BOTANICAL MEDICINE
Exam-Focused Student Handbook

Course 13 | Student edition | October 2026

Based on the uploaded March 2026 clinical-sciences reference guide and the user-supplied botanical lectures, worksheets, and cases. Not an official exam publication.

Start here

What to learn: botanical safety (adverse effects, contraindications, drug interactions and toxicity); pharmacognosy, indications, effects, plant parts, routes, posology and abbreviations. The whole exam blueprint includes assessment/diagnosis (30-34%), modalities (55-59%) and critical care/public health (9-13%). No separate botanical percentage is given.

The exam contains stand-alone and case-based questions and tests clinical reasoning; memorize safety warnings before traditional indications.

How to answer a clinical botanical MCQ

1. Recognize red flags and required standard care.
2. Name the diagnosis and essential alternatives.
3. Verify exact Latin botanical name, part, extract and quality.
4. State traditional action and what evidence supports.
5. Check pregnancy, age, liver/kidney/heart disease and all drug interactions.
6. Review route, product form, concentration and Canadian NPN/label.
7. Select the safe next action and monitoring/disposition.

High-yield toxicity and interactions

St. John’s wort

Clinically important induction and serotonergic interactions: contraceptives, warfarin, transplant drugs, antivirals, antidepressants.

Licorice

Glycyrrhizin exposure: hypertension, edema, low potassium and potentially serious arrhythmias; caution with diuretics and corticosteroids.

Comfrey and pyrrolizidine alkaloids

Toxic alkaloids may cause severe liver injury; internal comfrey is not appropriate.

Kava

Rare but serious liver injury and additive sedation with alcohol/CNS depressants.

Ashwagandha

Pregnancy and breastfeeding avoidance; thyroid, liver, autoimmune and interaction warnings.

Digitalis / Aconitum / Convallaria

High-risk cardiac toxins, potentially fatal dysrhythmias.

Herb powders versus standardized extracts

Not dose-interchangeable; verify extraction ratio and marker compounds.

Acute UTI/pyelonephritis, infected stone, hepatitis

Herb formulas cannot replace timely evaluation and standard treatment.

12-lesson study map

Lesson 01: Pharmacognosy, Identification and Herbal Actions

Lesson 02: Growing, Harvesting and Quality

Lesson 03: Preparations and Extractions

Lesson 04: Clinical Formulation and Posology

Lesson 05: Adaptogens, Nervines and Mental Health

Lesson 06: Digestive and Respiratory Botanicals

Lesson 07: Cardiovascular, Metabolic and Immune Botanicals

Lesson 08: Skin and Anti-inflammatory Botanicals

Lesson 09: Reproductive and Endocrine Botanicals

Lesson 10: Toxic Alkaloids and Glycosides

Lesson 11: Interactions, Contraindications and Safety

Lesson 12: Evidence, Canadian Regulation and Integrated Cases

Each lesson links to a 10-question practice set. A full 120-question set is available in study and exam modes in the separate Question Bank folder.

Selected botanical memory cards

Traditional category is a class-note concept, not proof of therapeutic efficacy. Critical risks follow current public safety sources where available. Actual dose is species-, product- and patient-specific.

Achillea millefolium — Yarrow

ACTION: Astringent; diaphoretic; traditional vulnerary

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Mild skin or digestive traditional use; efficacy is not established

SAFETY: Avoid in relevant Asteraceae allergy; pregnancy caution

Aconitum napellus — Monkshood

ACTION: Toxic alkaloid; not a self-treatment

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Aconitine affects cardiac ion channels

SAFETY: Potentially fatal arrhythmias and neurologic toxicity; urgent poison-centre response

Actaea racemosa (Cimicifuga) — Black cohosh

ACTION: Reproductive health; traditional menopausal symptom use

PART: Root/rhizome | CONCEPT: Evidence varies by preparation; do not infer hormonal activity

SAFETY: Rare liver injury reports; pregnancy and liver-disease cautions

Aesculus hippocastanum — Horse chestnut

ACTION: Venotonic

PART: Seed standardized extract | CONCEPT: Aescin is a key constituent

SAFETY: Raw seeds are toxic; anticoagulants and bleeding considerations

Allium sativum — Garlic

ACTION: Traditional cardiovascular adjunct

PART: Bulb | CONCEPT: Alliin/allicin-related sulfur chemistry

SAFETY: Supplement forms may increase bleeding risk; procedure and medication review

