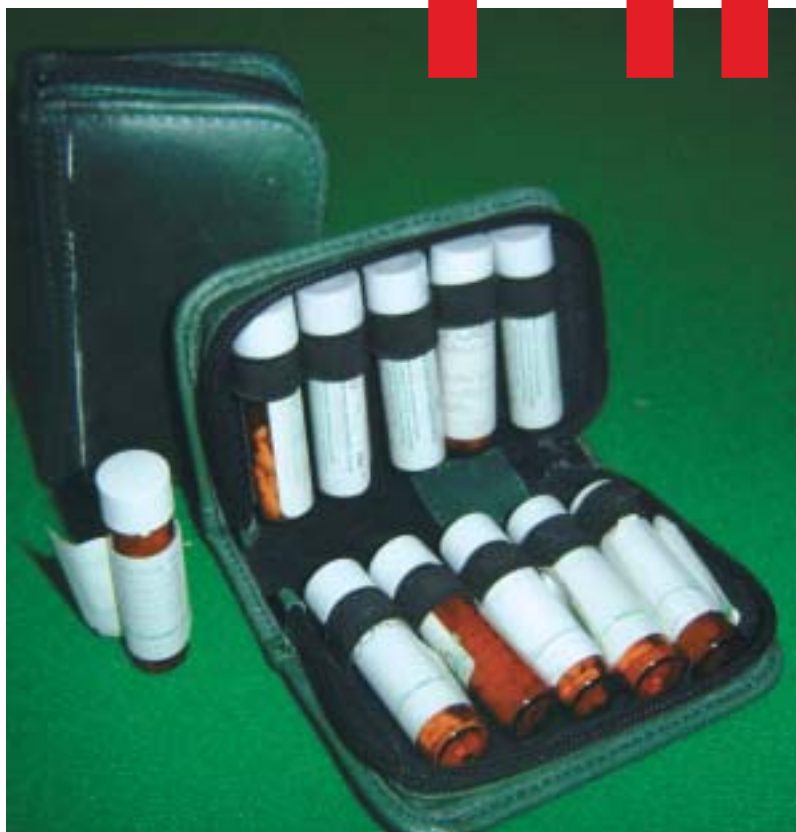


First aid



Carol Jackson discloses what remedies she keeps close to hand and why

When setting up a first aid kit, it's important that you are familiar with the remedies it contains. If you need a materia medica to use the products it's not "first aid"! When I first became interested in homeopathy I set up a first aid kit using my tutor's recommendations. The vast majority of the remedies I never used; but then she was a doctor and my kit was purely for personal use (family, friends, my pets and myself). So my advice is only put in what you think you will need and can use confidently.

I've been a bit selfish with this choice; most of the remedies are the ones I have in my own kit and I've chosen 20 as that's how many fit in the cases! Joking apart, to be first aid it must be readily accessible and portable. My kit consists of two leather cases with elastic retainers inside which hold 7g tablet bottles. I take them everywhere with me, including to Everest Base Camp where they stood me in extremely good stead!

So let's consider the remedies I've chosen and their uses. You may like to laminate the reference guide overleaf and keep it with your kit, or better still write a summary in your own words.

Aconite napellus

For shock; but only the obviously panicky shock. It won't help the "strong silent types". They will respond better to Arnica. If the person has suffered an injury, alternate the Aconite with Arnica for the physical trauma; try not to give the remedies concurrently as they work best when given alone. The remedy should be given as soon as possible in as high a potency as possible. My kit contains 1M Aconite for extreme shock; I keep the lower potencies for influenza, colds and high fevers which occur suddenly and are often brought on by exposure to dry, cold winds.

