

3. FIRST AID USING SIMPLE REMEDIES

There are numerous drugless remedies for all sorts of common ailments encountered while traveling, trekking or simply mucking about at home. In most cases, these remedies may be found in any part of the world, making language only a small barrier to finding relief. Even better, such remedies are invariably inexpensive -- often free -- and available in most places where food is sold.

There are hundreds of simple first aid remedies, many of which are described in *FIRST AID USING SIMPLE REMEDIES* (The G-Jo Institute -- www.g-jo.com). But a general knowledge of just ten common substances should be more than enough to cover the typical ailments we might encounter for relief or first aid.

Having traveled -- and visited food stores -- in nearly every part of the world, I know that nearly all of the following substances are readily available, or could even be easily carried in a "natural" first aid kit. Before going further, however, let me say that in my experience the best first aid technique is G-Jo -- a simplified form of acupuncture that I have described in previous issues of East West Journal. While there are many common foods and similar substances that have surprising uses (such as baking soda, cabbage, carrots or grass), the following are ten of the most broadly useful and readily available self-help remedies:

CASTOR OIL

This universally available oil may be used for numerous different disorders, especially in the form of a heat pack -- a cotton or flannel cloth lightly soaked in castor oil, covered by a plastic sheet, then covered further with a heating pad and placed over an affected area. Castor oil is a good general emollient (lubricator) and all-around healing agent for such conditions as:

- Bruises, "black eye" -- rub castor oil into bruised or affected area;
- Burns and scalds -- rub castor oil into affected area, after first cooling site with ice, ice slush, etc.;
- Constipation -- rub two or three Tbsp. castor oil onto entire lower or middle abdomen, medicinally;
- Corns and bunions -- rub castor oil into affected area;
- "Hay fever", allergies -- place five drops of castor oil on tongue nightly, followed by a half glass of water;
- Headaches -- rub castor oil into temples;
- Hives and rash (urticaria) -- rub castor oil into affected area; or use as for "Hay fever";
- Sores, lesions -- rub castor oil into affected area medicinally;
- Warts -- rub castor oil into affected area; takes a number of applications to be effective.

CHARCOAL

Charcoal may be used internally or externally when crushed and powdered. Medicinal-quality charcoal may be purchased at drug stores, but may be made by blackening bread or totally covering a piece of smoldering wood with sand or dirt for several hours. Any kind of charcoal may be used except self-lighting (impregnated) charcoal for barbecuing.

If using chunks of charcoal, first pound charcoal into small pieces, then pulverize in a blender, if available. If not, charcoal may be chewed and swallowed, followed by a glass of water. Charcoal may also be placed in a fabric bag, moistened and used as a poultice for many problems. It has a tendency to draw out infections, poisons, etc., and to purify the entire system by absorption. Here are some of its many uses: mix one or two tsp. of charcoal in a glass of water and drink medicinally for: alcohol overdose; allergies; bad breath; cholera; diarrhea; fever; gas and flatulence; heartburn; jaundice and most gastro- intestinal disorders.

Also:

- Bites, stings -- pack affected area in a paste of charcoal plus water or Vaseline8Z;
- Gangrene -- mix charcoal with whole wheat flour in enough water to make a paste; use as poultice on affected area;
- Infections -- mix one or two tsp. charcoal in a glass of water and drink medicinally; mix powdered charcoal with Vaseline8Z or flour and water to make a paste, then spread onto affected area medicinally;
- Inflammations -- mix charcoal with Vaseline8Z or flour and water, to make a paste; spread onto affected area;
- Pain -- mix one or two tsp. charcoal in a glass of water and drink medicinally (for internal pain); mix powdered charcoal with Vaseline8Z or flour and water to make a paste; then spread onto affected area medicinally;
- Poison ivy -- mix charcoal with flour and water to make a paste and spread onto affected area medicinally;
- Poisoning (of many sorts) -- mix up to three or more tsp. charcoal in a glass of water and drink medicinally.

GARLIC

Garlic is the single most powerful medicinal herb in the history of natural healing. It is a "hot" herb -- use sparingly, if you are prone to a bad temper, are in a hot or tropical climate or have a weakened constitution. Avoid garlic if you are allergic to sulphur.

