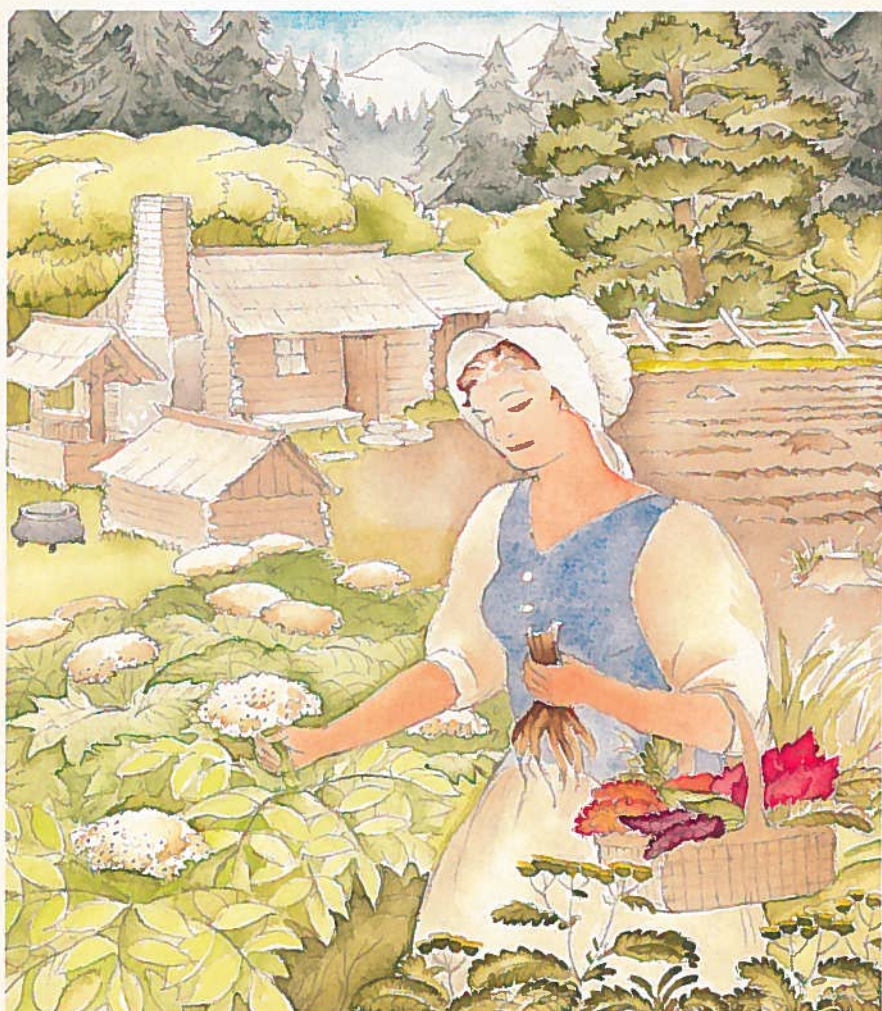


AMERICAN FOLK MEDICINE

*The most complete collection of time-tested home remedies
made from herbs, simple kitchen products,
garden vegetables and fruits and other natural ingredients.*

CLARENCE MEYER



BITES and STINGS of INSECTS

Bees leave their stingers in the skin and they must be removed first. Wasps do not leave stingers.

BEE OR WASP STINGS

For bee or wasp sting apply honey.

When far from usual remedies, clap a handful of damp dirt or moist clay on the wound, removing when dry and heated and replacing with fresh application.

Simple remedies for bee and insect stings are a piece of raw beef, a strong solution of ammonia, vinegar and salt, or borax moistened with lemon juice, or tincture of myrrh.

A little lemon juice applied to a sting or insect bite will soon relieve the pain.

If bee sting looks fiery and swells, poultice it with cloth or cotton wool damped with lime water or a strong solution of bicarbonate of soda.

Apply a strong decoction of wild chamomile flowers.

Make a strong decoction of *Lobelia inflata* and apply it often. An infallible cure.

Olive oil or sweet oil affords relief from stings of bees or other insects.

Castor oil is said to be an infallible remedy for the stings of bees and other insects. It appears to counteract the poison and allay the pain as soon as applied.

Kerosene often relieves the pain of stings at once and prevents swelling.

An application of snuff on yellow jacket or hornet bites usually is very effective.

Apply damp tea leaves to wasp stings.

Rub wasp stings with clove of garlic, sliced onion or raw potato.

