



HEALING HOME Remedies

Down with a cold? Suffering from indigestion?
Treat common ailments the natural way

They say an apple a day keeps the doctor away. But sometimes an apple just won't cut it when you're in bed with the flu, have a hangover, or your allergies are flaring up. That doesn't mean you need to rush to the doctor, though. Here are some of the best natural ways to cure common ailments at home...

Cold and flu

Winter is cold and flu season, so even if you've done your best to keep the bugs at bay, the viral infection may still have broken through that barrier. Despite the constant hand-washing and surge in vitamin C intake, you may find yourself with a tickle in your throat, the sniffles, or congestion. The common cold is harmless and, well, common, but that's no comfort when you're feeling groggy. Keep in mind that the cold and flu are quite different; even though you may have overlapping symptoms, the flu is much more debilitating, and can lead to fatigue, fever, respiratory congestion and even vomiting and diarrhoea. Depending on the severity of your symptoms, you may want to visit your GP to ensure the flu doesn't lead to more serious issues such as pneumonia. However, the common cold is quite easily treated at home.

"There are plenty of remedies that can help alleviate common cold

symptoms, besides getting a lot of rest and keeping yourself hydrated," medical scientist Dr Nauf AlBendar (thewombeffect.co) says. "Zinc supplementation has become a popular treatment. Research has found that zinc may reduce the duration of a cold, perhaps by as much as 50%. Zinc also helps to control infections and prevent out-of-control inflammation. Echinacea extracts also seem to have an effect on the immune system by increasing the number of white blood cells that fight infections.

"Teas and syrups made from the elderberry plant have been commonly used to boost immunity for hundreds of years. Eucalyptus essential oil is known for its powerful ability to stimulate immunity, fight coughs, provide antioxidant protection, and unclog respiratory congestion. Add a few drops into steaming hot water or a diffuser to help clear nasal passages. It's worth noting that essential oils are powerful, so safety is paramount. Their use should be avoided on babies younger than six months old, in pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, asthmatic individuals, or people using other medications."

Whether you have a tickle in your throat or the fully-fledged flu, never underestimate the powers of water and rest. Stay well-hydrated, get plenty of sleep to allow your body to recuperate, and stay warm.

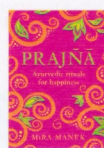


TRY THESE 5 COLD AND FLU REMEDIES...

- 1 Mix together one teaspoon of ground ginger, one teaspoon of ground turmeric, one tablespoon of honey, and eat this mixture.
- 2 Fresh or powdered turmeric in hot milk is especially great at night, but can be taken at any time of day.
- 3 Lemon or lime juice with ginger juice can be taken as a shot, or could be stirred into hot water.
- 4 Boil grated fresh ginger and fresh turmeric in

water for 10 minutes. Pour the mixture into a mug, then squeeze in half a lemon and stir in a teaspoon of honey. Grating releases more juice than when slicing; if you don't have fresh ginger and turmeric root, simply stir some ground ginger and ground turmeric into a mug of hot water.

5 If you can handle the heat, then take a small shot of mixed pure ginger and turmeric juices. Add honey if you need to.



Extracted from *PRAJNA Ayurvedic Rituals For Happiness* by Mira Manek (£12.99, miramanek.com)

SORE THROAT

Mira Manek (miramanek.com), author of *PRAJNA Ayurvedic Rituals for Happiness*, turns to salt when a sore throat hits: "Gargle half a glass of warm water with a teaspoon of salt. You can do this throughout the day, but certainly start the morning with this to ease the soreness in your throat. Another option is to boil a teaspoon of ajwain (carom) seeds in a few cups of water. Strain, then add half a teaspoon of salt, and gargle this twice a day."

INDIGESTION

Peppermint, ginger, parsley, camomile, and lemon balm teas have all been shown to support and calm digestive health. If you suffer from indigestion, these herbal remedies could all help to alleviate symptoms.

Mira's go-to is a ginger concoction that she recommends for its warming, anti-inflammatory effects; it's also great for metabolism. While you can use grated ginger, ground ginger tends to be more concentrated. Try making this drink and sipping on it throughout the day: stir half to one teaspoon of ground ginger, a pinch of sea salt or Himalayan salt, and a few drops of coconut oil into a mug of hot water.