Garlic should be eaten raw, if possible, or lightly browned with honey. It may also be steamed, boiled and made into a soup or added to a meal -- but it is best used in its natural state and in medicinal quantities.

Other ways to use garlic internally include the following: Chop or crush the equivalent of up to two (peeled) buds of garlic, either raw, sautéed (in a little olive oil), or combined with boiling water to brew a "tea" (infusion), which may be consumed up to several times daily. Several cloves may be pressed and crushed into olive oil and spread on toast (after the garlic/oil "spread" has been left standing overnight). It may also be crushed and blended into a beverage. For the most part, garlic may be cooked without spoiling its effectiveness (the "strong" part -- that which creates its harsh odor and taste -- is a volatile oil and is quickly lost in cooking). Taken internally, garlic has classically been used to relieve and often "reverse" (stimulate the body's healing energy) the following problems:

- High or low blood pressure;
- Asthma and other lung disorders;
- Liver and gallbladder disorders;
- Cystitis;
- Tuberculosis;
- Catarrh and sinusitis (creates an expectorant effect);
- Various kinds of poisoning (especially by putrid meat, fish, salmonella, etc.);
- Digestive ulcers;
- Gonorrhea;
- Tonsillitis;
- Hot flashes;
- Depression;
- "Morning sickness" in pregnancy;
- Blood poisoning;
- Diabetes (especially eaten with parsley and watercress);
- Diarrhea (especially chopped, eaten with milk or honey);
- Dysentery;
- Typhoid;
- Cholera;
- Streptococci germs (scarlet fever, sepsis, diphtheria, erysipelas, rheumatic fever, etc.);
- As an expectorant to clear phlegm;
- If you feel "too cold";
- Angina pectoris;
- Colds and upper respiratory infections (both internally and externally -- see below);
- Impotence (as a male aphrodisiac, when used on a regular basis);
- Most skin diseases (either internally or externally -- see below);
- Worms (round and thread) and other internal parasites;
- Infections -- especially the prevention of infection;
- Menstrual cramps;
- Conjunctivitis ("pink eye");
- Typhus;
- Polio;
- As an antibiotic (in relatively large doses);
- Coughs and croup;
- Pneumonia.

There are several ways of -- and many reasons for -- using garlic externally. Some of them include:

- Athlete's foot -- rub a cut clove of garlic on the affected area;
- Hemorrhoids -- make a suppository of a peeled bud, and use medicinally;
- Boils, sties and carbuncles -- make a compress of "garlic tea", but do not put garlic in direct contact with skin (generally, garlic is not recommended for any kind of inflammation -- a "hot" ailment);

- Earache -- wrap a small, cut clove in gauze -- or use several drops of garlic oil -- and place directly into ear;
- Toothache -- place a cut clove against or behind the painful tooth, medicinally;
- Stings (esp. hornet, bee, etc.) -- rub affected area with a cut clove of garlic (after extracting the stinger by scraping the edge of a fingernail over the stinger itself, in the opposite direction of entry);
- External parasites -- hang a peeled clove of garlic in a cut bag around the neck, beneath the clothes;
- Snakebite -- apply directly to the site of the bite;
- Stings of scorpions, other poisonous insects -- apply directly to affected area;
- Sore throat -- hold a cut clove in your cheek medicinally;
- Lip and mouth disorders -- make a salve of garlic plus Vaseline and apply to affected area;
- Loosened teeth -- place cut clove of garlic directly in contact with the affected tooth and gum (helps them take root again);
- Burns and scalds -- rub several drops of garlic oil or a cut clove directly onto affected area;
- Colds and influenza -- put a cut clove in either cheek at the onset of a cold (it should be cleared within a day); or use a poultice for the bottom of the feet (see below);
- Bleeding wounds -- place crushed or grated garlic in a cloth bag and tie directly onto affected area (to help stop bleeding and prevent infection -- but do not place directly on/in open wounds);
- Pimples and acne (as well as other eruptive skin disorders) -- rub affected area with a cut clove of garlic;
- Rheumatism -- rub cut clove on aching and affected areas;
- Impetigo and eczema -- rub onto affected areas (take internally also);
- Blisters -- rub cut clove -- or esp. oil (if available) -- directly on affected area.

