

"Calendula is an herb of sunlight and warmth, offering the healing gifts of comfort and vitality. It is perfect for treating wounds and emotional scars, encouraging both physical healing and emotional renewal."

James A. Duke (author of The Green Pharmacy)

CALENDULA





Table of Contents

Calendula: Nature's Golden Healer	1
Calendula: Identification, Cultivation & Harvesting	1
Energetics	3
Traditional Folk Uses of Calendula	4
Key Plant Constituents	7
Calendula: What Does the Science Say?	11
The Synergy of Herbal Pairings	16
Calendula: Simple Preparations	20
Closing Thoughts	27

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Calendula: Nature's Golden Healer

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) is an herb that embodies the qualities of warmth, vitality, and nurturing healing. In traditional Western herbalism, it is considered a gentle, moistening, and heart-centered plant that supports both the physical and the emotional body. In this e-booklet, we're going to look at the historical and folk uses of this wonderful plant ally as well as key plant constituents, scientific research, and simple recipes!

Identification, Cultivation & Harvesting

Calendula, or pot marigold, is an easy-to-recognize flowering plant from the Asteraceae family. It typically grows between 12 to 24 inches tall, with bright orange or yellow flowers. The leaves are broad, lance-shaped, and covered with fine hairs. The flowers are composite, meaning they are made up of many small flowers, which create the larger bloom we recognize as a single flower. Calendula's sunny, cheerful appearance makes it a favorite in gardens or windowsills!



Cultivation

Calendula is relatively easy to grow and thrives in full sun, though it can tolerate partial shade. It prefers well-draining, moderately fertile soil. It's quite resilient, often considered an annual in colder climates but can reseed itself in temperate regions. Calendula is often started from seeds, which can be sown directly outdoors in spring or started indoors a few weeks before the last frost. The plant can bloom from early spring through fall, depending on the climate. It's an excellent addition to garden beds, herb gardens, or even in containers.



Harvesting

Calendula flowers are best harvested when they are fully open but still fresh, as this is when the medicinal properties are most potent. Pick the flowers in the morning, after the dew has dried, to avoid any excess moisture. To harvest, simply pluck the flowers off the stems, being careful not to damage the plant, as it will continue to produce more blooms if kept healthy. Regular harvesting can encourage more blossoms, making it a rewarding plant to grow for both beauty and medicinal use.



Preservation

Calendula can be preserved in several ways to ensure its medicinal properties are maintained. The most common method is drying, where the fresh flowers are laid out in a single layer in a cool, dry place with good air circulation. Once dried, the flowers can be stored in airtight containers in a dark, cool place. Another popular method of preservation is making tinctures or infused oils (discussed later in this e-booklet.)



Calendula: Energetics

In traditional Western herbalism, herbs are often described by their energetic properties—their qualities that influence the body's internal balance of warmth, moisture, dryness, and other vital forces. Calendula is primarily considered a warm, moistening, and soothing herb, with a special focus on cooling inflammation and promoting healing.

Calendula's energetic qualities are slightly warming and moistening, making it a great herb for soothing and calming conditions that are dry or inflammatory in nature. The warming quality is especially helpful for people who feel cold, weary, or drained, as it can help restore balance by gently bringing warmth and vitality.

- **For inflammation and heat:** Calendula is considered ideal for treating hot, inflamed conditions in both the body and mind. For example, it's used to soothe inflammatory skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis, and sunburn, as well as internal inflammatory issues like gastritis or irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Its moistening action is thought to bring coolness and hydration to areas of dryness and heat.
- **For dryness:** Calendula is also beneficial for those experiencing dryness or roughness, as it moistens the skin and the internal tissues. It's used to treat dry skin, scaly rashes, and conditions like dry eyes.

Emotional Profile

"Calendula is one of the finest plants for healing the heart. Its cheerful energy and radiant flowers help bring light into the darkest corners of the psyche, particularly for those who feel emotionally drained or disconnected from their sense of self."

Matthew Wood (author of The Earthwise Herbal)

Calendula is often described as a "sunshine herb" because of its ability to uplift the mood and help alleviate feelings of sadness or emotional heaviness. It can be helpful in situations of emotional stagnation or depression, as it supports those experiencing grief or loss. It has a way of gently restoring a sense of joy and vitality.

Traditional Folk Medicine Uses

Calendula has a rich history of use in folk medicine worldwide. Its uses span from treating skin conditions to aiding digestion, supporting women's health, and even offering comfort to the emotional and spiritual well-being of people. In this section, we'll examine folk traditions in six key areas: skin healing and protection, digestive issues, menstrual relief, immune support, eye health, and emotional wellbeing.



