

Website Reference:

<http://blog.emergencyoutdoors.com/home-remedies-the-many-medicinal-uses-of-vinegar/>

Home Remedies: The Many Medicinal Uses of Vinegar

Emergency Outdoors on July 11th 2012



Vinegar has been a useful medicine for thousands of years, crossing continents and cultures, assisting doctors and helping ailing populations. While current medicine focuses almost exclusively on complex chemical and drug treatments, vinegar is still being studied for its potential uses in both complementary and orthodox medicine.

As a home remedy, it is reputed to soothe almost anything from joint pain and sore throats to eczema and fatigue and is also beneficial to weight loss.

Apple cider vinegar is the favorite therapeutic vinegar and is used in all the remedies featured here. Organic apple cider has further benefits, so whenever possible use it as your remedy base.

It must be stressed that prior to self-diagnosis, it is essential to contact your medical professional to discuss your health problem(s).

A small warning: Vinegar contains acetic acid, and acid and tooth enamel don't mix well. Be aware that when ingesting vinegar as a remedy, it is best to dilute it with water. Prolonged use of vinegar can cause damage to your teeth – so play it safe and water it down.

Ear, Nose & Throat

Swimmer's Ear

The build up of moisture in the ear canal is known as “swimmer's ear” and when aggravated by the presence of bacteria, it can cause extreme itchiness and pain.

Keeping the ear free of water helps dramatically so, every time you come out of the pool, shower or bath, train a hair dryer on each ear for 20 seconds.

If the itchiness is more than you can bear, try a few drops of white vinegar in the ear canal (much like medical ear drops). Ensure the vinegar gets deep into the ear canal by moving your head slightly. Then after 30 seconds allow the fluid to drain out.

Aim for two drops for each ear and continue for five days.

Nosebleeds

There are many ways to stop a bleeding nose and vinegar is one of them.

Soak sterile cotton strips in vinegar and gently insert into nostril. Vinegar will then stem the bleeding.

Coughs

If you have a cough that continually keeps you and everyone nearby awake at night, sprinkle a few drops of apple cider vinegar on a cloth and lay it under your head while you sleep.

Sore Throats

There are three ways of treating sore throats – gargling, swallowing and wrapping. If you do all three, the sore throat stands no chance:

- To gargle, mix one teaspoon of apple cider vinegar in a glass of warm water and gargle for ten seconds, three to four times a day.
- To swallow, mix four teaspoons of apple cider vinegar and four teaspoons of honey in a glass of warm water. Drink every four hours.
- For wrapping, first steep a cloth in a mixture of 200 ml/7 fl oz/1 cup of warm water and two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar. Squeeze it out and place on the throat, keeping it in place by wrapping another scarf or cloth around it. Wear this while sleeping and the vinegar will draw the toxins out of your system.

Colds

No-one likes having a head-cold and once it starts you don't want it to get worse and end up in your chest – particularly if you are an asthma sufferer.

One method of arresting a cold's development is to start with a warm bath into which you have poured 500 ml/16 fl oz/2 cups of vinegar.

While in the bath, take a flannel (wash-cloth), steep it in the vinegar solution and place it on your chest keeping it in place for ten minutes.

Some people add pepper to the vinegar to draw toxins out of the body.

Rinse your chest, stay warm and go to bed. Repeat with a daily bath until the cold starts to leave your body's system.

If winter is approaching you are likely to be surrounded by people sneezing, coughing and spluttering germs, so prepare this remedy in advance:

Soak 100g/3 1/2 oz each of chopped garlic and fresh ginger in 500 ml/16 fl oz/2 cup of apple cider vinegar.

Seal in a sterilized bottle until the last month of autumn then, at the end of every meal, drink 10 ml/2 teaspoons of it for two weeks. Be warned, the concoction will have quite a kick!

For blocked nose, the best method is to inhale eucalyptus oil on a handkerchief, but if you add some drops of vinegar as well, you will keep your nose disinfected and help fight off any bacteria in the air.

