***Ointments***

By Barbara J. Denny, Certified Herbalist

**Ointment** - semisolid preparation (usually containing a medicine) applied externally as a remedy or for soothing an irritation, a soft, bland, smooth, semisolid mixture that is used as a lubricant and as a vehicle for external medication. Ointments are easy to make in the home. With the addition of vitamin E oil, they have a shelf life and can be stored in a cool dark place. Always label your ointments and though many contain non toxic ingredients, keep them away from children and pets.

**3-C SKIN OINTMENT**This is an ointment which is general in purpose and can be used on almost all skin problems.

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| ¾ oz dried chickweed ¾ oz dried comfrey leaf (or root) ½ oz dried calendula flowers 8 to 9 oz of sweet almond oil (or olive oil or combo of the two) ¼ oz (approx) of grated beeswax 800 IU vitamin E |

*Optional:* Echinacea and other extracts can be added just before the beeswax for their antiseptic properties.

Powder herbs.   
Combine herbs and oil in a pyrex bowl or the top of a double boiler.  
Place ¾" water in an electric skillet and bring temp to a steady 95°F.   
Place bowl in water in skillet and clip cooking thermometer to side of bowl with tip touching the oil.   
When a steady temp of 95° to 98° degrees is attained, allow to simmer for 12 to 14 hours or till herbs look "used up".   
Strain through fine muslin and into a measuring cup to remove all traces of the herbs.   
See how much oil you have recovered; it should be about 4 oz. Add a bit of oil if it doesn't.   
Return oil to cleaned bowl or pan and raise the temp in the skillet to 150°.   
Keeping heat at 150°, return bowl or pan to skillet and add beeswax (melts at about 148°F).   
Keep stirring well till beeswax is melted.   
Test for desired consistency by dropping a drop or two into the bottom of a jar which will hold the ointment. When desired consistency is reached, remove from heatand add contents of vitamin E capsule(s). You can also add the tinctures at this time.   
Allow to set up; cap tightly.