Aloe vera — Aloe

ACTION: Demulcent topical gel vs stimulant laxative latex

PART: Gel or leaf latex | CONCEPT: Aloe latex contains anthraquinone derivatives

SAFETY: Latex can cause cramping/electrolyte loss; products and routes differ

Althaea officinalis — Marshmallow

ACTION: Demulcent

PART: Root/leaf | CONCEPT: Mucilage soothes irritated mucosa traditionally

SAFETY: Separate from some oral medication doses; allergy possible

Andrographis paniculate — Andrographis

ACTION: Traditional respiratory/infection adjunct

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Andrographolides

SAFETY: Hypersensitivity; pregnancy caution; never replace infection treatment

Angelica sinensis — Dong quai

ACTION: Traditional reproductive botanical

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Coumarin-like and volatile constituents

SAFETY: Bleeding and anticoagulant considerations; pregnancy caution

Arctium lappa — Burdock

ACTION: Alterative; traditional skin and GI use

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Inulin; lignans

SAFETY: Asteraceae allergy and product contamination review

Arctostaphylos uva ursi — Bearberry / uva-ursi

ACTION: Traditional urinary antiseptic

PART: Leaf | CONCEPT: Arbutin

SAFETY: Not a substitute for evaluation/antibiotics in UTI; kidney/pregnancy cautions

Arnica montana — Arnica

ACTION: Traditional topical pain/vulnerary

PART: Flowers | CONCEPT: Sesquiterpene lactones

SAFETY: Do not take oral non-homeopathic arnica; avoid broken skin and allergy

Astragalus membranaceus — Astragalus

ACTION: Traditional adaptogen/immunomodulator

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Polysaccharides; saponins

SAFETY: Review immunosuppressants and autoimmune disease; clinical evidence limited

Atropa belladonna — Belladonna

ACTION: Toxic anticholinergic botanical

PART: Leaves/roots | CONCEPT: Atropine; scopolamine; hyoscyamine

SAFETY: Anticholinergic delirium, tachycardia, hyperthermia; medical emergency

Avena sativa — Oat

ACTION: Traditional nutritive/nervine

PART: Aerial tops | CONCEPT: Polysaccharides and nutrients

SAFETY: Review oat sensitivity and gluten cross-contamination

Bacopa monnieri — Bacopa

ACTION: Traditional nootropic

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Bacosides

SAFETY: GI effects, possible sedation; clinical outcomes vary

Berberis vulgaris — Barberry

ACTION: Traditional bitter/antimicrobial

PART: Root/bark | CONCEPT: Berberine

SAFETY: Pregnancy and newborn caution; drug interactions and GI effects

Boswellia serrata — Boswellia

ACTION: Traditional anti-inflammatory

PART: Resin | CONCEPT: Boswellic acids

SAFETY: GI effects and interactions possible; not replacement for DMARDs

Calendula officinalis — Calendula

ACTION: Vulnerary; topical skin use

PART: Flowers | CONCEPT: Triterpenoids; flavonoids

SAFETY: Asteraceae allergy; infected wounds need proper assessment

Camellia sinensis — Tea

ACTION: Astringent; methylxanthine source

PART: Leaves | CONCEPT: Caffeine; catechins; tannins

SAFETY: Concentrated green tea extracts may injure liver; caffeine/drug interactions

Capsicum frutescens — Cayenne / capsicum

ACTION: Rubefacient; topical counterirritant

PART: Fruit | CONCEPT: Capsaicin

SAFETY: Burning/irritation; avoid eyes and broken skin

Cassia angustifolia (Senna) — Senna

ACTION: Stimulant laxative

PART: Leaf/pod | CONCEPT: Sennosides

SAFETY: Avoid in obstruction and unexplained abdominal pain; electrolyte loss with misuse

Cassia spp. — Senna

ACTION: Stimulant laxative

PART: Leaf/pod | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: Avoid in obstruction and unexplained abdominal pain; electrolyte loss with misuse

