



BRUISES

Arnica (*Arnica montana*). According to Commission E, Arnica is helpful in treating bruises. Arnica works by stimulating the activity of white blood cells which process congested blood, and by dispersing trapped fluids from joints and muscles and bumped and bruised tissue. It also has anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial qualities and it is these that help to reduce pain and swelling as well as improving wound healing.

Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*). Comfrey is among the oldest herbal remedies for skin problems. Poultices of the fresh leaves are a traditional home remedy for sprains, bruises and cuts. Comfrey not only promotes the healing of tissue and bone, but at the same time reduces swelling, effectively speeding up the healing process. Comfrey's healing powers have been attributed to its high content of allantoin, a substance that promotes the growth of tissue, bone and cartilage, both externally and internally. It's probably a good idea not to ingest comfrey, however. It contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids, compounds that are toxic to the liver, and there is some controversy about its safety.

Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*). Parsley is a common garden herb, rich in vitamins and therapeutic properties. Parsley has the ability to shrink small blood vessels and is helpful in treating piles, broken or thread veins and bruising.

St.-John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*). Early Greek herbalists considered St. Johns Wort an effective herb for healing wounds. Modern analysis of the plant has shown the plant to have antibacterial and astringent properties, both qualities useful in the speedy healing of cuts and wounds.

Witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*). The astringency of the leaves and bark of witch hazel made it a popular remedy for all sorts of skin conditions, from bruises to varicose veins.

Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*). I have used pieces of potato to lighten under-eye circles for many years.