



Desert Wisdom for Nourishing Dry Cracked Feet: Aloe, (Lemon, Salt) and Prickly Pear Foot Bath

I moved to Arizona three years ago. I can truly say I am addicted to the year round sunshine and blue skies. This of course comes with consequence where there is lack of a gloomy sky and rain, comes dryness. What I wasn't prepared for was for how dryness would affect my patients. One of the most common dry area that I see are dried cracked heels on my patient's feet. I've been told it is due to sandal wearing as well as the dry weather. I also found oils I used in the Midwest (olive and coconut) did not absorb very well here and would just be absorbed by my acupuncture sheets or my patient's clothes. This has led me on many journeys to finding the perfect nourishing combination. I finally looked to the desert for wisdom. It was so obvious when I started to see products containing aloe vera and prickly pear together. Well that makes sense. For the last few months I have been using Prickly Pear Seed Extract Oil and Aloe Vera for my hair and skin, which absorbs well and holds moisture.

These two powerful plants are heat clearing, antibacterial, antiviral, anti-inflammatory (1), Aloe Vera (Lu Hui) according to a study, "The Effect of Aloe Vera in Clinical Trials on Prevention and Healing of Skin Wound: A Systematic Review" (2) explains the properties of aloe can be used to retain skin moisture and integrity. It prevents skin ulcers and contains amino acids, zinc and mucopolysaccharides. One benefit that exceeds all is its afford-ability. Organic Prickly Pear Cactus seed oil maker and skin care expert Cheri Roanoski in Tuscon explains that the oil contains high levels of Vitamin E.,

Omega 6 and Omega 9. This gives the skin a silky, youthful and toned feel. (3) Thus, boasting its power in making skin and hair glow. Studies in India for Prickly Pear *Opuntia ficus indica L. inermis* (OFI) extracted oil from Tunisia, has shown wound healing to be effective with antimicrobial/fungal properties and promoting epithelial (skin cell) tissue thickening. (4) This has been used in Traditional Medicine Pharmacopeia for its natural bioactive compounds that help fight bacteria, yeast, and fungi.

Foot baths benefits are known to help a person ground and harmonize their body as well as provide nourishment to the feet. Loosening dead skin and encouraging circulation and distribution of nutrients to the foot is preventative skin care for the foot. An Aloe Vera gel and Prickly Pear Seed Oil foot bath will encourage moistening, wound healing and skin toning to the tired dry and cracked feet. For an added bonus lemon (Ning Meng) (5) can be added to aid in moving circulation and detoxify. In TCM we believe it to move stagnation in the blood and qi, soften nodules, clears heat, and promotes cleansing. Salt (Yan) is also a good addition as it is skin softening and exfoliates the dead skin. It is also helpful in balancing fluids and providing electrolytes. In TCM it tonifies the kidney (5) meridian, which runs to the bottom of the foot.

For more great ways to fight dryness you can come for gua sha to open the pores. I also provide hot wet towel tuina treatments to bring moisture deeper. Chinese herbs are an excellent and internal way to revive dryness within the body.



Foot Bath Recipe:

- 1 or 2 bowls for foot or feet with Towels (placed in tub if too heavy to carry)
- Warm water
- 1 Lemon (medium) squeezed to juice
- 1 Medium Spear of Aloe skinned and blended in blender with 1 cup of water
- 1/4 cup Sea Salt
- 10 drops of Prickly Pear Cactus Extracted Oil (cheridesertharvest.com)
- Blend ingredients in bowl together
- Add Flowers for TLC and ambiance. (optional)

Mix in Bowl and place foot or feet for 10-20 minutes. Relax! Dry feet with towels.

Disclaimer: If pregnant or have concerns with foot conditions, please consult physician before trying foot baths. Always use with caution and test skin for allergic reactions if sensitive.

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1. Hekmatpou, D., Mehrabi, F., Rahzani, K., & Aminian, A. (2019, January). The effect of Aloe vera clinical trials on prevention and Healing of Skin Wound: A systematic review. Iranian journal of medical sciences. Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6330525/>
2. Hekmatpou, D., Mehrabi, F., Rahzani, K., & Aminian, A. (2019, January). The effect of Aloe vera clinical trials on prevention and Healing of Skin Wound: A systematic review. Iranian journal of medical sciences. Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6330525/>
3. Organic prickly pear cactus seed oil. Cheri's Desert Harvest. (2018, October 16). Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://cheridesertharvest.com/product/organic-prickly-pear-cactus-seed-oil/>
4. Organic prickly pear cactus seed oil. Cheri's Desert Harvest. (2018, October 16). Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://cheridesertharvest.com/product/organic-prickly-pear-cactus-seed-oil/>
5. Lemon (Ning Meng). White Rabbit Institute of Healing. (n.d.). Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://www.whiterabbitinstituteofhealing.com/herbs/lemon/>
6. Organic prickly pear cactus seed oil. Cheri's Desert Harvest. (2018, October 16). Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://cheridesertharvest.com/product/organic-prickly-pear-cactus-seed-oil/>