Bones & Blood

Cholesterol

Fatty foods, smoking, alcohol intake – all these are known to be detrimental to cholesterol levels and if your family is genetically disposed to high cholesterol, you may be at risk of heart disease. Vinegar is

known to reduce cholesterol, its acidic nature and rich mineral and trace element content assisting in returning the body to its natural balance.

Combine the fresh juices of fruits that are also known to assist in lowering cholesterol such as apples, cranberries and grapes and add in a tablespoon or two of apple cider vinegar. Drink this every day and your cholesterol count will be reduced.

Arthritis

This is a condition that blights sufferers with painful and stiff joints but the use of apple cider vinegar has consistently been shown to alleviate the pain.

Medical stores abound of patients, whose fingers have become deformed by arthritis, finding themselves with pain-free digits thanks to the use of vinegar.

The process is simple. Start with one teaspoon of vinegar a day in a large glass of water. At your own pace, increase this to twice a day and then drink the vinegar with every meal. Over time, increase the vinegar intake to a dessertspoon (two teaspoons) with each glass.

Improvement will occur though how great it is depends on the severity of the condition.

Blood Flow

Vinegar is known to greatly assist in thinning the blood because acetic acid restores the alkaline properties of the system.

People who suffer from heart conditions should consult their doctor before using vinegar as part of their therapy, as the medication they are using can seriously be affected by vinegar.

A teaspoon of vinegar in a glass of warm water taken with every meal can greatly improve your blood's circulation.



Feet & Legs

Foot Odor

Smelly feet are no-one's friend and can cause embarrassment. If you suffer from foot odor, soak your feet in a bowl of warm water to which 20 ml / 4 teaspoons of white vinegar has been added and do so twice a day for 15 minutes. Continue to do so for ten days and the foot odor will soon cease.

Toenail Fungus

Fungus growth under the toenail can become extremely painful if not treated properly.

If possible cut the dead part of the nail off and soak the toe in diluted white vinegar for ten minutes.

Repeat this twice daily, once before putting your shoes on and again at the end of the day when you take them off.

You can also soak a cotton wool (absorbent cotton) ball in vinegar and rub the toe frequently throughout the day. It may also be worth sterilizing your socks in one part white vinegar to four parts

water, before washing them as normal.

Varicose Veins

The process for healing varicose veins depends on the severity of the condition, but apple cider vinegar will certainly assist.

There are two methods you can use:

The first is massaging the vinegar directly into the affected part of the leg, three times a day.

The second is resting the leg by wrapping it in a vinegar-soaked cloth and elevating it for 30 minutes, twice a day.

Either method will produce results though the process is slow so be patient.

Leg Cramps

A leg cramp can attack suddenly and without warning.

Rub white vinegar into the affected area and the pain will disappear instantly.

Tired Aching Feet

Wearing high-heeled shoes, standing on your feet all day, jogging, going to the gym – these are just some of the things that make our feet think we don't love the.

When they start to ache, rub a tablespoon of cider vinegar into them and they will soon feel relaxed and refreshed.

Calluses

Soaking feet in apple cider vinegar, Epsom salts and warm water will assist the healing of calluses on feet.

Wash and dry your toes and then apply a cloth soaked in vinegar directly to the callus.

Either leave the cloth on for 30 minutes or, to kick-start therapy, tape the cloth in place with sticking plaster and leave it overnight.

Athlete's Foot

For this condition you can use vinegar to clean and disinfect your socks and also apply it to the affected area for relief.

Rinse your socks in 500 ml/16 fl oz/ 2 cups of cider vinegar to 2 liters/3 1/2 pints/4 cups of water and leave it soak for 30 minutes before washing.

For your feet, apply vinegar directly to the area three to four times a day – this method should reduce the itching quickly.

Low Energy

Potassium

Potassium is a trace mineral that is a key element for cell and tissue growth.

