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Summer Skin TLC: Easy, Natural Recipes



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PLEASE READ: *The information handout has not been approved by the FDA and does not in any way intend to diagnose or prescribe. Always consult with your health practitioner before taking any remedy.*

Above this, I also recommend that you...

1. *Research an herb in at least three good sources before ingesting it (see website for sources),*
2. *Take proper steps to ensure that any wildcrafted or cultivated plant is what you think it is,*
3. *Check with your pharmacist for herb-drug interactions if you take prescriptions, AND*
4. *Listen to your body and/or intuition if an herb does not resonate or you experience side effects.*

SUMMER SKIN:

Bug bites, sunburns, poison ivy, dry skin... our skin can take a beating during the summer. Why turn to drugstore solutions when you can make many wonderful products in your kitchen with little more than what you've already got in your pantry? From simple 1-ingredient remedies to complex formulas, you can make it as easy or elaborate as you'd like. Here are the basics...

Great Summer Skin Herbs

Leaves and flowers most readily lend their properties to oil. You can use "harder" parts of the plants like roots, bark, and nuts, but they may not extract as well. If you only keep two herbal oils in your pantry, make them calendula and St. John's wort. In my opinion, they're the most useful and "miraculous."

☼ *May have slight SPF action.*

- **Calendula flowers (*Calendula officinalis*)** – This is one of the most common herbal oils, and it can be purchased by the ounce in most natural food stores. Use dried bright yellow or orange blossoms, which make a golden oil. Calendula flowers have slight antimicrobial properties and are soothing to inflamed skin. It's great in formula's for baby's skin, itches and rashes, superficial wounds, and some cases of dermatitis, eczema, and psoriasis. Dry or fresh (wilted) herbal oil infusion.
 - ↳ Also try it as a wash (same as making a tea) or an herbal bath (add 1 quart of strong tea to bath).
- ☼ **St. Johnswort flowers & buds (*Hypericum perforatum*)** – The fresh yellow buds and flowers of this important weed yield an amazing crimson oil. Only fresh buds and flowers should be used (top bit of the plant, it's ok if you get a few leaves and some stem), and the oil will be stronger if you let it infuse in the SUN (this is a SUN PLANT) for a few days or weeks. You can purchase St. Johnswort in 1 to 4 oz quantities in natural food stores. It's an amazing medicinal oil for most skin conditions including burns, cuts, wounds, bedsores, radiation burns, etc. It can be applied along an inflamed nerve or muscle for pain including sciatica or shingles. It is reported to have mild sunscreen properties and also helps with sunburns. Fresh (no need to wilt) herbal oil infusion.
 - ↳ Though drying, SJW tincture can be used in a pinch.
- **Gotu Kola leaves (*Centella asiatica*)** – The dried leaves of this ivy-like vine make a vibrant green oil (it does not color the skin). Gotu kola is a wound healer and general cure-all for circulation, collagen support, and the nervous system. We are seeing it more in formulas for varicose and spider veins, cellulite, skin imperfections, and wrinkles. It is occasionally available in natural food stores in jojoba or other carrier oil. Dry herbal oil infusion. Not local, but it can be grown as an annual or indoors.

Tropical Summer Sipper:

South of the Border, iced *hibiscus tea* helps cool the body on a hot summer day. Infuse 1 teaspoon of the dried flowers in 1 cup of water. Sweeten with honey, sugar, or agave nectar if desired. Drink the sweet-tart beverage chilled, and enjoy!