1. Skin Healing and Protection

Calendula has long been celebrated for its skin-healing properties, and many cultures relied on it for treating wounds, burns, and skin irritations.

- **Ancient Egypt:** The Egyptians are known to have used calendula to treat wounds, burns, and inflammation. Its soothing and anti-inflammatory properties were highly valued by early healers in the ancient world.
- **Traditional European Herbalism:** In European folk medicine, particularly in countries like Germany and France, calendula was often used for treating cuts, abrasions, and eczema. Calendula-based poultices were applied to the skin to promote healing and prevent infection, and it was also used for sunburns and diaper rash. It was said that calendula is for “where the sun doesn’t shine”– armpits, groin area, etc... eluding to its anti-fungal properties.
- **Native American Traditions:** Native American tribes such as the Cherokee and Iroquois used calendula as a poultice for wounds, swelling, and skin rashes. The herb was honored for its healing and anti-inflammatory properties, and it was often applied to injuries or irritated skin as a natural remedy.
- **Spanish Folk Medicine:** In Spain, calendula has been traditionally used to soothe inflammatory skin conditions and treat skin ulcers. Calendula tea was also used for its digestive benefits and to soothe upset stomachs.

2. Digestive Health

Calendula has been widely used across cultures for promoting digestive health, often consumed as a tea or tincture.

- **European Folk Herbalism:** In the United Kingdom and Germany, calendula was commonly brewed into a tea to help with digestive issues, such as indigestion, gastritis, and constipation. It was also used to promote bile production, assisting with the breakdown of fats.
- **Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM):** While calendula is not a major herb in TCM, it has been occasionally used in specific formulations for its mild liver-supportive qualities and its ability to support digestive health, particularly in cases of inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract.



3. Menstrual Relief

Calendula has long been used by women's herbalists to address menstrual discomforts and other female health issues.

- **European Folk Herbalism:** Throughout Europe, particularly in France and England, calendula was used for menstrual cramps and to regulate heavy periods. Its antispasmodic effects were known to relax the uterus, easing cramping and discomfort. It was also used to help balance the female menstrual cycle and ease symptoms of menopause.
- **Native American Traditions:** Calendula was also used by some Native American tribes to treat menstrual cramps and painful periods. The herb was often included in herbal teas along with other menstrual-regulating plants like raspberry leaf (see our e-booklet on raspberry.)

4. Immune Support

Calendula has a strong presence in many folk remedies aimed at boosting immunity and fighting off infections.

- **European Folk Herbalism:** Calendula was widely used in herbal infusions or syrups to soothe coughs, sore throats, and cold symptoms. In France, it was also used as part of spring tonics to cleanse the body of toxins and refresh the system, while in Italy, calendula was believed to support the body's immune system and improve vitality.
- **Mexican Folk Herbalism:** In Mexico, calendula was used in immune-boosting teas and as a remedy for infections like cold sores or eye infections. It was also considered to have detoxifying effects, helping cleanse the body of accumulated waste.



5. Eye Health

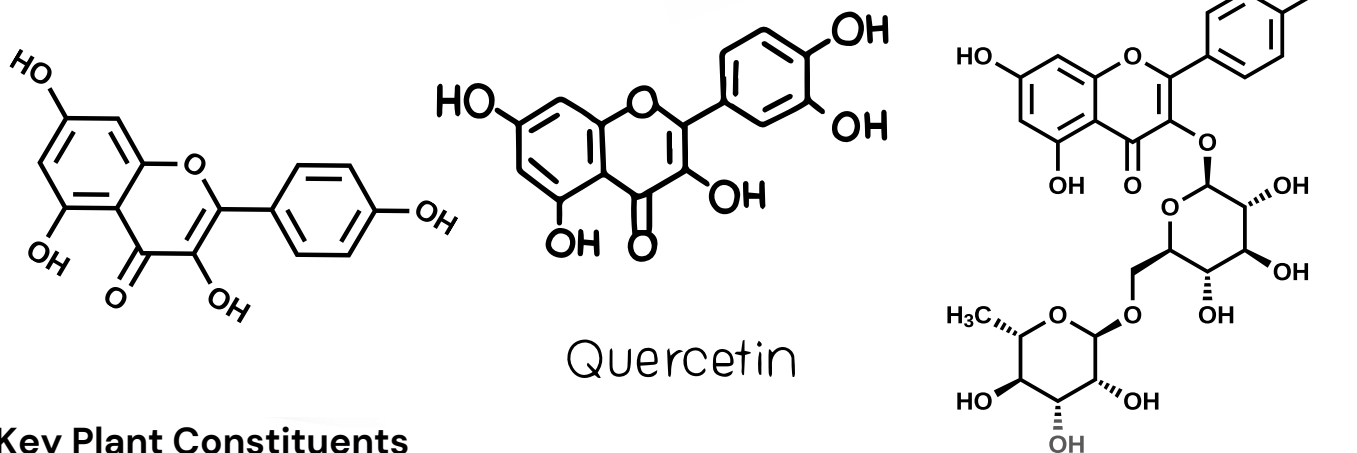
Calendula's application for eye health has also been practiced across various cultures.

