

## A SOURCE OF LIFE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Directly, or indirectly, there are many uses of plants. For one, humans would not be here without plants, as plants produce much of the oxygen that allows humans to survive. Around the world there are many plants that are used for medicine. Planting different kinds of medicinal plants indoors or outdoors can help your personal health. Medicinal plants and natural products are still considered promising alternatives to prevent or treat several diseases. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, various traditional herbal medicines have been used and resulted in positive health effects among COVID-19 patients and improved their general well-being. The most common one used in South Africa, and in some parts of Africa, is African wormwood or 'Mhlonyane' or 'Lengana' (*Artemisia afra*).



Credit: Laura Cortesi on Unsplash.com

In the well-developed world that any of us live in, it is easy to forget that many people rely on the forest for their livelihood. Nowadays, medicinal plants play an important role in communities, both preventing and curing diseases and ailments, despite advances in modern western medicine. Forests around the world provide some medicinal products to the communities and contribute to their livelihoods. Plants are used in medicine to maintain and enhance health - physically, mentally and spiritually, as well as to treat specific conditions and illnesses.

### Did you Know?

- ◆ Herbal remedies have long been used to treat infections and viruses, such as the common cold, influenza, fever, and even herpes.
- ◆ About 40% of pharmaceuticals are either derived from plant extracts or synthesized plant compounds.
- ◆ There isn't enough data on herbs and COVID-19. (WHO and EMA, 2020).

Let us closely look at some of the well-known healing plants people have been using over the years.

**1. Aloe Vera:** Aloe is one of the best house plants as it requires little maintenance, and only needs to be watered about every three weeks.

**Uses:** helps with digestion; reduces skin inflammation; treats home burns; cuts; and small skin infections.



Credit: Pisauikan on Unsplash



Credit: Sentot Setyasiswanto on Unsplash

**2. Ginger:** the root or underground stem is mainly used.

**Uses:** aids with digestion and reduces nausea (especially morning sickness). It has the ability to fight a cold and help relieve a sore throat quickly.

**3. Green Tea:** a type of tea that is made from *Camellia Sinensis* leaves and buds that have not undergone the same process as other teas.

**Uses:** used to control bleeding and heal wounds; aid digestion; improve heart and mental health; weight loss; and regulate body temperature.



Credit: Matcha & CO on Unsplash



Credit: Sahand Babalion on Unsplash

**4. Garlic:** a herb related to onion, leeks and chives.

**Uses:** generally used for cardiovascular conditions, including high cholesterol and triglyceride levels associated with the risk of atherosclerosis.

**5. Holy Basil:** known as "The Incomparable One" or "The Mother Medicine of Nature".

**Uses:** helps protect against infection; lower blood sugar; lower cholesterol; ease joint pain; and protect the stomach.



Credit: Matt Montgomery on Unsplash



Credit: Britannica.com/plant/ginseng

**6. Ginseng:** the root is used.

**Uses:** as a general tonic to increase overall body tone, and is considered helpful in elevating energy levels and improving resistance to stress.

Plants provide humans with many benefits, and one of these is medicine. These plants need to be carefully managed and used in a wise way. It is very important that there is a balance in the environment, for the benefit and sustainability of future generations.



For more information on being Water Wise please contact 0860 10 10 60 or log onto [www.randwater.co.za](http://www.randwater.co.za) and click on the Water Wise logo

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References for Newsletter:

- [www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/269538#\\_noHeaderPrefixedContenthttps://www.rainforest-alliance.org/articles/9-rainforest-facts-everyone-should-know](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/269538#_noHeaderPrefixedContenthttps://www.rainforest-alliance.org/articles/9-rainforest-facts-everyone-should-know)
- [www.frontiersin.org](http://www.frontiersin.org)
- [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

# “MEDICINAL PLANTS” ACTIVITY

1. FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH THE CORRECT WORDS GIVEN BELOW:

Holy Basil	prevent	Incomparable	viruses
medicine	traditional	Aloe Vera	
Ginger	infections	cure	Ginseng

1.1 Medicinal plants play an important role in communities, both to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ various diseases and ailments.

1.2 The \_\_\_\_\_ plant is helpful in elevating energy levels and improving resistance to stress.

1.3 The Holy Basil plant is known as “The \_\_\_\_\_ One.

1.4 \_\_\_\_\_ helps with digestion and reduces nausea.

1.5 \_\_\_\_\_ is a medicinal plant that’s been used to treat various health conditions for thousands of years, including home burns, cuts and small skin infections.

1.6 \_\_\_\_\_ lowers blood sugar, cholesterol and products are still considered alternatives to prevent or treat joint pain.

1.7 Plants are used in \_\_\_\_\_ to maintain and enhance health - physically, mentally and spiritually.

1.8 Herbal remedies have long been used to treat \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

1.9 Millions use \_\_\_\_\_ medicine and many drugs come from natural products.

Answers:  
1.1 prevent and cure 1.2 Ginseng 1.3 Incomparable 1.4 Ginger 1.5 Aloe Vera  
1.6 Holy Basil 1.7 medicine 1.8 infections and viruses 1.9 traditional



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References for Activity:  
• [www.slideshare.net/shalinipandey77985/medicinal-plants-27019694](http://www.slideshare.net/shalinipandey77985/medicinal-plants-27019694)

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