For An Instant Cure

Posted on
The cure for all ills at one’s fingertips

A runny nose, a painful body, a pesky headache and the day couldn’t be more awful. In less than five hours the painkiller has lost its punch. Try some ginger, mixed with lemongrass, cinnamon and honey, says mother. Could this home physician’s advice be a mere old wives’ tale and just mumbo-jumbo?

Words Jennifer Paldano Goonewardane **Photographs** Isuru Upeksha and Dilshi Thathsarani

To the contrary, the richness of natural herbs and condiments as home remedies have, for centuries, been the source of time-honoured beliefs concerning their benefits to health and nutrition and as a cure for a multitude of ailments. Thus, home remedies have remained preferred alternatives to treating colds, coughs, fever, diarrhoea, burns and more serious conditions. The ability of these natural ingredients to purify the body and strengthen and energise the affected area of the body is undeniable.

Many are the home remedies for the common cold, a condition so miserable and debilitating that it dulls the energy for many days. The prevalent home remedy among Sri Lankans to treat a cold is a beverage of boiled coriander seed. The seeds, roasted slightly, are boiled in water: 60 grams of coriander seed, brewed in eight cups of water and reduced to one cup. In addition, a formula of two parts ginger, three parts cinnamon with a pinch of cardamom brewed in one cup of hot water for ten minutes and consumed several times a day will relieve a cold. A cold is quite often accompanied by a cough and congestion, treatable with a home remedy of half a teaspoon of cinnamon and one teaspoon of honey, taken two to three times a day. Herbal tea made of coriander, cinnamon, ginger or cumin, coriander and fennel seeds, sipped every few hours helps break a fever.

Honey is an elixir of life, a kind of remedy for all ills and a must in all homes. It can be combined with a variety of herbs and condiments to prepare home remedies to treat a number of ailments. The daily consumption of honey is advocated as an important component for good health. An effortless home remedy for a persistent

cough is black pepper and honey. A combination of a quarter teaspoon of ground pepper with one teaspoon of honey should
be consumed on a full-stomach. The intensity of black pepper relieves congestion. Honey with a pinch of powdered cloves or the juice of ginger with ground mustard also brings out the mucus, while it also relieves a cold and sore throat. A combination of one teaspoon of fresh onion juice with half a teaspoon of honey at room temperature or a little warmer is recommended for an earache.

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Given the variable food habits of people, adapted so well to life on the run and the road, eating ‘out’ and from fast-food outlets and satiating intermittent hunger pangs with quick-fix junk food, the likelihood of developing nausea, vomiting, stomach ache, acidity, heartburn, diarrhoea, gas and flatulence is high. Chewing a few seeds of cardamom is an easy way to treat nausea and vomiting. A blend of equal parts of lemon juice and honey consumed slowly with a dip of the index finger is another therapeutic option.

A stomach ache can be a reaction to unhealthy food, indigestion, constipation or acidity. A blend of a quarter cup of fresh onion juice with half a teaspoon of honey and half a teaspoon of black pepper is ideal to relieve abdominal pain caused by indigestion. Fennel, cumin and coriander seed roasted separately, mixed and chewed now and then is also an effective home remedy.

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Milk and yoghurt have often been cited as the antidote for heartburn and an acidic stomach, but have not always proved effective. Two teaspoons of Aloe Vera gel with a pinch of baking soda will give that urgent soothing effect. Ten grams of coriander seed, crushed lightly, immersed overnight in water and the liquid consumed in the morning relieves gastritis. This beverage is highly recommended to ease menstrual pain as well.

It is not unusual to experience bouts of excessive accumulation of gases in the

colon, thereby creating flatulence, tightness and ample discomfort, not to mention awkwardness. It is time to stop fretting; have a go at a potion of ground ginger with one teaspoon of lime juice. One teaspoon of lemon juice and half a teaspoon of baking soda stirred in one cup of cool water, consumed immediately after meals eases and controls flatulence.

A cup of hot black coffee with a few drops of lime juice is still the customary home remedy for diarrhoea. Another easy remedy is to chew on a mix of half a teaspoon of fennel powder and half a teaspoon of ginger pulp. Consuming a few fenugreek seeds has also been a common household remedy for diarrhoea.

A natural way to control unhealthy cholesterol is to drink the beverage from one teaspoon of lightly crushed fenugreek infused overnight in one cup of water. Placing the crushed fenugreek on a contusion prevents blood from clotting. The pain from a fall can be swiftly eliminated with a paste made from boiling two parts turmeric powder and one part crushed salt in water.

Keep away from applying butter on burnt skin. The best remedy being cold water, it could be treated with a paste made of sandalwood and turmeric powder mixed in Aloe Vera gel. Aloe Vera gel alone is therapeutic for burns.

Home remedies are a good choice in wellbeing, opines Dr B W Padhmashanthi, an Ayurvedic physician. They are consumed as the symptoms emerge. Being items of daily consumption, these ingredients have no side effects unlike medicine that can disturb internal organs. It certainly saves time and money. Don’t look any further. The answers for many ailments sit in the kitchen larder.