- **Plantain (*Plantago* spp), Chickweed (*Stellaria* spp), and Cleavers (*Galium* spp) leaves** – These three miracle weeds are usually only used fresh (slightly wilted) in classic folk herbalism. The three can be used separately or together for wound healing and itchy skin including eczema, dermatitis, psoriasis, and poison ivy. Fresh (wilted) herbal oil infusion.
 - ↳ These herbs make lovely fresh poultices for a variety of irritated skin conditions, bug bites, stings, poison ivy, rashes, etc. Simply mash them up with a bit of water and plaster them to the skin. Just chew a plantain leaf and apply it to bee stings and bug bites for healing in a jiffy.
- **☼ Chaparral (*Larrea tridentata*)** – Chaparral is a supreme summer skin herb that grows prolifically in the southwest. It seems to have some sun-protective properties as well as antioxidants that may be helpful for post-burn healing. Chaparral is also amongst our best herbal antifungals, making it a nice choice for foot fungus and other “icky critter” salves. (If you’d like, you can combine it with oregano, lavender, sage, thyme, thuja, or other anti-fungal/bacterial infused oils... a few drops of essential oil would work nicely, too.) Dry herbal oil infusion. Note: Internal use is controversial.
 - ↳ Also consider chaparral as a wash or soak. For foot fungus, make a foot bath. For sunburn, make a tea, cool it in the fridge, and spray it as needed.
- **Lemon Balm leaves (*Melissa officinalis*)** – Lemon balm is our classic for the herpes virus, whether it be cold sores, chicken pox, shingles, or genital herpes. The herb appears to bind to cell receptor sites, blocking the herpes virus from entering and replicating. It’s best used at the very first tingle of an outbreak. (Lemon balm tea or tincture can be taken internally as well, since it’s soothing to a frayed nervous system, which often is what gave the virus an opportunity to emerge.) Lemon balm essential oil can be added to an oil or salve—it’s the strongest form—but it’s extremely expensive and often adulterated. Lemon balm leaves lose their essential oils quickly once dried, so it’s important to make this oil as quickly after harvesting to ensure good quality. Fresh (wilted) or freshly dried herbal oil infusion. (Fresh lemon balm is apt to mold in herbal oil infusions.)
 - ↳ Also a wonderful tea, wash, bath, poultice tincture... It’s not a bad idea to take it internally (tea or tincture) since it is soothing, calming, and slightly anti-inflammatory, which usually benefits its external uses.
- **☼ Comfrey leaf (best for salves) or root (*Symphytum officinale*, *S. x uplandicum*)** – This is a classic herb for wound healing and strengthening the skin. The primary known constituent allantoin is a cell proliferative and may or may not be extracted in oil (modern science says it’s water soluble only—more so in hot water—yet herbalists have traditionally used in oil-based products). Dry herbal oil infusion. Note: Internal use is controversial.
 - ↳ Comfrey also makes a great wash, fresh or dry poultice. Taking it internally is controversial due to liver toxins in the plant.
- **Witch Hazel leaf or bark (*Hamamelis virginiana*)** – The bark is the most commonly used part of this highly astringent plant. However, for an oil, the leaf will work better (and lucky for us, the small tree is abundant here!). It’s a common ingredient in varicose vein and cellulite formulas. Fresh leaf or dry bark infused oil.
 - ↳ Witch hazel can be used in less oily forms for more astringent, cooling action. Teas that have been cooled can be applied topically or added to the bath. Store-bought or home-made distilled witch hazel has a longer shelf life. Though drying, tinctures may also be used topically.
- **Green or White Tea leaves (*Camellia sinensis*)** – As we know, the tea plant is one of our most useful antioxidants. This can be helpful in fighting free radical damage including sun damage and signs of aging. Tea has astringent properties that lend it to varicose and spider vein and cellulite formulas, and can be used safely for most people. Dry herbal oil infusion.
 - ↳ Green tea is also lovely as a bath, tea/wash, or a cooling spray.
- **Rose petals or buds (*Rosa* spp)** – This luxurious infused oil will have a slight scent of roses that can be augmented with a drop or two of rose essential oil (very expensive!). Roses are astringent and soothing to the skin and are often used in skincare recipes for aging, sensitive, or irritated skin. Dry herbal oil infusion.
 - ↳ Also try teas, home-made or store-bought flower waters, washes, baths...

A GREAT BASE: HERB-INFUSED OILS

Herb Infused Oils

For most herbs, oil is not the best solvent (alcohol and water tend to be best). However, we prefer to infuse herbs in oil for most topical recipes. It has the added benefit (in most situations) of holding in moisture and keeping skin soft. Infused oils can be used “as is” for many health concerns—warmed mullein oil dropped in the ear for earaches, St. John’s wort oil applied along nerve pain or for bedsores, calendula oil on sore mama nipples, eczema, and rashes. Or, you can use your herbal oil as a base for other products—salves, lip balms, massage oils, creams, etc.