Centella asiatica — Gotu kola

ACTION: Traditional vulnerary; cognitive use

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Triterpenoids (asiaticoside)

SAFETY: Skin reactions and liver cautions; evidence varies

Cinnamomum verum — Ceylon cinnamon

ACTION: Carminative; flavoring

PART: Bark | CONCEPT: Cinnamaldehyde

SAFETY: High-dose products not established for diabetes treatment; avoid assumptions

Cinnamomum zeylanicum — Ceylon cinnamon

ACTION: Carminative; flavoring

PART: Bark | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: High-dose products not established for diabetes treatment; avoid assumptions

Codonopsis pilosula — Codonopsis

ACTION: Traditional adaptogen/tonic

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Polysaccharides; saponins

SAFETY: Limited rigorous clinical evidence; product-specific quality

Convallaria majalis — Lily of the valley

ACTION: Cardiac glycoside plant; toxic

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Convallatoxin

SAFETY: Life-threatening dysrhythmia; not a safe cardiac tonic

Crataegus laevigata — Hawthorn

ACTION: Traditional cardiotonic

PART: Leaf/flower/berry | CONCEPT: Flavonoids; oligomeric procyanidins

SAFETY: Cardiac disease and interacting medications demand medical review

Crataegus oxyacantha — Hawthorn

ACTION: Traditional cardiotonic

PART: Leaf/flower/berry | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: Cardiac disease and interacting medications demand medical review

Crataegus spp. — Hawthorn

ACTION: Traditional cardiotonic

PART: Leaf/flower/berry | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: Cardiac disease and interacting medications demand medical review

Curcuma longa — Turmeric

ACTION: Traditional anti-inflammatory

PART: Rhizome | CONCEPT: Curcuminoids

SAFETY: Concentrated supplements may cause liver injury; gallbladder and interaction review

Datura stramonium — Jimsonweed

ACTION: Toxic anticholinergic

PART: Leaf/seeds | CONCEPT: Tropane alkaloids

SAFETY: Severe anticholinergic toxidrome; do not self-administer

Digitalis purpurea — Foxglove

ACTION: Cardiac glycoside source; toxic

PART: Leaf | CONCEPT: Digoxin-like glycosides

SAFETY: Potential fatal arrhythmia; narrow therapeutic index

Echinacea angustifolia — Echinacea

ACTION: Traditional immunostimulant

PART: Aerial parts/root | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: Asteraceae allergy; evidence for respiratory infections limited/mixed

Echinacea purpurea — Echinacea

ACTION: Traditional immunostimulant

PART: Aerial parts/root | CONCEPT: Alkylamides; polysaccharides

SAFETY: Asteraceae allergy; evidence for respiratory infections limited/mixed

Eleutherococcus senticosus — Eleuthero

ACTION: Traditional adaptogen

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Eleutherosides

SAFETY: Potential stimulant interactions and sleep effects; limited evidence

Ephedra sinica — Ephedra

ACTION: Sympathomimetic botanical

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Ephedrine alkaloids

SAFETY: Serious cardiovascular adverse events; avoid use

Eucalyptus globulus — Eucalyptus

ACTION: Volatile-oil respiratory traditional use

PART: Leaf / essential oil | CONCEPT: 1,8-cineole

SAFETY: Undiluted essential oil ingestion is toxic; children at risk

Foeniculum vulgare — Fennel

ACTION: Carminative

PART: Seed | CONCEPT: Anethole

SAFETY: Allergy and estragole exposure considerations

Ginkgo biloba — Ginkgo

ACTION: Traditional circulatory/cognitive botanical

PART: Leaf extract | CONCEPT: Ginkgolides; flavonoid glycosides

SAFETY: Bleeding risk considerations, seizure risk with seeds; interacting medicines

Glycyrrhiza glabra — Licorice

ACTION: Demulcent; traditional adaptogen

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Glycyrrhizin / glycyrrhetinic acid

SAFETY: Hypertension, hypokalemia, edema and arrhythmias; medication review

Harpagophytum procumbens — Devil’s claw

ACTION: Traditional anti-inflammatory

PART: Tuber | CONCEPT: Iridoid glycosides (harpagoside)

