

The Free Pharmacy

Contents

Common Household	4
Herbal	6
Over the Counter	8
Recycled BigMed Prescriptions	9
Write Like a Doctor or Nurse	11
A note on forging prescriptions	12

The pharmacist and the doctor have a good gig making money selling folks cures. Often, for minor stuff, you end up paying the doctor 100 USD or more to tell you that you are messed up and then sent to the drug store to buy something that you could have originally picked up yourself. However, for many minor illnesses and injuries, you can take care of yourself and others right out of your pad! Of course, this is no substitute if things go really wrong. You still need those guys for the serious stuff. However, with a fully stocked cabinet and a little bit of know-how, you can be the go-to person whenever someone needs help. You may even already have many of these items in your pad!

Common Household

Many common household items also have uses in medicine.

- Vinegar is a Miracle Drug, and it is one of the cheapest things in the grocery store. Rubbed into your underarms and pubes it slows the growth of bacteria that make you smell all funky – you can use it to have at least a cleanish day if you're not carrying any deodorant. Rubbed on your face it is very effective against acne. It can also be used to treat all sorts of skin infections, from crotch rot to athletes' foot. Warm vinegar water is a good soak for skin infections, but if your skin is tender from an advanced infection, it will sting like fire, so fold a bandanna or washcloth, wet it good with water, and put a small sprinkle of vinegar on it, and gently pat yourself down if your skin is red and tender. Sluice down your feet with it and rub the vinegar in hard between your toes if you have, or even might get, Athletes' Foot. It works in about three good applications over a couple of days, on even advanced infections, much faster than drugstore creams. If your skin is cracked and bleeding, though, you're screwed and you need the drugstore creams or even medical assistance. Vinegar is a powerful food acid, and will sting the living shit out of raw, tender skin, so test out a goodly dab on you first to see how bad off you are before your screams echo in the bathroom, or behind the church, or wherever...
- Baking soda, also known as sodium bicarbonate, is a good wet or dry deodorant for the crotch and armpits. It is also easy on the skin. Baking soda is also a toothpaste powder, mouthwash and a quick effective antacid. Add to your wash bucket with the soap to deodorize your clothes and bedding. Just don't try to combine baking soda with vinegar. They produce a great deal of foamy bubbles when mixed.
- Rubbing alcohol can be used for cleaning out wounds and cuts if you don't have iodine solution but it burns like hell and is not as effective. It can bring relief from a cold or fever when rubbed down after a bath. Just remember that it is a combustible liquid, and has been denatured to keep people from drinking it (You WILL get violently sick if you do!) and you can use it as fuel if you make a soft drink can stove.
- Witch Hazel is an excellent (and cheap!) astringent, and is good for stopping up shaving cuts and reducing hemorrhoids.
- Zinc Oxide can be used to make a sunblock cream like old school lifeguards would wear on their nose. Oil of cloves is good to numb a sore tooth. Mix oil of clove and zinc oxide into a clay, stuff it into a dry lost filling cavity, then bite down on a cotton ball for a half hour to make a well fitted temporary filling good for up to six months.
- Charcoal. We are not talking about the commercial nuggets you buy in stores, most charcoal in stores has chemicals added to it to help it burn. We are talking about burning a slice of bread to cinders on a stove top (wait until there are no more orange flames coming from it). Both can either be chewed (when cool) and swallowed or crushed and mixed into a glass of water and drunk (gritty but quick). The charcoal absorbs the toxins from an intestinal infection giving your bowels a rest.

Taking charcoal when you have diarrhea is the answer, in addition to drinking clean or purified water and light soup, for returning to health. Be careful not to take anti-diarrhea medications unless you have a very mild case. The idea is to let your body eliminate the bad stuff inside you instead of hardening it up and leaving it in you to keep you sick.

