

# Healing Yourself at Home with Household Items



Amber Robinson

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## Introduction

Many people seem to think that they need to go out and spend a ridiculous amount of money to treat common health issues. What if the answer to your problem was already sitting in a cabinet in your home?

This may sound too good to be true, but the reality is many household products offer proven benefits for conditions ranging from skin issues to calming a stubborn cough.

The best part is that these products are all-natural. There's no need to waste money on chemical-laden products when the solution to your health dilemma is already in your possession.





## Wounds and Bleeding

Wounds are bound to happen. For wounds that are minor to moderate, you may be able to take care of them at home, while promoting healing. The common products below can help to clean the area, stop bleeding, and help repair damage:

### Teabag for Bleeding

Many people drink tea, making it a very common household item. Tea isn't just a refreshing drink, though. Tea contains tannins. Tannins are astringent compounds in tea (especially green tea) that may help to clot the blood and draw tissues together. Used teabags have been applied after tooth extractions to help stop the bleeding and decrease oozing.

To utilize these, you will need green or black tea bags. Herbal teas won't work because they won't contain the tannins necessary for blood clotting. Decaffeinated tea will not work either. Press the tea bag firmly against the wound and hold until the bleeding stops. Try to elevate the area above the heart if possible.

### Onion for Nosebleeds

For many years, Chinese medicine practitioners have stated that onions help stop nosebleeds.

To utilize an onion to stop a nosebleed, simply grate a little onion and squeeze out the juice into a small bowl. Next, dip a cotton ball in the juice. It is not necessary to fully saturate the cotton ball. Finally, place the cotton ball inside the affected nostril, leaving it there for up to four minutes.

Another option is to slice an onion and hold it directly under the nostril for several minutes. It is thought that the strong fumes from the onion help to accelerate clotting.

### Apple Cider Vinegar for Nosebleeds

Another nosebleed remedy is to use apple cider vinegar. This common household item is useful for a large variety of ailments, and nosebleeds are just one.

You will need to put one tablespoon of apple cider vinegar in a small bowl and dip a cotton ball in the liquid. It is not necessary to saturate the entire cotton ball.

Place the cotton ball into the affected nostril for up to ten minutes. It is thought that the acidity of the vinegar helps to constrict the blood vessels.



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## Cayenne Pepper for Nosebleeds

Look no further than your spice rack for many natural remedies! Cayenne pepper is a common addition to any spice rack and has many medicinal properties, including the ability to stimulate blood clotting. To use cayenne for a nosebleed, simply add a teaspoon of ground cayenne to a glass of warm water and stir it well. Drink this mixture as soon as possible to benefit.

## Honey for Cleansing and Treating Wounds

Arguably one of the most useful household items, honey offers a variety of benefits. The best honey to have in your home is raw honey. Avoid honey that has been pasteurized, as the medicinal benefits are lost through this process. Honey is packed with antimicrobial compounds that help heal a wound by preventing bacteria from growing. Honey also has a slightly acidic pH, so this aids in blood clotting, as well as encouraging blood to release oxygen for healing. The sugar content in honey helps draw water from the wound to keep it from swelling.

To apply honey to a wound, simply spread a little on gauze and place the gauze on the wound. Place a clean, dry dressing over that dressing and make sure to replace the dressing when the drainage from the wound has saturated it.

## Garlic to Cleanse and Prevent Infection

Garlic is nature's antibiotic, helping to kill bacteria and prevent infection from setting in. Because garlic can be bothersome to the skin if it is left on too long, it is important to only leave the garlic on the skin for up to 25 minutes. Crush one to three cloves well and apply them to the skin, holding them in place. Make sure that before you apply garlic, you have washed the area thoroughly.



## Potato Poultice for Inflammation

Potatoes have been used on wounds to help draw out infection and help reduce inflammation in a wound. They can even be sliced and placed over a splinter for several hours (covered with a bandage) to draw it out. For other wounds, make a poultice with shredded potatoes and apply this directly to the wound for up to four hours. Make sure you cover the area with a cloth. After removing, rinse the area with salt water and apply more if desired. It is okay to leave the poultice on overnight while you are sleeping. Repeat the poultice application and salt water rinsing until the wound has healed.

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## Aloe Vera for Speeding up Healing

This familiar household plant has many uses, especially when it comes to healing wounds. The inner gel of the plant is powerful and can help reduce inflammation, soothe, and repair tissue. Cut a leaf off your aloe vera plant and apply the inner juice to a wound (after cleaning it).





## Burns

When burns occur, the pain that usually accompanies them can be intense. There are different degrees of burns, and the remedies mentioned below are best for minor (first degree) burns. There are several household items you can employ to soothe and heal a burn, but the first step after suffering a burn is to immediately wash the area in cool water. This helps soothe angry skin and nerves, as well as washes away impurities. Never apply any kind of oil (with the exception of diluted lavender essential oil) to a burn, as this might make it worse by trapping in the heat.

### Aloe Vera: Famous for Healing Burns

Aloe vera has already been mentioned for wound healing, but it may be more popular for the treatment of burns. Many companies use aloe vera in their solutions for sunburn. This is because it is great at soothing angry skin and reducing inflammation. It contains compounds that calm the skin and promote healing. You can apply the juice from the plant directly to the affected areas, or you could apply a liberal amount of the juice to gauze and apply this to the burn wound. For sunburns that may be hard to reach, you can squeeze a half-ounce of aloe vera juice into a small, one ounce spray bottle and add another half-ounce of distilled water, lavender hydrosol, or witch hazel extract. Shake this mixture well and store in the fridge between uses. Spray on affected areas to cool and provide relief.

### Banana Peels for Burns

Did you know that banana peels have anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antimicrobial properties? These attributes make them perfect for application to wounds and burns.

If you have any bananas handy in your house, have a snack and then apply the peel to the burn for several minutes, until the area begins to feel better.



