



SIMH
SOUTHERN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL HERBALISM

Diploma of Medical Herbalism

Curriculum

The Southern Institute of Medical Herbalism (SIMH) Diploma of Medical Herbalism is constructed on the simple objective of teaching that which will be most clinically relevant to the practicing medical herbalist who wants to get the best possible results with their work. The course is therefore focused on medicinal herbs and the holistic treatment of common health conditions and there is much practical and experiential learning along the way!



Structure

There are four stages to the SIMH Diploma of Medical Herbalism, each one broadly representing the main stages of life as well as correlating to some of the core traditional elements of Nature:

Wood - growth & potential - pregnancy & children's health

Fire - change & transformation - adolescence

Earth - stability & strength - women & men's health

Water - adaptation & renewal - adulthood & aging



Coursework

Overview

In various formats, the student will create several unique documents for their Diploma coursework

1. Materia Medica

In each stage, through video & audio lessons & by reading from a variety of sources, the student will construct a close working knowledge of many of the most important medicinal herbs and will create their own A-Z reference text; a ‘Materia Medica’

2. Conditions Index

In each stage, the student develops an understanding of how to work safely and effectively with many of the most common health conditions found in modern herbal practice and will create their own A-Z reference text; a ‘Conditions Index’

3. Applied Learning

The applied learning section of the course contains a number of practical videos designed to teach essential clinical skills to enable the student to begin working with case studies as a student practitioner as soon as they are ready. The second part of the applied learning concerns the development of several research projects that are described in further detail below

4. Experiential Journal

Personalised learning is recognised as an optimal method for the knowledge and theory of medical herbalism to become known in a way that can be best used to guide and help others. The learning process is recorded in the ‘Experiential Journal’

Materia Medica	Conditions Index
Botanical Name & Family Actions - Energetics History - Folklore Science - Safety Indications Dosage Pairing & Formulation Preparation & Manufacturing	Terms & Concepts Signs & Symptoms Causation - Mitigation History - Development Constitution - Terrain Cycle of Healing Medicinal Options Therapeutic Actions
Experiential Journal	Applied Learning
Therapeutic Diets Exercise Techniques Relaxation Practices Emotional Healing Organoleptic learning Pairing & Formulation Self-Understanding, Awareness & Observation	Taking the Case - Interview skills Diagnostics - physical & laboratory Assessment & follow-up The therapeutic relationship Medical ethics, safety, confidentiality Scope of Practice, Referring Building successful practice Research projects

1. Materia Medica

In each stage, through video and audio lessons and by reading from a variety of sources, the student will construct a close working knowledge of many of the most important medicinal herbs and will create their own A-Z reference text; a ‘Materia Medica’

This means learning their:

1. Botanical name & family
2. Actions & energetics
3. Uses & indications
4. Dosage matters
5. Science & safety
6. History & folklore
7. Pairing & formulation
8. Preparation & manufacturing



Stage 1 ♦ Wood	Stage 2 ♦ Fire
Agrimony - Alfalfa - Aniseed - Calendula (cert)* Caraway - Catnip - Chamomile (cert) Echinacea (cert) - Elder - Eyebright Fennel - Garlic - Ginger - Hyssop Lemon-balm (cert) - Lime flowers Marshmallow (cert) - Myrrh - Nettles (cert) Oatstraw - Peppermint - Plantain Raspberry (cert) - Thyme - Yarrow	Barberry - Basil (cert) - Boneset - Burdock (cert) Californian poppy - Cascara - Celandine Cinnamon - Dandelion (cert) - Feverfew - Gentian (cert) - Globe artichoke - Goldenrod Golden Seal - Hops - Kava - Lavender Passion flower - Poke root - Red Clover (cert) Rosemary - Skullcap (cert) - St John's (cert) St Mary's thistle - Yellow Dock
Stage 4 ♦ Water	Stage 3 ♦ Earth
Angelica - Arnica - Astragalus Bacopa - Bayberry - Birch leaf - Cayenne Celery seed - Devil's claw - Elecampane Ginkgo biloba - Hawthorn (cert) Horse Chestnut - Lobelia - Mullein Panax Ginseng - Plantago husks Prickly Ash - Reishi - Slippery elm White horehound - Turmeric (cert) Valerian (cert) - Wild Cherry - Willow	Black Cohosh - Cleavers - Cordyceps Corn silk - Cramp bark (cert) - Damiana Dong Quai - Epimedium - Juniper (cert) Kola nut - Lady's mantle - Licorice (cert) Meadowsweet - Motherwort - Paeony Rehmannia - Rue - Sage - Sarsaparilla Shepherd's purse - Uva-ursi Vitex - Wild yam - Withania - Wormwood



*Cert - these herbs were part of the experiential sample pack that students received in the Certificate and will be further revised in the Diploma

2. Conditions Index

In each stage, the student develops an understanding of how to work safely and effectively with many of the most common health conditions found in modern herbal practice and will create their own A-Z reference text: a Conditions Index.

