

## OUTLINE

### Topic 5 - Western Herbology and the "Actions" of Medicinal Plants

1. "Actions" denote the physiological effects that medicinal plants have on the body.

A given medicinal plant may have more than one "Action"

The terminology used for "Actions" reflects both modern physiology as well as older folklore

Herbals and *Materia Medica* are often arranged with plants grouped according to their "actions"

2. A vocabulary of medicinal plant "Actions"  
(Terms which describe how medicinal plants affect the body)

- (a) Adaptogen  
Example: Asian Ginseng, Siberian Ginseng
- (b) Alterative  
Example: Echinacea
- (c) Anthelmintics  
Example: Garlic
- (d) Anti-Catarrhals  
Example: Peppermint
- (e) Anti-Emetics  
Example: Ginger Rhizome
- (f) Anti-Lithics  
Example: Gravel Root
- (g) Anti-Microbials  
Example: Goldenseal
- (h) Anti-Pyretics (also Febrifuges)  
Example: Violet flowers/rhizome; Chrysanthemum  
Flowers
- (i) Anti-Spasmotic  
Example: Cramp Bark
- (j) Astringent  
Example: Witch Hazel
- (k) Bitter (or Digestive Bitter)  
Example: Gentian Root