



# Gemmotherapy, Homeopathy's "Good Friend"

## Harnessing the power of plant stem cells

by LAUREN HUBELE

*New for 2018 and by popular demand!*

This column will focus on healthy lifestyles and therapies that are complementary to the use of homeopathy.

More than likely, you have had the good fortune to experience the amazing ability of a homeopathic remedy to engage your vital force and promote a natural resolution of symptoms. Perhaps this was with a flu or migraine headaches or a skin condition.

But have you also had times when your symptoms did not resolve 100%? Or when a remedy to match your symptoms could not be found? Or when your baby's inability to verbally express her symptoms meant you could not find the right remedy for her? Exactly these scenarios are when turning to homeopathy's good friend, gemmotherapy extracts, would serve you.

### How is gemmotherapy different?

Gemmotherapy extracts offer a very different yet complementary action to homeopathy. While homeopathic remedies engage the vital force, gemmotherapy extracts engage organs and organ systems on a cellular level to improve their function. The extracts are the result of a maceration process: the early buds or shoots from an individual tree, shrub, or vine are steeped in alcohol and glycerin for 30 days at a ratio of 1 part plant matter to 20 parts solvent; the liquid extract is then strained and decanted.

Gemmotherapy extracts stand out

from all herbal extracts because of the plant material used—buds and shoots. So gemmotherapy extracts are able to deliver the growth materials and healing potential of the entire tree or shrub from which the bud is selected. This is because buds and shoots include *meristem cells*, the very cells that keep the plant growing, similar to stem cells in humans. These embryonic cells of the plant provide gemmotherapy extracts with their unique potential to simultaneously clean, feed, and restore organ tissue.

In contrast to vitamin and mineral supplements that can improve health only as long as you continue to consume them, gemmotherapy extracts can actually correct the function of organs so that, over time, your body is once again able to produce exactly what is required.

### Eight essential extracts

One of the best ways to familiarize yourself with gemmotherapy extracts is to use them at home for acute ailments. With a small set of only eight extracts, you can care for a wide range of acute symptoms. While you will certainly want to eventually explore the other 20-plus extracts known for addressing acute symptoms, the following eight extracts will give you an opportunity to build your confidence and appreciate the results:

- Common Alder\*, *Alnus glutinosa*
- Black Currant, *Ribes nigrum*
- Dog Rose, *Rosa canina*
- European Blueberry, *Vaccinium myrtillus*
- Common Fig, *Ficus carica*
- Hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus*

- Silver Lime, *Tilia tomentosa*
- Walnut, *Juglans regia*.

Acute symptoms are those that occur suddenly; they are not the chronic symptoms experienced daily or cyclically. Gemmotherapy extracts can be used according to the following acute protocols for up to three weeks at a time. Beyond three weeks, a symptom has become chronic and requires a different treatment method that addresses elimination symptoms, as explained later under "Restoring immunity."

### Home care: acute protocols

Here are some protocols you can create with this set of eight extracts:

#### • Digestive Symptoms

*Acid Reflux/Bloating or Nausea/Vomiting:* Common Fig

*Colic or food-related Digestive Discomfort:* Common Fig + Walnut

#### • Elimination Symptoms

*Constipation:* Walnut

*Diarrhea:* Common Fig

*Post-antibiotic Diarrhea:* Walnut

#### Emotional Symptoms

*Panic or Anxiety (situational, not generalized):* Common Fig + Silver Lime

#### • Ear, Nose, Throat, Respiratory Symptoms

*Bronchitis or Cough:* Common Alder + Black Currant + Hornbeam

*Earache:* Black Currant + Blueberry + Dog Rose

*Flu and Flu-like Virus:* Black Currant + Oak



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European Blueberry, *Vaccinium myrtillus*

## Gemmotherapy Origins

While the early concept of gemmotherapy can be credited to Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), we can thank the persistence of Belgian physician and homeopath, Dr. Pol Henry, for the foundations of gemmotherapy. Henry conducted the first known comprehensive research on the therapeutic qualities of plant buds, discovering the great healing potential of their meristem tissue. He called his medicine *gemmotherapie* after the "gem" of the plant and published his findings in his 1959 book, *Bases Biologiques de la Gemmotherapie*.

The French physician, Dr. Max Tetau, collaborated with Dr. Henry from the 1960s onward and conducted further research. Tetau believed chronic disease results from an accumulation of toxins within the body, and he sought a therapy to successfully drain toxins and heal tissue on a cellular level. Tetau expanded on Henry's findings, right up to his own passing in 2012.