SAFETY: Gastrointestinal intolerance; gallbladder cautions

Hydrastis canadensis — Goldenseal

ACTION: Traditional antimicrobial/bitter

PART: Root/rhizome | CONCEPT: Berberine; hydrastine

SAFETY: Drug interactions; pregnancy avoidance; not substitute for antibiotics

Hypericum perforatum — St. John’s wort

ACTION: Depression adjunct; strong interaction profile

PART: Aerial flowering tops | CONCEPT: Hyperforin / hypericin

SAFETY: Enzyme/transporter induction reduces many drugs; serotonin toxicity risk

Inonotus obliquus — Chaga

ACTION: Traditional immunomodulator mushroom

PART: Fungal tissue | CONCEPT: Polysaccharides / oxalates

SAFETY: Evidence limited; possible oxalate kidney injury; avoid unsupported cancer claims

Juniperus communis — Juniper

ACTION: Traditional diuretic

PART: Berry | CONCEPT: Volatile oils

SAFETY: Kidney disease and pregnancy caution; no role in treating acute UTI alone

Larrea tridentate — Chaparral

ACTION: Traditional antimicrobial; high-risk

PART: Leaf | CONCEPT: Lignans

SAFETY: Documented severe liver toxicity; avoid internal use

Lobelia inflata — Lobelia

ACTION: Traditional respiratory botanical

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Lobeline

SAFETY: Nausea, toxicity with excessive exposure; not asthma rescue therapy

Mahonia aquifolium — Barberry

ACTION: Traditional bitter/antimicrobial

PART: Root/bark | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: Pregnancy and newborn caution; drug interactions and GI effects

Matricaria chamomilla — Chamomile

ACTION: Carminative / nervine

PART: Flower | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: Asteraceae allergy; anticoagulant considerations

Matricaria recutita — Chamomile

ACTION: Carminative / nervine

PART: Flower | CONCEPT: Apigenin and volatile oils

SAFETY: Asteraceae allergy; anticoagulant considerations

Melissa officinalis — Lemon balm

ACTION: Nervine; carminative

PART: Leaf | CONCEPT: Rosmarinic acid; volatile oils

SAFETY: Sedation with CNS depressants; limited evidence for illness treatment

Mentha piperita — Peppermint

ACTION: Carminative; antispasmodic

PART: Leaf or enteric-coated oil | CONCEPT: Menthol

SAFETY: May worsen reflux; peppermint oil is not the same as tea

Panax ginseng — Asian ginseng

ACTION: Traditional adaptogen

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Ginsenosides

SAFETY: Glucose-lowering medication and anticoagulant interactions; insomnia

Panax spp. — Asian ginseng

ACTION: Traditional adaptogen

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Related species/name: compare exact botanical identity, preparation and source monographs; do not assume direct equivalence.

SAFETY: Glucose-lowering medication and anticoagulant interactions; insomnia

Passiflora incarnata — Passionflower

ACTION: Traditional nervine/sedative

PART: Aerial parts | CONCEPT: Flavonoids

SAFETY: Sedative interactions; pregnancy caution

Petasites hybridus — Butterbur

ACTION: Traditional migraine/allergy botanical

PART: Root extract | CONCEPT: Petasin

SAFETY: Only appropriately PA-free products; liver injury concerns

Piper methysticum — Kava

ACTION: Anxiolytic traditional botanical

PART: Rhizome/root | CONCEPT: Kavalactones

SAFETY: Serious liver injury risk; additive sedation; avoid with alcohol

Polygonum multiflorum — Fo-ti

ACTION: Traditional tonic

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Anthraquinones and stilbenes

SAFETY: Liver injury reports; no proof of rejuvenation claims

Rauwolfia serpentine — Rauwolfia

ACTION: Reserpine-like hypotensive botanical

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Reserpine

SAFETY: Depression, bradycardia, hypotension; interaction risk

Rhodiola rosea — Rhodiola

ACTION: Traditional adaptogen

PART: Root/rhizome | CONCEPT: Rosavins; salidroside

SAFETY: Evidence limited; activation/interaction review

Salix alba — White willow

ACTION: Analgesic/anti-inflammatory traditional

PART: Bark | CONCEPT: Salicin

SAFETY: Salicylate allergy; bleeding and ulcer risks; avoid in children with viral illness