Apply some good rubbing alcohol on cotton for wasp stings.

SPIDER BITES

Apply vinegar, ammonia or tobacco juice.

Take alum powder and white of an egg beaten and make a small poultice. Apply to the part and it will take out swelling and relieve the pain.

When stung by an insect or bitten by a spider, suck the wound vigorously for a moment, and then cover it with a cloth wet with quite strong ammonia. A mixture of equal parts of common baking soda and salt well rubbed into the wound will often give relief.

The expressed juice of the common plantain leaves is an effectual antidote to the bite of venomous spiders. Apply some of the juice to the wound, and take about a gill of it internally; or chew the leaves.

It was recorded in a Virginia paper, that a gentleman was bitten above the knee by a spider. A few minutes after, he perceived a pain shooting upwards from the spot which soon reached his heart. A quantity of plantain was immediately gathered and bruised, and the juice squeezed out and swallowed, which stopped the progress of the poison, so that a cure of the bite was obtained immediately.

Elias Smith, Physician, 1826

MISCELLANEOUS BITES

Ant bites, apply eau de Cologne.

Centipede or scorpion bites, apply ammonia.

Chigger bites, use butter thickened with salt.

Horsefly bites, apply ammonia.

in a small jar—lay it on pillow at night and breathe, breathe and breathe.

Mrs. C. W. C., 1950

Take 2 cups of boiling water add 1 heaping teaspoon of wild plum bark and 1 level teaspoon each of coltsfoot and mullen herb. Allow to steep for 20 minutes. Drink wineglassful 2 or 3 times a day.

Old medical paper

The worst case of hayfever that ever existed can be immunized by the use of the leaves and flowers of common ragweed and golden-rod. Mix the herbs and use ½ ounce to each pint of boiling water. Steep 10 minutes. Strain. Take wineglassful 4 times daily.

HEADACHES

BILIOUS HEADACHE

Take ½ ounce rhubarb, 1 ounce carbonate of magnesia; mix intimately; keep well corked in glass bottle. Dose, 1 teaspoon, in milk and sugar, the first thing in the morning; repeat until cured.

Steep a pinch of senna leaves and chamomile flowers in a little boiling water. Strain and drink when cold.

Steep a pinch of senna leaves with a little sage and a dash of ginger in 1 cup of boiling water. Strain and drink when cool.

DISSIPATION, MENTAL EXHAUSTION OR MENSTRUAL PERIOD

Stir a teaspoon of powdered seeds of guarana in 1 cup of boiling water and drink while warm.

Drink a cup of clear coffee with the juice of a lemon.

Mrs. M. S.

NERVOUS HEADACHE

Drink a hot tea made with motherwort herb or dittany herb.

Make a strong decoction of hop tea and take a wineglassful every ½ hour or hour as desired or according to response.

Drink an infusion made of equal parts of wood betony, wood sage, and ground pine.

Brew a tea of equal parts of betony, marjoram, rosemary, and sage. Drink a wineglassful morning and night.

Boil 1 ounce of lady slipper root in a pint of water for 10 minutes. Strain and bottle liquid. Dose, a wineglassful when desired and as a sleep inducer on retiring.

Pour 2 pints of boiling water on ½ ounce of each of skullcap herb and chamomile flowers. Let it stand and cool. Strain and take wineglassful frequently.

Take teaspoon each of skullcap and valerian root. Steep in 1 cupful of boiling water. Strain when cool and drink. Another method: Take powdered botanicals with peppermint tea.

One quart of cider, 3 tablespoons of white mustard seed, 3 of burdock seed, a small horseradish root, well steeped together. To be kept in a bottle well corked; dose, a wineglassful 2 or 3 times a day.

Exercise on horseback, a cold bath every morning, an attention to the diet, and the bowels, together with the following infusion, will effect the cure; take skullcap, skunk cabbage root, lady slipper root, each, in coarse powder, a tablespoon; boiling water, a pint; mix; steep near hot fire for 1 or 2 hours, when cold, sweeten. The dose is a tablespoon every 2 hours.

J. King, M.D., 1855

SICK HEADACHE

The juice of a lime or small lemon in ½ glass of cold water, with a little baking soda stirred in. Drink it while it foams, at the time of getting up in the morning.

The juice of a lemon in a cup of hot water is excellent. Follow with a good laxative.

Take a shovelful of clean wood ashes; put them into clean cold water; when it has settled, drink the water: it may cause vomiting; if it does, the headache will be relieved the sooner.