- Acidophilus. If you have a fungal infection on any part of your body give acidophilus a shot before seeing a doctor. It works wonders by displacing the fungal organisms and then staying to defend their new territory. Acidophilus is either available from health stores as a powder in a capsule which is either eaten or broken open and applied wet or in active culture yogurt which can be rubbed onto to unbroken skin.
- Salt. While Epsom salts are best even regular table salt and very warm (not burn yourself hot) water is a great way to soak out an infection or stiff joint or muscle. For a hand or foot just use a bucket and add salt until a drop tastes very salty.
- Hydrogen Peroxide. Excellent first aid antiseptic. Dilute it with equal parts water, and it's a very strong mouth rinse. (Just do NOT swallow it!).

If you need to soak your body and have no bathtub get the smallest kids inflatable pool you can find or a wash tub, place it on an insulating layer of cardboard or sleeping mats, inside a tent if it is winter. Add a gallon or two of cold water to protect the pool and boil up a gallon or two in a metal bucket over a camp stove or hotplate (you might need to wrap the outside of the bucket with many wraps of foil and cardboard and make some kind of lid so it will hold it's heat) add cold water to the pool until water is cooled to the hottest you can safely stand then add salt. Have a friend heating more water to keep your soak warm.

Herbal

Herbs have been used by medicine men and women since ancient times. If you know about plant identification, you could even go out in the woods and harvest some of these herbs. The more common plants, you can even grow yourself if you have a green thumb.

However, hospitals and medical staff shy away from herbs for good reason. Many herbs have widely varying strength. Some herbs may have no effect and others can be very dangerous if they interact badly with other herbs or drugs or are given in the wrong quantity.

- **Aloe Vera** EVERYBODY should grow this plant in their pad or backyard. Get one now. Aloe Vera is an active ingredient in many over the counter and prescription skin ointments and skin products. Why pay for this when you can have it for free? Even folks with no green thumb will find it easy to grow and near impossible to kill.

The leaves from the Aloe Vera plant, if broke open, contains a ready to use salve that can be a godsend for burns, minor cuts, and skin conditions. Even a novice can grow it.

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- **Plantago** Also known as Plantain (but not the same plant as the one that bears fruit). It's a small common weed that grows on every continent which can be identified by it's broad fibrous leaves. There's medical evidence that it can be used as an anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory. Grind up it's leaves with a little water and put it on small wounds. Alternatively you can chew up the leaves and put it on wounds. The seeds contain a chemical very similar to that which is contained in many commercial laxatives. Eating them should give a desirable laxative effect.
- **Diarrhea** - Drink tea made from the roots of blackberries and their relatives to stop diarrhea. White oak bark and other barks containing tannin are also effective. However, use them with caution when nothing else is available because of possible negative effects on the kidneys. You can also stop diarrhea by eating white clay or campfire ashes. Tea made from cowberry or cranberry or hazel leaves works too.
- **Antihemorrhagics** - Make medications to stop bleeding from a poultice of the puffball mushroom, from plantain leaves, or most effectively from the leaves of the common yarrow or woundwort (*Achillea millefolium*).
- **Antiseptics** - Use to cleanse wounds, sores, or rashes. You can make them from the expressed juice from wild onion or garlic, or expressed juice from chickweed leaves or the crushed leaves of dock. You can also make antiseptics from a decoction of burdock root, mallow leaves or roots, or white oak bark. All these medications are for external use only.
- **Fevers** - Treat a fever with a tea made from willow bark, an infusion of elder flowers or fruit, linden flower tea, or elm bark decoction.
- **Colds and sore throats** - Treat these illnesses with a decoction made from either plantain leaves or willow bark. You can also use a tea made from burdock roots, mallow or mullein flowers or roots, or mint leaves.