Note: Herbal oils are NOT the same as ESSENTIAL OILS (EOs). An EO is made through distillation in a process that is not available to most home herbalists unless you have some fancy equipment. EOs are highly concentrated due to their processing, so their medicinal value is often increased or changed compared to home herbalist preparations of the same plant. They’re also more apt to pose health risks—EOs are often extremely toxic when taken internally, particularly in doses more than a drop or two. Even topically, most EOs need to be diluted to about 2%. Herbal oils are much gentler, bring out different constituents, and have a much more mild fragrance. You can certainly dilute an EO in an herbal oil to combine their healing effects.

There are MANY methods for making an herbal oil. Some of it is personal preference. Also, some herbs extract better through different methods. Use whatever resonates and works best for you.

Michael Moore Method: 1 day with alcohol & a blender

- 1 oz of dried herb, ground coarsely in the blender or food processor
- 1/2 oz whole grain alcohol (vodka can be substituted)
- 7 oz olive or other carrier oil

In a Pyrex container, mix dried herb with alcohol. Let sit, covered, for 2-24 hours.

Place the mix into a blender, add oil, and slowly blend the mixture. Increase the speed. Let blend until the blender gets warm, about 5 minutes.

Strain through cheesecloth, muslin, and/or a coffee filter to desired clarity.

Store in glass in a cool, dark place. Should keep for 6-12 months.

Note: I often like to combine this method with Simple Method #2. After I blend it in the blender, I put it all in a mason jar and let it sit in the car for a few days, then strain it out.

Simple Method #1: 2 weeks in mason jar

- 4 oz dry herb or 6 oz of fresh wilted herb
- 8 oz of olive or other carrier oil (or enough to completely cover the herbs)

Place all ingredients in a mason jar and leave in a warm spot for 2 weeks. Shake daily. Strain through cheesecloth or muslin. (Watch for mold if using fresh herbs.) Store in glass in a cool, dark place. Should keep for 6-12 months.

Simple Method #2: 1 day on stove or in crock-pot, or a few days in a warm, sunny car

- 4 oz dry herb or 6 oz of fresh wilted herb
- 8 oz olive oil or other carrier oil

Place ingredients in crock-pot or in pan on stove top. Bring to 90-100 degrees (this can be difficult to maintain with most kitchen equipment) or as low as possible. Let warm gently for 2-6 hours or overnight, stirring occasionally. Use caution not to cook the herbs or smoke the oil. A warm, sunny car can range from 100-200 degrees depending on the outdoor temps, sun exposure and where you place the oil (windshield, floor, shady spot). Strain with cheesecloth or muslin. Store in glass in a cool, dark place. Should keep for 6-12 months.

Infused Oil Cautions: Avoiding Microbial Growth

Many microbes thrive in the anaerobic environment that oils provide. Without harsh or synthetic preservatives, infused oils and products made from them can potentially harbor bacteria, mold, etc. Of particular concern is the botulism toxin, which can exist on almost any plant matter (roots, flowers, leaves). This is more of a concern for oils that are consumed (basil or garlic oil, for example) than ones put on the skin, and it is not all that likely to occur. However, it can happen.

Also, infused oils made with fresh plant material are at a particularly higher risk of growing nasty critters. You may want to stick to infusing oils with dried herbs; however, some herbs are only useful when fresh (St. John's wort, chickweed, plantain, cleavers). Reduce the risk: Don't let your herb sit around for more than two weeks before straining. And, wilt particularly juicy plants to 1/2 their weight before you add oil.

You can also use natural and semi-natural preservatives including vitamin E, honey, grapefruit seed extract (not as natural as it claims to be), benzoin, and essential oils like rosemary.

Basic Ingredients #1: Carrier Oils

A carrier, or fixed, oil is your base oil for massage oil, infused oil, lip balms, body butters, etc. It generally has little to no scent and does not evaporate. By far the most popular carrier oil in herbal products is olive oil. However, there are other options for carrier oils as well, each with slightly different properties. (🌿 **Some of my preferred summer skin oils.** ☀️ **May have slight SPF protection.**)

Here is my experience with the most common oils:

🌿 **Olive Oil:** Advantages: As mentioned, olive oil is the carrier oil of choice for most herbalists and natural bodycare craftswomen. It will go rancid more slowly than other oils, meaning you can still use your lip balm a year later without getting a nasty, acrid flavor and gummy texture. It is of medium viscosity, is easily available, and not too expensive. It is easily available unrefined. Disadvantages: Olive oil has a distinctive scent that may not be popular in bodycare products. Some people do not like the texture and feel that it does not sink into the skin well. It does not withstand high temperatures well.

