

Cayenne to the Rescue Part II

I would have been happy to have discovered cayenne pepper if it only helped with immune boosting and migraine busting, but it wasn't to stop there. The *Herbal Home Healthcare* textbook I had used during the Family Herbalist correspondence course included even more uses for the potent herb within its pages. A head collision during a soccer game provided me with an opportunity to use cayenne pepper to stop bleeding.

When Andrew, our star player, dashed to save a goal he did not know that he would be walking off the field, face covered in blood from a head injury. Andrew plays forward on our high school soccer team. When a corner kick threatened our goal, Andrew dashed forward to block that attempt with great fervor. The opposing player wanted the opposite, with equal intensity. Both walked off the field bleeding after a head collision at the goal. A student nurse cleaned up Andrew's face and scalp wound. It took a while as Andrew's hair was so matted from the blood. The student nurse applied an instant icepack and waited for the bleeding to stop. Once the small head gash was visible it was

thought that Andrew did not need stitches. The scalp wound was about an inch long and about a sixteenth of an inch deep. The gushing had subsided but the wound intermittently seeped blood. Andrew wanted to get back in the game, but the coach would not allow it while the wound continued oozing. The opposing player was not as fortunate and was presently in transit to the hospital where he would receive stitches for an opened eyebrow. At that moment my thoughts were



mixed, "Maybe I should leave things well alone, since it seems that Andrew was out of the woods, probably not needing stitches, with the main blood gushing stopped?" My other thought was to source some cayenne powder and make a solution for Andrew to drink as well as apply directly to his head wound. I pondered the thought as I assumed my position in the lawn chair along the sidelines, next to my wife. Then the voice next to me said, "Why don't you put what you have learned in your Family Herbalist class to use?" That was all I needed to hear. I put a call out for cayenne powder and soon it appeared, brought from a local home. I asked Andrew if he wanted to stop the bleeding with hopes of reentering the game. He replied with a hearty, "Yes." First, I made a cayenne solution for Andrew to drink consisting of about one teaspoon of cayenne powder into a sixteen- fluid - ounce bottle of water, about half full. After Andrew drank the cayenne solution I asked him if he minded if I put cayenne powder directly on his head wound which was intermittently oozing blood. Again, Andrew said yes. Next, I warned Andrew that it might burn. I didn't remember what the *Herbalist Home Health Care* book had said about the cayenne burning, or even about the direct usage of cayenne powder on a wound. I did

remember reading that cayenne powder could be directly applied to a bleeding wound, acting as a styptic to stop the bleeding, somewhere in my coursework. I applied a little cayenne powder to Andrew's head wound, starting at the outer edges of the wound, asking him at every step if he felt burning and if he wanted me to continue. Each progressive dousing brought the affirmative from Andrew to continue, with no report of pain. After applying about a half of a teaspoon of cayenne powder to Andrew's scalp wound, and after he drank a cayenne solution, all bleeding stopped. Next the mother was called again to ask if her seventeen-year-old son could re-enter the game. The coach was told that Andrew's bleeding had completely stopped and that his mother had approved of his re-entrance into the game. Andrew heartily re-entered the game and was able to complete it without further bleeding. Our high school soccer team did not win that day, but I gained confidence in applying my herbal training, which in itself was a personal victory for me. Next time I'll be more confident to bring cayenne to the rescue at the out start of a bleeding issue; even pack it in an herbal medicine bag.

I'm glad I learned yet another usage for cayenne pepper that day and will be more confident to use it during a bleeding event should that occasion present itself to me again.

More fun with cayenne pepper: Whereas I have made cayenne powder at home using a coffee grinder and dried cayenne peppers, I am currently experimenting with my own tincture, having grown a good amount of cayenne peppers on our organic vegetable farm this past summer. I currently have five mason jars of fresh cayenne peppers steeping in one-hundred-proof-grain alcohol. I used Svedka Swedish vodka as Swedish vodka is not produced from GMO grain. I should have enough cayenne tincture to keep Dawn's migraines at bay for a while.

Upon returning to my home I searched for the reference regarding cayenne as a direct application to a bleeding wound. This is what I found within the "Family Herbalist" course materials. On page seventy of *Herbal Home Health Care* it states, "The old herbalist claimed that cayenne pepper should be poured directly into a fresh wound, to sterilize and stop the bleeding." With a little more digging I found what I had remembered reading in my course work. In *Herbs to the Rescue*, page seventeen, under the section titled "Bleeding" it says: "Typically, use Cayenne powder directly on wound." I guess that makes me an old-fashioned herbalist. And I'm ok with that. It worked.

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