Apis mellifica

For bee or wasp stings, and any allergic reaction to a bite or sting which causes swelling, redness and pain. The affected area will be hot and very sensitive to touch; there may be general stiffness and constriction due to the swelling. The majority of urticaria cases (allergic skin rashes) respond to Apis. Remember red, swollen, hot: the pain is often described as burning or stinging. Apis can also be used for sore throats and rheumatically joints with the familiar constriction, red-

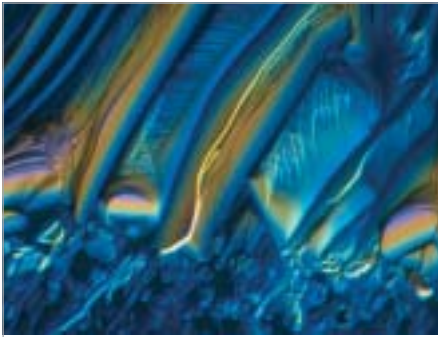
ness and stinging pain. Using 30c every couple of hours till the pain subsides is a suitable dose.

Argentum nitricum

Stomach upsets. The rushed and hurried diarrhoea, sickness, bloating, flatulence and headache you might get from nervous anticipation. It's wonderful for pre-driving test, or pre-flight nerves. In fact it can be used for "pre-anything" nerves, especially public performances involving speaking or singing, where the victim gets splinter like pains in the throat. Give 30c twice daily for "pre-anything" nerves, 30c every couple of hours for stomach upsets.

Arnica montana

Trauma. Well all the books label this as the "traumatic remedy par excellence", and that just about says it all. Give it as soon as possible, in as high a potency as possible for acute conditions. Lower the potency for conditions that started after a trauma but were not treated with Arnica at the time. My kit contains 1M Arnica, but I use 30c and sometimes 6c or 6x for conditions which have been allowed to develop over a long period.



Argentum nitricum



Carbo veg



Cantharis



Apis mellifica



Aconite napellus



Sulphur



Phosphorus



Staphysagria



Ledum



Hypericum



Rhus tox



Urtica urens



Calendula



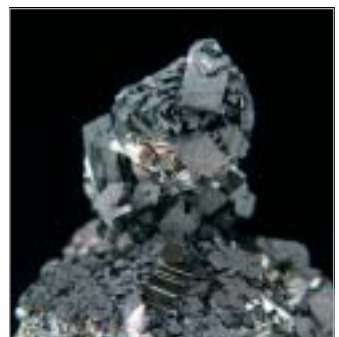
Nux vomica



Hepar sulph



Arnica montana



Arsenicum album



Ruta grav



Sepia - Carol's constitutional remedy



Belladonna

Photo sources in alphabetical order: Archive of Central Texas Plants, University of Texas, Austin; Earth Science World Image Bank; istockphoto.com; Mary Ellen Harte/www.forestryimages.org; Science Photo Library; Andrew Lambert Photography/Stephen A. Skirius; Stan Shebs; Vascular Plant Image Library, Texas A&M University; Wellcome Library, London

Quick reference guide

Condition	Remedy	Indication	Dose
Abcess and suppurating wounds	Hepar sulph	Very painful wounds	30c 3x daily orally
Abrasions and cuts	Calendula Hypericum	Take orally to prevent infection/use to bathe wound* Orally for damaged nerves/use to bathe painful wounds*	6c twice daily orally 30c every 2 hours
Bites and stings	Apis Urtica	Red, swollen, painful Vesicles and itching	30c every couple of hours 30c 2 or 3 x daily
Bleeding	Phosphorus	Bleeding wounds /nose bleeds	Use high potencies every 15 minutes as needed
Burns	Cantharis Urtica	Severe burns including sunburn Minor burns and scalds	30c every 2 hours 30c every 2 hours
Fever	Aconite Belladonna	Sudden fevers brought on by dry, cold, winds/ patient is panicky Sudden fevers, red, swollen, throbbing/patient more violent than panicky	30c 2 or 3 x daily 30c 2 or 3 x daily
Hangover	Nux vomica	For over indulgence	30c every two hours
Shock	Aconite Arnica	Panicky and frightened When the patient appears calm	A high potency every 15 minutes as needed A high potency as soon as possible as a single dose
Sprains and muscle injuries	Rhus tox	Patient is better for movement	30c 2 or 3 x daily
Stomach upsets	Argentum nit Arsen alb Carbo veg Nux vomica	Hot, hurried and worried Cold and panicky Flatulent, cold, lifeless Over-indulgence	30c every 2 hours 30c every 2 hours 30c every 2 hours 30c every 2 hours
Strains	Ruta grav	Patient not better for movement	30c 2 or 3 x daily
Trauma	Arnica	Physical and mental trauma	High potency as soon as possible
Urticaria	Apis Sulphur Urtica	Red, swollen and painful Patient better for scratching For "prickly heat"	30c every 2 hours 6x when required 30c 2 or 3 x daily
Wounds	Ledum Staphysagaria	Puncture wounds /keyhole surgery/ blunt trauma to the eyes Lacerated wounds or open surgery	30c 2 or 3 x daily 30c 2 or 3 x daily