🌿 **Grapeseed Oil:** Advantages: Grapeseed oil is a light, fragrance-free oil with possible antioxidant properties. Many favor it for massage oils because of its lighter viscosity and glide effect. It is priced comparatively with high quality olive oil. It has a relatively long shelf life and withstands high temperatures. Disadvantages: Grapeseed is always refined and often a bit expensive.

• **Almond Oil:** Advantages: Almond oil—which does not smell like almonds—is rich and smooth. It provides a fantastic texture to body and massage oils and lip balms. It is believed to be therapeutic to the skin. Disadvantages: Almond oil is quite expensive and has a very short shelf life. I've had lip balms go rancid within three months. Extend the shelf life by adding more long-lived oils and natural preservatives.

🌿 ☀️ **Sesame (Untoasted) Oil:** Advantages: Sesame oil is priced in the eastern world for its skin-protective and healing properties and is often used as a base for Ayurvedic skincare and medicines. It has some natural sunscreen properties and a relatively good shelf life. It is priced comparatively with quality olive oil. Disadvantages: It has a slight scent of sesame. (Do not confuse it with toasted sesame oil which is dark brown and strongly sesame scented.) Slightly expensive.

• **Avocado Oil:** Advantages: Avocado oil is rich, thick, and highly moisturizing. It is great on its own or in combination for very dry skin. Disadvantages: It's quite expensive, goes rancid quickly, and is too thick for many people.

- **Apricot Oil:** Advantages: Like grapeseed, apricot is a light and unscented oil, making it great for massage. Disadvantages: It is expensive and has a moderate shelf life. It's a kind of bland oil without much healing property.
- **Canola and Safflower Oils:** Advantages: These oils are cheap, somewhat light in texture, unscented, and have a moderately good shelf life. Disadvantages: They are bland oils with little/no healing properties. They tend to be highly refined are products of major agribusiness.
- **🌿 Jojoba Oil:** Advantages: This liquid wax is similar to the skin's oil and makes a nice addition to advanced skincare products or as a light facial moisturizer. Common golden jojoba is slightly thicker and better for dry skin. Filtered clear jojoba is lighter and more appropriate for oily skin. It has the longest shelf life of all the carrier oils. Disadvantages: Jojoba is probably the most expensive of all carrier oils. For some it is not moisturizing enough.
- **🌿 Coconut Oil:** Advantages: This saturated fat is semi-solid at room temperature, hard at cooler temps, and liquid in warm climates. It is very rich and soothing for dry skin. Extra virgin, raw, and unrefined coconut oil is the best for skincare and has a slight coconut scent and flavor. It has a good shelf life if kept in a cool, dark spot, and withstands higher temperatures. Refined coconut oil is not as useful herbally but it does have an even longer shelf life and is scent/flavor free for those who prefer it. Coconut oil is lovely solo as a body moisturizer or tanning oil. Some report that it has light sunscreen properties. Disadvantages: Quality coconut oil is somewhat pricy. The temperature-sensitive consistency can be a pain since lip balms turn to liquid on a summer day and massage oils solidify in the jars during the winter. Some people find it too thick for their tastes. While the coconut scent and flavor can be a boon to some bodycare makers, others don't care for it.
- **Cocoa Butter:** Advantages: This chocolate-y, rich butter of the cocoa bean is a great addition to lip balms, thicker massage oils and body butters. Opt for fair-trade products, if possible. It has a long shelf life. It can be used to solidify a balm or salve without beeswax (for vegans). Disadvantages: It is extremely solid, which makes it hard to get out of the container and mix into recipes. It's a bit pricy and too thick/rich/hard for most bodycare recipes. It's strongly chocolate scent mixes nicely in some formulas but can overpower others. Cocoa butters can be adulterated with other ingredients—look for 100% pure AND double check the ingredients list. www.mountainroseherbs.com sells organic cocoa butter.
- **🌿 Shea Butter:** Advantages: This rich putty-like butter is fantastic for irritated and dry skin, making it a great simple or addition to formulas for eczema, psoriasis, and dry skin. It is available, organic, raw, and unrefined, though it can be hard to find all traits in one product. It's available in white or golden forms. Opt for fair-trade products. It has a good shelf life. Disadvantages: Shea is very expensive and the putty-like texture can be hard to work with. If melted into a liquid product, shea might settle to the bottom with milky thickness (just shake and/or warm to remix), which is perfectly safe but may look unappealing. Shea can have a slightly funky odor that some don't like. Many of the shea butters on the market are not 100% pure—always double-check the ingredients list.