Sambucus nigra — Elderberry

ACTION: Traditional respiratory remedy

PART: Berry | CONCEPT: Anthocyanins

SAFETY: Raw/uncooked parts can contain cyanogenic compounds; not antiviral replacement

Serenoa repens — Saw palmetto

ACTION: Traditional urinary/BPH

PART: Fruit | CONCEPT: Fatty acids / phytosterols

SAFETY: Evidence mixed for urinary benefit; bleeding and hormone considerations

Silybum marianum — Milk thistle

ACTION: Traditional hepatic botanical

PART: Seed | CONCEPT: Silymarin

SAFETY: No substitute for hepatitis treatment; check allergy and interactions

Symphytum officinale — Comfrey

ACTION: Traditional vulnerary, toxic internally

PART: Leaf/root | CONCEPT: Pyrrolizidine alkaloids

SAFETY: Hepatic sinusoidal obstruction risk with internal use; avoid internal use

Tanacetum parthenium — Feverfew

ACTION: Traditional headache/migraine

PART: Leaf | CONCEPT: Parthenolide

SAFETY: Pregnancy avoidance; mouth ulcers and bleeding considerations

Taraxacum officinale — Dandelion

ACTION: Traditional bitter / diuretic

PART: Leaf/root | CONCEPT: Inulin; sesquiterpene lactones

SAFETY: Asteraceae allergy; diuretic/medication considerations

Thuja occidentalis — Arborvitae

ACTION: Traditional antimicrobial, toxic potential

PART: Leaf/oil | CONCEPT: Thujone

SAFETY: Neurotoxicity risk with essential oil; avoid internal self-treatment

Urtica dioica — Nettle

ACTION: Traditional nutritive/diuretic

PART: Leaf/root (different uses) | CONCEPT: Minerals; lectins

SAFETY: Diuretic, BP and glucose medication reviews

Vaccinium macrocarpum — Cranberry

ACTION: UTI recurrence prevention context

PART: Fruit extract | CONCEPT: Proanthocyanidins

SAFETY: Not acute UTI treatment; warfarin caution discussions

Valeriana officinalis — Valerian

ACTION: Nervine/sedative

PART: Root | CONCEPT: Valerenic acids

SAFETY: Sedative/additive CNS effects; impaired driving

Vitex agnus-castus — Chasteberry

ACTION: Traditional reproductive/endocrine modulator

PART: Fruit | CONCEPT: Iridoid glycosides

SAFETY: Dopaminergic medicines, pregnancy/hormone-sensitive conditions

Withania somnifera — Ashwagandha

ACTION: Traditional adaptogen

PART: Root / extracts | CONCEPT: Withanolides

SAFETY: Avoid in pregnancy and breastfeeding; liver, thyroid, medication interactions

Zea mays — Corn silk

ACTION: Traditional demulcent/diuretic

PART: Silks | CONCEPT: Mucilage and flavonoids

SAFETY: UTI/stone red flags need standard assessment; limited clinical evidence

Zingiber officinale — Ginger

ACTION: Antiemetic / carminative

PART: Rhizome | CONCEPT: Gingerols; shogaols

SAFETY: GI effects; review interactions with anticoagulant/antiplatelet drugs

Complete searchable index

The website atlas contains all 203 distinct labels from the March 2026 uploaded reference list, including legacy spellings. Only 77 currently have curated summary cards. Remaining names are index-only pending clinical reference verification.

- Achillea millefolium
- Aconitum napellus
- Actaea racemosa (Cimicifuga)
- Aesculus hippocastanum
- Agrimonia eupatoria
- Allium cepa
- Allium sativum
- Aloe vera
- Althaea officinalis
- Andrographis paniculate
- Angelica archangelica
- Angelica sinensis
- Apium graveolens
- Arctium lappa
- Arctostaphylos uva ursi
- Arnica montana
- Artemisia absinthium
- Artemisia annua
- Asclepius tuberosa
- Aspidosperma quebracho
- Astragalus membranaceus
- Atropa belladonna
- Avena sativa
- Bacopa monnieri
- Baptisia tinctorial
- Berberis aquifolium
- Berberis vulgaris
- Boswellia serrata
- Bryonia alba
- Cactus grandiflorus (Selenicereus)
- Calendula officinalis
- Camellia sinensis
- Cannabis sativa
- Capsella bursa-pastoris
- Capsicum anuum