- **Aches, pains, and sprains** - Treat with externally applied poultices of dock, plantain, chickweed, willow bark, garlic, or sorrel. You can also use salves made by mixing the expressed juices of these plants in animal fat or vegetable oils.
- **Itching** - Relieve the itch from insect bites, sunburn, or plant poisoning rashes by applying a poultice of jewelweed (*Impatiens biflora*) or witch hazel leaves (*Hamamelis virginiana*). The jewelweed juice will help when applied to poison ivy rashes or insect stings. It works on sunburn as well as aloe vera.
- **Sedatives** - Get help in falling asleep by brewing a tea made from mint leaves or passionflower leaves.
- **Hemorrhoids** - Treat them with external washes from elm bark or oak bark tea, from the expressed juice of plantain leaves, or from a Solomon's seal root decoction.
- **Constipation** - Relieve constipation by drinking decoctions from dandelion leaves, rose hips, or walnut bark. Eating raw daylily flowers will also help.
- **Worms or intestinal parasites** - Using moderation, treat with tea made from tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) or from wild carrot leaves.
- **Gas and cramps** - Use a tea made from carrot seeds as an antifatulent; use tea made from mint leaves to settle the stomach. Fresh parsley eaten raw is good for a quick antacid, but be sure to eat the stems too. They have the most juice.
- **Antifungal washes** - Make a decoction of walnut leaves or oak bark or acorns to treat ringworm and athlete's foot. Apply frequently to the site, alternating with exposure to direct sunlight.

You can download the US Army Survival Manual here:

- <http://www.humboldt.edu/~hsusnc/FM%2021-76%20US%20ARMY%20SURVIVAL%20MANUAL.pdf>

Over the Counter

Not all over the counter medicines are evil. In fact, a very few are worth keeping around.

- Aspirin. Aspirin is a low strength pain killer and blood thinner. It can take away light pains and some smaller headaches. Recently, scientific studies have shown that a baby aspirin a day can prevent heart attacks and strokes and may reduce the risk of colorectal cancer. It does have one nasty side effect: it can upset some stomachs if too much is taken.
- BC Powders/ Goodies. These awful tasting aspirin powder cocktails react fast and can kill most hangovers, headaches, and medium level aches pains very quickly. Be sure to have a soda or other beverage to chase it with! If the rancid taste can be handled, you will swear by this product.
- Diphenhydramine. Sold as Benadryl in the USA. It's both an antihistamine and a mild sedative; useful for allergic reactions and insomnia. One of the few OTC drugs that have a noticeable effect. Also comes in the form of a cream which can be used to treat rashes and bug bites. The liquid from the gel cap form can be used as a very mild local anesthetic.
- Drawing salve. This is an ointment that can help extract things from your skin like splinters, acne, boils, ingrown hair and toenails, insect stingers or even small infections. Often sold under the generic names Ammonium Bituminosulfonate, Ichthyol or (more commonly) Ichthammol.
- Naproxen. This goes by the brand name Alleve in the USA. It is not as bad on the liver as Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and nowhere near as bad on the stomach as aspirin.
- Neosporin (bactracin). Your grandmother is correct. This is a miracle ointment. It kills bacteria, has a mild pain reliever, and keeps wounds moist under bandages. Use this on most minor cuts.

Any other product like cough medicine and other situational stuff is probably not worth keeping around. Most healthy folks do not get sick very often, and most of these medicines have a limited shelf life when opened.

Recycled BigMed Prescriptions

Contrary to what doctors tell folks, it is usually okay to take other folks prescriptions or let someone who is hurt or sick take one of yours. The reason they give this advice is because most non-medical people are not well researched on allergies, drug interactions, side effects, and doses. Some pharmacy meds are also extremely addictive, particularly pain medications. However, if you can manage to acquire some of the more popular and useful prescriptions, it may pay to have around for emergency use.

Big Med prescriptions have three names: a brand/trade name, a generic name, and an actual chemical name. In our descriptions, we will stick to actual chemical names and easily recognizable trade names.

Get this book! If you are dealing with any prescriptions, you will be glad you have it. It is updated once a year and has pictures of each pill, side effect information, bad interaction information, and pregnancy precautions.

