



COASTAL FOODWAYS

GLOSSARY OF PLANT MEDICINE PROPERTIES

When you're researching plant medicines or learning from a knowledge keeper, there are many terms that explain the different medicinal properties of specific plants.

Medicines require respect and caution. It's important to make sure you do thorough research and gain a confident understanding before you utilize plant medicines to learn how they can affect your body and interact with Western medicines.

The purpose of this glossary is to help you understand common terms found in writing about herbal medicine. We hope it supports your learning journey.

Abortifacient: stimulates abortion

Analgesic: reduces pain without causing a loss of consciousness

Anti-anemic: prevents or treats anemia (low iron)

Antibacterial: effective against bacteria

Antibiotic: prevents or treats bacterial infection

Anti-convulsive: prevents or controls convulsions or seizures

Antidepressive: prevents or treats depression

Antihistamine: counteracts histamines to treat allergic reactions

Anti-inflammatory: prevents or treats inflammation

Antifungal: prevents or treats fungal infection

Anti-microbial: destroys or inhibits the growth of pathogenic (disease-causing) microorganisms

Anti-nauseant: prevents or treats nausea

Anti-neuralgic: prevents or treats nerve pain

Antioxidant: neutralizes free radicals (unstable molecules that can harm your cells)

Antirheumatic: prevents or treats rheumatism

Antipyretic: reduces fever

Antiseptic: prevents or inhibits the growth of harmful microorganisms

Antispasmodic: prevents or relieves spasms or seizures

Anti-toxic: counteracts toxins

Antiviral: prevents or treats viral infections

Aphrodisiac: arouses sexual desire

Astringent: contracts soft tissues and mucus membranes

Bactericidal: destroys bacteria

Calmative: calms or regulates the nervous system

Carminative: reduces flatulence

Cicatrizant: promotes wound healing and development of scar tissue

Decongestant: relieves congestion in the mucus membranes

Depurative: purifies or detoxifies

Diaphoretic: increases perspiration

Digestive: aids digestion

Diuretic: increases urination

Emmenegogic: promotes menstruation

Emollient: softens or soothes

Euphoric: produces feelings of wellbeing or elation

Febrifuge: reduces fever

Galactagogue: promotes breast milk production

Hepatic: promotes healthy liver function

Hypertensive: raises blood pressure

Hypotensive: lowers blood pressure

Hypnotic: induces sleep

Nervine: calms or regulates the nervous system

Parasiticide: destructive to parasites

Pectoral: strengthens the heart and respiratory system

Prophylactic: prevents the spread of disease or infection

Restorative: restores consciousness and strength

Sedative: calms or moderates the nervous system

Splenetic: promotes healthy spleen function

Stimulant: increases energy or functionality

Stomachic: promotes health stomach function

Tonic: invigorates or restores physical tone

Vulnerary: promotes healing of wounds



The purpose of this glossary is to help you understand common terms you might find when you're researching the medicinal properties of plants. It is not a replacement for the advice of a qualified practitioner of herbal medicine.