

How to Select a Good Herbal Salve



Four Qualities of a Herbal Salve

A Good Herbal Salve is GOLD!

What is the best type of salve to use for a minor injury or strain? As salve makers for over 35 years, we at [Cortesia Herbal Products](#) believe there are four qualities of a good injury salve that enhances its effectiveness. These are:

- The ethics of the salve manufacturer
- The restorative qualities of the herbs used
- How the salve is made
- How the salve is applied

In this article, learn four key components of a quality therapeutic salve that make it a good **FIRST AID SALVE** for minor skin issues and injuries (like our [Cortesia Healing Salve](#)), or a **DEEP PENETRATING SALVE** that helps with muscles, joints, bones, and buffering membranes (like our Cortesia [Deep Penetrating Salve](#)).



What are the Ethics of the Salve Manufacturer?

It is important to know the overall ethics and integrity of the company making a salve, especially when shopping on the Internet. At Cortesia Herbal Products, for example, the following principles are an important reason we have many dedicated return customers using our organic remedies:

1. We are environmental stewards striving to honor and uphold Nature with reverence (our 22-acre Cortesia Sanctuary, with 2 acres of gardens, has received national praise and awards for stewardship; our low-cost gardening publications have been distributed to millions of families throughout North America).
2. We understand and abide by governmental regulations (i.e. FDA, etc.) regarding manufacturing and medical claims.
3. Our plant materials and ingredients are organic, whole-plant based (meaning not powdered plant concentrates).
4. Our staff is treated with dignity and respect, receiving above-living-wage compensation for their skills and education.
5. We treat customers like family, with compassion and respect.
6. Finally, we philanthropically support those in need in our community and elsewhere (we donate about 10% of net profits to charitable causes related to housing, shelter, and food security).

What Restorative Herbs are in the Salve?

An **herbal salve can be one of the most beneficial remedies in self-care**. The advantage of using an herbal salve is its ability to provide **TARGETED RELIEF** via immediate dermal penetration and/or absorption. This is because the skin's penetrating and absorbent qualities (up to 60%) allow plant nutrients to permeate its Epidermal, Dermal, and deeper Subcutaneous layers. An oral tincture, on the other hand, is absorbed into the bloodstream and allows for the slow release of nutrients. (If you want to learn more about the miracle of your skin and all the neat things underneath it, [here is a good read.](#))

Four Salve Qualities

We believe that every medicine cabinet should have two types of salves:

- **ALL-PURPOSE SALVE** that works very well with **minor first aid and skin issues** characterized by its immediate absorption, moisturizing, pain-relieving and skin-restoration properties.
- **DEEP PENETRATING SALVE** that uniquely **moves through all skin layers** down to muscle, joints, buffering membranes, and connective tissue.

In short, the types of organic herbs used in a salve should be known for their unique restorative qualities. These qualities may be moisturizing, cleansing, pain relieving, antimicrobial, antibacterial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, astringent, catalysts for immune system response, and more! The carriers (oils, butters, vitamins and nutrients, etc.) should also allow the herbs' phytonutrients to safely permeate skin layers. Finally, the creator of the salve should know what they are doing in its creation!



An example is the common herbs in our customer favorite **Deep Penetrating Salve** — Solomon's Seal, Calendula, Comfrey, Mullein, Horsetail, Arnica, St. John's Wort. In our 35 years of study of the historical use of herbs, we identified particular ones cited to support muscular-skeletal and skin/tissue health. These all-natural nourishing herbs are packed with numerous phytonutrients and when combined create exceptional synergy as a salve that really moves deeply when rubbed in well.

This salve should always be rubbed in well (use only a small amount at a time - a greasy film is too much!). It can also be applied after application of a topical Magnesium spray, for even deep penetration.

Four Salve Qualities



Our all-purpose **Cortesia Healing Salve** has been beloved for over 35 years. Numerous garden herbs like Solomon's Seal, Calendula, Comfrey, St. John's Wort, Oregon Grape, Lemon Balm, Plantain, Chickweed, Prunella, and Yarrow make for quite an earthy family of skin-enhancing herbs that do well for life's bites, scrapes, owees, roughness, rashes, blemishes, minor burns, new baby butts, and even tight bolts and rusty garden clippers!

How is the Salve Made?

Since **our skin cannot discriminate between synthetic and natural**, or between harmful and beneficial, it may absorb harmful chemicals present in commercial skin care products and the

environment. This is all the more reason to consider the use of an organic natural herbal salve, especially one made by a trusted company or even by you.

When we decided to make salves for customer use at Cortesia Herbal Products, our ethic of reverence for life demanded conscientious production and use of non-harmful ingredients. Here are numerous qualities to look for in any salve.

- Natural and organic base oils, butters, and plants (not from powdered concentrates)
- Free of synthetic fragrances and colors
- Free of artificial preservatives and fillers
- Free of artificial foam boosters
- Free of alcohol
- Free of petroleum products
- Free of synthetic additives
- Free of GMO's
- Free of detergents
- Created by a company with dedication to individual and environmental health

Four Salve Qualities

That's quite a manifest, but for over 35 years we have reverently abided by the above principles to create our salves, each designed for deep penetration and absorption, and created in small batches in an FDA-approved facility. Slowly steeping and stirring the herbs in the base oils over many hours under very low heat extracts the important restorative phytonutrients unique to each plant. We believe this is key to creating a salve that penetrates the skin and/or is absorbed at deeper cellular levels. Let's now look at how a salve is applied.

How is the Salve Applied?



Like a sponge, our skin allows for both penetration and absorption. Therefore, when using an herbal salve, consider its use 1) cosmetically for skin health, and/or 2) therapeutically targeted for deep penetration and absorption. Here's why:

1. If a chemical or substance is **applied to the skin**, it may only penetrate the first (Epidermis) of the three layers of skin. This

cosmetic use may allow **absorption** without deeper systems of the body being affected. For example, oil or a moisturizing cream or salve only penetrates the skin and provides for skin health.

Our [Cortesia Healing Salve](#) is a time-proven, restorative salve, using herbs that are excellent for all-purpose skin health.

2. If a chemical or substance is **absorbed through the skin**, it may move through the three skin layers (Epidermis, Dermis, and Subcutaneous), reach the bloodstream and potentially affect internal body systems — muscles, joints, buffering membranes, connective tissues, etc. An example would be the use of a transdermal nicotine patch, concentrated essential oil, deep penetrating salve, or even radiation. Our [Cortesia Deep Penetrating Salve](#), especially when rubbed in well to a specific location, contains herbs that work deeply and very well together (what is called “synergy”).

Four Salve Qualities

A well-made, all-natural organic herbal salve can be a wonderful staple in self-care. Here are a few tips for application:

- Keep your salve out of heat or light. Herbal salves can soften a little if stored near heat, and then re-harden when cooler. Over time, this may affect the quality and smell.
- Apply just a dab and rub it in well for a few minutes. A little bit can work well and when absorbed should not feel greasy.



- Skin pores are like shingles; so, rubbing upwards (towards the heart) helps with absorption and penetration.
- Applying moist heat to a penetrating salve moves the herbs deeply. It is as simple as a heating pad placed on top of a well-wrung cloth on your injured area.
- If using a topical Magnesium spray, apply first and then apply the herbal salve. The reason is because the magnesium chloride spray “opens” the skin’s pores for better absorption
- Stay devoted to a daily use of your salve and other herbal remedies. Their unique wellness properties may appear both subtle

over time and dramatic, but you would never know if you weren’t attentive and devoted to your efforts!

Visit us at: www.cortesiaherbalproducts.com

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2022 by C. Forrest McDowell, PhD