

Bergamot #6 Wteehaskwal (Munsee)

Monarda fistulosa

Wild Bergamot, commonly known as #6 to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, is among the most widely used traditional medicines. Its uses are many, helping to alleviate colds, the flu, fevers, and chills. This medicine can be found in open fields growing anywhere from 1-3 feet tall with lavender-pink flowers. Harvest this medicine by cutting at the base of the stem, making sure to leave the root. #6 is best picked when the flowers are in full bloom, in the late summer. Preserve this medicine by hanging it in bundles to dry for around 2 months. When fully dried, break up the stems to store in a glass jar alongside the flowers.

#6 is consumed as a tea to alleviate a variety of symptoms.

Ingredients:

- 1tbsp of #6
- 1 cup of water (for adults)
- 2 cups of water (for children)

#6 tea preparation and usage:

1. Steep 1tbsp of #6 in 1-2 cups of boiled water for 10 minutes.

Drink up to three cups of tea a day to alleviate symptoms.

Catnip Askaskwaamek (Munsee)

Nepeta cataria

Catnip is one of the more common medicines which has had a continued usage by the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. This medicine can be prepared into a tea that is used to alleviate anxiety, stress, insomnia, and cold or flu-like symptoms.

According to Misty Cook, Catnip grows abundantly near old barns and should be harvested in July through August. Preserve this medicine by bundling it and hanging to dry for around 2 months. Once fully dried, break it apart to store in jars for up to a year.

Ingredients:

- 1tbsp of Catnip leaves and stems
- 1 cup of boiling water (adults)
- 3 cups of boiling water (children)

Catnip tea preparation and usage:

1. Pour the boiling water over the Catnip leaves & stems and allow to steep for 15 minutes.

Adults: Drink one full cup at bedtime.

Children: Drink as desired at bedtime, normally around ½ cup.

Elderflower

Sambucus canadensis

Asanakoonzhuymihtkwus (Munsee)

This medicine comes from the Black Elderberry tree, and is commonly known as 'Elder Blows' by the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. The Elder Blows are the white blooms that precede the black berries of the tree, and are used to alleviate fevers, colds, and constipation. Harvest Elder Blows during the springtime. You will find them growing at the edges of forests or in areas of new growth. Collect elder blows inside a paper or cotton bag, making sure not to break apart the flowerheads. Preserve this medicine by placing the flowerheads on top of a cotton sheet to dry. When fully dried, store the flowers inside a cotton or paper bag.

Elder Blows are consumed as a tea to alleviate various symptoms.

Ingredients for Elder Blow tea:

- 1tbsp of Elder Blows.
- 1-1½ cups of water

Preparation and usage:

1. Steep 1tbsp of Elder Blows in 1 cup of water for 15 minutes.

Adults: Drink up to three cups of this tea per day.

Children: Dilute the tea with an additional ½ cup of water and drink as desired.

Joe-Pye-Weed

Eutrochium purpureum

Pkuwiimakw (Munsee)

Joe-Pye-Weed is a medicine of great historical significance to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. This medicine was used to treat Typhoid fever in the 18th century. The preparation and dosage of this medicine is no longer known to the Community, but it has a rich history relating to the Stockbridge-Munsee People.

The common name of this medicine is linked to Joseph Shauquethqueat, a Mohican sachem who was among the first generation of Mohican people who lived in the town of Stockbridge, MA. Shauquethqueat was born in 1722 and was the son of sachem Benjamin Kokhkewenaunaunt.

According to the greater Ashinaabe tradition, Joe Pye is the anglicized spelling of Zhopai, a medicine man who helped cure a community of Indigenous People and European settlers from Typhoid fever. When his Tribe was forcibly removed from New York State, he remained behind, some say he was forced to by settlers.

He is said to have gifted his grandchildren a bag of Joe-Pye-Weed seeds, asking them to spread them on their journey so he could eventually follow their tracks and be reunited with his Tribe.

Red Osier

Cornus sericea

Maxkweepanã'kw (Mohican)

Red osier is commonly known as 'Red Whips' to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. This medicine can be used to make a tea wash for sore eyes. Red Whips grow in swampy areas and are easy to spot in the late fall through spring due to their bright red branches. By the summertime, the bark turns green and is less noticeable. Red Whips can be harvested throughout the year by cutting branches and shaving off the bark. Preserve this medicine by laying the bark on a cloth to dry for around 3 months. Store the dried bark in a glass jar. However, since this medicine is available year-round, it is advisable to harvest as needed, rather than saving for future use.

Ingredients and equipment:

- 1tbsp of bark
- ½ cup of water
- A clean, white cloth

Tea wash preparation and usage:

1. Boil 1tbsp of Red Whip bark in ½ cup of water.
2. Strain the tea and let cool to room temperature. It is very important that the tea is fully cooled.

Dip a clean, white cloth into the tea and dab it onto the eyelids. Apply twice a day as needed.

Wild Onion

Allium canadensis

Weenoos (Mohican) Wiinoonzhuyak (Munsee)

Wild Onion can be used to treat pneumonia, reduce fevers, and alleviate coughs & congestion. Harvest by carefully removing the stalk and bulb in mid to late summer. Wild Onion can be prepared in many ways. When treating pneumonia, pound 1 onion in a cloth bag, heat it up with an iron, and apply to the chest. To reduce fevers, chop 1 onion and place equal halves on the bottom of each foot and wrap overnight. This medicine can also be made into a cough syrup. To preserve Wild Onion cough syrup, simply refrigerate for up to two weeks. Before refrigeration was widely available, a small amount of whiskey was added.

Ingredients:

- 1 large wild onion
- Sugar, honey, or maple syrup

Preparation into cough syrup:

1. Boil 1 large wild onion in water for 5 minutes.
2. Add a small amount of sugar, honey, or maple syrup, and reduce until the mixture reaches a thick consistency and can coat the back of a spoon.

Take 1tbsp of Wild Onion cough syrup as needed.

Yarrow

Wtakiipakw (Munsee)

Achillea millefolium

Yarrow can be used to alleviate mild arthritis symptoms when consumed as a tea. It's best to harvest this medicine from open fields in the summer through the early fall. Preserve this medicine by hanging it in bundles for around two months. When fully dried, break it up to store in a glass jar to be used throughout the year.

Yarrow is consumed by making a concentrated tea that is diluted before drinking.

Ingredients:

- 1 full Yarrow plant, excluding roots
- ½ cup of water

Yarrow Tea preparation and usage:

1. Boil the Yarrow plant in ½ cup of water for 5 minutes.
2. With a dropper, drop five drops of the concentrated tea into a small glass of water.

Drink this mixture twice daily to alleviate symptoms of arthritis.