Central to this knowledge is a recognition that it is vital to understand a person's constitution, to see the underlying 'terrain' of their health, and to develop a working toolbox with the kinds of medicinal and therapeutic options that are most likely to help.



Stage 1 ♦ Wood	Stage 2 ♦ Fire
<i>Children's health - Pregnancy health</i> Allergies & Intolerances - Anxiety - Asthma Bedwetting - Bronchitis & Pneumonia Breastfeeding - Childbirth - Colds & Flu - Colic Constipation - Coughs - Diarrhoea Ear Infections - Eye problems - Eczema Failure to thrive - Fevers - Immunisations Morning sickness - Miscarriage Nausea & Vomiting - Pre-parturition Sore throats & Tonsillitis Sleeping problems - Stomachaches Stretch marks - Teething - Wounds	<i>Adolescent health - Young Adult health</i> Acne - ADD/ADHD - Anaemia Anger & irritability - Anorexia CFS/Fibromyalgia - Detoxification Diaphoresis - Gallstones - Hay fever Headache - Herpes infections - Insomnia Inflammatory Bowel Disease Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) Liver health - Lymphatic health - Migraine Mouth Ulcers - Nerve Pain - Partial paralysis Post-viral syndrome - Sinusitis Tinnitus - Vitiligo
Stage 4 ♦ Water	Stage 3 ♦ Earth
<i>Mature adult health - Aging health</i> Arrhythmias - Back problems - Bad breath Cancer - Fatigue Gastritis - Gout High blood pressure - Intermittent claudication Involuntary movements - Isolation Loss of Purpose - Loss of weight or appetite Meniere's disease - Osteoarthritis Osteoporosis - Raynaud's Syndrome Skin Ulcers - Urticaria - Varicose veins	<i>Women's health - Men's Health</i> Amenorrhoea - Cholesterol - Depression Dysbiosis - Dysmenorrhoea ED - Endometriosis - Fertility - Fibroids Immune deficiency - Kidney health Low libido - Menorrhagia Metabolic Syndrome - PCOS Premenstrual syndrome - Prostate Problems Rosacea - Menopause - Thyroid health - UTIs



3. Applied Learning

The Applied Learning sections in the Diploma include educational videos, audio lectures, selected reading, self-directed study and participation in the student forums.

Core learning outcomes are for the student to develop a practical understanding of key areas of clinical relevance to the practicing herbalist, so there are in-depth discussions on such matters as:

- Interview skills
- Diagnostics - physical & laboratory
- Constructing effective treatment programs
- Assessment & follow-ups
- The therapeutic relationship
- Medical ethics, safety & confidentiality
- Scope of practice
- Referral networks
- Building a successful practice

Research Projects

The Diploma includes four in-depth research projects. At the end of each stage, along with the other coursebooks, the research projects that are in development can be sent in for review and feedback if needed.

There are four broad areas for each project: **Nature - History - Health Science - Plant Science**

The projects are to deepen knowledge and help the student self-direct their learning with the goal of encouraging a lifelong interest in the study of the art and science of health and medicine.

Examples of research projects are given below, and the student may choose these as their template however, they are also welcome to request doing their research into other subjects and need only write about their topic and goals to the faculty beforehand for there to be an understanding of the level of expectation for the work required.

Nature	History
e.g. grow a plant from seed and learn how to identify and sustainably wildcraft medicinal plants in the student's region	e.g. learn and write about the history of 'Western Medical Herbalism' including examples of medicines still used today and the influence of key figures & schools of thought
Plant Science	Health Science
e.g. show an understanding of toxicology, pharmacognosy and compare optimal methods of extraction for various plant constituents	e.g. explore in-depth the anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology of a condition of personal importance to the student

4. Experiential Journal

A good herbalist, depending on who is coming to see them and why, can need to be a counsellor, an exercise coach or a dietician. From the beginning of the certificate course, our students practice experiential learning and, throughout the diploma, each student must try out and journal their experiences with various diets, exercise methods and emotional healing techniques, along with the herbs that they get to know in person.