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| **CALENDULA OINTMENT**   |  | | --- | | 7 oz petroleum jelly 2 oz (a handful) freshly picked calendula flowers |   Melt petroleum jelly over low heat. Add calendula. Bring mixture to a boil and simmer very gently for about 10 min, stirring well.  Strain through fine gauze and press out all the liquid from the flowers. Pour liquid into container and seal after it has cooled.    **COMFREY-PLANTAIN OINTMENT**   |  | | --- | | 1 oz dried comfrey  1 oz dried plantain  8 oz sweet almond oil  1½ oz. beeswax  Bring mixture to a boil and simmer very gently for about 10 min, stirring well.  Strain through fine gauze and press out all the liquid from the flowers. Pour liquid into container and seal after it has cooled. | |  |   **EUCALYPTUS OINTMENT**  Contains antiseptic and healing properties. Produces good results in chapped hands, chafes, dandruff, tender feet, enlargements of the glands, spots on the chest, arms, back and legs and pains in the joints and muscles. Apply a piece of clean cotton or gauzy type material to wounds after all dirt is washed away. For aches and pains rub the affected part well and then cover with cloth; repeat 2 or 3 times.   |  | | --- | | 12 oz elder oil 2 oz beeswax 2 tsps eucalyptus oil 20 drops wintergreen oil |   Combine elder oil and wax in top of double boiler over low heat until wax melts; remove from heat and stir in remaining 2 oils. Pour into appropriate containers.  **CUCUMBER OINTMENT** Used as a healing and cleansing cream.   |  | | --- | | 1 lb cucumber 3¼ oz pure lard 2¼ oz veal suet |   Grate the washed cucumbers into a pulp or use a blender or food processer.  Strain the juice out and save.  Cut the suet into small pieces and heat over a water bath till the fat is melted out from the membrane. Add the lard.  When melted, strain through the muslin into a crock or jar capable of holding upto 1 quart.  Stir until it begins to thicken.  Add 1/3 of the juice.  Beat with a spatula till the odor has been wholly extracted. Put into jar and cover.  Heat in a water bath till the fatty matter separates from the juice.  Strain off the green coagulum floating on the surface.  Put jar in a cool place to solidify.  The crude ointment is then separated from the water liquid on which it floats, is melted and strained and then placed in glass jars which must be kept sealed.  Add a layer of rosewater on the surface to help preserve it. Rosewater may also be added to make this preparation creamy and white.    **EMERGENCY OINTMENT** Combine some wheat germ oil and honey and apply to sore, bruise or wound.  Tinctures of Comfrey, Calendula, St. Johnswort or Mullein can be added (between 5 and 15 drops) to the oil and honey.  **ITCH OINTMENT**  Use Burdock root or Chickweed or a combination of both.  Wash and grate the Burdock root or use *fresh* Chickweed; combine with safflower oil (or olive oil) and cocoa butter; cook in a covered heat resistant dish at 200°F for 2 to 3 hours (use an electric skillet with water in it to have controlled temp - see ([Basics/How To](http://Earthnotes.tripod.com/basics.htm#howto)). Strain and return liquid to dish along with grated beeswax; figure ¼ oz beeswax for each 2 oz liquid.    **JUNIPER BERRY OINTMENT** Useful for wounds, itching, scratches, scars from burns, hangnails and festering sores.  Collect the berries from the garden or the wild just as they are getting ripe.   |  | | --- | | 2 cups juniper berries 2 cups oil (olive, peanut, safflower, sweet almond, or etc) 2 to 3 tbsp beeswax |   Soak berries overnight. Strain out the water.  Simmer the berries over very low heat in the oil in the top of a double boiler and take care not to burn.  Remove from heat and strain out berries.  Return to heat and add beeswax.  When melted pour into appropriate containers.    **LAVENDER OINTMENT RECIPE #1**   |  | | --- | | 25 drops essential oil of lavender 10 drops essential oil of lemon (or neroli) 5 drops essential oil of thyme 2 tbsp oil of lavender (which is prepared by infusing flowers in olive oil) 60 g beeswax |   Melt beeswax in top of double boiler, then beat in oil of lavender.  As ointment begins to cool, add the essential oils and continue to beat till cool.  Store in covered jar in refrigerator.  **RECIPE #2** Good for chapped lips, skin and cold sores.   |  | | --- | | 4 tbsp olive or almond oil 3 to 4 tbsp beeswax 3 tsp cocoa butter 2 tsp lanolin 10 drops vitamin E oil 15 drops lavender oil 15 drops sandalwood oil |   Combine olive or almond oil, beeswax, cocoa butter and lanolin and heat in top of double boiler.  Remove from heat and add vitamin E (a 400 IU capsule can be opened and contents squeezed out), lavender and sandalwood oils and beat well. Pour into little jars and allow to cool before putting on lids. Keeps 6 to 12 months.    **LAVENDER-TEA TREE OINTMENT** Good antiseptic properties and soothing to skin problems.   |  | | --- | | 2 oz oil ½ oz beeswax 5 drops lavender oil 3 drops tea tree oil 400 IU vitamin E |   Combine oil and beeswax in top of double boiler over low heat till wax melts.  Remove from heat and add lavender and tea tree oils. Snip vitamin E capsule open and squeeze contents into oils.  Place in ointment jar and allow to setup before capping.    **PAINFUL SORES OINTMENT** Combine 8 oz vegetable glycerine and 2 oz white oak bark powder.  Heat together in top of double boiler for 30 min.  Cool, strain and bottle.  Be sure to label.  **PLANTAIN OINTMENT**   |  | | --- | | 2½ cups fresh plantain leaves 1½ cups wheat germ oil ½ cup honey |   Mix wheat germ oil and honey in a blender, making sure blades are covered with the oil.  Add fresh plantain leaves.  Scrape out the preparation with a spaula.  Place in a labeled bottle or jar.  To solidify add 2½ tbsp or more of warm, melted beeswax.    **RED CLOVER OINTMENT** In a pyrex bowl, place a handful of red clover and cover with olive or sweet almond oil.  Place bowl in center of electric skillet which has some water in it to protect the finish.  See [Basics/How To](http://Earthnotes.tripod.com/basics.htm#howto) for procedure.    **SORE LEG OINTMENT**   |  | | --- | | 1 handful chickweed 1 handful red rose leaves 1 pint olive oil (or other suitable oil) |   In top of double boiler combine oil, chickweed and rose leaves.  Simmer over very low heat for 1 to 3 hours.  Strain out herbs.  Use as a liquid ointment on sore legs.    **SAGE and SWEET VIOLET OINTMENT** Good for chapped lips, cold sores and chapped skin.   |  | | --- | | 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh sage leaves 2 tbsp sweet violets 4 tbsp sweet almond oil |   Combine ingredients in a small stoppered bottle.  Leave in a warm place for 1 month, shaking daily.  Strain into a bowl and add 4 tbsp each of almond oil and melted beeswax which have been melted together in the top of a double boiler.  Beat until cold.  Store in an airtight jar in a cool place. |