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HERBAL MEDICINE

Herbal medicine has a long history, with both man and animals seeking out the healing properties of herbs long before recorded history. The first accepted evidence of herbal medicine is from the paintings in the Lascaux Caves in France dating somewhere between 13,000 and 25,000 BC. Modern day research is now validating traditional usage of many herbs.

What's special about herbs?

Most herbs have multiple properties and a therapist will often combine various herbs to make up a combination that acts synergistically to deal with a client's specific health problems.

An example of the complexity of herbs is the herb licorice, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, (no relation of the confectionery of that name which normally contains no licorice herb!). Only the root of licorice herb is used medicinally. Licorice root has specific action as an adrenal gland tonic and is anti-inflammatory, muco-protective (protects mucous membranes), expectorant (encourages removal of mucous), demulcent (soothing), anti-tussive (reduces coughing) and is a mild laxative. Licorice is used in the treatment of stress, peptic ulcers, gastric reflux, respiratory problems and constipation.

While licorice is an extremely valuable medicinal herb, there are some cautions. As licorice encourages the retention of sodium it should be avoided or used with care in cases of high blood pressure, fluid retention, congestive heart failure and low potassium levels.

In my practice I custom mix herbal medicines according to the specific needs of my human and animal clients.



Licorice herb

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