### Honey for Burns

It's no wonder this superfood can help treat burns, in addition to treating wounds. Honey can help to prevent infection, heal the area, and reduce inflammation in the area. Apply honey to gauze and then apply this to the affected area. Leave it on for several hours before removing to replace.



## Insect Stings and Bites

Bites and stings from insects can cause anything from serious pain to major itching, or even an allergic reaction. If you suspect you have been bitten by an insect, pay close attention to how you feel in the moments following the incident. If you have any symptoms of an allergic reaction, seek medical help right away. The following household items can help provide relief from the symptoms that can result from bites and stings:

### Oatmeal for Itchy Bites

No doubt this popular breakfast food is in most people's pantry. Oatmeal is not only good for you nutritionally; it can be good for your skin. There are many ways you can use oatmeal (more will be discussed later) but one way you can use it is for relief from the itching that accompanies many insect bites. You may have heard (or experienced yourself) a relief from chickenpox itching in the form of an oatmeal bath. This is one very effective way to soothe irritated skin, while calming itching. Another effective way is to create a poultice/paste from the oatmeal by adding a little water. Apply it directly to the affected area and leave it there for at least twenty minutes.



### Baking Soda for Itchy Bites

Baking soda is useful for so many issues, it is no wonder itching is one of them. You can add baking soda to a teaspoon of water to make a paste and apply it to an itchy spot. Another way to enjoy the benefits of baking soda for itching is to add some to a warm bath and soak. If you want to get double the relief, try adding a combination of baking soda and oatmeal to a bath!

### Aloe Vera for Stings

Some insects do more than leave an itchy bump. Insects like wasps, hornets, and bees can sting and the pain can be quite bothersome. If you are suffering from a painful insect sting, soothe the pain and lower the inflammation by applying an aloe vera leaf poultice to the area immediately. Make sure the stinger is not still in the wound before application. Mash up a leaf, making sure to get plenty of juice and apply it to the area. You may choose to place a small bandage on top of this to hold it on. Reapply as needed for relief.



# Cracked Heels

Cracked heels are very common during the winter months, or if you happen to live in a dry climate. If left untreated, they can worsen to the point where the heels are cracked too deep, exposing a vulnerable layer of skin. In addition, they can be painful. There are several household items you can use to eliminate this issue and get your feet ready for summer:

### Mouthwash and White Vinegar

Believe it or not, mouthwash has been used to get rid of cracked heels, and quite effectively at that. You will need to use a mouthwash similar to Listerine. To do this, simply mix one cup of mouthwash, one cup of white vinegar, and two cups of water in a basin big enough to place both of your feet into. Soak your feet in this mixture for fifteen minutes. After removing your feet from the solution, scrub your feet with a foot file or pumice stone to get all the dead skin off. It should fall right off and leave you with beautiful, smooth heels. Moisturize the area and put socks on to hold it in.

### Coconut Oil for Intense Moisturizing

One of the most skin-nourishing oils available might be sitting in your kitchen. Coconut oil has many uses, and intense moisturizing is just one. It is the perfect consistency for a less messy application as well.

Coconut is usually in a semi-solid state at room temperature, but has a low melting point. When you scoop some out of the container, it will come out in chunks and then as you rub it onto your heels, you will notice it melt readily. Once you have slathered your feet liberally with coconut oil, put socks on and leave this on overnight as you sleep. When you wake up and remove your socks, you will see that your heels are much smoother.



### Apple Cider Vinegar and Baking Soda Mixture

Soaking your feet in apple cider vinegar and baking soda can help to remove dead skin and treat cracked heels. Simply fill a basin with three cups of water, add one cup of apple cider vinegar, and then 1/3 cup of baking soda. Soak your feet for fifteen minutes and then scrub them upon removal to fully eliminate the dead skin. Another great benefit of apple cider vinegar is that it can help treat fungal conditions, so if you suffer from athlete's foot and dry heels, this is a must!



## Acne

Although acne is associated with the teenage years, there are many adults who suffer from acne as well. It can be brought on by hormonal issues, a skin reaction, foods you eat, or stress. It is important to try and find the source of the breakouts before pursuing treatment. Some ways you can do this are to keep a food journal, have hormonal bloodwork conducted, and do your best to manage stress in a healthy way. Below are home remedies that can help you get rid of acne:

### Toothpaste

This is often considered an old wives' tale, but many people swear by the effectiveness of toothpaste when applied to acne breakouts. Some of the ingredients in toothpaste help to dry out the area, helping to reduce the size of the pimple. Apply a very small amount to a pimple and leave it on for up to five hours. As always, if you feel like you may be having a reaction to the toothpaste, remove it as soon as possible.

### Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple cider vinegar can help to reduce inflammation, kill bacteria, and reduce the appearance of scars. This is the perfect combination to tackle acne. To use apple cider vinegar for acne, make a solution of one part apple cider vinegar and two parts water (add more water if you have sensitive skin). Dip a cotton ball in the solution and apply it to pimples. Let this sit on the face for one to two minutes before rinsing off. Try this up to twice a day for best results.

### Honey

Raw honey is an antibacterial powerhouse, but also gentle and soothing to the skin. Take a tablespoon or two of honey and apply it to the face like a mask. Let this sit on the skin for up to twenty minutes before rinsing it off. Repeat daily for best results.

### Green Tea

If you like to drink green tea, keep it up, because this antioxidant-rich tea is excellent for acne as well. It is thought to help control sebum production, as well as reduce inflammation. In addition to drinking green tea, try making an extract to apply to the face. To do this, boil water and steep the tea for up to five minutes. When this has cooled, take a cotton ball and dip it in the tea. Apply this to the face and leave it on for up to ten minutes (or until it dries into the skin). You can rinse your face off afterwards.





