

# Herbal Abortifacants

This information is culled from 20 books on herbal remedies and from talks with herbalists and women in the States and Europe. It is not all that exists on abortifacants but the most persistent.

Any use of these herbs must be done in a careful way. Read the article thoroughly; be cautious. These herbs can be very potent. Do not use them in larger quantities or more often than specified. All work best in the first month of pregnancy or as soon as pregnancy is suspected. The herbs usually work approximately 40% to 45% of the time.

These methods are best used in a situation where you can have access to a mechanical abortion as a backup. Complications are possible with any miscarriage. There is the danger of an incomplete miscarriage or hemorrhaging. It is also possible that an herbal concoction which does not produce the intended miscarriage still damages the fetus.

1. This method is the best tried and proven. It is easily available and cheap with no known side effects: **Vitamin C**. Dosage is 6 grams for 3 days. It should be taken in small quantities, ie: 2 grams 3 times a day for 3 days. Vitamin C can be taken immediately after unprotected intercourse to prevent fertilization or as soon as pregnancy is suspected. It seems to work best if taken when, or just after, period is due but it has been effective into the first month of pregnancy. Basically the sooner it's taken the better.

The 3 day treatment can be repeated, but there is no known information on how often it can be repeated safely. Because no one really understands how or why it works, we limit it to two trials. It usually takes 2½ to 3 days after the first dosage to work. Wait 4 or 5 days from the last day taken before repeating if there is no blood after 3 days. Blood flow is slow at first. There may be some cramps. It may not work for women who take doses of Vitamin C regularly. NOTE: It should not be taken by women with kidney problems as it puts stress on the kidneys in the elimination process.

2. An alternative to Vitamin C which may be used together with it (more effective) is **parsely**—fresh only, in the vagina. Change every 24 hours but it should work (if it's going to) within 12 to 15 hours after

insertion. It may get smelly or hard to take out, but it is not dangerous. Method: Take fresh parsely (a handful), wrap it lightly in gauze and roll like a tampon. A string can be sewn on to make removal easier. Insert overnight preferably. This can be repeated without danger but usually works quickly if it's going to.

3. These are the most common herbal abortifacants, in decreasing order of effectiveness:

**Black Cohosh**—causes uterine contractions

**Blue Cohosh**—stimulates contractions and helps to slough off uterine lining

**Penny Royal**—stimulates release of oxytocin in the brain which is the hormone which induces contractions

**Mugwort, Ginger, Yarrow**—helps to slough off lining of the uterus

**Saffron, Rue, Cotton Root Bark**—stimulates contractions

**Tansy, Southernwood, Squaw Vine, Golden Ragwort**—stimulates contractions

Any of these can be taken individually or in combination and may cause contractions and subsequent bleeding. They are most effective in combination. They are called 'emmenagogues' but have a different function in the body. That's why it's best to combine them, eg. one to slough off, one to stimulate contractions and one to tone etc. The general recipe for any of these is an infusion (tea) of one teaspoon herb per cup of boiling water. Steep 20 minutes. Drink one cup of tea 4 times a day for 5 days.

A recipe that has worked best for women in Montreal, and has also been used in San Francisco and New York is:

1 tablespoon Penny Royal (fresh not oil)

1 tablespoon Blue Cohosh

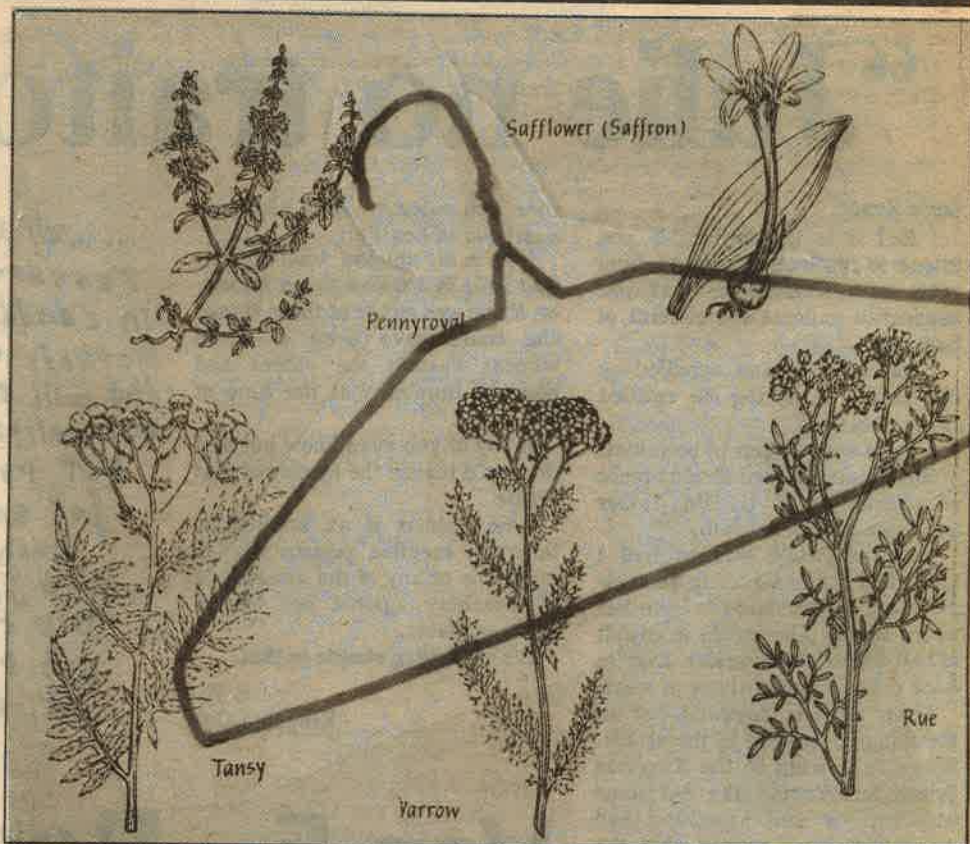
1 tablespoon Yarrow

1 tablespoon Rue

Boil 3 cups of water. Add Blue Cohosh. Allow to simmer 10 minutes. Add other herbs. Remove from flame and allow to steep 30 minutes. Drink 1 cup every 4 hours for up to 5 days.