- **Ancient Greek and Roman Medicine:** Calendula has been used since ancient times for eye health. The famous Greek physician Dioscorides recommended calendula for treating eye infections and conjunctivitis. He also believed that it could improve vision and provide relief from eye strain.
- **European Folk Herbalism:** Calendula has been used in eye washes or compresses throughout Europe. The soothing properties of calendula made it effective for eye irritation, conjunctivitis, and tired eyes.

6. Emotional Wellbeing

While calendula is not known for its sedative effects, it has long been considered an herb that brings emotional comfort.

- **European Folk Herbalism:** Calendula was believed to have a cheerful, uplifting quality. It was often used in herbal infusions to ease nervous tension and support emotional well-being. In England, it was said that calendula could “bring joy to a sad heart.”



Key Plant Constituents

Now for a little chemistry! Calendula's healing powers can be attributed partially to its rich and varied chemical profile, which includes flavonoids, triterpenes, carotenoids, saponins, essential oils, and polysaccharides. These compounds work synergistically to provide a wide range of anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, and wound-healing benefits, making calendula an incredibly versatile herb in both topical and internal healing applications. Let's explore some of calendula's key constituents:

1. Flavonoids

Flavonoids are a group of plant compounds known for their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Calendula contains several types of flavonoids, including quercetin, kaempferol, and rutin. These flavonoids help to:

- **Reduce inflammation:** Flavonoids in calendula work by inhibiting the release of pro-inflammatory molecules in the body, making them effective for treating conditions like eczema, dermatitis, and psoriasis (Tomer et al., 2011).
- **Protect against oxidative stress:** The antioxidant properties of flavonoids help protect the body's cells from damage by free radicals, which can contribute to aging and chronic disease.

Scientific research: A study published in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* found that the flavonoid-rich extract of calendula demonstrated strong anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects, helping to reduce skin inflammation and accelerate healing (Hussain et al., 2014).

2. Triterpenes

Triterpenes are naturally occurring compounds that are widely regarded for their anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antimicrobial effects. Calendula contains several types of triterpenes, including oleanolic acid and ursolic acid, which contribute to its medicinal properties:

- **Promote wound healing:** Triterpenes stimulate the production of collagen and other components necessary for tissue repair, making calendula a fantastic herb for wound healing and skin regeneration (Zhao et al., 2007).
- **Antimicrobial activity:** These compounds also possess significant antibacterial and antifungal properties, which help to prevent infections in wounds and minor cuts.

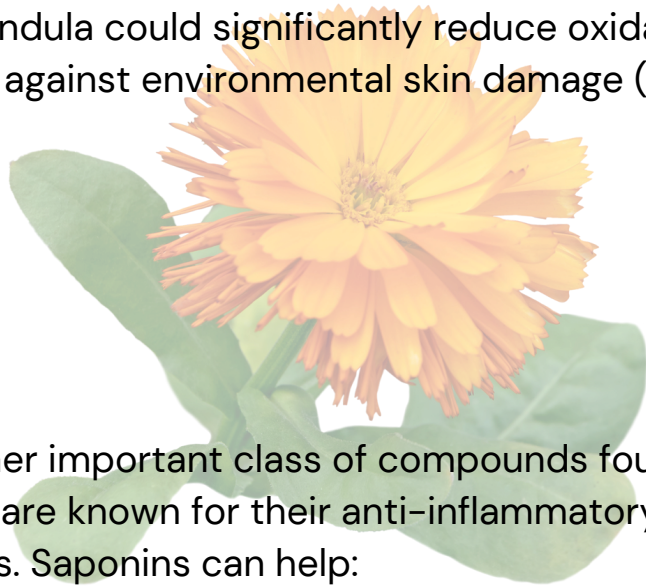
Scientific research: A study published in *Phytotherapy Research* found that triterpenes extracted from calendula were effective in reducing inflammation and accelerating the healing process in both superficial and deep skin wounds (Tomer et al., 2011).

3. Carotenoids (including Beta-Carotene)

Carotenoids, such as beta-carotene, are pigments that give calendula its bright, orange-yellow color. These compounds are known for their antioxidant properties, helping to:

- **Protect skin from UV damage:** Carotenoids can absorb harmful UV rays, protecting the skin from sunburn and premature aging (Amin et al., 2017).
- **Boost immune function:** Beta-carotene, a precursor to vitamin A, plays a key role in supporting the immune system and promoting healthy vision.