A pinch of salt on the tongue, followed 10 minutes afterward by a drink of cold water.

Take a spoonful of finely powdered charcoal in a small glass of warm water. Charcoal absorbs the gases produced by the fermentation of undigested food.

Take a teaspoon of powdered charcoal in molasses every morning, and wash it down with a little tea; or, drink $\frac{1}{2}$ glass of raw rum or gin, and drink freely of mayweed tea.

Dr. A. A. Benezet, 1826

Eat the meat of a peach stone. This has been tried in my mother's family since I was a child, and the remedy was never known to fail.

The Kansas Home Cook Book, 1879

Nothing is better than a cleaning-out of the stomach. To do this quickly and easily, simply drink lukewarm water until you can't drink any more. Drink until you are full to running over, and your stomach will empty itself without any difficult retching. Follow the cleaning out with a small dose of bicarbonate of soda in water, and lie down to rest.

Make a tea of mullein seeds and drink freely.

Whenever the symptoms are felt coming on, drink a cupful of bone-set tea.

Gather sumach leaves in summer, and spread in the sun a few days to dry. Then powder them fine, and smoke morning and evening for 2 weeks, also whenever there are symptoms of approaching headache. Use a new clay pipe. If these directions are adhered to, this medicine will surely effect a permanent cure.

EXTERNAL APPLICATIONS

Nervous headaches will sometimes yield to a hot foot bath and hot water applications to the back of the neck.

Wet cloth in cold water, and lay it on the back of the neck. Fold a towel smoothly over it, and very often it will soothe the weary brain, and quiet the nerves better than an opiate.

Peel and slice raw potatoes and bind them on the forehead in a cloth that reaches around the head.

Stir baking soda in cold water, dampen a rag or towel and tie it around the head.

Wet cloth with spirits of camphor and sprinkle with black pepper. Apply to the head.

A ground mustard poultice, applied to the back of the neck, between the shoulders, is good.

The root of cow parsnip boiled in sweet oil and the head rubbed therewith, will cure headache and drowsiness, lethargy, etc.

The oil from anise scented goldenrod prepared in essence, and used to scent snuff with, is good for those persons who are constantly troubled with headache.

Cajeput oil applied to the temples or inhaled through the nostrils often cures violent headaches.

If those who are suffering from violent headache, bind fresh mint across their forehead, they will soon experience relief and ease.

Hop pillows are good for nervous patients and those afflicted with headaches and neuralgia. Heat them well and place under the head.

Fresh leaves of common burdock, fresh roots of poke, fresh garlic, garden onions, wild onions or mustard seed. Apply any one of the above to the soles of the feet.

John Monroe, *The American Botanist and Family Physician, 1824*

The most excruciating head and toothache have often been suddenly dispelled by applying horseradish in fresh shavings or bruised garlic, between 2 fine pieces of muslin, to the bend of both arms, or the hams. Another simple remedy of equal efficacy, in periodical headaches, especially in the morning, is a thin piece of fresh lemon peel freed from the soft fibrous part, and placed on each of the temples, before the volatile oil be evaporated.

HICCUP or HICCOUGH

Place the hand flat upon the pit of the stomach, immediately below the cartilage forming the end of the breast bone, and making firm pressure. Should this prove unsuccessful, place a firm roll of muslin

structed or suppressed menses, it is highly valuable, either alone, or in combination with wild ginger or vervain root, to be taken in tea or infusion. In cases of painful or too profuse menstruation, and in flooding from the womb, or menorrhagia, combined with the cinnamon bark and raspberry leaves, it is also extremely valuable taken freely in infusion.

J. C. Gunn, M.D., 1862

For suppressed, painful or excessive menstruation, take from 10 to 30 grains of the powdered star root 3 times a day, in ordinary cases; in urgent cases, as in dysmenorrhea, flooding, and the like, it should be given in doses of $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon, in a little hot water, once an hour or oftener, until several doses are taken. The dose of the infusion is about $\frac{1}{2}$ a teacupful, repeated according to circumstances.

Jill-grow-over-the-ground is the best thing known in the world to correct female irregularities.

P. F. Bowker, 1836

Mugwort is a friend to break up the vicious circle of perverted menstrual function in cases of dysmenorrhea, the stops and starts of amenorrhea. It affords remarkable symptomatic relief by raising the tone of the musculature of the uterus and by sustaining utero-circulation. Over a few months its use promotes a healthy menstrual cycle.