HANGOVER

We'd love to tell you that there's a magic cure for a hangover... but we'd be lying. The best way to counteract the effects of this is simply to allow your body time to recover. Ensure you get plenty of sleep, and drink lots of fluids

(we mean water!) to rehydrate. You could also try ginger root tea to fight off any nausea.

HEADACHES

If you regularly suffer from headaches, it can be tricky to put your finger on what's triggering them. Common causes include dehydration, stress, eye strain, and even bad posture. Dr Nauf notes that research has also linked chronic headaches and migraines to vitamin deficiencies; specifically vitamin D, riboflavin, CoQ10, and magnesium. So, consider visiting your GP to check for any deficiencies, then increase your intake of vitamins through diet and supplementation if needed.



When a headache does hit, Dr Nauf suggests using a cold or hot compress either on your forehead, your neck, or the back of your head, to relieve symptoms. Peppermint essential oil is also an effective natural painkiller and muscle relaxant, and is especially helpful in alleviating tension headaches. Simply apply the oil topically to the area of concern.

Combining it with lavender oil also helps your body to relax, and reduces pain.

ALLERGIES

If you suffer from environmental allergies such as hay fever, it can make you feel miserable as you battle symptoms like sneezing, itchy eyes, and sinus congestion. But research suggests that some natural remedies may help relieve symptoms if you use them as a preventative measure.

"Bromelain, an enzyme found in pineapples, can help reduce swelling in the nose and sinuses, which may relieve hay fever symptoms," Dr Nauf says. "You can also try supplementing and eating foods rich in quercetin, such as raw onions, apples, red grapes, kale, spinach, cherries, bee pollen, green tea, and chilli peppers. Surprisingly, stinging nettle contains antihistamine and anti-inflammatory properties that help block the body's production of symptom-causing histamine." You can find stinging nettle in several forms – including root, leaf, and powdered – but tea and all-natural supplements are potentially the easiest ways to reap the benefits of this helpful herb. You can make your own brew by soaking fresh nettle leaves, or you can buy pre-packaged tea from health food stores.

You can also try irrigating your nose frequently to remove allergens, showering before bed to remove pollen and dust that's built up throughout the day, hoovering your home regularly, and limiting your exposure to allergens; particularly on windy days.

First-aid essentials

Stock up your cupboard with Dr Nauf's top natural healers...

1 Arnica: a must-have for a natural first aid kit. Its ability to reduce pain and inflammation when applied to the skin comes in handy for all kinds of bruises, aches, sprains, and swellings. Arnica is best used on unbroken skin.

2 Aloe vera: a popular medicinal plant with powerful antioxidant and anti-microbial properties. Applied topically, it can be used to soothe skin irritations and burns (especially sun burns).

3 Garlic: can boost immune function with its antiviral, antifungal, and antibacterial properties. Garlic is best eaten raw if used for its microbial properties. Garlic oil ear drops can also help relieve ear infection and ear aches by killing off the offending pathogens.

4 Activated charcoal: may help to relieve gastrointestinal issues such as bloating and diarrhoea. It is important to note that frequent activated charcoal intake tends to absorb essential nutrients and minerals, depleting their levels and raising your risk for certain health problems.

5 Lavender essential oil: has antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, and sedative properties. It can also help to heal minor burns and stings, and help alleviate anxiety, irritable mood, and



sleep disturbances. When combined with peppermint essential oil, it's a great way to help your body relax, reduce muscle pain, and alleviate headaches.

6 Ravintsara: this is derived from the *Cinnamomum camphora* tree, and is the ultimate essential oil of reference for winter; it's a superb antiviral essential oil, and is a useful ally for flu prevention and other viral infections. Add a couple of drops in a diffuser, or for adults, inhale straight from the bottle.

7 Propolis: generally known as 'bee glue'. Used for centuries, propolis

exhibits natural antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, antifungal, and antiulcer properties. Red propolis is found to contain the highest antioxidant activity; it's great for common colds, sore throats, cold sores, minor burns, and yeast infections.

8 Tea tree essential oil: well-known for its powerful antiseptic, antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal properties. Add 1-2 drops on clothing and inhale to help fight a number of infections, and inhibit the growth of pathogens.

HEALING HEROES



Melora Multifloral Manuka Honey & Lemon, **£14.99**, melora.co.uk

Thursday Plantation Tea Tree Oil, **£11**, Boots



Pukka Elderberry Syrup, **£11.99**, ocado.com

Weleda Arnica Bumps & Bruises Skin Salve, **£6.79**, hollandandbarrett.com