Scientific research: A study published in *Phytomedicine* found that the carotenoids in calendula could significantly reduce oxidative stress and provide protection against environmental skin damage (Frozza et al., 2015).



4. Saponins

Saponins are another important class of compounds found in calendula. These compounds are known for their anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting properties. Saponins can help:

- **Support immune function:** Saponins stimulate the activity of immune cells, which can help the body fight off infections.
- **Enhance wound healing:** Saponins also contribute to calendula's ability to promote the healing of wounds and minor burns by improving circulation to the affected area.

Scientific research: A study in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* showed that saponins extracted from calendula have a mild antimicrobial effect and help enhance the immune response, supporting the body in healing and preventing infection (Zhao et al., 2007).

5. Essential Oils

Calendula also contains volatile oils that contribute to its soothing and healing effects. These essential oils, such as linoleic acid and phytosterols, are thought to:

- **Sooth irritated skin:** The essential oils in calendula are calming and can reduce redness and swelling in inflamed skin, making calendula a go-to for conditions like sunburn, rashes, and insect bites.
- **Promote skin regeneration:** These oils stimulate the regeneration of skin cells, which helps to speed up the healing of minor cuts and burns.

Scientific research: Research published in *Phytotherapy Research* confirmed that the volatile oils in calendula significantly enhanced the healing process in skin lesions, promoting faster regeneration and reducing pain and swelling (Dornelles et al., 2019).

6. Polysaccharides

Calendula also contains polysaccharides, which are long chains of sugar molecules that contribute to the herb's anti-inflammatory and immune-supportive properties. These compounds are believed to:

- **Promote tissue healing:** Polysaccharides play a role in stimulating the growth of new tissue, helping to speed up the recovery process for wounds and skin injuries.
- **Support digestive health:** Calendula's polysaccharides also have soothing effects on the digestive tract, helping to calm symptoms of indigestion, ulcers, and inflammation in the gastrointestinal system.

Scientific research: A study published in the *Journal of Medicinal Plants* indicated that calendula's polysaccharides contributed significantly to its ability to support both skin healing and gastrointestinal health, enhancing the regeneration of tissues and reducing inflammation in the gut (Frozza et al., 2015).

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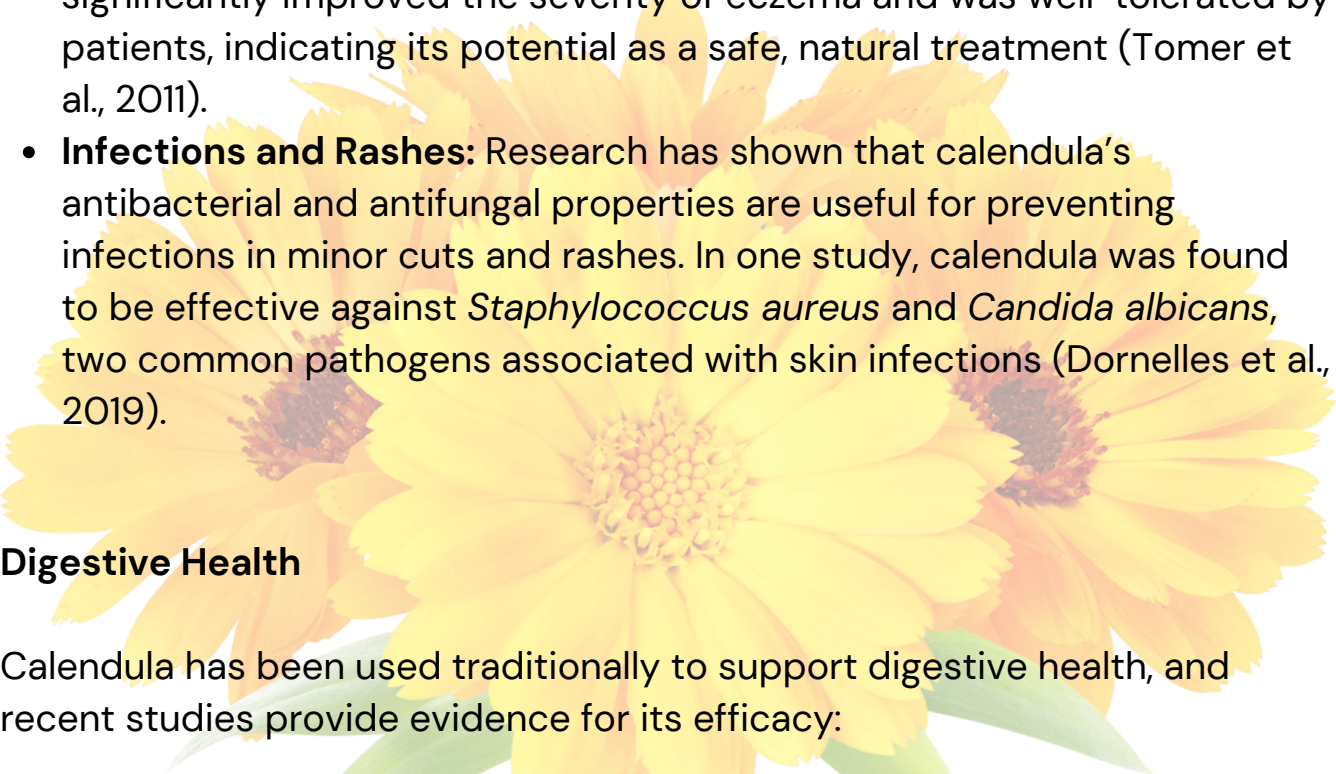
Calendula: What Does the Science Say?