CHANGE OF LIFE (MENOPAUSE)

There is no better herb than mother-wort for cleansing the womb and removing obstructions in the female at this time of life. A wineglassful of the decoction should be taken 3 times a day.

Excessive flowing in change of life: Grate 1 ounce of nutmeg in 1 pint Jamaica rum, mix well. Dose, 1 teaspoon 3 times a day as long as necessary.

Equal parts of white plantain, sumac leaves, yellow dock, or burdock and devil's bit. Boil them and sweeten with molasses and put $\frac{1}{4}$ part spirits. Dose, a wineglass $\frac{1}{2}$ full 3 times a day. Good for all female derangements, specially at the change. Called mother's friend

Dr. B. W. James, 1852

MOUTH

Also see THROAT.

BAD BREATH

In children it generally indicates a disordered stomach or loaded bowels when not caused by decayed teeth or morbid secretion of the tonsils. A tumbler of chamomile tea on rising every morning often corrects this condition.

Infuse a handful of raspberry leaves in a $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of boiling water for 15 minutes; when cold strain, and add 2 ounces of the tincture of myrrh. Rinse the mouth with a little of it 2 or 3 times a day, swallowing a little each time, until relieved.

Chew 1 or 2 whole cloves, cardamon seeds, or a whole cubeb.

CANKER OR THRUSH

Take a piece of alum, rub on the canker often.

Burn a corn cob and apply the ashes on the sores 2 or 3 times a day.

Take 4 large spoonfuls of good cider vinegar, 4 of water, 1 teaspoon of salt and a very small portion of black or red pepper. Gargle or swab the mouth. (Pepper may be left out.)

The most important thing is to keep the mouth of the child clean. A few grains of borax dissolved in a teacup of water and used as a wash after each feeding will generally be effective. A very nice application is to dissolve $\frac{1}{2}$ drachm of borax with 1 drachm of glycerin and 1 ounce of water.

Rinse the mouth well with a weak solution of borax on canker.

Take $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon borax, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon tincture of myrrh, 1 teaspoon glycerine and enough boiled water to make 1 ounce. Apply gently

to the inside of the mouth several times a day with clean camel's hair brush.

Swab the mouth out with a little borax and honey, and occasionally a little raspberry leaf tea, keeping the bowels moderately open with the soothing syrup.

Infuse a handful of raspberry leaves in $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of boiling water for 15 minutes; when cold strain and add 2 ounces tincture of myrrh, rinse the mouth with a little of it 2 or 3 times a day, swallow a little each time until relieved.

Black currant jelly is an excellent remedy for canker and sore mouth. Pick your currants clean, mash them, stew them and rub through a sieve; add the same weight of loaf sugar, and simmer over a slow fire 30 or 35 minutes.

A tea made of the ripe berries of sumach and sweetened with honey is good for canker in the mouth. It is also used as a gargle, in putrid fevers, to remove the thrush and sores from the mouth and teeth.

G. Capron, M.D., and D. B. Slack, M.D., 1848

Make a strong decoction of 1 tablespoon each of sumach bark and white oak bark, add a piece of alum as big as a hazelnut. Boil in a quart of water. Use as mouth wash or gargle.

Equal quantity of sweet apple tree bark, blackberry root, bark of root of sumach, and borax. Steep in water.

Grandma Allen's Recipe Book, about 1820

Take sage, hyssop, sumac berries, equal parts: make a strong decoction, sweeten with honey, and to $\frac{1}{2}$ a pint of it add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pulverized borax: let the mouth be often washed with this.

Take the yolk of a roasted egg, burnt leather, sage pulverized, and burnt alum, mix with honey. It will cure canker or sore mouth.

Cleanse the mouth with a little sage tea sweetened with honey and mixed with a dram of borax. If the canker sore affects the throat great benefit may be derived from a decoction of carrots in water. Sweeten with honey and give several times a day.

Take the scrapings of a blackberry briar root, a little saffron, a little sage, and some gold thread, or yellow root. Put with these a

little alum, some vinegar and honey, simmer this on hot ashes, after adding a little water. Wet the mouth often. It seldom fails of a cure.

Take plantain leaves, honeysuckles, sage and rosemary, equal parts, and boil them in sour wine, add thereto a little honey and alum. Wash the mouth with this as often as necessary. A few times will be sufficient. It is very harmless, but not more so than it is healing.

Take of plantain seeds 1 ounce, boil in $1\frac{1}{2}$ pints of water, down to 1 pint. Strain and sweeten with honey. Give 1 tablespoon 3 or 4 times a day.