* To make a solution for bathing, dissolve 2 pillules in a little bottled water

Think of the remedy when a person says they are fine but doesn't want you to touch an injured area, even if you cannot see any damage. Remember it can be used for mental traumas as well as physical injuries. Again the patient will say they are fine when that's very unlikely! I've had good reports from patients using it for jet-lag.

Arsenicum alb

Food poisoning, especially from fruit or water. The person will be very anxious and not easily pacified. They will be cold, unable to get warm though the stomach pains would be described as burning. I've found it useful for severe heartburn; especially that which occurs at night when you get anxious about not being able to sleep. Indeed Arsenicum does have "worse at between 2 and 4am". Give 30c every couple of hours.

Belladonna

Illnesses that come on suddenly and violently, resulting in throbbing pain, redness and swelling characterise Belladonna. I've used it more in children than adults; the child is often in a positively vile temper. Perhaps it's just easier to spot in children who don't modify their behaviour to fit expectations. Ear problems are especially prevalent, the sufferer will literally be driven mad with pain. It was particularly useful in measles and almost specific for scarlet fever, though these illnesses are no longer common. Most sunstroke responds well to Belladonna, with appropriate re-hydration therapy, of course. Give 30c every couple of hours as necessary.

Calendula

Abrasions and cuts. I give it orally and sometimes use the pillules to make up

a solution to bathe any wounds. The solution is wonderful for cold sores and mouth ulcers, and can be mixed with Hypericum, if the sore is very painful. The mixed solution is good for bathing minor burns or scalds. Don't put anything on a major burn. I use 6c pillules and give them orally twice daily; use a solution as required.

Cantharis

Major burns. It goes without saying that really severe or extensive burns must be seen by a doctor, but Cantharis often takes away the pain and stops the skin cracking. I've used it in bad sunburn; alternate with Belladonna if sunstroke is an accompanying factor. Cantharis can be used in cystitis but the occasions when it is the correct remedy are few and far between. The burning pain is extremely severe (not just stinging), and

there may be bleeding present. Cystitis of this severity is best treated by a doctor. Give 30c every two hours.

Carbo veg

Stomach upsets. Particularly caused by rich foods, wine and general “high” living. The stomach will be greatly distended, with much flatulence and colic. The patient feels cold and lifeless but they want to be fanned and must have fresh air. They are better for belching. Carbo veg is useful for any case where the patient “lacks” oxygen and can be given in suspected heart attacks, where the patient is blue and lifeless. Make sure you give an aspirin and call an ambulance as well.

Hepar sulph

Abscesses and suppurating wounds which are very, very painful. The patient won't even tolerate puffs of air across the wound. Hepar sulph aids the body to expel infections, but serious wounds should be checked by a doctor. I have used this remedy for a dental abscess, when the patient wouldn't take the antibiotics the dentist prescribed. Well the abscess did recede allowing the tooth to be removed; but please make sure dental problems are seen by a dentist. Give 30c three times daily.

Hypericum

Painful injuries where nerves are damaged. Think of crushed fingers and stubbed toes. It works like an anaesthetic, so can be used for any painful injury. Like Calendula I sometimes dissolve the pillules and use the solution to bathe wounds or as a mouthwash for mouth ulcers. I have 30c pillules in my kit. Give every two hours for wounds.

