

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE • Published September 18, 2013 • Last Update October 24, 2015

Comfrey: Topical rescue from a skin-healing plant

By Chris Kilham, | Fox News



Used to prevent various diseases of the joints at any age.

When you consider that our skin is the largest organ of our bodies, it's understandable that there are so many remedies for dealing with topical troubles. Scrapes, cuts, bites, burns, rashes and sores are among the many hundreds of conditions that can adversely affect skin. And for virtually all of them, there's comfrey.

LIVE COVERAGE

Polls close in Virginia governor's race at 7 PM ET. Stay with Fox News for live results.

Want to get these alerts sent to you directly? [Click here.](#)



white, pink or purple flowers. The plant's pretty appearance and hardiness make it a popular ornamental.

Comfrey is not new, and comfrey salves, balms and creams have been around for centuries. Yet most people still don't know this effective skin-healing plant. In various preparations, both Russian comfrey (*Symphytum uplandicum*) and common comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*) are used. The name comfrey means "to grow together," appropriate for a plant used to heal wounds.

Comfrey salves and other topical preparations have long been employed to heal bruises, skin ulcers and joint inflammation, and to help fractures to knit more quickly. Comfrey preparations are staples in Russian, European and North American herbology. In these, both the leaves and the roots of the plant are used.

Typically comfrey is finely macerated and then mixed with a base such as beeswax, or an inert cream formula. Comfrey can also be employed in a bath by making a large pot of concentrated tea, adding to a bath, and soaking in the bath for a while. This enhances and beautifies skin, and is soothing in cases of itchy and dry skin.

If comfrey has an especially potent skin-healing agent, it is allantoin, which can be found widely in cosmetic preparations, especially those for sensitive skin. It aids wound repair, accelerates skin healing, and possesses anti-inflammatory activity. Allantoin is the subject of many patents, and is both derived from comfrey and synthesized in laboratories. Employed in shampoos, toothpastes, skin care lotions, anti-acne preparations and lipstick, allantoin is a staple compound in the cosmetic industry.

Yet other compounds in comfrey also demonstrate benefits when applied to skin. Additional compounds including caffeic acid, chlorogenic acid and rosmarinic acid help to protect the lipid linings of skin cells, reduce inflammation, and show anti-cancer activity. This may support the use of comfrey preparations for various skin cancers.

In human clinical studies, comfrey preparations have performed well. In one study, sufferers of acute ankle sprains experienced more rapid recovery with the application of a comfrey-based

LIVE COVERAGE

Polls close in Virginia governor's race at 7 PM ET. Stay with Fox News for live results.

Want to get these alerts sent to you directly? [Click here.](#)



abrasions experienced more rapid healing and recovery than those who did not.

Comfrey salve, balm or cream is on my must-have list for a well-stocked home medicine cabinet. Most topical herbal preparations contain some comfrey, but some are more concentrated. I like the [EuroPharma Traumaplant Comfrey Cream](#).

Long used, clinically tested, easy to grow, abundant, cheap and effective, comfrey deserves its enduring spot in nature's medicine chest. Given its numerous benefits to the largest human organ, comfrey is a good remedy to keep on hand.

Chris Kilham is a medicine hunter who researches natural remedies all over the world, from the Amazon to Siberia. Chris advises herbal, cosmetic and pharmaceutical companies, is a regular guest on radio and TV programs worldwide, and is the author of fifteen books. Read more at [MedicineHunter.com](#).

Conversation

Be the first to comment...

Powered by  OpenWeb

[Terms](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Feedback](#)

LIVE COVERAGE

Polls close in Virginia governor's race at 7 PM ET. Stay with Fox News for live results.

Want to get these alerts sent to you directly? [Click here.](#)