Basic Ingredients #2: Essential Oils

Essential, or volatile, oils are highly concentrated, strongly aromatic, evaporate quickly, and are used in small quantities only (1-2% of an entire formula). They're usually made via a complex distillation process. LOTS of plant material makes just a little essential oil, which is why they're so strong (just a drop or so will do it) and often expensive. Essential oils provide natural fragrance, healing properties, and natural preservative properties to your products. They're generally much better than synthetic fragrances—which are often carcinogenic, neurotoxic, and endocrine-disrupting—but they are still potent extracts that should be used with caution, and in only as little of a dose as you need.

Note: Essential oils are generally toxic when used internally, particularly in doses of more than a DROP. 1/4 teaspoon of wintergreen essential oil can kill an adult.

Essential Oil Simples: Lavender, Orange, Peppermint, and Spearmint are all popular and inexpensive single oils if you don't feel like blending. Rose and Sandalwood (note: often unethically harvested) are expensive, but also popular.

Summer Skin Essential Oil Blends

Poison Ivy Spray

3 parts lavender
1 part peppermint
in jewelweed/vinegar mix

Invigorating Blend

2-3 parts lavender
1 part peppermint
in vodka/water mix

Bug Spray

2 parts lavender
2 parts rose geranium
1 part lemon euc/citronella
in vodka/water mix

Antifungal Blend

1 part oregano
1 part thyme
1 part clove
1 part lavender
In a base of thuja, chaparral,
oregano, black walnut or
other tincture or vodka.

Cautions for Common Essential Oils:

Read up on your essential oils before adding them to products. Some, like citrus and spice essential oils, can irritate the skin. Add the essential oils slowly and work up to your desired fragrance level. Some oils, like lavender, can be added liberally. Others, like peppermint, quickly overpower a recipe. Visit www.oshadhiusa.com or www.auracacia.com for each oil's properties and safety data. Here are some basics:

- **Clove and cinnamon** are skin irritants. Use only in very dilute amounts or not at all for topical products.
- **Citrus oils including orange, lemon, grapefruit, tangerine, and bergamot** react with the sun and can burn the skin. Never use undiluted and use caution in products that may be exposed to the sun—for example, don't put it in your suntan oil.
- **Peppermint** is strong and can burn or irritate the skin if used undiluted. A little goes a long way.
- **Rose, jasmine, neroli (orange blossom), chamomile, vanilla, lemon balm,** and—to some extent—**sandalwood** essential oils are lovely but extremely expensive. If you find them cheap, they're probably adulterated. Oshadhi sells them in very small quantities of 1 ml, which can make them more affordable (\$20-30 instead of \$50-100) if you really want to use them. Only a drop or two will do it!
- **Essential oil brands vary greatly in quality.** Use your nose to find the best quality essential oils—it doesn't take an expert to tell what smells good. Oshadhi is among the better ones. Many people like Young Living oils (multi-level marketing). Mountain Rose does well, good prices, but not high-end quality. Aura Cacia is an ok for the newbie. Generally more \$\$ = better quality.

Extra Ingredients #1: Flower Waters, Extracts & Flower Essences

Milder water-based extracts of aromatic plants can be a great way to add fragrance, safely, with less cost. Hydrosols are made during the steam distillation process. They can also be made at home. "Flower water" may refer to a hydrosol or a fragrance added to water. Rose water is widely available. Extracts from the baking aisle—like vanilla—can also add lovely scent to fragrance with minimum \$\$ (Vanilla essential oil is expensive!) They're much less concentrated than essential oils, but that's ok.

Flower essences like Rescue Remedy can be added by the drop for their emotional benefit. (Unscented.)

Note: These "waters" will separate out of 100% oil-based products like lip balm and body oils.

Extra Ingredients #2: Natural Preservatives

You can prolong the shelf life of your natural bodycare product through the products you choose. The greatest threat to natural bodycare products is rancidity of oil products. The next is mold in water-based products, particularly creams and lotions that blend oils & waters. Some people use tincture or essential oil of benzoin—a natural preservative—but I have never used it or seen it in stores. Less natural preservatives include potassium sorbate and methyl and poly parabens, but I've never needed to use them.