# Pain and Inflammation

Whether it is joint pain from arthritis or inflammation caused by autoimmune issues, remedies are likely available in your home. The remedies below can help for a variety of issues that arise due to pain and inflammation in the body:

### Epsom Salt

Although it has been used as a laxative, Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate) is also very useful for pain and soreness. It is especially useful for sore muscles. Soaking in a warm bath with Epsom salt has been shown to help soothe tired, sore muscles. Add one to two cups to your next bath and soak as long as you can to benefit. You will find that Epsom salts are a great remedy for overexertion, which you have worked too hard and strained your muscles.

### Olive Oil with Cayenne and Ginger

Cayenne is a common spice, but it also has proven benefits when it comes to helping with pain and inflammation. Cayenne contains compounds that help block nerve pain. Ginger is great to use in conjunction with cayenne. Ginger can help to reduce inflammation and lower pain as well. Make a massage oil using olive oil as a base.

Add one to two teaspoons each of ground ginger and cayenne to one ounce of olive oil. Put this in a container with a lid and shake it well before massaging into the sore muscles and joints. Avoid areas with broken skin and areas close to mucus membranes. Always wash your hands thoroughly after working with cayenne and don't touch your eyes during the process.

### Honey, Lemon, and Ginger Tea

This anti-inflammatory trio can work together to soothe the body and promote relaxation and pain relief. Add two teaspoons of ginger to a cup of hot water and stir until it is dissolved well.

Add raw honey to taste and squeeze the juice of one lemon into the cup as well. Drink this up to three times daily for relief from pain and inflammation.



### Warm Turmeric and Black Pepper Milk

Create a treated often referred to as “golden milk” with ground turmeric and black pepper. Turmeric is a common Indian spice, but also contains strong anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties.

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Black pepper works synergistically with turmeric to help the body absorb the curcumin (the active medicinal compound in turmeric).

Create this beneficial drink by heating a cup of milk (substitute almond, coconut, or oat milk if you want) on the stove and add one tablespoon of ground turmeric. Next, add one-half teaspoon of black pepper and stir until everything is well blended. Remove from heat and carefully pour into a cup. Add raw honey to taste and enjoy. Drink this daily for best results.



## **Coconut Oil with Cinnamon**

Coconut oil is great for inflammation, and when paired with cinnamon, this duo is excellent for providing relief. Cinnamon is rich in anti-inflammatory properties, as well as fighting pain. Blend these together by melting an ounce of coconut oil on the stove (on low heat). When the oil is thoroughly melted, add a tablespoon of cinnamon and stir until it is well-blended. Remove this from heat and let it cool. Apply a small amount to sore muscles, joints, or wherever you are experiencing pain and inflammation. Massage into the skin well.

## **Clove and Olive Oil**

Create an oil infusion with clove that can be used both internally and externally for fighting pain. First, heat an ounce of olive oil in a small pan on the lowest setting on your stovetop.

Add five cloves to the olive oil and let this infuse on very low heat for up to one hour. Remove the infusion from heat and let it cool before removing the cloves and bottling the infused oil. Massage this into sore joints and muscles or take a teaspoon by mouth daily for relief.



## **Cabbage**

Cabbage leaves have been used for centuries to treat swollen, sore areas of the body. One use in particular is the practice of placing cabbage leaves in the bra to help dry up milk and reduce the risk of mastitis in the breasts. Cabbage contains powerful anti-inflammatory properties and may

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help with fluid retention issues. To use cabbage, simply place cabbage leaves on swollen and irritated areas of the body. Cover them with light gauze or material and let this sit on the area for up to four hours. Feel free to reapply leaves as needed. Use cabbage leaves to help sprains, swollen joints, and muscle pain.



## Sore Throat

Sore throats can be caused by drainage or another bacterial infection. Make sure you know what to look for to differentiate the two. With drainage caused by excess mucus, you will not usually have a fever or be very ill.

With an infection like strep throat, you can become very sick and have a high fever. The pain in the throat is usually more intense with strep throat. To treat strep, you will likely need antibiotics from a medical professional. The remedies below are meant for the treatment of a sore throat caused by a cold, allergies, or drainage.

### **Salt and Baking Soda Gargle**

When you start to feel a sore throat, make a quick gargle of 1/8 teaspoon of salt, ¼ teaspoon of baking soda, and one cup of warm water. Gargle this for up to three minutes, making sure you reach the area of the throat where the pain is originating. You can repeat this every two to three hours throughout the day.

### **Honey and Lemon**

Soothe and coat a sore throat with a combination of raw honey and lemon. The antimicrobial properties of honey can help to kill any bacteria, while the thick consistency is great for coating the throat.

Lemon can help to cleanse the throat, break up mucus, and manage pain. Blend ½ cup lemon juice with two tablespoons of raw honey and gargle before swallowing.



### **Garlic and Apple Cider Vinegar**

Garlic is highly antimicrobial, so it is a great option for preventing the growth of bacteria in the throat. Apple cider Vinegar is also antibacterial, and because it is so acidic, it helps to break down mucus that may be causing irritation in the area.

Combine the two by infusing three to four cloves of chopped garlic in a cup of apple cider vinegar and leaving this to sit in a jar (with a lid) for four weeks. Strain out the solution and bottle the infused liquid. When you are ready to use it, simply gargle a small amount for up to a minute and spit it out. Do this up to three times daily, depending on the severity of your symptoms.

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## Chamomile Tea

If you happen to have chamomile tea on hand, steep a tea bag in a cup of hot water and let this infuse for up to seven minutes. Add raw honey to taste. Drink as soon as the tea is cool enough to tolerate.

Chamomile has powerful analgesic and antispasmodic properties. In addition, it is both antioxidant and astringent, making it useful for breaking up mucus. Drinking two to three cups a day can speed healing and manage throat pain.





# Cough

A cough can be vexing and prevent you from being comfortable. In severe cases, it may impede your ability to get a decent night's rest. Try the remedies below to help manage a troublesome cough so you can get back to doing what you love:

### Sage and Honey Cough Syrup

Sage is a common culinary herb, but it also contains therapeutic properties that treat inflammation, strengthen the immune system, and kill bacteria. The addition of honey helps to coat the throat and prevent spasmodic coughing.

