

Foreword by James A. Duke, PhD, Author of *The Green Pharmacy*

Years ago, when Martha Libster approached me for advice, I was delighted. I wanted nurses and physicians to write herbals for nurses and physicians in lingo they understand and believe. As I recall, I told her that I knew the herbs and she knew the clinic. Let's get them together—nurse, herb, and clinic. It's done. Nice work, Martha! You have compiled the right amount of useful experience and information on most of the important herbs in common use in America.

Delmar's Integrative Herb Guide for Nurses brings to nurses, and more importantly, perhaps, their patients, a nurse's view of plant medicine as a practical and timely choice in the care of at least some patients. (No one medicine is best for all patients!) It also acquaints nurses with plant therapies, reminding them of their historical connection with plant healing in patient care and providing the readers with a fundamental introductory understanding of herbal therapies and their potential integration with nursing practice.

This book stresses the importance of good relationships with the environment and plants, an essential part of our environment. Prominent nurse theorists, including Florence Nightingale, have focused on the importance of the environment in patient care. Getting to know plants firsthand, through gardening, nature walks, and so on, makes you believe in the power of the "green pharmacy." And believing is half of healing. I have long maintained that I want the best medicine for myself and my family, be it natural or synthetic. Since Martha started this labor of love, many herbs (e.g., saw palmetto and St. John's wort) have proven themselves as good as their more expensive pharmaceutical counterparts, with fewer side effects. Herbs increasingly are being recognized as safe and gentle medicines, which our genes have long experienced.

I think American medicine will be improved by an infusion of rational herbalism and phytomedicine into modern allopathy. I even predict a hybrid vigor from this marriage of the best of disparate disciplines.