- Capsicum frutescens
- Cassia angustifolia (Senna)
- Cassia spp.
- Caulophylum thalictroides
- Ceanothus americanus
- Centella asiatica
- Chamaelirium luteum
- Chelidonium majus
- Chionanthus virginicus
- Cineraria maritima
- Cinnamaldehyde
- Cinnamomum verum
- Cinnamomum zeylanicum
- Codonopsis pilosula
- Colchicum autumnale
- Coleus forskohlii
- Collinsonia canadensis
- Commiphora molmol
- Commiphora mukul
- Commiphora myrrha
- Convallaria majalis
- Cordyceps sinensis
- Corydalis spp.
- Crataegus laevigata
- Crataegus oxyacantha
- Crataegus spp.
- Curcuma longa
- Cynara scolymus
- Datura stramonium
- Digitalis purpurea
- Dioscorea villosa
- Dipsacus sylvestris
- Drosera rotundifolia
- Echinacea angustifolia
- Echinacea purpurea
- Eleutherococcus senticosus
- Ephedra sinica
- Equisetum arvense

- Eschscholzia californica
- Eucalyptus globulus
- Eupatorium perfoliatum
- Eupatorium purpurea
- Euphrasia officinalis
- Filipendula ulmaria
- Foeniculum vulgare
- Fucus vesiculosus
- Galium aparine
- Ganoderma lucidum
- Gelsemium sempervirens
- Gentiana lutea
- Geranium maculatum
- Ginkgo biloba
- Glycyrrhiza glabra
- Grifola frondose
- Grindelia robusta
- Gymnema sylvestre
- Hamamelis virginiana
- Harpagophytum procumbens
- Humulus lupulus
- Hydrangea arborescens
- Hydrastis canadensis
- Hyoscyamus niger
- Hypericum perforatum
- Inonotus obliquus
- Inula helenium
- Iris versicolor
- Juglans nigra
- Juniperus communis
- Lactuca virosa
- Larrea tridentate
- Lentinus edodes
- Leonurus cardiaca
- Leptandra virginica
- Ligusticum porteri
- Ligustrum lucidum
- Linum usitasissmum

- Lobelia inflata
- Lomatium dissectum
- Lycopus virginicus
- Mahonia aquifolium
- Marrubium vulgare
- Matricaria chamomilla
- Matricaria recutita
- Medicago sativa
- Melaleuca alternifolia
- Melissa officinalis
- Mentha piperita
- Menyanthes trifoliata
- Mitchella repens
- Momordica charantia
- Nepeta cataria
- Olea Europa
- Paeonia alba
- Panax ginseng
- Panax spp.
- Papaver somniferum
- Passiflora incarnata
- Pausinystalia yohimbe
- Petasites hybridus
- Phyllanthus amarus
- Phytolacca americana
- Pilocarpus microphyllus
- Pimpinella anisum/ aniseed
- Piper methysticum
- Piscidia erythrina
- Plantago major
- Podophyllum peltatum
- Polygonum multiflorum
- Poria cocos
- Prunus africana
- Prunus serotina
- Pulsatilla vulgaris
- Quercus rubra
- Rauwolfia serpentine

- Rehmannia glutinosa
- Rhamnus spp.
- Rheum palmatum
- Rhodiola rosea
- Ricinis communis
- Rosemarinus officinalis
- Rubus idaeus
- Rumex crispus
- Salix alba
- Salvia officinalis
- Sambucus nigra
- Sanguinaria canadensis
- Sassafras albidum
- Schizandra chinensis
- Scutellaria lateriflora
- Scutelleria baicalensis
- Selenicereus grandifloras
- Serenoa repens
- Silybum marianum
- Smilax spp.
- Solidago spp.
- Symphytum officinale
- Syzigium aromaticum
- Tabebuia impetiginosa
- Tanacetum parthenium
- Tanacetum vulgare
- Taraxacum officinale
- Theobroma cacao
- Thuja occidentalis
- Thymus vulgaris
- Tilia (cordata; europa)
- Trametes versicolor
- Tribulus terrestris
- Trifolium pratense
- Turnera diffusa
- Tussilago farfara
- Ulmus rubra
- Urtica dioica