Make a tea from common strawberry leaves. This may be used to swab baby's mouth. Add a small piece of alum to the infusion for adults.

Make a strong decoction of red oak bark, add a little salt and pepper. Use as a gargle. Do not add pepper if parts are very red and inflamed.

Chew a small twig from a cherry tree, letting the bruised bark rest on the sore spot. Relief is generally immediate and mouth heals quickly.

Mrs. C. Bigelow, Nurse, 1917

To relieve thrush in infants who are still nursing, the mother may chew small pieces of rhubarb root. Two or 3 pieces the size of a pea every day. This often benefits the infant through the mother's milk.

Goldthread roots, made into a strong tea, thickened with cream, and made sweet with loaf sugar, and applied with a swab, made of a linen rag, tied on the end of a stick, is good.

A decoction of quince seed makes a soothing gargle in aphthous affections, and ulcerations of the mouth. The decoction is made in following manner: take 2 drachms quince seed to 1 pint of water. Boil them over gentle heat for 10 minutes and strain.

English recipe

A strong decoction of marsh rosemary is good for canker.

A decoction of golden seal root and blue cohosh, used as a wash or gargle is useful in ulcerated sore mouth and throat. Another: make a decoction of yarrow herb or privet bush leaves and beth root; sweeten with honey.

Wash the mouth frequently with some warm astringent infusion as the following: Equal parts goldenseal, cranesbill root, alum; or infusion made with red root, witch hazel bark, and cranesbill.

Drink an infusion made with hops. Hold it in the mouth several minutes before swallowing.

MISCELLANEOUS MOUTH COMPLAINTS

When chewed, ginger root excites the salivary glands, and hence it has been found useful in relaxations of the uvula and tonsils; and paralysis of the tongue and fauces.

Scurvy in the mouth: Take prince-of-pine or scurvy grass, boil it in water, add to it rum and honey, hold it in the mouth as hot as it can be borne, and boil a large quantity of herbs, and sweat the head over it.

GUMS

Gumboils: Wash them out with warm water, adding $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon tincture of myrrh and a pinch of saleratus to each cup of water.

Spongy gums: Rub with tincture of myrrh.

Denture-sore gums: Rub with tincture of myrrh or with gel of aloe vera.

LIPS

Take 4 parts lard, 2 parts white wax, 2 parts spermaceti; melt, and work well together. Pour into little glass boxes. Perfume if you like.

Take 2 tablespoons of sweet oil, a piece of beeswax the size of a hazelnut, melt over a lamp, in a piece of letter paper large enough to hold it.

Sore lips: Wash lips with a strong decoction made from the bark of white oak.

MUMPS

In this disorder the patient should not expose himself to take cold in the damp air, or by wetting his feet, but should continually have recourse to stimulating spirits, and bathe the swelling with the same. If the patient should swell downwards, take white beans, pound them fine, and make a poultice of them in milk and water, and apply to the swelling. If this should not check the swelling, take the garden chamomile and simmer it in milk, and with the liquor bathe the part affected, and drink infusions of the herb. A wash made of the roots and tops of bittersweet is likewise an excellent remedy, and should be taken internally, and applied externally.

J. Monroe, 1824

A mild infusion of scullcap tea will work wonders. Two teaspoons scullcap herb should be placed in a teacup and boiling water poured on. Add 3 or 4 drops oil of spearmint if recovery is a little tardy. For children under 7, give 2 to 3 teaspoons 4 times daily, and for those above this age, $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 teacupful. Hot fomentations of chamomile flowers applied over the swollen area will assist in reducing the swelling.

In ordinary cases, the disease is mild, and requires only a little good nursing, and care that the body be kept warm and dry. The child should stay in the house, and if the swellings are painful use hot herb teas, such as pennyroyal, peppermint, or catnip in order to cause sweat. A large, thick piece of flannel, or, which is better, a clean woolen sock, should be worn around the neck, and the food should consist of rye pudding or brown bread, with sweetened water. If the swellings and inflammation become severe, cathartics, and sudorifics will be required.

G. Capron, M.D., and D. B. Slack, M.D., 1848

For pain, bathe parts with mixture of 1 dram scraped castile soap, $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce oil of sassafras, 1 ounce olive oil, 3 drams camphor. Warm this mixture and apply 3 times a day.

Apply to the swelling 1 part each of lobelia extract, oil of mustard