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- Antibiotics. Usually, the patient wants to take all of this that is prescribed. The reason is that many bacteria will evolve into a more resistant strain if it is not all killed off. MRSA is an example of such a mutation. Hoarding and too widespread use of antibiotics during the 1990s created a monster flesh eating form of staph that only IV antibiotics like vancomycin have any effect on. However, sometimes a good amount can be left over occasionally. Keep these around in case someone gets infected. Common antibiotics include Penicillin, Amoxicillin and E-Mycin (Erythromycin). When you get prescribed antibiotics, you may be able to ask for a second prescription, if say, there's a chance of infection occurring immediately after the treatment is over.
- Narcotic pain medicines. The average stoner may be tempted to ingest these to get high, but we suggest you save them for a time when you have a bad tooth ache and the dentist wants to rape you for cash! Most pain meds have actual street value. Be sure if you are sitting on these that you take measures to prevent visitors from going through your medicine cabinet to "relieve" you of this. Females may be able to get a Tramadol prescription by bitching about their cramps and asking about muscle relaxants.
- Sleep aids. If you occasionally have a restless night or have a partner who does and Melatonin tablets will just not do, many prescription sleep medications can be good to have. Just be careful you or the person you give this to do not become dependent on this. Be careful of sleep medication side effects, too. Sleep medicines include Zolpidem (Ambien), eszopiclone (Lunesta). Anti-anxiety meds like Clonazepam (Klonopin), Lorazepam (Ativan), Alprazolam (Xanax) and many others are sometimes used to help insomnia, as well. The same warning that applies to narcotic pain medicines apply to the anti-anxiety meds sometimes also used for sleep and relaxation. They have cash street value and can be stolen from you. Keep these meds safe. Be careful with Ambien because in some folks it creates a delusional, dementia filled night of no sleep and living hell.
- Stimulants. Given to those who "have" ADHD/ADD to increase dopamine levels. It's usually not hard to find some adderall(mixed amphetamines), vyvanse(lisdexamfetamine), strattera (atomoxetine) or similar. These have value in an emergency kit as they can keep you up for days on end

far better than caffeine. There is a risk of addiction and withdrawal with their use, but they store well enough and can be of use in a first aid kit.

Write Like a Doctor or Nurse

Yes, you too can set up your own herbal practice or write orders for your brothers and sisters like a doctor. Or just be able to decipher the gibberish on a prescription. Or you can memorize these tables to help you out through the first few classes of any allied health course. Below is a list of abbreviations used in prescriptions and medical charting. We have left out some of the more nursing specific terms like BSC for bedside commode and Pt. for patient. It is a bit overwhelming at first, but all medical staff knows all these by heart. Sadly, many of these will be lost forever in a few years as healthcare is in the middle of a push towards all computerized charting after lagging behind business and government for a decade.

Example chart/ prescription orders:

Ativan Xmg tab po prn = take ativan (x mg tablet) by mouth as needed.

A DSG qod = change dressing every other day.

BS q4hr - take blood sugar reading every 4 hours.

A note on forging prescriptions

<http://wiki.stealthiswiki.org/wiki/The-Free-Pharmacy> 5/9

Just remember, it is a misdemeanor to forge prescriptions and in some cases, a felony to impersonate a doctor or nurse. The old fashioned prescription tablet, though not completely dead, is gradually giving way to computer charting and shared databases between doctors and the drug stores. Most of the time, all you need to do is tell the doctor where you want the prescription filled, and it is automatically sent there. Even in cases where the old tablet method is still used, the pharmacist will **AUTOMATICALLY** call the doctor if there are any strange large orders for street value medicine. Addict folks that tend to like nasty BigMed offerings usually just seek out quack doctors rather than risk fines and imprisonment.

