

LISA BEDNER – MOTHER NATURE

MOTHER NATURE CAN HELP WITH WHAT AILS YOU by Heather Mullinix: Herald Citizen Staff, Cookeville, TN: Regional Buyers Guide, Sunday, 1 March 2009, pg. 18.

BLOOMINGTON SPRINGS: Mother Nature has many gifts to offer. Medicinal herbs are among those gifts. From aloe to soothe burned skin to fragrant herbs that open sinus passages, these plants have helped treat a host of illnesses for hundreds of years.



Lisa Bedner, a registered nurse and an herbalist certified by the American Herbalists Guild, offers fresh, native herbs and education about medicinal herbs from her greenhouse in the Bloomington Springs community.

(Pictured: Lisa Bedner)

“Herbs work very well for chronic medical problems,” Bedner said.

The majority of herbs are safe for use, she said, through there are herbs that can have interactions or can be dangerous.

“The difficulty is that, just like with drugs, there are all kinds of conflicting information about herbs,” Bedner said. That’s where education is important.

Bedner offers one-hour initial consultations with clients to learn about their medical history, diet and the medications they are taking to recommend proper diet, appropriate herbs and minerals or other supplements.

“I want to get people started on the right track, and once they are on the right track, things go much more smoothly,” she said.

One reason herbs can be effective in medicinal use is because many prescription drugs are derived from herbs and plants. But, those plants lose some qualities when synthesized. For example, Bedner pointed to a common high blood pressure medication that has a side effect of depleting the body of potassium, leading to possible complications.

That drug, she said, was synthesized from dandelion leaves.

“Good old dandelion leaves have been used as a blood pressure medicine since we knew what blood pressure was,” Bedner said.

But when the active ingredient was identified and recreated, it didn’t have the entire properties of the dandelion leaves, which provides potassium with the blood pressure medication.

“That’s where they end up with side effect,” Bedner said. “Because they only used part of the plant.”

Bedner said clients are cautioned against stopping prescribed medication, and said they should discuss their herbal use with their medical providers.

“Only a physician can put a person on or take a person off prescribed medication,” she said.

Bedner said herbal medicine and traditional medicine can often work together to help people suffering from conditions. It can also be useful in preventative medicine, which is much more effective.

“It’s much better to stop someone from getting diabetes or high blood pressure than to do it backwards,” she said.

Bedner has been practicing herbal medicine for more than 20 years. In addition to this training, Bedner has apprenticed with medicine men and women of several Eastern Native American nations. She is Medicine Woman of the Turtle Clan of the Teehahnahma Nation.

“That means I know how to use what is outside in the yard,” Bedner said, noting the herbs and plants she uses are all species native to the area.

She has settled near Martin’s Creek in a area that once served as the gathering grounds for Native American nations.

“This area was known as Medicine Woods,” she said. After Native American people were moved away from their traditional homes, the medicine women would have to travel to areas that were rich in medicinal plants and herbs. This was one of those areas.

Bedner offers 130 varieties of naïve herbal plants that can be grown in gardens, yards or indoor in pots.

She grows herbs using organic methods, with no fertilizer or pesticides. She also practices sustainable methods and harvest all her seeds. Her property is also a United Plant Savers botanical sanctuary for endangered plant species.

She recommends people grow herbs for their own use. Aside from the aesthetic properties, home-grown herbs guarantee the plants were grown using no pesticides or chemicals, that they have not been contaminated during processing and they were not harvested in areas using child labor. The herbs grow well in pots, as well, so even those living in apartments or condominiums can grow their own herbs.

Bedner offers classes and workshops during the year, focusing on different areas of interest. Topics range from basic herbal medicine, to herbal healing to specific topics. Women’s issues are very popular, she said.

“I have lots of clients who are entering menopause who do not want to take hormones, of any kind,” Bedner said. “And, the Native American philosophy is the Creator didn’t make any mistakes. Therefore, when he created women’s bodies and decided we were at some point not going to make these hormones, that is not a mistake. It’s another stage of life.”

She teaches them at the site of her greenhouse. Many clients travel from Atlanta, Birmingham, Nashville and Knoxville areas. She also welcomes people who would like to visit the greenhouse to see the gardens.

Lisa’s Greenhouse is at 450 Davison Chapel Lane in Bloomington Springs, on the corner of Putnam and Jackson counties. Workshops are held during April, May, June, July and August. She recommends those wishing to see the gardens visit from the end of April to the end of June. The greenhouse is open by appointment. Call (931) 653-4402.

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