



Health

Best home cures for your aches and pains

"My tummy feels awful."

Nausea, diarrhea & upset stomach

When diarrhea strikes his family, Gannady Raskin, MD, ND, dean of the School of Naturopathic Medicine at Bastyr University, cures it with herbal concoctions. "Tea made from pomegranate skin will help an upset stomach," he says. Set aside the leftovers of your next purchase; you can store dried skin for up to 6 months. Then steep a tablespoon's worth in a cup of boiling water for 3 to 4 minutes. Oak bark (available at health food stores) works, too: Boil for 3 minutes, let sit for half an hour, and then strain. Both recipes are rich in tannins, which help the body produce mucus to line the stomach and lessen irritation.

If you suspect food poisoning, couple black tea with a few pieces of burned toast, says **Georgianna Donadio, PhD**, director of the National Institute of Whole Health, a holistic certification program for medical professionals. "The tannic acid in tea and the charcoal in the toast will neutralize the toxins and help you get much better very quickly."

For a hangover, **Donadio** recommends a cup of tomato juice with a splash of Tabasco sauce. "It stimulates the liver and is loaded with antioxidants that your body needs replenished," she says.

"I'b all stuffed ub"

Cold, flu, congestion & allergies

In the early stages of cold or flu, try this recipe from Brian Berman, MD, director of the Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine: Place a whole unpeeled grapefruit, sectioned into four pieces, in a pot and cover with water; heat to just under a boil. Stir and add a tablespoon of honey, and drink the whole mixture like tea. "The simmering releases immune boosters from the grapefruit into the water — vitamin C and flavonoids hidden between the rind and the fruit," he says. "The concoction packs more punch than store-bought grapefruit juice, plus the warmth eases a sore throat." To beef up your body's healing response, he swears by liquid olive leaf extract, available at health food stores. Studies suggest that its antiviral qualities can help treat cold

and flu bugs. "You end up getting rid of mucus sooner, and it helps your immune system fight back as well."

Congestion and bronchitis call for an oldie but a goodie, says Woodson Merrell, MD, an assistant clinical professor of medicine at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons: medicated vapor rub. Applied to the chest, it helps stuffed-up sufferers breathe easier, but Merrell prefers a cleaner approach: Boil a pot of water, let it cool for about 1 minute, and then mix in a teaspoon of vapor rub. Lean over it with your head about a foot from the steam. Use a towel over your head to make a tent, and inhale for 5 minutes.

Your nasal congestion may also respond to saltier measures: Merrell rinses his sinuses with a store-bought nasal saline solution (or, in a pinch, dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a cup of water) to wash out pollen and thin mucus. Spooner says his two children willingly "hose their nose" when they're sick by squirting the solution up each nostril with a bulb syringe. "Buy saline by the case, and start your kids early. It provides instant relief of congestion without side effects," he adds. "It won't shorten your cold, but being able to breathe through your nose makes the wait more pleasant."

For relief from seasonal allergy symptoms — such as itchy eyes, runny nose, and sneezing — Merrell also recommends herbal supplements. Last year, Swiss researchers showed that one tablet of butterbur three times a day worked just as well as popular antihistamines without causing drowsiness. Herbs can sometimes interfere with other drugs or cause problems in pregnancy, though, so talk to your doctor before taking them.