The ingredients you use make all the difference. My first lip balm contained honey, olive oil, vitamin E,

and grapefruit seed extract, and it was still good 3 years later (I made WAY too much). Another lip balm I designed for smooth consistency only contained almond oil and beeswax—it was totally rancid within 2 or 3 months.

Avoiding rancidity, natural preservatives:

- **Carrier oils with long shelf lives** – particularly olive oil, also coconut, sesame and grapeseed oils and cocoa butter. Avoid overuse of almond and avocado oils.
- **Essential Oils** – Most essential oils have antioxidant properties that help slow the oxidation (rancidity) of oils and antimicrobial properties that help prevent mold or bacterial contamination. Rosemary, lavender, eucalyptus, thyme, oregano, and clove are particularly useful. (Note: clove can irritate the skin, use with caution.)
- **Vitamin E oil** – Easy addition to any oil-based product, also wound-healing. Some products can be smelly but this will generally be covered by other ingredients.
- **Honey** – sweet addition to lip balms, though it can make the product more sticky
- **Grapefruit Seed Extract (GSE)** – This liquid can be added to any oil- and/or water-based product to prolong shelf life and reduce mold. GSE is NOT really natural. Studies show it contains synthetic antibacterials and preservatives.
- **Reduce the following:** Exposure to air, heat, and light, all of which increase rancidity and decrease freshness.

Avoiding mold, natural preservatives:

- **Shelf-stable ingredients** – This may seem like a given, but it's tempting to use a little mashed strawberries or avocado. "Fresh" ingredients are fine for immediate use but not appropriate for most bodycare products. Also beware of aloe gel products that need to be refrigerated once opened—opt for ones that have preservatives added to make them shelf stable. Some folks use liquid lecithin to emulsify oils and waters in lotions—which creates a creamy consistency—but this can mold after a few months.
- **Clean containers** – If you are reusing jars, sterilize them and use new caps to avoid the introduction of bacteria. I get most of my bottles and jars from www.SKS-bottle.com. If you really get into it, you can buy just the lids. I tend to use new jars and lids for gifts rather than re-use.
- **Keep fingers out** – Opt for containers that pump into the hand rather than jars you dip your fingers into. This'll reduce the likelihood that you introduce bacteria or germs into the product. Or, keep a small jar for use and leave the rest in a container that you refill from.
- **GSE** – see above
- **Essential Oils** – see above

Extra Ingredients #3: Herbal Oils, Vinegars & Honeys

You can use your infused herbal oils (herbs steeped in carrier oils & strained out) in place of plain carrier oil in any basic recipe for added healing properties. Think of rose calendula lip balm with a drop of rose essential oil added. Herb-infused honey can also be added in place of plain honey. Vinegars are great for sprays (cleaning, antifungal, deodorant, sunburn...).

BASIC DIY BODYCARE RECIPES:

Below you'll find recipes designed to be simple, inexpensive, yet lovely, as well as essential oil blends to add to your products. Mix and match to optimize your time and gifts. For instance, make a big batch of lip balm and massage oil, mix up two or three different essential oil blends, and add the blends to smaller batches before pouring into jars and bottles.

Simple Lip Balm

Makes about 25 lip balm tubes. Divide/multiply the recipe as needed.

- 1 oz of beeswax, crushed or grated*
- 4 oz of olive, grapeseed, and/or coconut oil or other carrier oils like jojoba, apricot, almond...
- Vitamin E oil, honey, GSE (optional)
- 15 drops of essential oils, optional for scent

Gently melt beeswax and olive oil together in a double boiler or microwave, stirring frequently. When the beeswax melts thoroughly, test consistency by dripping some of the mixture onto a cold metal spoon or bowl. If too hard, add more oil. If too soft, add more beeswax. Once desired consistency is reached, remove from heat and stir in vitamin E, honey, and or grapefruit seed extract (all optional). Then add essential oils and pour into lip balm tubes or jars. Allow to harden before capping.

***Beeswax Tip:** Wrap beeswax in a clean cloth, place on a hard surface (ie: concrete, a rock, pavement), and bang with a hammer until broken up. **Note:** Lip balm tubes hold 0.15 oz. You can also use jars, tins.