It is also essential in keeping arteries resilient and assisting in blood circulation.

Depletion of this mineral can cause numerous symptoms such as:

- Mental and physical fatigue
- Aching bones and muscles

- Sensitivity to cold
- Difficulty in sleeping
- Impatience, memory lapse, forgetfulness
- Itchiness of the skin and scalp
- Tired eyes
- Lower back pain
- Depression
- Nervousness
- Muscle cramps
- Constipation

All or any of these may be an indication of potassium deficiency. The benefit of apple cider vinegar is its high potassium levels, so incorporating this vinegar into your diet can be beneficial.

Drink a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar in a glass of water with every meal to increase your potassium levels.

Fatigue

First check your feeling of fatigue with your doctor as excessive tiredness can be the first symptom of many complaints.

If it is just the result of too many busy days and nights, mix three teaspoons of apple cider vinegar with 250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup of honey.

Mix two teaspoons of this liquid with hot water just before bedtime and you will feel refreshed the next day.

Insomnia

A mind that won't settle, an inability to find a comfortable place in bed, watching the clock tick through every minute from 4:00 am to breakfast time- all of us have experienced sleeplessness at some stage.

For an insomniac, this can happen every night of the week and, apart from leaving a person exhausted, the nervous system can become quite depleted.

Vinegar can assist as a nightcap if two teaspoons of honey and two of cider vinegar are dissolved in a glass of warm water.

Take a few sips before bedtime and, if you wake in the night, take a few more sips and go back to sleep.

Inveterate insomniacs may do this a few times but the method will work eventually.

Waste Removal

Urinary Tract

The purpose of the urinary tract is to assist in removal of waste in the body and to do so it requires a certain level of acidity.

Infections, bacteria, antibiotics, coffee – all these and many other phenomena can disrupt normal levels of acid, making urination uncomfortable.

Vinegar's ability to restore pH levels will assist in restore the tract to its normal state.

A glass of water with a teaspoon of vinegar will help a lot.

Kidneys

Kidney stones form due to a build up of uric acid and calcium.

When stones become dislodged and begin the journey out of the kidneys and through the urinary tract they become excruciatingly painful.

Vinegar is well known for its ability to actively dissolve uric acid and calcium and ingesting small amounts of vinegar will reduce the accumulation in the kidneys.

Sprinkle vinegar on salads and meat dishes as part of your daily meal or, alternatively, take a teaspoon a day in warm water.

This will help to dissolve excess calcium and allow the kidneys to remove the matter easily through the urinary tract.

Cystitis

Bacteria live naturally in parts of the urinary tract but for various reasons the bacteria sometimes travel back into the tract causing discomfort and even bleeding during urination.

Taking a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar three times a day will provide relief, but see a doctor if the problem persists for more than five days or if there is blood in the urine.



Stomach

Stomach Ulcers

The thought of putting any acid on an ulcer would seem ill advised.

However it is known that apple cider vinegar assists the stomach in releasing a substance that is beneficial to the gastric system and acts as a protection against ulcers.

One teaspoon of apple cider vinegar in a glass of water before every meal will do the trick.

Indigestion

Discomfort caused by certain foods does not help your body's process of eliminating waste and absorbing protein, minerals and vitamins.

If you suffer from indigestion, in a small ceramic teapot, mix two teaspoons of vinegar and half a teaspoon of green tea and fill with boiling water.

Allow the liquid to steep for five minutes then drink as required.

Alternatively you can use peppermint tea instead – peppermint greatly assists digestion and is well known for its benefits for upset stomachs.

Weight Loss

There are many diets, pills and potions which help people lose weight but it must be stressed that rapid weight loss in any form can have dire consequences for the body.

You will serve your body far better by approaching weight loss gradually, using sensible dieting and regular exercise.

Allow your system to adjust to the process. Apple cider vinegar can assist with dieting as it works as a diuretic, draining the body of excess fluid while also reducing the appetite.