or (not together and is less effective): **Saffron**—1 gram per 1 litre of water. Steep 30 minutes. Makes 8 portions. Drink 1 portion every 2 hours for 1 day. Period may appear at the end of the day. If not do not repeat.

or



American Indian recipe: Penny Royal and Brewers Yeast—1 teaspoon Penny Royal per cup of boiling water. Steep 20 minutes. Add Brewers Yeast. Drink 1 cup every 4 hours for 4 days.

The first recipe is the best. The others have worked, but not as consistently. The herbs are potent. What may work for one woman may not work for another. If a woman starts to feel sick, she should stop taking the tea. Some cramps and any normal pre menstrual feelings and aches are not dangerous, but feeling 'sick' is not okay. If the herbs are going to work, they usually do so after the first try. Two dosage periods are okay for all the recipes except for the Saffron, but the dosages are not recommended more than twice and then only in the early stages, up to 8 weeks. (The herbs have worked for some women a bit later, this depends on the woman.)

NOTE: If any of these herbal remedies are unpalatable, any mint teas may be added to the recipe. Do not add more water, just the mint. Women should eat very lightly when

taking the teas—vegetables and tea. Oil of herbs is much more potent and concentrated than dried or fresh herbs. All of these recipes are for dried herbs. Do not substitute oils for fresh.

"If I suspected I was pregnant, I would start with the Vitamin C, and then go on to the herbal concoction. I would do the Saffron last, and probably not try any of it after 8 weeks, unless I was sure of getting a mechanical abortion if the herbal abortion didn't work. I'd do the Vitamin C and the herbal recipe twice before the Saffron, and

then I'd give up in favour of a medical abortion. I'd do everything I could to get an appointment for a mechanical abortion, even if I was trying the herbal recipes. The appointment can always be cancelled. Keep in mind that these herbs, if they work to induce abortion, could also be potentially damaging to the fetus. Only use these herbs if you are sure of having options other than continuing the pregnancy if they don't work."

## Visiting the Colonel

continued from page 11

Gaddafi, she declared that the conference was meaningless because it didn't deal with the problem of the oppression of women. She got a standing ovation for it.

When I asked about the British delegation spokesman both Juley and Lorna started pulling faces and making vomiting noises. He was from the Workers' Revolutionary Party and apparently people kept on coming up to him and asking after Vanessa Redgrave!

"It was the same old shit — the powerful white man talking. He wasn't asked to, he pushed his way into it. One of the black members of the British delegation should have done it, they would have made a much better job of it."

One of the speakers got up and asked everybody who was ready that minute to answer the call of the Green Army to stand up.

"There we were me and Juley, bums firmly in our seats. I'd been leafing through my book of the life of Gaddafi and this bloke in front of us turns around and whips it out of my hands and stuffs it into his briefcase."

Luckily for Lorna and Juley, this was not the only memento of their trip: they were also issued with a Gaddafi bootlace tie, keyring, and set of postcards.

By the end of the third day, all those ready to answer the call of the Green Army were getting down to the nitty-gritty of forming an international network. It was decided that the next day be spent forming a secret committee and drawing up the binding terms. Juley and Lorna decided not to go.

There were two sessions that day — one in the morning and one in the afternoon — and so our two heroines lay in bed, munching rolls smuggled from dinner the night before,

until the bus going to the morning session was safely on its way.

Shortly afterwards they got the first of their phone calls from Hassan who was the man in charge of organizing the conference, wondering where they were. He told them to be ready at seven because their flight left at nine. They left on Wednesday and the conference didn't finish until Friday. Among the treats that they didn't regret missing was a tour of all the military bases which they later found out had been on the agenda for Thursday.

L: "One thing I thought: there's people that would sell their grandmothers to be here, and here we are, not appreciating it in the slightest..."

Soon after they got back, came Reagan's bombing raid on the city they'd been in. Juley and Lorna then embarked on a series of actions against U.S. bases in this country involved in that act of state terrorism, culminating in delaying a NATO military exercise whilst actually in court for redecorating Welford's bomb silos. Five of them took off in a car that night to Upper Heyford and broke in with the usual ease. One of the hangars they discovered, after a hair-raising journey down the runway wondering whether they were going to be shot, was full of F1-11s with their engines on. Two of the women climbed in while the others graffitied the outsides.

They were held in remand for eight days after doing this. On being released after pleading not guilty to charges of criminal damage to F1-11s they were told that the planes on this exercise had left the base at six a.m. instead of the scheduled two o'clock. This was due to 'bad weather'. "... but there wasn't any bad weather that night, it was a beautiful night..."

OPEN ROAD needs writers...  
and photographers and artists.

Our aim is to be a forum for the international anarchist movements. To do this we need written and graphic contributions from people on the spot. We need first-hand accounts of your aims, your struggles, and successes, what works and what doesn't. You can make the Open Road the paper you deserve. Send any and all contributions to:

The Open Road Box 6135, Station G  
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6R 4G5