Steep two to three teaspoons of sage (this is more convenient if you use a stainless steel tea infuser or an empty tea bag) into a cup of hot water and add two tablespoons of raw honey. Blend until the honey is thoroughly dissolved into the warm water. When the mixture has cooled enough to drink, take thirty milliliters. You can take this as needed to manage a stubborn cough. Store this in the refrigerator between uses. It will last up to five days in the refrigerator.

### Thyme and Ginger Decoction

Thyme is great for managing a cough because it is full of powerful antioxidants that help boost the immune system and fight off unwanted pathogens. It contains strong antimicrobial properties as well. Ginger is excellent for a cough because it can soothe while fighting inflammation.

To create a decoction from these, simply boil two cups of water and add one tablespoon each of ground thyme and ginger. Let this simmer until the liquid has reduced by roughly half. This means that when you remove the mixture from heat, there should be around one cup of liquid remaining. Strain out the liquid after it has cooled sufficiently. Add raw honey to taste. Sip on this liquid, taking small sips, until it is gone. This will help to reduce coughing, as well as support your immune system.

### Pineapple Juice

Pineapple is a rich source of bromelain, a powerful antitussive. It is great for breaking down mucus and reducing inflammation.

Bromelain is most abundant in the core of the pineapple. Try juicing a pineapple (core and all) and drinking a cup or more of the juice to kill a cough fast.





# Colds and Other Viruses

Most viruses come with unwanted side effects like a cough, runny nose, fever, headache, and body aches. For a cough and sore throat, you can use the remedies previously mentioned. However, there are other things you can do to boost your immune system and help your body fight the virus. These remedies are listed below:

### Nasal Irrigation with Salt and Baking Soda

When you are feeling stuffy, make sure you don't keep that mucus in your head. Get it out as much as possible to avoid a sinus infection. Blowing your nose often can help clear your head of potentially harmful bacteria in the mucus. Do not blow hard, but rather gently, holding your finger against one nostril as you blow out the other one and vice versa. Blowing your nose too hard can actually cause mucus to back up into the ear canal, causing an ear infection. Another effective way to help your body get rid of excess mucus is to try nasal irrigation. This cleanses the sinuses and prevents (as well as treats) infection. Mix  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of sea salt with  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of baking soda in eight ounces of warm, sanitized water. Use a bulb syringe or similar nasal irrigation tool to squirt the mixture into one nostril (while holding the other nostril closed) and then let it drain. Do the other nostril before repeating this process up to three times.

### Fire Cider

For ages, people have used a remedy called "fire cider" to boost the immune system and treat a virus or infection. Many of the ingredients are common herbs and plants you likely have in your home already. They are infused in apple cider vinegar for a month and then strained out. Look around your home for the following ingredients: garlic, cayenne (jalapenos or habanero can be used as a substitute, or you can use them all if you have them), thyme, parsley, rosemary, horseradish, ginger, turmeric, onion, lemon, black pepper, raw honey, and oregano. It is okay if you do not have them all, just get together as many as you can.

Fill a clean mason jar with a half cup of peeled and diced garlic,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup peeled and diced horseradish root,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup peeled and diced ginger root (or add a few tablespoons of ground ginger),  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup peeled and diced turmeric (or a few tablespoons of ground turmeric),  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of peeled and diced onion, one habanero (or another pepper you have on hand),  $\frac{1}{2}$  to one full chopped lemon or orange (you can also use both), two tablespoons each of thyme, oregano, rosemary and parsley, and one tablespoon of black peppercorns.

Once your jar is filled with the chopped plant material, cover  $\frac{3}{4}$  of it with the apple cider vinegar. Finally, fill the jar the rest of the way with raw honey. Let this sit in a cool, dark place for a month before straining it out. Some people keep it in the refrigerator as it infuses, and some keep it in the cabinet. Make sure to strain everything through a cheesecloth and squeeze it well to get every last drop of therapeutic liquid into bottle. When you feel the symptoms of a cold or virus coming on, take a shot glass full of fire cider up to five times daily. It is spicy, so it will

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open up your sinuses and promote mucus flow out of the body. Store your finished product in the refrigerator between uses, where it should last up to a year.

## **Shower Steam Treatment**

A nice, hot shower can be relaxing when you don't feel well. The best part is the steam can help to moisturize nasal passages and help you breathe better. It can also help a cough and chest congestion.

If you are feeling too tired or dizzy, put a waterproof chair in the shower so you can sit and relax, while enjoying the steam treatment. Make sure the curtain is shut well so it traps in as much steam as possible. If you happen to have an herb garden, try picking a bundle of oregano, thyme, rosemary, or eucalyptus and hang this from the shower head with string. This will help to release the therapeutic oils from the plants and mingle with the steam you inhale to heal your body.



## **Chest Rub**

You can create your own chest rub to help break up congestion with a few common ingredients. You will need eight ounces of olive oil, one ounce of beeswax, and one ounce each of ground ginger, oregano, and thyme. Ginger helps to reduce inflammation in the chest to open things up, while oregano and thyme help fight infection. A fast way to infuse the oregano, thyme, and ginger into the olive oil is on the stovetop. This is done by heating it on very low heat and letting the ingredients infuse for several hours. You may choose to add a chopped clove of garlic to this as well (the salve will last longer if the garlic is dried first). Another way to infuse the herbs into the olive oil is to fill a jar with the plant material and the cover it with the olive oil. Let this sit for one month, shaking the jar daily, and then straining it out when it is ready. Whichever way you choose, when the herb-infused olive oil is ready, simply melt one ounce of beeswax into the oil in a double boiler. Once the beeswax is thoroughly melted and blended, pour the warm liquid into containers for storage. You can use small tins with lids or small mason jars, whatever works best for you. Massage the salve into your chest as often as needed for relief from congestion. Try using it at bedtime to promote a more comfortable night's sleep when you are not feeling well.



