

How To Make

A Balm for Any Swelling

- 1 2 cup fresh mallow leaves
- 1 2 cup fresh wormwood leaves
- 1 2 cup fresh smallage leaves
- 1 lb (373 g) lard or vegetarian option

In the past ointment was really just a word for a topical preparation. You might also see them called unguentums. Balm or salve was sometimes used if the name of the receipt referred to the action of the preparation.

Some ointments were thickened with animal fat that hardens as it cools while some contained resins, or beeswax. Some didn't contain any fats or oils at all.

Topicals made without waxes and resins were often employed to relieve swelling and pain. Topicals made with waxes (sometimes called cerates) were often made for caring for wounds or drawing out infections.

To make this particular ointment, credited to a Mrs. Pawlet in 1653, chop the herbs finely and grind them with the fat until the juice runs from the leaves and the fat takes on a green color. I suggest using a food processor for this.

Put this mixture in a saucepan with the oil and heat them until everything melts together. You might let it simmer a few minutes if you see liquid bubbling off.

Strain into a container with an airtight lid.

