of salicin.

To reap the benefits, just make a tea from the inner bark of the tree.



Witch Hazel

This stuff is great. It has anti-inflammatory, astringent properties that are good for a wide variety of ailments.

Witch hazel is a shrub that grows all over the United States and southern Canada and is used to treat muscle aches, bug bites, swelling and bruises.

It's also used to stop bleeding and is great for treating acne, eczema, poison ivy, varicose veins, sunburn and hemorrhoids.

Geranium

This pretty flower is found all over the world. The leaves have historically been used by Native Americans to treat stomach and digestive problems and to stimulate appetite.

It was also used to get rid of worms and treat inflammation and back pain.



Geranium may cause headaches, nausea and vomiting so use it carefully.

There are many different Native American remedies that we can benefit from but we need to be extremely careful.

You need to educate yourself well and know the side effects as well as the uses of any herb that you may choose to use medicinally because many of them are perfectly safe at one level and lethal at another.

Don't ever just throw a pinch into the teapot – know what you're doing before you begin any treatment whatsoever, even if It's only on you.