- Usnea barbata
- Vaccinium macrocarpum
- Vaccinium myritillus
- Valeriana officinalis
- Veratrum album
- Verbascum thapsus
- Verbena officinalis
- Veronicastrum virginicum
- Viburnum spp.
- Vinca major/minor
- Viscum album
- Vitex agnus-castus
- Withania somnifera
- Zanthoxylum Americanum
- Zea mays
- Zingiber officinale

12 guided practice cases

Case 01. Suspected acute urinary infection

Dysuria with fever, flank pain and vomiting. The patient asks for uva-ursi instead of antibiotics.

First safe step: Assess urgent complicated UTI/pyelonephritis, vital signs and need for medical treatment. Avoid replacing indicated care with botanicals.

Case 02. Kidney stone and possible obstruction

Severe unilateral flank pain, fever and reduced urine output. The student suggests a diuretic tea.

First safe step: Fever and obstruction concern require urgent assessment. No herbal regimen should delay emergency evaluation.

Case 03. Potential herb-drug interaction

A patient taking oral contraceptives asks for St. John’s wort to improve mood.

First safe step: Review depression assessment and medication; St. John’s wort can lower contraceptive concentrations and interact with antidepressants.

Case 04. Hypertension and licorice

Patient with high blood pressure and potassium-lowering diuretic wants daily strong licorice-root decoction.

First safe step: Glycyrrhizin can worsen hypertension and potassium depletion; review medications and avoid risk.

Case 05. Liver disease and old class notes

Patient with hepatitis and jaundice is offered several herbs from a 2018 classroom formula.

First safe step: Evaluate abnormal liver tests and hepatitis management first. Some botanicals are hepatotoxic; historical formulas are not evidence-based replacements.

Case 06. Unclear botanical identity

Label says only “ginseng 500 mg”. Patient is on glucose-lowering medicines.

First safe step: Ask exact species/part, preparation, strength, product certification and interactions; no interchangeable common name assumption.

Case 07. Pregnancy and herbal tonic

A pregnant patient asks about a multi-herb reproductive formula borrowed from old course notes.

First safe step: Do not recommend without pregnancy-specific evidence and qualified review; screen for uterotonic botanicals and contraindications.

Case 08. Toxic herbal “cardiotonic”

A patient with palpitations takes a foxglove preparation purchased online.

First safe step: Potential cardiac-glycoside poisoning; urgent evaluation/poison control. Foxglove is not a safe home cardiotonic.

Case 09. Preparation not interchangeable

A student substitutes 600 mg whole powdered root for 600 mg concentrated standardized extract.

First safe step: Not equivalent: confirm botanical identity, part, DER, solvent/marker concentration, quality, dose-specific evidence.

Case 10. Mild reflux and peppermint

Patient with heartburn and reflux asks for concentrated peppermint oil after reading it is “carminative”.

First safe step: Peppermint can aggravate reflux; consider diagnosis, product route and alternative evidence-based approaches.

Case 11. Autoimmune disease on treatment

Patient with rheumatoid arthritis wants to stop disease-modifying medication for turmeric and mushrooms.

First safe step: Do not stop standard treatment; evaluate risks, interactions, measurable outcomes and rheumatology coordination.

Case 12. Insomnia with sedatives

Patient taking benzodiazepines asks to combine valerian, passionflower and kava.

First safe step: Potential additive sedation; kava has serious liver injury risk. Review all medicines and avoid unsafe combinations.

Source notes and scope

Exam skills and botanical-name index: uploaded March 2026 clinical-sciences examination reference guide, blueprint and botanical medicines list.

Historical teaching: user-uploaded botanical lectures, 2018 herb-action tables, formulation worksheets, adaptogen comparison, BOT 202 question bank and 2017-2019 clinical case exercises.

Updated safety: NCCIH Herbs at a Glance, St. John’s Wort, Licorice Root, Ashwagandha, Kava; Health Canada Natural Health Products registration and licensing.

Quick links: https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/herbsataglance

https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/natural-non-prescription/regulation/about-products.html

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