Drs. Gerard Gueniot and Fernando Piterà further developed the research of Drs. Henry and Tetau. Professor Piterà is the guiding force behind the spread of gemmotherapy research to Italy. A physician, homeopath, and scientist at the University of Genoa, Piterà published the first complete exposition on gemmotherapy in 2000, *Compendio di Gemmotherapia Clinica*. His work has demonstrated that gemmotherapy, based on meristems, is able to extend its action to the organic and cellular levels, while herbal therapy works only at the functional and metabolic level.

Today, cutting-edge research in gemmotherapy is occurring in Romania. The Romanian Association of Gemmotherapy and Homeopathy serves as a forum to collect and present the most current discoveries. The association publishes an annual journal and sponsors a lively, well-attended conference at the start of each summer.

It is interesting to note that gemmotherapy, homeopathy, and herbal therapies experienced a resurgence in Romania during the 1980s financial crisis imposed by the last communist dictator, Nicolae Ceausescu. As a solution to the restriction of imported medications, many medical schools implemented training programs in gemmotherapy, homeopathy, and herbal therapies, and these programs still thrive today.

## ... buds and shoots include *meristem cells*, the very cells that keep the plant growing, similar to stem cells in humans.

*Seasonal Allergies:* Black Currant + Common Alder + Dog Rose

- **Skin Reactions** - *topical applications*  
*Stings, Hives:* Black Currant  
*Infected Wound:* Walnut

### Taking the extracts

Gemmotherapy extracts are available in either a concentrate (the liquid extract from the maceration of the buds) or a D1 dilution (a dilution of the concentrate, equivalent to a 1X potency in homeopathic terms). I prefer the D1 dilutions, as I find they allow greater control in dosing babies and sensitive adults. The following suggested dosages are for D1 dilutions. (If you are using a concentrate, adjust the dosage by considering that one drop of concentrate is equivalent to about eight drops of D1.)

To take a dose, put the appropriate number of drops into 4 to 6 ounces of water. Babies can be given drops directly in the mouth, followed by breast milk or bottle.

*For Acute Protocols, in general:* During the first 24 hours, dose every 1 to 3 hours. Reduce the frequency as symptoms improve. Continue dosing for 3 days after all symptoms have cleared.

*For Acute Vomiting, Fever, or Allergic Reaction:* Dose every 15 minutes until improvement, then twice daily for the next 3 days.

*For Acute Topical Application (for stings, hives, infected wound):* Apply with a clean fingertip, up to 4 times daily.

*Dosage Amounts for D1 Gemmotherapy Extract Dilutions:*

Age 10 years to adult: 25 drops per extract (up to 3 times daily)

Age 5 to 10 years: 15 drops per extract (up to 3 times daily)

Age 3 to 6 years: 10 drops per extract (up to 3 times daily)

Age 0 to 3 years: 5 to 10 drops per extract (up to 3 times daily)

### Gemmotherapy for animals

At times, sorting out symptoms and modalities of our animal companions so we can choose a homeopathic remedy can be particularly challenging; however, choosing a gemmotherapy extract is more straightforward. Animals can benefit from all the acute protocols for humans described above. In addition, here are a few extracts for more chronic situations that I have found useful, to be given on a daily basis.

Many elderly cats (and dogs) can develop urinary symptoms. Supporting their colon and kidneys with a daily dose of Lingonberry extract (*Vaccinium vitis*) will bring great relief.

Animals with skin issues may find relief with the kidney tonic, Silver Birch Sap (*Betula linfa*). Should skin conditions be inflamed or infected, Walnut (*Juglans regia*) extract would be the preferred choice. Animals with allergy symptoms may do well on the human *seasonal allergy protocol* described earlier.

After an animal has been vaccinated or given prescription medication, Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) can be used for a minimum of one month. For animals on long-term medication, Hazel (*Corylus*) in daily doses provides an excellent protection and support for the liver as it manages the added toxic load.

Supporting the kidneys of healthy animals can promote longevity and reduce chances of chronic symptoms developing later in life. A general daily support can

Dog Rose, *Rosa canina*

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be provided with this schedule: during autumn and spring, give Silver Birch Sap (*Betula linfa*); during winter and summer, give Juniper<sup>1</sup> (*Juniperus communis*). Note: Juniper should never be given to animals with kidney cancer or disease.