Simple Aromatherapy Mist

Makes 2 oz

- 1 oz distilled water & 1 oz water (or tinctures, vanilla ext, flower h2o, vinegar)
- 10+ drops of essential oils

Mix all ingredients and essential oils of choice. Pour into spray bottles. Spray to freshen air or wear as a light perfume.

Simple Massage Oil

Makes 2 oz

- Almost 2 oz of carrier oil or herb-infused oil
- 1/4 teaspoon vitamin E oil, optional
- 20+ drops of essential oils

Mix all ingredients and essential oils of choice. Pour into bottles with screw or pump tops. Use for massage or as a moisturizing body oil.

Perfect Cream

This recipe is adapted from *Rosemary Gladstar's Family Herbal* (Storey Books, 2001) recipe "Rosemary's Perfect Cream" (recently reprinted in softcover as *Rosemary Gladstar's Herbal Recipes for Vibrant Health* (Story, 2008)). This recipe does not need to be stored in the refrigerator.

Oils:

- 3/4 cup (6 oz) "liquid oils" (grapeseed, infused olive oil, sesame...)
- 1/3 cup (2.5 oz) "saturated fats" (coconut oil, cocoa butter, shea...)
- 1/2 to 1 ounce grated or smashed beeswax*

Waters:

- 2/3 cup (5.5 oz) distilled water, tinctures, vanilla ext &/or rose water
- 1/3 cup (2.5 oz) aloe vera gel (shelf stable form)
- 1-2 drops of essential oil of choice (or more)
- Vitamin E or GSE to preserve, optional

1. In a double boiler over low heat, combine the oils. Heat just enough to melt. Once melted, pour into a glass mason jar (for immersion blender) or blender. Let cool to room temp. The mixture should become thick, creamy, semisolid, and cream colored.
2. While the oils are cooling, combine the "waters" in a pour-able container. Let warm to room temp.
3. When both mixtures have reached room temperature (1-2 hours), use an immersion blender or regular blender to mix the cooled "oils." Slowly drizzle the "waters" into the whirling oils. If necessary, stop blending occasionally to mix with a spoon or spatula until everything has combined.
4. Pour or scoop into cream or lotion jars with clean caps, preferably sterilized to discourage mold and bacteria growth. Stored in a cool, dry place. The cream will thicken as it sets.

Today's Cream:

Make ONE 1/2 oz jar

Add 1-5 drops of EO of choice

Ingredients

- Oils: Herb-Infused Olive & Sesame oils, Coconut oil, Shea, Beeswax,
- Waters: Aloe, Distilled Water, Vanilla Extract, Comfrey Rt Tincture
- Opt Preservatives: Grapefruit Seed Oil, Vitamin E

Quick Guide to Summer Skin Herbs

(my favorites are underlined)

Sun Protection (Slight):

Herbs: St. John's wort, Comfrey leaf, Chaparral, maybe Green Tea

Oils: Sesame, Coconut, Shea, Jojoba, Hemp

Minerals: Zinc oxide, Titanium dioxide

Post Sunburn:

Herbs: Pure Aloe Gel (fresh leaf = best), St. John's Wort oil, Green Tea, Chaparral, Witch Hazel, Lemon balm &/or Anise Hyssop tea (internally & externally)

Essential Oil: Lavender

Other: Vinegar (apple cider), Cool Bath or Spray, Yogurt

General: With a few exceptions (SJW oil, Lavender EO), oils are usually not good at the beginning of a sunburn. Opt for cool water-based remedies instead. Oils may be used after the initial "burn feeling" is gone to support healing.

Quick Tip for Travel ~ Wipes:

I keep natural wipes—made with essential oils and alcohol—handy for travel. I particularly like Dessert Essence and Perks Organics brands, though EO is good, too. The lavender and other oils work in a jiffy as a bug repellent, antimicrobial wash, anti-itch remedy, rash-stopper, and burn soother. Also nice for washing hands or freshening up on camping trips.

Rashes & Poison Ivy

Herbs: Jewelweed (frozen in ice cubes = great!), Grindelia (not local), Plantain, Calendula, Chickweed, Cleavers, St. John's Wort, Witch Hazel, Lemon Balm, Gotu Kola (not local)

Essential Oils: Lavender, Peppermint

Oils: Olive, Coconut, Shea (although certainly others are ok, too)

Other: Clay, Ice

General: Although salves can be helpful, often in the first stage of poison ivy it's best to use drying or water-based remedies like tincture, vinegar, or water sprays.