Take one teaspoon in two cups of warm water before each meal, coupled with regular exercise.

Itches & Scratches

Bites

Apple cider vinegar's ability to draw out toxins is one reason why it is so good for applying to insect bites.

As an immediate solution, you can place vinegar directly on the area and rub it off.

Dip a cloth in the vinegar, press it against the bite and the itchiness will cease, sealing some of the broken capillaries at the surface of the skin.

If the bite has drawn blood, the vinegar will disinfect the area and prevent further bacteria from entering the wound.

If welts occur, make a paste from vinegar and cornflour (cornstarch) and apply it once every two hours until the lumps are reduced.

Hives

These are lumps and bumps on the skin that are the result of allergic reactions and are similar to insect bites.

Vinegar will draw out the toxins. Dissolve one tablespoon of brown sugar, one teaspoon freshly-grated ginger root and 125 ml/4 fl oz/1/2 cup cider vinegar in 250 ml/8 fl oz/ 1 cup warm water.

Dab the mixture on the affected spot or spots with cotton wool (absorbent cotton) twice a day.

Eczema

Eczema sufferers claim that taking vinegar in their diet has greatly decreased and sometimes even altogether removed their eczema.

Vinegar should have the same effect on eczema rash as it does on other forms of skin irritation, if it is directly placed on the affected area.

Pouring a tablespoon or two of cider vinegar in a bath will help a lot also.

Some eczema is an internal response to a reaction within the body and in these cases vinegar may not help.

If this is the case, medical advice should be sought.

Psoriasis

This very unpleasant and extremely irritating skin condition is mainly treated by keeping the affected part (often the face and head) wet with baths or swimming.

Sometimes hot water can cause further itchiness, so it really depends on what works best for the individual.

To ease an itching scalp, dip a cloth in apple cider vinegar and apply to the scalp or use a final rinse of vinegar in the water after washing your hair.

Hemorrhoids

The presence of hemorrhoids can lead to burning sensations and bleeding, which can be hugely discomforting for the sufferer.

You can use undiluted vinegar to assist or, if you find that too strong, dilute it with water.

Take a cotton ball dipped in diluted vinegar and gently dab the affected area.

Cold Sores

The cold sore virus is a strain of herpes which remains dormant in the body for long periods of time.

Stress, lack of vitamin C, sleeplessness and a cold wind are just some of the factors that can trigger an outbreak around the mouth.

Apart from being extremely painful and unsightly, a cold sore can also cause fatigue. It is extremely important at the first sign of a 'tingle' to increase your vitamin C intake.

The cold sore will usually run its course, starting with a blister which will then rupture creating the sore itself.

At the burst blister stage, apply small dabs of vinegar to the affected area. This will assist in healing the sore more quickly.

Shingles

Shingles, like cold sores, are caused by a virus and occur under similar conditions, with stress and being physically run down acting as major triggers.

Shingles are a far more serious condition than cold sores, however, as they can continue erupting for many, many weeks and are extremely painful.

You can apply vinegar directly to the sores but some people find them to be too sensitive – if so, dilute the vinegar with water and apply it three to four times a day.

Jellyfish Stings

In summer, particularly on extremely hot days or after it has rained, these creatures float in large numbers towards the shore with the tide.

Bathers can swim along happily unaware of the jellyfish until the skin starts to burn from a sting.

To treat the stings immediately, pour vinegar over the affected area to inactivate the stinging cells.

Any kind of vinegar will do. If tentacles cling to the skin, avoid touching them with bare skin. Above all do not rub or scratch the skin as this will further inflame it.

Bee Stings

Like jellyfish stings, rinsing the wound with vinegar will greatly reduce the pain or itching.

Ensure you first remove the bee's tail (stringer) from the puncture wound. Then soak a cloth in neat vinegar and compress it against the sting, holding it there until it has given relief.