Calendula is highly regarded for its versatility in addressing both external and internal health issues. Below are some medicinal uses of calendula that are supported by scientific research:



Skin Healing and Topical Applications

Calendula is well-known for its ability to aid in the healing of wounds, cuts, burns, and other skin conditions due to its anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and wound-healing properties. Several studies have documented these effects:

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- **Wound Healing and Burns:** A clinical trial published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* demonstrated that calendula ointment was more effective than traditional treatments in reducing radiation-induced skin reactions in cancer patients (Kaal et al., 2018). The anti-inflammatory compounds in calendula, including flavonoids and triterpenes, are thought to play a key role in this healing process.
 - **Chronic Skin Conditions:** Calendula has been shown to have a positive effect on inflammatory skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis. A study published in *Phytotherapy Research* found that calendula extract significantly improved the severity of eczema and was well-tolerated by patients, indicating its potential as a safe, natural treatment (Tomer et al., 2011).
 - **Infections and Rashes:** Research has shown that calendula's antibacterial and antifungal properties are useful for preventing infections in minor cuts and rashes. In one study, calendula was found to be effective against *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Candida albicans*, two common pathogens associated with skin infections (Dornelles et al., 2019).

Digestive Health

Calendula has been used traditionally to support digestive health, and recent studies provide evidence for its efficacy:

- **Indigestion and Gastritis:** Calendula has demonstrated anti-inflammatory effects in the gastrointestinal tract, helping to reduce symptoms of indigestion, bloating, and gastritis. A study in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology* found that calendula extract helped to protect against gastric ulceration in rats by inhibiting gastric acid secretion and reducing inflammation (Suleiman et al., 2009).
- **Stomach Ulcers:** Calendula's ability to promote healing of the gastrointestinal lining has been highlighted in animal studies. A study published in *Phytotherapy Research* found that calendula extract could accelerate healing in animals with experimentally induced gastric ulcers by reducing oxidative stress and inflammation (Tomer et al., 2011).

Anti-Inflammatory and Immune Support

Calendula's anti-inflammatory effects are particularly useful for managing inflammatory conditions like arthritis or general pain:

- **Arthritis and Joint Pain:** A study published in *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* investigated the use of calendula extract for reducing inflammation in patients with rheumatoid arthritis. The research indicated that calendula had significant anti-inflammatory effects, potentially providing a natural alternative or complement to traditional arthritis treatments (Das et al., 2016).
- **General Immune Support:** Calendula's immunomodulatory effects were explored in a study in *Phytomedicine*, where it was shown that calendula extract could enhance the immune response by increasing the production of cytokines. This suggests that calendula may play a role in supporting overall immune health, helping the body fight off infections (Frozza et al., 2015).

Antimicrobial and Antiviral Properties

Calendula has shown promising antimicrobial and antiviral properties that make it effective in preventing and treating infections:

- **Antibacterial:** A study in the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* found that calendula exhibited strong antibacterial activity against a range of pathogenic bacteria, including *Escherichia coli* and *Staphylococcus aureus*. These properties make calendula an effective topical treatment for preventing infections in wounds and rashes (Bertoloni et al., 2016).
- **Antifungal:** In a study published in the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*, calendula extracts were found to inhibit the growth of *Trichophyton rubrum*, one of the most common species responsible for athlete's foot and ringworm. The researchers suggested that the active compounds in calendula, especially flavonoids, might interfere with fungal cell wall synthesis, impairing fungal growth (Tundis et al., 2014).

