

# The natural medicine cabinet in 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 the sock in the bathtub for a natural way to moisturize skin.

**Olive Oil**—

- Put a couple drops into the ear three times a day

to 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.
- Also use to kill [lice](#). 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**-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 (don't put in if your child has a hole in their ear drum eg. myringotomy tubes).

**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 lemon juice with honey in tea to alleviate hoarseness

**Salt**— Mixed into lukewarm water, gargling with salt water will help ease sore throat pain

**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.
- Another use of baking soda: one part baking soda with 4 parts corn starch makes a natural underarm deodorant.

**Sugar**: Mix sugar 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.

**Ice:** Ice not only decreases swelling when applied to injuries, it can also be used to combat the itch of bug bites and poison ivy.

**Kitchen sink:** This is an excellent place to wash any cut, scrape, or bleeding wound under running water with soap. 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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