**Dilute honey effective in fighting urine infection among hospital patients**

* **ANI, Washington**

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Diluting honey with water and giving it to hospital patients can help them fight urine infections, finds a recent study.

Scientists at University of Southampton have shown that diluted honey stops some common bacteria from forming sticky, hard-to-remove layers on surfaces such as plastic, reports BBC News.

A honey solution might be useful for flushing urinary catheters to keep them clean while they remain in the bladder.

Honey has been used for centuries as a natural antiseptic to treat burns and wounds and many companies now sell a range of “medical grade” honey products that comply with regulatory standards.

The research looked at two common bacteria that can cause urine and bladder infections — E. coli and Proteus mirabilis.

Even at low dilution of about 3.3%, the honey solution appeared to stop the bacteria from clustering together and creating layers of known biofilm.

Lead researcher Bashir Lwaleed used Manuka honey (made by bees that feed on the nectar of the manuka tree) in their study because this dark-coloured honey from Australia and New Zealand is known to have bacterial-fighting properties.

They said other types of honey might work too, but they have not tested this.

“Nobody knows exactly how or why honey works as an antibacterial. And we don’t know how well honey would be tolerated in the bladder. We are the first to propose this,” Lwaleed said.

Professor Dame Nicky Cullum, an expert in wound care has also looked at the evidence around honey as a treatment.

“This work from Southampton is at a very early stage so we shouldn’t get too excited. But it is an interesting avenue that is worth pursuing,” she said.

Adding, “Obviously, we’d need more studies to check that it wouldn’t irritate the bladder or cause any other problems. People like things that are natural but they are not always more effective.”

The research was published in the Journal of Clinical Pathology.

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