- **Cold Sores:** Calendula has also shown antiviral properties, especially for herpes simplex virus (HSV) infections. A clinical trial published in *Herpes* journal found that calendula-based creams helped reduce the symptoms of herpes simplex virus and sped up the healing of cold sores (Voutilainen et al., 2018).

Liver and Detox Support

Calendula's potential to support liver function and aid detoxification has been explored in several studies:

- **Liver Health:** Calendula's hepatoprotective (liver-protecting) properties were examined in a study published in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, which found that calendula extract helped protect the liver against damage caused by toxins. The study concluded that calendula could be a helpful adjunct in detoxification and liver health (Zhao et al., 2007).
- **Detoxification:** Calendula's ability to promote the elimination of toxins through the liver and kidneys has also been supported by research. A study in *Phytotherapy Research* found that calendula may support detox processes by stimulating bile production and encouraging detoxification pathways (Tomer et al., 2011).



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Synergy, Herbal Pairings, and Simple Preparations

When it comes to herbal medicine, the whole can truly be greater than the sum of its parts. This idea of synergy is the foundation of traditional herbal practices. Rather than relying on a single herb to tackle a health issue, herbalists often pair or blend herbs to amplify their effects, balance their energetics, or address multiple aspects of a condition. It's like a good friendship—each herb brings out the best in the other!

For example, one herb might be great at soothing inflammation, while another enhances circulation, helping to carry those anti-inflammatory benefits exactly where they're needed. Together, they create a more effective solution than either herb could on its own.

Calendula is a fantastic example of an herb that benefits from synergy. Known for its skin-healing, anti-inflammatory, and lymphatic-clearing properties, calendula pairs beautifully with other herbs to target specific conditions. Here are a few popular calendula herbal pairings and what they're used for:

1. Calendula + Plantain (Wound Healing)

These two are a dream team for cuts, scrapes, and minor wounds, both externally and internally.

- **Calendula:** Reduces infection, soothes irritated tissues, and moves lymph
- **Plantain:** Known for its “drawing” action, it helps pull out toxins and speed up healing.

Use this pairing in salves, compresses or poultices for skin injuries or as a “gut healing” tea for leaky gut or ulcers.





2. Calendula + Red Clover (Skin Conditions)

For eczema, psoriasis, or acne, this combo works wonders to help the liver clear toxins out of the body.

- **Calendula:** Helps calm inflammation, move lymph, and promote tissue repair.
- **Red Clover:** Acts as a blood purifier, helping clear skin from the inside out.

Drink as a tea or use as a wash for chronic skin flare-ups.

3. Calendula + Chamomile (Digestive Health)

When your tummy's in turmoil (cramping,) this soothing duo is the perfect match.

- **Calendula:** Soothes inflammation in the gut and supports tissue healing.
- **Chamomile:** Relaxes spasms and eases indigestion.

This pairing is especially helpful for conditions like gastritis or irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Brew it as a gentle, calming tea. Add peppermint to help calm gas and bloating. Make an infused oil for skin rashes and inflammation.



4. Calendula + Elderflower (Lymphatic Support for Cold and Flu)



To help clear out toxins and reduce swollen lymph nodes, calendula and elderflower team up beautifully.

- **Calendula:** Stimulates lymphatic drainage and reduces inflammation.
- **Elderflower:** Anti-viral and encourages sweating to help the body detoxify.

Perfect for teas during colds, flus, or after an illness when your lymphatic system needs extra support. Add peppermint for extra cooling or ginger for a warming effect!

5. Calendula + Burdock Root (Blood Cleanser and Lymph Mover)

For chronic skin conditions like acne, eczema, or psoriasis, this duo shines as an internal detoxifier.

- **Calendula:** Promotes lymphatic drainage and tissue repair.
- **Burdock Root:** A deeply cleansing herb that supports liver health and eliminates toxins.

Drink this as a tea or use it in a decoction (simmering) for long-term skin support and gentle detoxification. Add red clover for more lymphatic and liver support.



6. Calendula + Licorice Root (Soothing Inflammation)



This pairing is perfect for irritated mucous membranes, whether in the gut, throat, or urinary tract.

- **Calendula:** Reduces inflammation and promotes healing in tissues.
- **Licorice Root:** A demulcent that soothes and coats irritated tissues while providing anti-inflammatory effects.

Best used as a tea for conditions like gastritis, sore throats, or bladder irritation.

How to Experiment with Synergy

Creating your own herbal pairings is part science and part art. Start by identifying the key action you want (e.g., calming inflammation, supporting digestion), then pair herbs with complementary effects. Be mindful of your body's unique needs—what works for one person might not work for another.