# Dry Skin and Wrinkles

Whether your dry skin is caused by the weather or genetics, there are many natural remedies you can create to combat it using household products. Leaving dry skin untreated can swiftly lead to an increase in wrinkles and sagging skin. Try the remedies below to nourish and hydrate your skin, while preventing the onset of wrinkles:

### **Coconut Oil**

Coconut oil is so effective for all kinds of skin conditions. One place it shines is providing relief from dry skin and nourishing down deep into the layers. If you happen to have this in your kitchen, try taking a small amount and gently massaging it into your face in the morning and evening. A little goes a long way! Sometimes, and this is very rare, coconut oil can have a drying effect on some individuals. Although this reaction is rare, if you notice your skin is not as hydrated as it should be after using coconut oil for a few days, discontinue use.



### **Yogurt and Banana Mask**

Not only is yogurt nourishing to our gut health, it is super hydrating to our skin! Likewise, bananas make an amazing and hydrating addition to any mask. Blend one tablespoon of yogurt with a small amount of mashed banana until you have a pasty consistency. Apply this evenly to the face and leave it on for up to fifteen minutes before rinsing it off. Do this daily for a glowing and more hydrated complexion.

### **Honey and Oatmeal Mask**

Honey may be effective for fighting bacteria, but it is also amazingly nurturing to the skin. Blending honey with oatmeal doubles the skin-calming and hydrating benefits. Create a moisturizing mask with these two common household ingredients by adding small amounts of oatmeal to one tablespoon of raw honey until you have achieved a good consistency for a face mask. Apply this to the face and leave it on for up to fifteen



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minutes. Repeat this daily for best results.

## Aloe Vera and Olive Oil Treatment

Aloe vera is one of the best plants for calming and moisturizing the skin. The juice inside its thick leaves is full of anti-inflammatory and soothing properties. Olive oil is perfect for hydrating dry skin, and can help to provide the skin with essential antioxidants that fight free radicals.

Free radicals are bad for our skin because they can damage it. Blend  $\frac{3}{4}$  ounce olive oil with  $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce aloe vera juice well and apply this to the face daily to prevent and treat wrinkles, while intensely hydrating. Store this in the refrigerator between uses.





## Rashes

Rashes are often a sign that the body is reacting to something it has come into contact with. There are many types of rashes caused by many types of substances. Some of the most common rashes include diaper rash, hives (allergic reaction rash), and poison ivy/poison oak/poison sumac rashes (contact dermatitis caused by exposure to damaging oils from certain plants). Make sure to seek medical attention right away if you experience a shortness of breath or feel like your throat is swelling. The remedies below may provide relief from the awful itching that comes with many rashes, as well as promote healing:

### Oatmeal Bath

Oatmeal baths are a popular way to get relief from itching. This is an especially effective way to treat a rash if it is covering large areas of the body. Dump one to two cups of oatmeal into a warm bath and soak as long as possible when you have an itchy and irritating rash.

### Apple Cider Vinegar Strips

The acidity of apple cider vinegar can feel very nice on an itchy rash. This is a popular home remedy for the treatment of poison ivy and related rashes. A great way to apply it is to soak strips cut from a brown paper bag in apple cider vinegar and place them across the affected areas until they dry. You will experience relief rapidly after applying them. Do this as often as needed for relief. This will also help to dry up the rash. Because this vinegar is acidic, use caution and do not continue using it if you notice a worsening of the condition.

### Baking Soda Paste

Baking soda can relieve itching and help skin heal. You can create a paste with it by blending it with a small amount of water until you reach the desired consistency.

Place this paste on the rash and leave it for up to twenty minutes before rinsing it off. Repeat this as often as needed for assistance with an itchy rash.



### Dead Sea Salt Soak

Soaking in a warm bath with two cups of Dead Sea salt can provide a mineral-rich respite from an annoying rash. If you don't happen to have any Dead Sea salt, you can also use Epsom salts, which contain magnesium sulfate. Magnesium sulfate helps relieve sore muscles and general body aches, but may also calm irritated skin. Soak as long as possible to reap the benefits of this remedy. When you are ready to get out, dry off well and apply a soothing moisturizer to the area, like aloe vera.

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## Aloe Vera Cold Compress

Not only will a cold compress relieve itching fast, it will also relieve pain. Using aloe vera as the base of your cold compress will further help to speed up relief, slow the progression of the rash, and settle the irritated skin. If you have a painful, itchy rash, consider this remedy first. Squeeze out as much aloe vera juice from an aloe vera plant as possible and freeze what you obtain in an ice cube tray. You may only end up with one ice cube, but it should last for several treatments. Once the aloe vera is completely frozen in the ice cube tray, pop it out and apply it to the affected area. If it is too cold, place the cube in a cloth and then apply it to the area. This will allow the aloe to still soak through the cloth and soothe the area, while also cooling it.



# Eye Bags and Dark Circles

Do people ask you if you are tired a lot? Or perhaps ask if you are feeling well? Dark circles and bags under the eyes can suggest that one is unwell or very tired. If you suffer from dark circles or eye bags, there are proven remedies that may help to reduce the appearance of these:

### Cucumbers for Puffiness

Take some time for a little self-care and relaxation while you use cucumbers to fight puffiness around the eyes. Find a place where you can sit back and relax for a half hour and apply your favorite moisturizing mask. Next, close your eyes and place a sliced cucumber over each eye. Relax for twenty to thirty minutes, allowing the soothing properties of the cucumbers to infuse into the skin under your eyes. Repeat cucumber treatment daily for best results.

