

Medicinal Plants



Miawpukek First Nations



Medicinal Plants



The information presented has been collected and compiled from a variety of resources, ranging from community elders to ethnographic study publications. The medicines within have been used for generations prior to colonial contact with the Europeans and have served our people well, demonstrated best by their healthy and lengthy lives. But as most of those I spoke to emphasized; in order for these medicines to work to their best ability, you must **believe** in their powers to heal.

- John Jeddore



Medicinal Plants



- The Seven Sorts – Mila-L'uiknek
Within the medicines listed are seven special plants, referred to as the seven sorts. Seven is a very spiritual number for the Mi'kmaq people so it comes with no surprise that one of our most important medicines is a combination of seven separate plants, boiled together. Over the years, different versions of the seven sorts have come about, citing different plants as the sources. In this collection, I will list the plants that were told to me by community elders and the Saqmaw, Mise'l Joe.



Medicinal Plants



- The Seven Sorts – Mila-L'uiknek
 - i. Cherry Tree (bark)
 - ii. Alder (bark)
 - iii. Dogwood (bark)
 - iv. Yellow Root (root)
 - v. Beaver Roor (root)
 - vi. Ground Juniper (boughs)
 - vii. Balsam Fir (tips)



Medicinal Plants



- The Seven Sorts – Mila-L'uiknek
These plants are mixed together and boiled. Once the solid pieces are removed, it is further boiled until a molasses-like consistency is achieved. This is used to treat internal pain *eg.* Back pain. It is believed that the medicine would move with the pain on it's own once applied to the body.

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- **Common/Ground Juniper**

Traditional name – Apatamkiejit
(ah-baht-ahm-gey-jhit)

Scientific name – *Juniperus communis*

This plant is commonly found on marshy lands, near wooded areas. Used in treatment of kidney ailments, especially bladder infections. The Juniper tree's twigs are cut off at the ends and boiled to make a tonic. This tonic is also used to treat after pains from birth. People with diabetes should take this tonic with caution due to its ability to lower sugar levels. This plant is also a component of the Seven Sorts



Medicinal Plants

- **Cherry Tree**

Traditional name – Wijokjemusi
(wee-joke-gee-moo-see)

Scientific name – *Prunus pensylvanica*

This plant is found in many wooded areas and is distinguished by its dark bark. Used to treat coughs and sore throats, the bark can be boiled into a tonic, or chewed to soothe a sore throat. The inner bark of this tree can also be boiled into a tonic to reduce blood pressure and help sleeping problems. This plant is also significant in its part with the seven sorts and their powerful ability to treat internal pains.



Medicinal Plants

- **Dogberries**

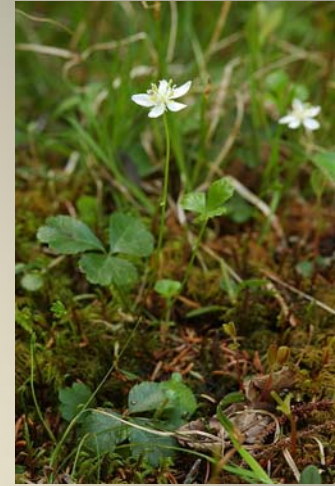
Traditional name – Lmujmanoksi
(ull-mooch-mahn-oak-see)

Scientific name – *Sambucus pubens*

This plant is found in many wooded areas. It is significant in it's part with the seven sorts and their powerful ability to treat internal pains.



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- **Golden Thread**

Traditional name – Wisowtakjijkl
(wee-sau-dahk-cheech-gill)

Scientific name – *Coptis trifolia*

This plant is found in wetlands and bogs. It can be steeped into a tea and used to help purify the blood and treat stomach ulcers, diarrhea, colds, influenza, diabetes and fertility of women. It was also used to help those who fought drinking habits. This plant can also be used to help treat external sores and wounds when boiled with sheep fat and cooled to produce a salve,

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- **Beaver Root**

Traditional name – Pako'si-jipisk
(bah-go-see jip-iss-k)

Scientific name – *Nuphar variegatum*

The beaver root is found at the bottom of a lily pad, which are found in many ponds. This plant is significant in its part with the seven sorts and their powerful ability to treat internal pains. Beaver Root is also used to help treat a sore throat and to subdue water infections. The Lily portion of this plant is also useful (continued on next slide)



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- **Cow Lily**

Traditional name – Pako'si
(bah-go-see)

Scientific name – *Nuphar variegatum*

This refers to the lily/stem portion of the plant. A treatment for colds, pako'si grows on land and in water. The one that grows on land is used internally and the one growing in water is used externally. It is cut into small pieces and boiled into a tonic. After consuming, go to bed and allow your body to sweat out the cold.



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- **Wintergreen**

Traditional name –Kaqewejewmnasqi
(gah-kay-wey-jew-min-ah-ski)

Scientific name – *Gaultheria procumbens*

Both the plant and the berries of the Wintergreen are helpful in treating a cold or the flu. It is also good for teething babies when steeped.