Partial list of prescription abbreviations	Latin	Meaning
Abbreviation		
A	(delta sign)	change
aa	ana	of each
ad	ad	up to
a.c.	ante cibum	before meals
a.d.	auris dextra	right ear
Ad lib	ad libitum	use as much as one desires; freely
admov.	admove	apply
agit	agita	stir/shake
alt. h.	alternis horis	every other hour
a.m.	ante meridiem	morning, before noon
amp	ampule	
amt	amount	
aq	aqua	water
a.l., a.s.	auris laeva, auris sinistra	left ear
A.T.C.	around the clock	
a.u.	auris utraque	both ears
bis	bis	twice
b.d./b.i.d.	bis in die	twice daily
B.M.	bowel movement	
bol.	bolus	as a large single dose (usually intravenously)
B.S.	blood sugar	
B.S.A	body surface areas	
BUCC	bucca	inside cheek
cap., caps.	capsula	capsule
c, c.	cum	with (usually written with a bar on top of the "c")
cib.	cibus	food
cc	cum cibo	with food, (but also cubic centimetre)
cf	with food	
comp.	compound	
cr., crm	cream	
CST 1 1	1 1	Continue same treatment 1 1
D5W	dextrose 5% solution (sometimes written as D5W)	
D5NS	dextrose 5% in normal saline (0.9%)	
D.A.W.	dispense as written (i.e., no generic substitution)	
dc, D/C, disc	discontinue	
dieb. alt.	diebus alternis	every other day
dil.	dilute	
disp.	dispersible or dispense	
div.	divide	
d.t.d.	dentur tales doses	give of such doses
D.W.	distilled water	
elix.	elixir 13	
e.m.p.	ex modo prescripto	as directed
emuls.	emulsum	emulsion
et	et	and
eod	every other day	
ex aq	ex aqua	in water
fl., fld.	fluid	
ft.	fiat	make; let it be made
g	gram	
gr	grain	

<p>s</p> <p>s.a.</p> <p>SC, subc, subcut, subq, SQ</p> <p>sig</p> <p>SL</p> <p>sol</p> <p>s.o.s., si op. sit</p> <p>ss</p> <p>stat</p> <p>supp</p> <p>susp</p> <p>syr</p> <p>tab</p> <p>tal., t</p> <p>tbsp</p> <p>troche</p> <p>tsp</p> <p>t.i.d.</p> <p>t.d.s.</p> <p>t.i.w.</p> <p>top.</p> <p>T.P.N.</p> <p>tr, tinc., tinct.</p> <p>u.d., ut. dict.</p> <p>ung.</p> <p>U.S.P.</p> <p>vag</p> <p>w</p> <p>wf</p> <p>w/o</p> <p>X</p> <p>Y.O.</p>	<p>sine</p> <p>secundum artum</p> <p>subcutaneous</p> <p>write on label</p> <p>sublingually, under the tongue</p> <p>solutio</p> <p>si opus sit</p> <p>semis</p> <p>statim</p> <p>suppositorium</p> <p>suspension</p> <p>syrupus</p> <p>tabella</p> <p>talus</p> <p>tablespoon</p> <p>trochiscus</p> <p>teaspoon</p> <p>ter in die</p> <p>ter die sumendum</p> <p>three times a week</p> <p>topical</p> <p>total parenteral nutrition</p> <p>tincture</p> <p>ut dictum</p> <p>unguentum</p> <p>United States Pharmacopoeia</p> <p>vaginally</p> <p>with</p> <p>with food (with meals)</p> <p>without</p> <p>times</p> <p>years old</p>	<p>without (usually written with a bar on top of the "s")</p> <p>use your judgement</p> <p>solution</p> <p>if there is a need</p> <p>one half</p> <p>immediately</p> <p>anal suppository</p> <p>syrup</p> <p>tablet</p> <p>such</p> <p>lozenge</p> <p>three times a day</p> <p>three times a day</p> <p>as directed</p> <p>ointment</p>
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