### Coffee for Swelling and Puffiness

Coffee may actually help tighten the skin under the eyes because it encourages blood flow and reduces fluid retention in the area. Since coffee is a natural diuretic, it is thought to encourage swelling and puffiness under the eyes as well. Make an under-eye mask from coffee grounds and coconut oil by blending two teaspoons of coffee grounds with one tablespoon of coconut oil. Since coconut oil is solid at room temperature, it may need to be melted (run it under hot water for a minute) before use to make blending easier. Apply a small amount under each eye and leave this on for twenty minutes. Repeat this daily for best results. As with any under-eye treatment, avoid getting any in the eyes.

### Potatoes for Dark Circles

Potatoes actually contain natural compounds that act as bleaching agents. They have been used for many years to aid in the elimination of dark circles under the eyes. Get the juice from a potato by grating a small amount into a cheesecloth and squeezing the liquid into a bowl. Take a cotton ball and dip it in the potato juice. Apply liberally underneath each eye and lay back to avoid letting it run down your face. Leave this on for up to fifteen minutes before rinsing off. Repeat daily until you achieve the results you desire.

### Lemon Juice for Dark Circles

Lemon juice has been used as a natural bleach, and has even been sprayed in hair prior to sun exposure to naturally lighten it. Applying a small amount of lemon juice under each eye with a cotton ball may help to reduce the appearance of dark circles, while promoting bright, glowing skin. Leave the lemon juice on for up to fifteen minutes before rinsing it off. Repeat this every other day for best results.



## Eczema

Eczema, or atopic dermatitis, is characterized by inflamed, itchy patches of skin. It can be triggered by diet, stress, dry weather, or a variety of other conditions. Eczema can range in severity. Those with severe eczema may experience thick, crusty patches of skin covering many areas of their body. These patches usually itch and when they are scratched too much, they can become infected and ooze. The first step if you want to tackle this condition is to watch your diet carefully. Foods often trigger this autoimmune response. Foods like dairy, anything containing gluten, eggs, alcohol, soy, and nuts are major culprits. Avoid these and see if your symptoms go away. Try using a laundry detergent for sensitive skin, and opt for soaps that are natural and do not contain synthetic ingredients. To treat eczema at home, there are several remedies you can try:

### Aloe Vera Gel

Aloe vera can heal wounds, treat inflamed skin, kill bacteria, and even boost the immune system. This makes it the perfect home remedy for eczema. It can provide a cooling and soothing sensation to irritated areas where it is applied. Apply a liberal amount of aloe vera gel to any itchy and inflamed patches of skin to experience relief. Apply it up to three times daily if needed. If you happen to have any tea tree or lavender essential oil, five drops of each blended with one ounce of aloe vera gel can work wonders. This is an effective remedy for psoriasis as well.

### Apple Cider Vinegar and Oatmeal Bath

Let your whole body experience relief from eczema with an apple cider vinegar and oatmeal bath. Make this your nightly ritual for an effective way to combat eczema at home. Add two cups of apple cider vinegar and one to two cups of oatmeal to a warm bath and soak as long as possible to benefit from this remedy.

### Honey Treatment

If you happen to have especially irritated patches of skin that appear to be oozing, honey may help to combat bacteria in the area that could lead to an infection. Honey is great for skin – simultaneously healing wounds while nurturing the skin. Apply honey to gauze and then apply the gauze to the affected area or areas. Repeat as often as needed for help combating irritation, inflammation, and to prevent infection. Blend the honey with some aloe vera gel to further soothe the area.



# Psoriasis

Psoriasis is an autoimmune disease characterized by the buildup of rough, bumpy patches of skin. Those with psoriasis often state that areas of their skin are red to purple in color, inflamed, and itchy. Like eczema, flare-ups may be lessened with dietary changes. It can also help to keep your home from getting too dry by using a humidifier. Be mindful of what you put on your skin, as many fragrances can trigger a flare-up. Try choosing natural products when shopping for detergents, lotions, and other substances that may come into contact with your body. The remedies below may help to moisten and soothe irritated skin caused by psoriasis:

### Olive Oil Soak

Olive oil is very hydrating and nourishing to the skin. It can be the perfect emollient to treat skin that is inflamed or irritated from psoriasis. Run a lukewarm bath (too hot may make psoriasis worse) and one ounce of olive oil. Stir the water up to help it evenly distribute on the surface. Soak in this for as long as you can to reap the benefits and allow the oil to penetrate deep down into the layers of the skin. When you get out of the bath, moisturize well again to lock in the hydration.

### Turmeric Tea

Turmeric has proven to be a powerful remedy for psoriasis because it can fight inflammation. If you happen to have this valuable spice in your spice cabinet, blend one to two teaspoons (of powdered turmeric) into a cup of hot water to make tea. Add cinnamon and raw honey for an even tastier treat. You can also make tea with fresh turmeric by infusing the chopped root into hot water with a reusable tea bag or stainless steel tea infuser. Drink this up to twice daily to help manage your psoriasis.



### Sun Therapy

Research has shown that ultraviolet light can slow the growth of skin cells, making it especially useful for those with overactive skin cell growth due to psoriasis. Exposing affected areas to sunlight for twenty minutes a day may help to reduce psoriasis flare-ups. Everyone's skin reacts differently with sun exposure, so do not stay out in the sun too long. Too much sun can make psoriasis worse, so avoid sunburn! A little time in the sun also helps the body make vitamin D, which is essential to immune system health.



# Urinary Health

Failing to drink enough water, hygiene, holding in urine too much, uncomfortable underwear, and chemical-laced feminine products can all affect urinary health. When bacteria enters through the urinary tract, it can make its way to the bladder and kidneys to create a very painful infection. There are steps you can take to avoid a urinary tract/bladder/kidney infection, and these include drinking the recommended daily amount of water, wiping from front to back, urinating when you need to, wearing breathable cotton underwear, and swapping commercial tampons and panty liners that often contain chemicals with natural, organic products. You should also urinate after sex. Check with your doctor to make sure you don't have kidney stones, which may also contribute to infections in the urinary system. Coffee is a diuretic, and drinking too much of this can contribute to UTIs. The home remedies below may help to prevent or treat an infection if they are taken at the first sign of symptoms:

### Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple cider vinegar has been researched for its antibacterial properties, so it makes sense to use it to kill bacteria in the urinary tract. Because it is acidic, it is thought that this can help kill bacteria in the bladder as well. Drink  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce of apple cider vinegar diluted in a glass of water at the first sign of trouble. Do this up to three times a day, while making sure you drink as much water as you can to help flush out the possible infection.