Calendula: More Simple Preparations

Calendula Compress

Calendula compresses are incredibly versatile and can be used for a variety of medicinal purposes, thanks to calendula's anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and healing properties. The compress method allows the herb to be applied directly to the skin for targeted relief. Here is a simple recipe and the different uses of a calendula compress:

How to Make a Calendula Compress:

Ingredients:

- Dried calendula flowers (or calendula tea bags)
- Water (preferably filtered or spring water)
- Clean cloth (muslin, cotton, or gauze)



Instructions:

1. Prepare the calendula infusion: Steep 1 tablespoon of dried calendula flowers (or 1–2 tea bags) in 1 cup of boiling water for 5–10 minutes. Let it cool to a comfortable temperature.
2. Soak the cloth: Soak your clean cloth in the cooled calendula infusion.
3. Apply the compress: Place the soaked cloth directly on the affected area and leave it for 10–15 minutes. You can repeat this several times per day as needed.

See the chart below for more specific uses of calendula compresses!



1. Skin Irritations and Rashes	<p>Use for: Eczema, allergic reactions, contact dermatitis, or other minor skin irritations.</p> <p>How to use: Apply a cooled calendula compress to the affected area for 10–15 minutes, several times a day.</p>
2. Minor Burns	<p>Use for: Sunburns, kitchen burns, or any minor burns.</p> <p>How to use: Use a cool calendula compress for 10–15 minutes, repeating several times throughout the day as needed. Ensure that the burn is not open before applying.</p>
3. Inflammation and Swelling	<p>Use for: Swelling due to injury, arthritis flare-ups, or muscle strains.</p> <p>How to use: Apply the compress to the inflamed area for 10–20 minutes, repeating 2–3 times per day to reduce swelling and inflammation.</p>
4. Wound Healing and Cuts	<p>Use for: Minor cuts, scrapes, and superficial wounds.</p> <p>How to use: Apply the compress to the affected area and leave it on for 10–15 minutes. You can repeat this several times daily.</p>
5. Conjunctivitis and Eye Irritations	<p>Use for: Conjunctivitis, dry or itchy eyes, eye strain, or tired eyes.</p> <p>How to use: Soak a clean cloth or cotton pad in cooled calendula tea and place it gently over your closed eyes for 10–15 minutes. Repeat 2–3 times daily for relief.</p>

6. Skin Dryness and Cracked Skin	<p>Use for: Dry skin, cracked heels, or chapped lips.</p> <p>How to use: Apply a warm calendula compress to the affected area for 10–15 minutes. Follow with a moisturizing calendula salve or lotion.</p>
7. Post–Surgery or Post–Procedural Care	<p>Use for: Healing after surgery, dental procedures, or invasive treatments.</p> <p>How to use: Use a calendula compress several times a day on the affected area to promote faster healing and reduce swelling or pain.</p>
8. Hemorrhoids	<p>Use for: Hemorrhoids, anal discomfort, or inflammation.</p> <p>How to use: Apply a calendula compress to the affected area for 10–15 minutes, repeating several times a day until symptoms improve.</p>
9. Styes (Eye Infection)	<p>Use for: Eye styes or small eyelid infections.</p> <p>How to use: Soak a cotton pad in cool calendula tea and place it over the infected area for 10–15 minutes. Repeat 2–3 times daily.</p>
10. Acne and Skin Blemishes	<p>Use for: Acne, pimples, and skin blemishes.</p> <p>How to use: Apply a cool calendula compress to the affected area to reduce inflammation and help heal the skin. You can also follow this with a calendula-based toner or serum for further benefits.</p>

Calendula–Witch Hazel Spray

Witch hazel is a skincare superhero, known for its ability to soothe inflammation, tighten pores, and calm redness. It's also a go-to remedy for everything from bug bites to minor cuts, thanks to its gentle astringent and anti-inflammatory properties! Combining witch hazel with calendula is another great example of "synergy." Use this as a skin toner or to help with scarring or other skin wounds. To create a spray for athlete's foot, consider adding a ½ teaspoon of oregano, clove, and/or turmeric from your spice cabinet for added anti-fungal effect!

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup dried calendula flowers
- 1 cup witch hazel extract (distilled witch hazel)
- A glass jar or bottle with a lid (for storage)

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Calendula:

Measure out 1/4 cup of dried calendula flowers. You can purchase these at most herb shops or online, or if you grow calendula, you can dry your own flowers.

2. Combine Calendula and Witch Hazel:

In a clean glass jar or container, add the dried calendula flowers. Pour in 1 cup of witch hazel over the calendula flowers. Seal the jar tightly and place it in a warm, sunny spot, like a windowsill, for about 1-2 weeks. Shake the jar gently every day.

3. Strain the Infusion:

After 1-2 weeks, strain the calendula flowers from the witch hazel using a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth. You should have a golden yellow infusion.