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- **Bakeapples**

Traditional name – Pko'kmin
(pik-oh-gi-min)

Scientific name – *Rubus chamaemorus*

The bakeapples are a significant source of vitamins and minerals, which are very important in maintaining a healthy body and mind.



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- **Trembling Aspen**

Traditional name – miti
(me-de)

Scientific name – *Populus tremuloides*

This plant is found in many wooded areas. It's bark is used as an anti-inflammatory and pain reliever. The internal sap was also used as a source of energy to those who were fatigued.

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- **Cow Parsnip**

Traditional name – Pakosi
(pah-go-see)

Scientific name – *Heracleum maximum*

When pounded into a mash, Parsnip can be used to treat swollen limbs. The roots are also used in treating the flu. As a superstition, people wore it's dried roots around their neck, believing it would keep sickness away.



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- **Pitcher Plant**

Traditional name – Mko'qewik
(muh-go-khe-week)

Scientific name – *Sarracenia purpurea*

When steeped into a tonic, this plant is useful in treating kidney ailments along with indigestion.

This plant can also prevent miscarriages when taken during pregnancy.

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- **Teaberry**

Traditional name – A'Idaia'al
(ahl-day-ahl)

Scientific name – *Gaultheria hispidula*

The berries are a significant source of vitamins and minerals, which are very important in maintaining a healthy body and mind. They are also used to sooth a bad stomach.



Medicinal Plants

- **Raspberry**

Traditional name – Klitaw
(glee-daw)

Scientific name – *Rubus idaeus*

This berry is a significant source of vitamins and minerals, which are very important in maintaining a healthy body and mind. It is also known to prevent sickness.



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- **Skunk Currant**

Traditional name – Apikjilu-ika'taqalatl
(ah-pick-jill-ou ee-ga-tach-all-adil)

Scientific name – *Ribos glandulosm*

This plant is a significant source of vitamins and minerals, which are very important in maintaining a healthy body and mind.

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- **Crackerberry**

Traditional name –Ka'qaju'manaqsi'l
(gah-kay-jew-mahn-ack-seal)

Scientific name – *Cornus canadensis*

This plant is a significant source of vitamins and minerals, which are very important in maintaining a healthy body and mind.



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- **Blueberry**

Traditional name – Pkwimann
(bick-wee-mahn)

Scientific name – *Vaccinium angustifolium*

This berry is a significant source of vitamins and minerals, which are very important in maintaining a healthy body and mind. It is known to prevent sickness, combat diabetes, improve eyesight and reduce inflammation.



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- **Strawberry**

Traditional name – Atuomkkmink
(ah-du-ohm-g-mink)

Scientific name – *Fragaria ananassa*

All parts of this plant has medicinal value. It is used as a blood purifier and a blood builder. It also relieves stomach cramps, diarrhea (both treated using the root of the plant), dystery and urinary infections.



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- **Bayberry**

Traditional plants – Keljikemnaqsi/Kwa'sanima

Scientific name – *Myrica cerifera*

This plant is used to treat arthritis, rheumatis and is an antiseptic mouthwash. The root is also boiled to make a tonic which keeps those who drink it in good health.

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- **Alder**

Traditional name – Tupsi
(doop-see)

Scientific name – *Alnus serrulata*

This plant can be used both internally and externally to treat many ailments and pains. The inner bark and leaves are boiled into a tonic and is consumed to treat rheumatism, stomach and kidney problems and fever. For headaches, the outer bark along with the leaves are soaked and applied to the forehead. It is held in place by sinew or a towel. It is said that when the leaves are dry, the headache will be gone. The male bud of the Alder is also used as a sleep aid. The Alder is also a component of the Seven Sorts



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- **Willow**

Traditional name – L'mu'ji'jmanaqsi
(ul-moo-cheech-mahn-ack-see)

Scientific name – *Salix sp*

The willow is used to help treat eczema sores.

This plant is made into a Salvé and is rubbed onto the affected parts of the skin.



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- **White Spruce**

Traditional name – kjimuatkw/Kawatk
(gah-wah-d-k)

Scientific name – *Picea glauca*

The Spruce is very resourceful plant demonstrated by it's uses by our people. The branches and bark of this plant are boiled into a tonic and consumed to treat laryngitis, colds and tuberculosis. The tonic is also said to give energy to those who drink it. The sap from the inner bark of the tree can be used to treat sores in the mouth and as a means of closing up wounds. The Spruce's roots are not only boiled to treat a sore mouth, but also to be used as thread holding together the birch bark canoe, an important transportation tool for the Mi'kmaq people.

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- **Balsam Fir**

Traditional name – Stogon
(stoe-khon)

Scientific name – *Abies balsamea*

This plant is found in many wooded areas and is characterized by its shiny, dark needles. It is a component in the Seven Sorts. The turpentine of the plant is used as a form of stitching. If someone were to tear the skin, balsam turpentine would be applied to the area, and help the broken skin in place until it healed.