Bug Repellent

Herbs: Catnip or Yarrow in vinegar or vodka spray, Rub basil on the skin

Essential Oils for All: Lemon eucalyptus (not local), Citronella, Lavender, Lemongrass

EOs for Mosquitoes: Catnip

EOs for Ticks: Rose Geranium

Bug Bites

Herbs: Plantain, Calendula, Chickweed, Cleavers

EOs: Lavender, Peppermint

Other: Ice, Clay (esp w/a few drops of lavender or peppermint)

For More Recipes & Natural Bodycare Information

- *Rosemary Gladstar's Herbal Recipes for Vibrant Health*. Storey Publishing, 2008.
- *Making Aromatherapy Creams and Lotions* by Donna Maria. Storey Publishing, 2000.
- *Natural Beauty at Home* by Janice Cox. Holt, 2002. (or other books by Cox)
- *The Herbal Home Spa* by Greta Breedlove. Storey Publishing, 1998.
- *Earthly Bodies & Heavenly Hair* by Dina Falconi. Ceres Press, 1997.

For TONS of recipes, visit www.makeyourowncosmetics.com (Not all recipes are shelf-stable.)

For essential oil info, visit www.oshadhiusa.com and www.auracacia.com

Learn about skincare safety: Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep at

www.cosmeticsdatabase.com & The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics at www.safecosmetics.org.

RECIPE IDEAS:

Oil: Make ONE 1/2-ounce bottle.

- **Sun-Protective:** chaparral and/or SJW oils, sesame and/or coconut oil
- **Anti-Fungal:** chaparral and/or calendula oils, coconut oil, EOs (5 drops) of oregano, lavender and/or tea tree
- **Itchy Skin:** calendula and/or SJW oils, lavender and/or peppermint EO (5 drops), rescue remedy

Sprays: Make TWO 4 ml sprays.

- **Bug Repellent:** EOs (5 drops) rose geranium, lavender, lemon eucalyptus and/or lemongrass in a base of water/vodka, catnip tincture and/or yarrow tincture
- **Poison Ivy Spray:** EOs (5 drops) lavender and/or peppermint in a base of jewelweed and/or comfrey tincture.
- **Soothing Sunburns:** EO (5 drops) lavender in a base of vinegar and/or comfrey tincture
- **AntiFungal:** EOs (5 drops) oregano, tea tree, and/or lavender in a base of vinegar, comfrey tincture, and/or water/vodka.

Lip Balm: Make TWO .15 oz tubes.

- Great Singles: Lavender, Peppermint, Spearmint, Orange

Where Do I Get the Supplies?

One-Stop-Shopping

- **The Concord Co-op, A Market (Manchester), Misty Meadows (Lee), the Mustard Seed (Northwood) & Portsmouth Natural Foods** generally sell everything you need: carrier oils, beeswax, bottles & jars, vinegar, some loose herbs, essential oils, vitamin E oil, etc. They may not have a wide selection of containers.
- **www.MountainRoseHerbs.com** also sells just about anything you might need for an herbal medicine or bodycare project, including bottles in jars in any quantity. HUGE herb selection. (These sources don't sell the vodka, but you can figure that one out, right?) ;)

More Sources ~ Bottles & Jars

- **www.sks-bottle.com** sells a variety of containers wholesale to the public—great selection and prices—but case quantities only.
- **www.mountainroseherbs.com** sells in any quantity, though less selection and higher prices
- **Craft shops** offer decorative bottles and jars at premium prices.
- **Small hardware stores** like Aubuchon carry mason jars.
- **Target** often carries the cute, squat 8 oz mason jars with silver lids.

Other Supplies

- **Staples & office supply stores** for Avery labels (templates free online).
- **Local beekeepers** for beeswax. Also available at herb shops, natural food stores, and online resources.
- **Liquor store** for vodka.
- **Grocery & natural food stores** for carrier oils (cooking oils), Epsom salts, salt, sugar, clay, etc.

DON'T FORGET TO LABEL YOUR GOODIES!

(People like to know what's in them, and it also helps to prevent allergy issues.)

Visit the Links page of **www.WintergreenBotanicals.com** for Local & Online sources for *bottles, jars, herb supplies...* as well as *recommended books & links to informative websites.*
