

The medicine cabinet inside your kitchen

☒ *You may not think of your kitchen as a convenient pharmacy, but parents used common kitchen items successfully to treat various maladies long before CVS and Walgreens were invented.*

Crisco— may not be healthy to eat, but smeared on skin, it's an old fashioned but effective treatment for eczema or dry skin.

Oatmeal— crush and put into the end of a hosiery sock. Float in the bathtub for a natural way to moisturize skin.

Olive Oil— a couple drops into the ear three times a day will loosen ear wax (don't put in if your child has a hole in their ear drum eg. myringotomy tubes). For cradle cap, rub into your baby's scalp and use your fingernail or a soft brush to loosen the greasy flakes. Use to kill lice through suffocation. Work the oil through the scalp, tuck hair into a shower cap and wash off in the morning. Although studies are unclear on how well this method works on lice, it certainly is worth a try.

White vinegar— dilute vinegar in water and soak feet to stop athlete's foot. If swimmer's ear is suspected, mix rubbing alcohol one to one with vinegar and drop a couple drops in the ear to stop the swimmer's ear from progressing.

Ginger— boil ginger to make a tea to take the edge off nausea

Honey— shown to soothe coughs-give a teaspoon of dark (buckwheat, for example) honey three times a day. However, NEVER give honey to a child who is younger than one year of age because it may cause infant botulism

Lemon— an old singer's trick—combine with honey in tea to alleviate hoarseness

Baking soda: Mix with water to make a paste to help soothe itchy skin, from maladies such as poison ivy . Can also be mixed with water to make toothpaste if you run out of your usual minty whitener.

Sugar: mix into weak tea (or your ginger tea from above) and give small amounts frequently to soothe your older child's nausea and help rehydrate after vomiting.

Kitchen sink: excellent place to wash any cut, scrape, or bleeding wound under running water with soap. Also immediately after a burn, rinse the burned skin under cold water for several minutes to limit the extent of the heat injury. Contrary to popular lore, DO NOT put butter on a burn. You may, however, put butter on your toast. In small amounts.

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