4. Storage:

Store the final calendula and witch hazel infusion in a glass bottle, spray bottle, or jar, preferably in the fridge to preserve freshness.



How to Use:

- **Topical Use:** Apply the infusion to your skin with a cotton ball or soft cloth to soothe irritated skin, calm inflammation, or cleanse wounds. It's especially good for treating minor burns, cuts, rashes, and fungal infections. It also makes a great skin toner!



Calendula Tincture

Calendula's immune-boosting properties make it a helpful herb during the cold and flu season.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup dried calendula flowers
- 1 cup vodka (or other high-proof alcohol)

Instructions:

1. **Fill a jar:** Place the dried calendula flowers in a glass jar.
2. **Add alcohol:** Pour the vodka (or alcohol of choice) over the flowers, making sure they're completely submerged.
3. **Seal and store:** Seal the jar tightly and store it in a dark, cool place for 4–6 weeks, shaking it daily.
4. **Strain and store:** After 4–6 weeks, strain the herbs out and store the tincture in a dark glass bottle. Take 1–2 droppers full in water or tea daily to support the immune system.

NOTE: Tinctures can also be applied topically for wound healing. If you don't want to ingest alcohol for religious or other reasons, you can use rubbing alcohol to make an **external-only** topical preparation (sometimes called a "liniment.") If using rubbing (isopropyl) alcohol, make sure to label the jar **"FOR EXTERNAL USE ONLY."**



Calendula-Infused Tallow

Calendula-infused tallow is a nourishing and healing balm for skin care. Tallow, a type of rendered animal fat (often from cows or sheep), is rich in vitamins A, D, E, and K, making it excellent for moisturizing, healing, and protecting dry, damaged, or inflamed skin.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup tallow (rendered beef or lamb fat, available at health food stores or butcher shops)
- 1/4 cup dried calendula flowers (or 1/2 cup if using fresh flowers)
- 1/2 teaspoon vitamin E oil (optional, for additional skin benefits)
- Crockpot or double boiler

Instructions:

1. Prepare and Make the Infusion:

Place the calendula flowers and tallow into a crockpot (or double boiler.) Heat on the lowest setting for 6–8 hours, stirring occasionally.

2. Strain and Combine:

After the heated infusion period, strain the calendula flowers from the oil using a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth. Allow tallow to cool and stir in vitamin E oil.

3. Store:

Transfer the calendula-infused tallow into a clean jar or container. Store in a cool, dark place. It will keep for at least six months and can be applied to dry skin, eczema, chapped lips, minor burns, or other skin irritations.



Calendula Alcohol-Intermediate Infused Oil

This alcohol-intermediate oil is a quick and effective method to create a calendula-infused oil. It combines alcohol and oil to extract the medicinal properties of calendula more efficiently, then removes the alcohol to leave behind the infused oil. The best part is that you can make this infused oil in a few hours! To make a facial serum, use a premium oil like jojoba!

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup dried calendula flowers, powdered
- 1 cup olive oil (or sunflower oil, sweet almond oil, or jojoba oil)
- Approx. 2 tablespoons high-proof alcohol (such as vodka or rubbing alcohol)
- Crockpot or double boiler
- Fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Alcohol-Infused Calendula:

Place the dried and powdered calendula flowers in the crockpot. Pour the high-proof alcohol over the flowers, just enough to soak them. Mix the alcohol and calendula powder. Alcohol helps draw out calendula's medicinal properties quickly. Allow the alcohol/calendula mixture to sit for 1-2 hours.

2. Add the Oil:

After the alcohol infusion, add the olive oil (or your preferred oil) to the crockpot. Turn the crockpot to low heat (or use double boiler) and allow the mixture to simmer for 2-3 hours, stirring occasionally. This will allow the oil to fully absorb the calendula properties and evaporate off the alcohol.

3. Strain the Oil:

After 2–3 hours, strain the calendula-infused oil through a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth to remove the flowers and any remaining alcohol. Pour the strained oil into a clean glass jar or bottle.

4. Storage:

Store your calendula-infused oil in a dark, cool place. It should last for six months. If you notice any changes in color or smell, discard it.



Closing Thoughts

Calendula, often called "nature's golden healer," has been cherished in herbal medicine for centuries and continues to shine in modern remedies! It has been used to heal wounds, soothe inflamed skin, and support the immune system. In modern herbalism, calendula is beloved for its antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and lymphatic-cleansing properties, making it a staple for everything from cuts and burns to soothing eczema or acne. It's also a gentle yet effective herb for promoting gut health, calming ulcers, and supporting menstrual balance. Whether used in teas, tinctures, salves, or infused oils, calendula's sunny flowers are a must-have for your wellness toolkit!