### Garlic

Garlic is highly antimicrobial and has been used by women to treat bladder infections for years. Some even claim that garlic can cure an infection and prevent the use of antibiotics. As soon as you suspect an infection, cut up at least three cloves of garlic into tablet-sized pieces and take them all throughout the day, while drinking plenty of water. Keep doing this daily until symptoms are gone.

### Baking Soda for Interstitial Cystitis

Interstitial cystitis is often confused with a bladder infection, and for good reason. Those with this condition claim that the pain they feel in their bladder is the same pain felt with a bladder infection. In addition, symptoms like urgency and painful urination are common with IC. However, those with IC may not have an infection. All of their tests come back negative for infection. This condition is also referred to as Painful Bladder Syndrome. The causes are up for debate, but some believe it is a nerve condition, while others believe it is diet related. A diet of

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acidic foods may contribute to IC flare-ups. If you suffer from this condition, avoid foods like tomatoes, citrus fruits, and cranberry. The problem is that many women who have this believe they have an infection and take cranberry or other acidic supplements to help combat it. This usually makes it much worse. One effective home remedy for IC is to add one to three teaspoons of baking soda to a glass of water and drink it. Repeat this up to three times daily to help neutralize the acidity of the bladder and calm any irritation.

### **Aloe Smoothie for Interstitial Cystitis or Infection**

Aloe vera gel (food grade if you are purchasing it from a store) is helpful in calming the bladder and urinary tract, as well as coating it. Its anti-inflammatory properties help to quiet irritation in the bladder and urinary area. It may also help with pain. It is best consumed in a blended drink, as the consistency of the gel is hard to swallow for some. Create a smoothie using one ounce of aloe vera gel, a banana (considered a bladder-friendly fruit) and coconut milk (you can use any type of milk you prefer if you don't like coconut milk). Blend this well and drink daily for prevention and treatment.





## Body Odor

Body odor is often caused by bacteria on the skin. An area of the body more prone to this condition is the armpits. This is due to the fact that the area doesn't get good air flow. The lack of ventilation plus the excess moisture caused by sweat makes the perfect environment for bacteria to thrive. You can control these bacteria naturally with household products, while helping to prevent fungal and bacterial infections. In addition, you will smell and feel great!

### DIY Deodorant with Coconut Oil

For a gentle, yet effective natural deodorant, look no further than your pantry. The main ingredients you will need for this include coconut oil, corn starch (or arrowroot powder), and baking soda. Optional ingredients include shea butter and essential oils. Essential oils are extremely helpful with tackling bacteria while helping you smell wonderful, so they are highly recommended. Some useful and gentle essential oils to add to this include lavender, tea tree, and chamomile essential oil.

To create this deodorant, you will need to first melt four tablespoons of coconut oil in a small pot (on low heat). If you have any shea butter, add one tablespoon to the coconut oil for melting. You can also melt the coconut oil by running it under hot water for a bit. When the oil has melted, remove it from heat and add two tablespoons of corn starch (or arrowroot powder) and three tablespoons of baking soda. Blend everything together well. Add ten to twenty drops of your favorite essential oil. Make sure it is a gentle essential oil (like one mentioned above) that will not cause skin irritation. Pour this into a container with a lid or an empty deodorant container and let it cool and harden. Place it in the refrigerator to help it harden extra fast. Apply as you would any deodorant. Some people are more sensitive to baking soda in deodorant recipes. If you find that you are experiencing irritation, leave out baking soda for your next batch.



### Armpit Detox with Apple Cider Vinegar and Bentonite Clay

An armpit detox is perfect for those who have spent years wearing commercial deodorants. Most commercial deodorants contain harmful chemicals like synthetic fragrances, parabens, and propylene glycol. These things are linked to hormonal issues and cancer. What's worse, many deodorants contain aluminum to prevent perspiration. This is a toxic metal and is linked to a

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number of health issues, including Alzheimer's. The first thing you should do if you wish to live a healthier lifestyle is ditch the commercial deodorants and try making your own (with the recipe above). Another helpful treatment to try is an armpit detox. This can help to pull impurities from the armpits.

To create this mask, blend one teaspoon of apple cider vinegar, one tablespoon of bentonite clay, and one to two teaspoons of water together until you have a paste-like consistency. Apply this to your armpits and leave it on for up to twenty minutes before rinsing it off. If you notice redness in your armpit area afterwards, this is normal, and a sign of increased blood flow to the area. You can repeat this daily or as needed.





## Oral Care

Proper oral care is important and should be a top priority. When we neglect our teeth and gums, the result can be devastating (not to mention expensive to fix). For example, if you have a tooth that is bothering you, treat it before it becomes seriously infected.

Think about how close your teeth are to your brain! An infection can spread, and if it does, it can severely injure or even kill. The remedies below can help to kill bacteria in the mouth, heal sores, and keep you healthy.

### **Antibacterial Mouthwash with Thyme and Oregano**

Both thyme and oregano are strongly antibacterial and can help to kill bacteria that cause issues in the mouth. Use these common household spices to create a mouthwash by adding one tablespoon of thyme and one tablespoon of oregano to one-half cup of water. Let this come to a boil and then simmer for ten minutes. When ten minutes have passed, remove the infused water from heat and let it cool.

