



Natural Pain Relief

There are Safe, Natural Ways to Deal with Pain

Nobody likes pain and any normal person wants relief from pain when he/she experiences it. Modern medicine has been very effective in creating pain-killing medications, but there are two problems with using these substances. First, they do not fix the cause of pain; they only relieve the effect. Pain is a signal that something is wrong. When we touch a hot stove, the pain tells us that what we just did is damaging to the body. This is how we learn to avoid doing harmful things to ourselves. Pain killers don't fix the problems that are causing pain.

Secondly, most of these pain killing drugs have serious side effects. Opiates and other substances that numb nerves are typically addictive. Corticosteroids, once heralded as miracle drugs, have been found to have numerous dangerous side effects. Now, one of the major drugs in the new class of COX-2 inhibiting pain killers has been removed from the marketplace because of dangerous side effects. So, while pain killers are nice to have, they aren't a good long-term solution to pain.

Fortunately, there are alternatives to pain killing drugs. Herbal remedies and nutritional supplements for pain may be slower acting, but they tend to have more positive cumulative effects. That is, they usually promote tissue healing and repair so that the cause of the pain is also relieved.

Pain almost always involves inflammation. Inflammation occurs whenever tissues are damaged in some way, usually through mechanical trauma or chemical irritation. Inflammation causes fluid and plasma proteins to accumulate in tissue spaces, depriving cells of oxygen and nutrients, and causing accumulations of waste material in the tissue spaces. Under these conditions, cells communicate their distress by sending signals to the brain which we interpret as pain. Disrupting the signals doesn't help tissues to heal. What is needed are remedies that bring oxygen and nutrients to tissues, remove wastes, and help tissues to heal. This is done by increasing blood flow to the damaged area and by improving lymphatic drainage at the site of damage.

One of the earliest natural pain relievers was herbs containing salicylates. These compounds were the forerunners of modern aspirin, and although they are not as strong as aspirin, they are without side effects and have tissue healing properties that work on the cause of pain, not just easing the effect. Willow bark was one of the first salicylate-bearing plants used for pain. As far back as the time of Hippocrates, willow bark has been used for arthritis, headaches and other aches and pains. Other salicylate-bearing plants include black cohosh, meadowsweet, and wintergreen. These plants reduce inflammation, tighten tissues to relieve fluid congestion, and speed tissue healing.

The best way to get the maximum effect from these herbs is to use them as part of an herbal formula. Two anti-inflammatory and pain relieving formulas which contain salicylate-bearing herbs (as well as other remedies to enhance circulation, promote lymphatic drainage and reduce inflammation) are APS II with White Willow Bark and Nerve Eight.

The body produces its own anti-inflammatory internally in the form of the adrenal hormone cortisol. Corticosteroid drugs were designed to mimic this hormone, but there are also natural substances that either enhance the action of cortisol or have a cortisol-like effect without the harmful side effects of corticosteroids. These include licorice root, wild yam and yucca. Since adrenal fatigue often contributes to pain, these herbs in conjunction with Adrenal Support can be helpful for chronic pain, especially when that pain is associated with auto-immune disorders.

There are also natural alternatives to COX-2 inhibitors. Omega-3 Essential Fatty acids, CLA and/or Super GLA can be used to naturally promote a natural change in COX-2 and other prostaglandin production that can ease chronic pain. The formula Triple Relief contains a plant extract that acts as a natural COX-2 inhibitor along with boswellia (frankincense) and willow bark. It provides better relief for headaches, back ache and joint pain.

Back and muscle pain often involve muscle cramping and spasms. Antispasmodic remedies relax muscles and ease these types of pain. Lobelia, Kava Kava and Cramp Relief all act as antispasmodics to relieve pain caused by muscle constriction.

There are numerous other anti-inflammatory remedies that also help to ease pain. Examples include Devil's claw, turmeric, chamomile, feverfew and yarrow. Joint Support contains a variety of herbs that ease inflammation and is very helpful for pain associated with gout or arthritis. Thai-Go is a blend of antioxidant fruits and herbs which reduces inflammatory responses in the body. Regular use of Thai-Go has helped reduce many types of chronic pain.

Massage promotes better circulation and lymphatic drainage to tissues which reduces inflammation and promotes healing. Using Tei Fu oil, Tei Fu Massage Lotion, or Deep Relief oil topically, along with regular massage, has helped to relieve and eventually heal painful tissue. For more information, on this type of pain relief consult the *Dr. Mom-Dr. Dad* course from Tree of Light Publishing.

There are many other natural remedies that can ease pain and promote healing. To help select the remedies that are right for you consult your local Herb Specialist.

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