

Hidden 'Weed Walks'



From paddock to road you can find your DIY medicinal plants.

The North East has many hidden 'weed walks' to delight every kind of DIY herbalist. Go for a walk in any paddock or down any road and you will see many medicinal plants available at your doorstep. Most likely you are already familiar with these plants, but had no idea of abundance of minerals and healing powers that they can give you. Most likely you know them only as weeds! We are very quick to criticise weeds – to spray them or dig them up – but these guys are also pretty powerful medicines.

You must make sure the plants you are going to use as your medicine have not been sprayed. It is also important to ensure you have the correct species of plant.

PLANT	PART USED	PREPERATION	MEDICINAL ACTION
Stinging-Nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>	Leaves	*Once heated the sting is deactivated. Herbal tea: chop 2-3 leaves and place in a cup of hot water. Let it steep for 5-10 minutes then drink Nettle pie: Use any recipe for spinach pie, but substitute half the spinach for fresh nettles.	High in minerals and iron, detoxifying, building and anti-inflammatory. Used for skin conditions, poor iron absorption.
Fennel <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Seeds	Fennel tea: 1 tablespoon of seeds in a cup of hot water. Steep for 5-10 minutes then drink. Can be used in combination with caraway seeds, chamomile or peppermint tea. As a food: the fennel bulb, eaten raw will help reduce gut spasms associated with trapped wind, as will chewing the seeds.	Calms digestion (wind, bloating, spasm, colic), stimulates appetite and moves mucous
Chickweed <i>Stellaria media</i>	Flowering tops and leaves	Poultice: Crush the leaves to make a paste. Place crushed leaves onto itchy skin and leave for 5-10 minutes. Apply the poultice 3x. Juiced: Juice ½ an apple, 1 cup of chickweed, ½ beetroot and 1 carrot.	The juice is a tonic and was traditionally used to detoxify at the beginning of spring. The poultice or cream of chickweeds helps to relieve dry itchy infected skin.
Dandelion <i>Taraxacum officinalis</i>	Roots and leaves	Coffee: Dig out the plant and find the roots. Take the roots inside and give them a rinse. Chop into small pieces. Roast them in the oven until dark in colour. Put them into a tea strainer in a mug of hot water and serve with a little honey. Tea: rinse some leaves and chop them. Place in a tea strainer in a cup of hot water and let them steep for 5 minutes.	The coffee stimulates the liver, improves bile flow to reduce constipation. The tea leaves have a diuretic action. They are also very high in potassium and other minerals.
Comfrey <i>Symphytum officinalis</i>	Leaves	Poultice: Crush the leaves to make a paste. Place crushed leaves onto itchy skin and leave for 5-10 minutes. Apply the poultice 3x	Wound healing