When it has cooled, strain out the liquid and dispose of the thyme and oregano (composting it can be beneficial). Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of alcohol (at least 80 proof) to the water and blend well. Store this in the refrigerator between uses to extend the shelf life significantly. Swish one to two teaspoons in your mouth for up to ten minutes daily to prevent infection and kill bacteria in the mouth. Spit it in the sink when you are finished. Repeat daily for best results.

### **Alum for Canker Sores**

Alum is a common kitchen ingredient used to pickle vegetables and preserve foods. It can also be used to treat canker sores in the mouth. Create a paste with alum powder by taking a small amount and blending it with a drop of water to reach a paste-like consistency.

Apply this paste to the canker sore and leave it on for at least one minute. When one minute has passed, rinse the mouth thoroughly with water. Repeat this up to two times a day until the sore is gone.



### **Salt Water and Baking Soda Gargle**

A simple combination of one teaspoon each of salt and baking soda in a cup of warm water can help to eliminate a mouth sore as well. Gargle this combination for one minute before spitting it out. Repeat up to five times daily for the treatment of mouth sores.

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## **Remineralizing Tooth Powder**

You can keep your teeth in top shape while encouraging remineralization with this useful tooth powder recipe. This can also prevent, or possibly treat, tooth decay. To create it, combine one tablespoon of baking soda, one to three teaspoons of powdered clove, one tablespoon of powdered cinnamon, two tablespoons of dried (preferably ground to powder) peppermint leaves, three tablespoons of calcium carbonate powder, three tablespoons of bentonite clay, and one tablespoon of xylitol powder (for sweetness – you do not have to add this if you don't have any). When these ingredients are properly blended in a container, use a small spoon to place what you need on a wet toothbrush and brush your teeth well. Brush your teeth with this at least twice a day for best results.



## Warts

Common warts are often the result of an infection on the top layer of skin. This is caused by a virus in the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Family. When the virus gets into the area, it causes the swift growth of cells on the outer layer, resulting in what we call a wart. Warts can appear all over the body, and usually aren't painful. However, warts on the feet can cause pain. The remedies below may help to treat warts using supplies you might already have at home:

### **Banana Peel for Gentle Wart Removal**

Because bananas are a rich source of potassium, they may also help to fight HPV. It is thought that potassium may be an effective remedy against this virus. To try this, simply rub a banana peel over the affected area up to three times a day.

### **Garlic for Wart Removal**

Allicin, the main therapeutic compound in warts, is a potent antimicrobial. It can kill a large number of pathogens in the body and has been used to fight all kinds of infections and viruses. Use garlic to combat warts by crushing one clove and blending the crushed clove with a tiny amount of water (to make a paste). Apply this to the wart and then cover the area with a bandage. Repeat this each day for up to one month.

### **Potato and Aloe Vera Paste**

Aloe vera has been shown to help kill bacteria, in addition to helping to soothe the skin. As previously mentioned, it also has strong anti-inflammatory properties, making it very useful in the removal of warts. Potato juice may help to dry out warts as well. Grate a small amount of potato and squeeze the grated potato to obtain juice. Blend this juice with an equal amount of aloe vera gel and apply this to the area liberally. Cover the area with a bandage and repeat this process daily.

### **Aspirin**

Aspirin is a popular over-the-counter pain reliever and fever reducer. The main active ingredient is called salicylic acid. Salicylic acid is obtained from willow bark. This compound can work to peel away the skin on the wart and eventually remove it. Create a paste with crushed aspirin tablets and a small amount of water. Apply this paste to the wart and cover it with a bandage. Repeat this daily for best results.





## Skin Tags

Skin tags are harmless protrusions of skin. They are usually attached by a small stalk referred to as a peduncle. Although they are harmless and not associated with skin cancer, they can become quite bothersome, especially if they are located in an area that is being rubbed a lot. For example, skin tags between the legs, in the armpits, or in the groin area can become irritated by clothing or friction. If you wish to remove these, there are ways to accomplish this using household products.

### Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple cider vinegar can remove skin tags, even in a short amount of time. However, if you have sensitive skin, you may want to choose another option. The acidity of apple cider vinegar can irritate the skin if you leave it on too long. If you choose this method, keep a close eye on the area. If you notice any major redness or irritation to the surrounding skin, discontinue use. To use apple cider vinegar to eliminate a skin tag, simply dip a cotton ball in a small amount of this vinegar and apply the wet end to the skin tag.

Cover this with a bandage and leave it on for a day. At the end of the day, remove the bandage and look at the area. If you do not notice any redness or irritation, dip more apple cider vinegar on a cotton ball and repeat the process the next day. Keep checking the area to make sure the skin is not irritated. At the end of day two or three, the skin tag should either be gone or significantly shriveled. If it is shriveled and withered, you may be able to remove it all the way by clipping it off, as it has likely lost nerve endings and feeling.

### Banana Peel

Just as banana peels can help remove warts, they are also an effective way to help remove skin tags. Because they are so gentle, they can usually be used without having to worry about damaging the skin. Apply a banana peel to the skin tag and secure it to the area with a bandage. Leave it on all night and repeat daily until the skin tag is gone.

### Vitamin E and Garlic Blend

Both Vitamin E and garlic can help remove skin tags. Vitamin E is excellent for the skin, helping to fight wrinkles and promote healthy, supple skin. It is loaded with antioxidants that prevent free radical damage. Garlic is a powerful ally for the skin, and may help to reduce inflammation. Combined, these two help to keep skin healthy and heal any damage to the area. Create this beneficial remedy by crushing one clove of garlic to a paste-like consistency.

Next, open the contents of one Vitamin E capsule and empty it into a small container with the crushed garlic. Blend the two ingredients together thoroughly and apply it to the skin tag. Place a bandage over the area and leave this on overnight as you sleep. When you wake up, remove the bandage and check the area to make sure everything looks well. Repeat this process each

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night until the skin tag is gone. When you make this remedy, there will likely be enough to last several nights, so place what you make in the refrigerator between uses to extend the shelf life.