ForeWord Reviews

HEALTH & FITNESS

Western Herbs for Martial Artists and Contact Athletes: Effective Treatments for Commom Sports Injuries

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As public awareness of the toxic effects of pharmaceutical medicines has increased, many people have embarked on a search for a natural elixir to alleviate pain, improve health, protect from iatrogenic effects, and increase longevity. As a result, natural remedies, which range from anti-aging formulas to healing serums and herbs, have become a multibillion dollar industry.

The use of natural remedies in the world of martial arts both mirrors and predates this trend. The martial arts have traditionally used herbs for healing purposes. Susan Lynn Peterson, researcher, author, scholar, and a martial arts expert with a fifth degree black belt in Shuri-ryu Karate, responds to the booming public interest in this topic by putting together *Western Herbs for Martial Artists and Contact Athletes.*

Her volume is an enlightening examination of Western herbs. It is designed to help the martial artist in the management of conditions that range from bruises and sprains to scrapes and cuts, and from jock itch and flatulence to insomnia and anxiety.

Peterson begins by discussing the safety principles surrounding the use of natural remedies. Subsequent chapters examine sixty-four herbs that are readily available in North America, starting with *Agrimonia eupatoria* and ending with witch hazel and *Achillea millefolium.* Instructions for preparing herbal infusions, poultices, and decoctions are accompanied by information about the application and uses of herbal remedies; contraindications and possible drug-drug interactions; and additional resources for locating herbs. Black and white illustrations, a glossary, and a helpful index complete the book.

The volume flows smoothly from chapter to chapter, providing the reader with a vast amount of information that covers the gamut of Western herb medicine. It is informative, yet jargon-free. It is elaborate and detailed, yet concise and clear.

This book will make a great read for martial artists, contact athletes, people with injuries, and anyone interested in herbal treatment. The spectrum of herbal remedies described here will arouse interest in the most skeptical mind.

Richard Skaff