

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S
Herbal Legacy Newsletter

Herbs for Athletes

by Jerem Eyre



I am a runner. I'm not the kind of runner you will ever see in the Olympics, or even the kind you will see crossing the finish line in first place at the local 10K. I am the kind who races only against my previous best times and finishes somewhere in the middle of the pack at the weekend races. I run 25 to 30 miles a week on average, and try to do at least one marathon every year with an additional sprinkling of 10Ks, 5Ks and half marathons throughout the year just to keep things interesting.

I'm also a budding herbalist. I find the two go really well together. Running, as with just about any sport, brings with it predictable repetitive use injuries, aches and pains. Shin-splints, ITBS (illiotibial band syndrome), plantar fasciitis, hip pains, knee pains, sore muscles, etc. I've experienced all of them. Early in 2003 it got so bad I quit running for the rest of year, and the next. Before I started using herbs, I didn't have any real care system for dealing with these aches and pains. I would stretch and roll out the muscles, take Tylenol when I felt I needed it, and do all the stuff that traditional sports therapists told me to do. And it helped... a little.

Now I have more resources. I've learned a little bit about herbs and formulas – I have three favorites that have dramatically changed the sport for me. I still get aches and pains to some extent – running more than 20 miles without stopping will do that no matter what you are taking – but those aches leave quickly, are much less severe than before, and my feet, legs, lungs and heart are healthier than they have ever been.

Favorite Herb #1 – Comfrey. There is a reason Dr. Christopher liked to call it “people putty.” It rebuilds tissue and muscle more effectively than anything I have ever seen. I use Dr. Christopher's Comfrey Ointment at night before bed. I will rub it thoroughly into my knees, down my shins, and around my ankles and feet. Consistently doing this has completely erased ITBS for me, which used to plague me. A word of caution: comfrey ointment will stain sheets if you hop straight into bed, so wear pajamas and socks.

Favorite Herb #2 – Complete Tissue and Bone Formula (formerly known as BF&C). Okay, so this is not a single herb, but a formula of several herbs. This is another game changer for me. I like to take it in the capsule form. During the heavy running season building up to a marathon, I will usually take 8 to 10 capsules a day; 4-5 at breakfast and another 4-5 at dinner. Paired with the Comfrey Ointment this has taken care of most of the chronic repetitive use injuries, aches and pains I used to suffer from. It is a formulation of oak bark, marshmallow root, mullein herb,

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walnut bark (or leaves), gravel root, wormwood, lobelia, and skullcap. This combination was formulated specifically for rebuilding and healing tissue, bone, flesh and cartilage. This is a formula that every athlete should stock up on.

Favorite Herb #3 – Cayenne. Simply put, cayenne is an amazing herb. It is especially good for the heart, arteries, blood, and the digestive system. I like to take this every morning after breakfast by mixing about ¼ teaspoon with a small amount of water and gulping it down. The effect has been surprising. I find I am able to run longer and faster with less fatigue. I believe it is because my heart and circulatory system are a lot stronger than they used to be, and they are working more efficiently. Digestion and bowel movements have never been better and I have a lot more energy throughout the rest of the day too.

A few months ago I had an exam for a life insurance policy application. The examiner had to check the blood pressure twice to make sure it was accurate. She then asked, “are you a runner?” I told her I was and she said “what else do you do? Because runners usually have strong hearts and really low blood pressure, but this unusually low, even for runners.”

A word of caution on the Cayenne: if you are considering taking it, and I strongly recommend you do, start small and cool. By that I mean start with small amounts, 1/8 teaspoon or so, and start with a low HU (Heat Units) variety of Cayenne. There is huge difference between 30,000 HU and 160,000 HU Cayenne. You’ll feel it immediately. Start cool and work up to the hot stuff over time. Also, be sure to mix it with only enough water that you can swallow it all at once. This helps to get it over with faster, and with less burning your mouth.

Those are my three favorites for running. Every athlete of any sport could benefit greatly by using them. And if you are a non-athlete, there are a whole host of benefits to you with these herbs as well.

To learn more about these herbs and formulas visit www.herballegacy.com.

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