When dosing animals with D1 extracts, the suggested amount is 1 to 7 drops depending on weight, with cats getting 1 to 2 drops and large dogs 5 to 7 drops, once daily for maintenance, and 3 times daily when symptoms are acute. Drops can go directly into the mouth, into a small dish of water if all is to be consumed, on food, or rubbed onto the inner skin of the ear.

### Gemmotherapy Resources

#### Books

*Gemmotherapy for our Animal Friends*, Stephen Blake

*Phytembryotherapy: The Embryo of Gemmotherapy*, Drs. Guenoit and Ledoux

*Gemmotherapy for Everyone: An Introduction to Acute Care*, Lauren Hubele

*Gemmotherapy for Everyone: Building Immunity in Babies and Young Children*, Lauren Hubele

#### Courses

Introductory and Advanced Gemmotherapy Webinars, live or recorded, Robin DiPasquale, ND, RH (AHG)

Foundations of Gemmotherapy, a live or recorded series, Lauren Hubele

Gemmotherapy for Everyone, free webinars, Lauren Hubele

#### Gemmotherapy Extracts

The following companies make gemmotherapy extracts:

Herbalgem—concentrated single extracts and blends

I & E Organics—D1 single extracts

Seroyal—D1 single extracts

Vital Extracts—D1 single extracts and concentrated acute blends

### Restoring immunity

While acute care protocols are of great benefit, gemmotherapy makes its greatest contribution to health when focused on building immunity in babies and children and restoring immunity in adults. Using individualized protocols to optimize bowel and kidney elimination will improve the body's ability to eliminate wastes and support the restoration of organ function in chronic conditions.

When bowel elimination is less frequent than twice daily or is unformed, urgent, or painful, the daily cleaning necessary to establish or restore a healthy immune response is diminished. The effects of poor elimination are clearest when observing a baby or young child. The most common chronic symptoms in children—colic, ear inflammation, sinus congestion, croup, inflamed bronchi or asthmatic coughing, skin conditions such as eczema—all have their beginning in less than optimal bowel elimination. Correct this with a gemmotherapy protocol and diet, and the immune system will quickly get to work. Alternatively, if you let the condition continue or suppress it, the condition will get worse and more complex symptoms will appear.

The gemmotherapy extracts most useful in optimizing bowel elimination in children include Silver Birch Sap, Blueberry, Blackthorn, Fig, Lingonberry, and Walnut. For adults, the list is the same, with the addition of Juniper.

However, selecting the correct extract and dosage to optimize elimination is more involved than addressing acute symptoms with a set protocol. To be successful and not aggravate present symptoms and not create new symptoms by detoxifying too quickly, one must learn to read the symptoms of vitality (eyes, teeth, hair, skin, sleep, and family history) and use those to choose the correct extract and dosage. Learning about these symptoms of vitality as well as the indications

for use of each gemmotherapy extract is highly recommended but beyond the scope of this article (see “Gemmotherapy Resources” below). Alternatively, contact a practitioner who has experience optimizing elimination with gemmotherapy and plant-based diets.

### Personal experience

I discovered gemmotherapy when my naturopathic physician included it in my protocols after a second melanoma occurrence. Later, when looking for ways to best resolve chronic inflammation for clients in my homeopathic practice, I considered gemmotherapy extracts. This led me on a quest to discover all that was currently documented on the extracts, and I spent years studying with European experts in the field.

Because of the reliable results, I began teaching my clients how to care for themselves and family members with acute gemmotherapy protocols. I also find that, for those with chronic conditions, homeopathic remedies are more successful after the organs of elimination have been optimized with a gemmotherapy protocol.

So there you have it, a glimpse into the potential of gemmotherapy extracts in supporting your healthy lifestyle. I hope you find gemmotherapy as empowering as my clients and I have found it to be.

<sup>1</sup> Juniper and Common Alder are two extracts that must be avoided during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Lauren Hubele is a coach, educator, wife, and mother in Austin, Texas. Her work provides a framework for resolving chronic and acute conditions using gemmotherapy, homeopathy, and a plant-based diet. She is author of the *Gemmotherapy For Everyone* series, which has two volumes, *Building Immunity In Babies & Young Children* and *An Introduction to Acute Care*; she is currently working on the third in that series, *Restoring Your Immunity*. She has served as an NCH board member and as Joint American Homeopathic Conference chair.