Ledum

Puncture wounds and blunt trauma to the eyes. It's the first remedy to think of with puncture wounds; it helps to prevent tetanus. Alternate it with Hypericum if the wound is painful. The odd thing with Ledum injuries is the patient may feel cold, or the wound may be cold, but the pain is eased with cold compresses.

Ledum is almost specific for blunt trauma to the eye; it helps to prevent bruising. If the eye is already black, Hamamelis would probably be better. I have used it as a prophylactic for someone who was having eye surgery. They didn't have any bruising at all; the surgeon was amazed. Give 30c two or three times daily.

Nux vomica

Stomach upsets, headaches and hangovers caused by over-indulgence. This patient isn't like the Carbo veg patient. He, and more than not it will be he, enjoys rich foods and high living. Nux vomica patients normally tolerate this lifestyle well. They are lively, work hard, play hard and as a result can be ratty and bad tempered! They certainly aren't the lifeless, limp individuals who profit from Carbo veg. Give 30c every couple of hours.

Phosphorus

Bleeding wounds/nose bleeds. Phosphorus stops bleeding virtually instantaneously. I have used it for my nephew's frequent nose bleeds and helped a colleague with very heavy periods, but make sure that any unexplained bleeding is investigated. Give the highest potency you have every 15 minutes. I carry 1M pills.

Rhus tox

Bruised, sore muscles and joints. This patient has stiff, sore joints and muscles but is better for movement. In fact they can be restless and unable to find a comfortable posture. If a person is not better for gentle movement, Rhus tox probably isn't the right remedy; think about Ruta or Arnica instead.

Rhus tox can be used for skin conditions that present like “poison ivy” rashes, for example chicken pox and shingles. Give 30c two or three times daily. If the injury is more chronic or the patient is very infirm, 6c would be a better choice.

Ruta grav

Strained joints and ligaments. Ruta can almost be considered to be “chronic Rhus tox”. If the patient is not better for movement it will help more than Rhus tox. Ruta helps with ligaments and tendon injuries, where Rhus tox is more muscular; but the boundaries are not clearly marked. I would try Ruta first for cases of repetitive strain injury. Give 30c two or three times daily. If the injury is more chronic or the patient is very infirm, 6c would be a better choice.

Staphysagria

Lacerated wounds. It can be used prophylactically for open surgery. Keyhole surgery would be better with Ledum. Give 30c two or three times daily.

Sulphur

Skin conditions. Sulphur is wonderful for itchy urticaria which the patient scratches until it bleeds. The skin will be red and “unhealthy” looking. They are worse for bathing, being wet and from the heat of the bed. Go very carefully with potencies. Skin conditions are notorious for flare-ups. I keep 6x in my first aid kit and dose as and when required for acute conditions.

Urtica urens

Skin conditions. As the name suggests this is useful for urticaria, but only the sort that produces little vesicles and/or raised lumps like nettle rash. It's great for “prickly heat”. Urtica can be used for minor burns and scalds as well. Burns that sting like nettle rash, but where the skin is not too sore to touch. Give 30c two or three times daily.

2oth remedy

Now if you've been following closely you'll see there are only 19 remedies – true. That's because I think it wise to include your own constitutional remedy in your kit. For me it's Sepia; I used to take it specifically for “female stuff”, now I only need to use it occasionally for those times when I don't “feel myself”. It seems to ward off minor problems and elucidates anything more serious.

Of course there may be other conditions you want to cover specifically, travel sickness, altitude sickness, period pain. It comes back to my initial advice, make the kit your own.

Potencies

A word about potencies. Basically, give what you've got. I was taught the remedy is the key for the lock, the potency is how hard one turns the key. If you have access to the potencies I've suggested so much the better, but the right remedy is the important factor.

Carol Jackson MRPharmS DFHom (Pharm) is a community pharmacist. One of the first group of pharmacists to pass the diploma exam for the Faculty of Homeopathy, Carol advises her customers on homeopathy and promotes it to the other health care professionals she works with.