

## HERBAL GARDEN A Treasure Trove at Your Fingertips



 With the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone is concerned about taking precautions and keeping themselves safe and their families protected. Households recall the precautionary remedies that have been passed down for generations.

One of the quick-to-come-to-mind remedies to treat a cold is inhaling the steam released from a pot of boiling coriander and lime leaves. Inhaling the steam provides relief from cough and cold. Kothamali (coriander seed) is a traditional immune booster; therefore, consuming a glass of hot kothamalli gives relief from cold and coughs and protects the body during times like the ongoing pandemic. Be it a throat irritation or running nose, this indigenous herb carrying antiviral and antibacterial properties is an instant reliever. Coriander or Cilantro seeds are probably the most widespread flu remedy in Sri Lanka. The strong, bitter, liquid infusion of the seeds boiled in water and the steam inhaled often brings welcome relief. Usually, other herbs such as ginger are added to this brew. Furthermore, this coriander tea is said to be a natural diuretic and to promote digestion.

Maintaining oral hygiene is also essential since it is one of the most accessible forms of germ entry. Methods like gargling with salt and warm water ease throat irritation. Washing the mouth with salt water mixed with vineyard also helps. Another remedy to get rid of cold, cough, and throat irritation is to mix chopped onions and bee honey, let them infuse and consume

The Sri Lankan curry leaf or Karapincha is a staple ingredient of any local curry dish. While its distinctive flavor adds a certain tang to meals, it is also known to have nourishing and healing properties. Karapincha is believed to aid in digestion and control high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and high cholesterol. The leaf may be chopped or ground and added to curries or prepared as a mallum (salad), porridge, or fried concoction.



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The leaves, roots, bark, stalk, and flowers of the karapincha plant can be either boiled or powdered together to relieve any type of stomach disorder.

Another miracle bulb, garlic, is known in Sri Lanka and worldwide for centuries for its remarkable healing properties. The pungent cloves, which are also an integral part of many local dishes, strengthen the immune system





and combat various illnesses from respiratory conditions such as cold, flu, asthma, and tuberculosis to digestive disorders, cardiovascular diseases, and skin problems. To get the full benefit of garlic, one can take half a teaspoon of crushed, fresh garlic juice daily. Crushed garlic soaked in bee honey is a remedy for coughs and asthma, and some believe a clove of garlic inserted lightly in the ear is a cure for earache.

The exotic yellow-gold spice, turmeric, is one of Asia's most ancient natural remedies and is the source of the yellow tinge and characteristic flavor of many Sri Lankan curries. Containing a compound called curcumin, a powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant, turmeric has been used to heal wounds, cuts, and burns and treat inflammatory skin conditions, skin diseases, and arthritis. Drinking a warm glass of water or milk with a teaspoon of turmeric is thought to be beneficial. Turmeric is a well-known cosmetic, and when applied as a paste to the skin, it improves and adds a glow to the complexion.

The distinctive tang of ginger is rarely absent from the Sri Lankan palate, and the zest it lends to a dish is irreplaceable. Often sautéed with garlic and added to curry, it has long been heralded as a healing agent for various health problems, including digestive ailments, arthritis, fever, infection, blood pressure, and muscular pain. It is even thought to protect against the harmful radiation from cancer treatments and cancer itself. Ginger can also be taken as a tea, infusion, or even eaten raw by dipping a few thin slices in salt and lime.

Nature is a treasure trove of healing powers, and many a remedy is waiting to be discovered around the corner.

Today, with the onset of the Covid-19 situation, it is advisable to keep ourselves healthy and protected. The ideal way is to follow the traditional herbal remedies available at our fingertips. With a positive mindset, coupled with traditional home remedies, let's make sure everyone stays healthy.

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