Stage 1	Stage 2
Hypoallergenic Diet Gut Activation e.g. Hara massage, Belly-dancing, Hula-hooping, Belly breathing Emotional Healing practice Working with anxiety e.g. Breathing - Worry time Course of Gut-healing herbs Organoleptic learning Pairing & Formulation Observing Nature	Cleansing diet High intensity training e.g. Calisthenics, circuit training, Freeletics etc. Emotional Healing practice Working with anger e.g. Releasing the heat - Active Listening Course of Cleansing herbs Organoleptic learning Pairing & Formulation Self-Reflection on the Cycle of Healing
Stage 4	Stage 3
Conscious eating Restorative exercise e.g. Yoga, Tai Chi, Walking Emotional Healing practice Working with tiredness Releasing tension Course of Nervine herbs Organoleptic learning Pairing & Formulation Personal Calling - Hopes & Aspirations	Ketogenic Diet Sustained exercise e.g. Hill walks, cycling, swimming Emotional Healing practice Working with sadness Constitutional approaches Course of Tonic herbs Organoleptic learning Pairing & Formulation Practicing Compassion



Paul Bergner's Courses

Ten complete courses from our senior lecturer, world renowned herbal educator Paul Bergner, are included throughout our training. Three are completed during the prerequisite Certificate of Herbal Medicine and seven are spaced throughout the Diploma. The seven diploma courses are staged and summarised as follows:



Stage 1	Stage 2
Materia Medica Intensive An advanced course on <i>materia medica</i> - the 'materials of medicine' for the nervous, respiratory, digestive, liver, and reproductive systems. Identifying and applying concepts of herbal energetics, temperatures, and humidity in the study of our healing herbs	Herbal Detoxification, Alteratives & the Liver Learning about the liver in health and disease, the different kinds of toxicity and the role of nutrition in supporting detoxification. In-depth study on cleansing herbs; <i>alteratives</i> , including how to match the right herbs to the right person and how to prevent side effects
Advanced Herbal Actions & Formulation Learning the clinical herbal actions that will accurately predict the physiological effects in the person taking the medicine. The art of combining actions and herbal pairing to learn how to devise the right formula for the patient first and their condition second	Inflammation, Intolerance & Autoimmunity Learning safe and effective methods of treatment for patients with serious chronic illnesses such as allergies, autoimmune conditions, neurological problems, cardiovascular inflammation, cancer, kidney failure, mental disorders, and more
Safety in Practice Seminar A comprehensive course on the essential subject of how to use herbs safely. Learning the principles and problems of herb-drug interactions, the importance of screening for iatrogenic (medical treatment induced) disease when assessing a patient, the potential toxicity of essential oils and the principles and potential challenges of working with elders or other patients with frail constitutions	Insulin resistance; pathophysiology An in-depth course on insulin resistance and its central role in many modern diseases. Practical, clinical tools for assessment and treatment of prediabetes, diabetes, vascular conditions, cancers, neurological diseases, and different kinds of reproductive dysfunction Fatigue: pathophysiology, adaptogens How to assess and treat the patient with fatigue as their chief complaint. The role of key nutrients, food selection and food intolerance in fatigue. The science of sleep, sleep cycles and sleep debt. The vital but misunderstood class of <i>adaptogens</i> ; key herbs for stress and fatigue.



Assessment

Throughout the course, and especially at the end of each stage, we assess and guide our students accordingly. There are three key methods of review as well as mentoring that is personalised for each student.



Coursework	Exams
<p>Return for review at completion of each stage</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Assignments from Paul's courses2. Materia Medica - notes & records3. Conditions Index - notes & records4. Research Projects - as developed5. Experiential Journal - personal notes	<p>Invigilated exams at completion of each stage Examinations ensure knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Key terms & concepts2. Materia Medica - core herb lore3. Conditions - safe & effective strategies4. Holistic medicine- readiness to practice
Mentoring	Case Studies
<p>Individualised & personal mentoring is an essential part of the student's professional development and can play a key role in identifying impediments to learning as well as helping to recognise strengths & areas of special interest in the work</p>	<p>Gaining personal, practical experience via a number of case studies is essential to learning how to become a safe and effective herbalist. Students will also help each other's learning journey by sharing their case studies on our live and interactive forum</p>



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