Other Complaints

Headaches

If you prefer to avoid taking aspirin, paracetamol or any other chemical treatment to alleviate a headache, vapor inhalation is a valid alternative.

In a saucepan, heat together 500 ml/16 fl oz/2 cups of apple cider vinegar and 500 ml/16 fl oz/2 cups of

water; leave the mixture to steam for five minutes.

Pour it into a glass or ceramic bowl, place your head over the bowl and cover your head with a towel.

Allow the vapors from the bowl to rise and inhale the fumes from the mixture until the headache starts to subside.

If your headaches are occurring because of blocked sinuses, drink a teaspoon of vinegar in warm water and repeat every four hours until the sinus clears.

Bruises

Just like Jack in the Jack and Jill rhyme, a bruise can be eased with a treatment of vinegar.

You can make a cold compress of vinegar and cover the bruise with it or dip the cut side of half an onion into the vinegar and rub directly on the affected area to stop the discoloration of bruised skin.

Sunburn

The simplest solution to sunburn is not to put yourself at risk, so stay out of the sun.

But if you can't bear to drag yourself away from that beach chair and have forgotten to douse yourself in suntan lotion and barrier cream, soaking the affected area in a mixture of vinegar and cool water will help alleviate the pain.

You can mix 250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup of vinegar with 125 ml/4 fl oz/1/2 cup natural (plain) yogurt and lightly cover the burn with the mixture every hour until the pain lessens.

To remove, rinse the area in cool water and pat the skin dry with a towel.

Do not rub the burn as this will irritate the skin further. Some remedies also add aloe vera, as the juice of this plant is extremely helpful in healing wounds, particularly sunburn.

If you have an aloe vera plant in your home, break off a leaf and add the juice to the vinegar and yogurt mix.

Mouth Ulcers

Ulcers can be extremely painful, making consumption of food almost unbearable.

Gargle with vinegar and this will help in the healing process.

Ensure you always rinse with clean water afterwards to protect your teeth.

Gingivitis & Bad Breath

Gargling with vinegar daily will help reduce bleeding from the gums when brushing and will also banish any nasty odors on the breath.

Be sure to rinse after gargling as the acetic acid in vinegar can damage the enamel on teeth.

Yeast Infections

There is a debate whether vinegar is helpful in removing the infection or whether it may actually be a hindrance.

Some people advocate treating vaginal thrush by bathing with 500 ml/16 fl oz/2 cups of vinegar in the bathwater.

This is said to greatly ease the itching.

Other sources indicate, however, that you should completely remove vinegar from your diet as it actually exacerbates the symptoms.

As with other vinegar remedies, the best method would be to test the treatment by applying it to a small area first before proceeding with the full course.

Nausea & Vomiting

As a herbal remedy, cloves are known to stop vomiting.

Mixing them with warm vinegar and water and then taking as a drink should provide some much needed relief.

An alternative is to soak a towel in warmed vinegar and place it on the stomach, replacing it with another towel when the first one goes cold.

The vinegar will gradually draw the toxins from your body.

Morning Sickness

Some women suffer dreadful bouts of morning sickness in pregnancy that can even last all day long.

Yet it is essential to eat correctly and sufficiently when pregnant. Some form of relief can be found by drinking a teaspoon of honey and a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar in a glass of water.

If you still have no relief, consult your doctor.

Boils

While these can be quite painful, the important thing to remember is not to squeeze the boil as this can cause further infection.

It is advisable to avoid sugary foods as these can further irritate the boil.

To treat a boil with vinegar, dissolved one tablespoon apple cider vinegar and drink the mixture twice a day until the boil subsides.

If it worsens, however, place a wet face flannel (wash-cloth) dipped in apple cider vinegar in a microwave and heat for 30 seconds on full power.

Then pack the wash cloth on the boil like a heat pack.

Continue doing this for 15 minutes, reheating the cloth if it cools down. Repeat three times per day until the boil subsides.