To make a garlic poultice, chop the cloves finely and substantially enough to cover the bottom of a cloth. Place another cloth on top of that and then coat the bodily surface that is to receive the poultice with Vaseline™ or similar insulation (garlic should not be in direct contact with the skin or it may cause a burn). Next, bind the poultice into place with another cloth. The poultice is useful when applied to the feet overnight and held in place with a pair of socks or stockings. A foot poultice is particularly useful for any kind of general internal disorder, such as colds and influenza, gastrointestinal distress, etc.

Serious problems -- such as dysentery, etc. -- could take up to several months to cure on a program of one garlic bud eaten five or six times daily; but relief should begin promptly. Washing hands in salt water helps kill the odor of garlic on the skin. Garlic breath odor may be "neutralized" by eating parsley, mint or orange peels, or by drinking milk or eating yogurt afterwards. Those with weak constitutions should always use garlic in cooked or diluted form.

HONEY

Honey has many medicinal and first-aid internal as well as external uses. It is easily available around the world, making it a particularly valuable substance. Use only raw, unfiltered honey, if

possible. NOTE: DO NOT FEED HONEY TO INFANTS AND CHILDREN UNDER 12 MONTHS OF AGE (MAY CAUSE BOTULISM OR OTHER POTENTIALLY FATAL PROBLEMS)!

When used internally, honey is generally taken in the amount of one or two Tbsp. Its internal uses include the following:

- Relieving nervousness;
- Soothing the digestive tract;
- Cough and croup (esp. when honey is combined with lemon juice and/or glycerine -- another common remedy -- in equal measures);
- Fatigue;
- Nasal congestion (inc. sinusitis, rhinitis, "hay fever," etc.) -- esp. chewing raw honeycomb;
- Asthma (honey plus grated radish);
- Ulcers (digestive);
- Many kinds of headache (honey plus grated onion);
- Hangover (spread honey on toast before bed, after drinking intoxicating beverages in order to wake up without hangover);
- Bed-wetting (one tsp. of honey before bed);
- Pregnancy prevention (emergency technique -- insert honey-soaked rag deep in vagina before intercourse);
- Migraine (one Tbsp. every 20 minutes or half-hour until relief);
- Dysentery;
- Typhoid;
- Most respiratory problems;
- Bronchitis;
- To stimulate heart;
- Pneumonia;
- Insomnia (two Tbsp. honey plus a small glass of buttermilk and a squeeze of lemon juice).

Honey may be used externally for:

- Athlete's foot (dab honey-soaked cotton swab between affected toes and let stand overnight);
- Burns and scalds (dab or pat honey onto affected area);
- Facial mask (pat honey directly onto face and let stand for up to a half-hour);
- Skin (dry or rough -- massage or pat honey onto affected area, let stand for 15 minutes, then wipe off);
- Stings, esp. bee or wasp (after removing the stinger by dragging a fingernail across the affected area backwards from the direction of the stinger entry) dab a bit of honey over the affected area, then cover with ice and let stand.

LEMON

Lemon rivals garlic as a natural "cure-all." It has numerous internal and external uses, but is

generally diluted with water for internal use. Diluted lemon juice -- a natural antiseptic -- may be used internally for the following:

- Sore throat (before swallowing, gargle for as long as possible with mixture of lemon juice and water);
- Nausea (lemon juice plus a small amount of salt and black pepper);
- Headache;
- Heartburn and indigestion;
- Colds and influenza;
- Nasal congestion; coughs and croup (esp. when juice is mixed with honey and/or glycerine);
- Radiation poisoning (reputedly, at least);
- Constipation (drink juice of lemon in a glass of warm water upon arising);
- Kidney stones (juice of one to two lemons daily, diluted, until stones are dissolved);
- Seasickness or motion sickness (use juice straight or slightly diluted, medicinally);
- Bilioussness and digestive malaise (mix juice with cold water and take before bed plus one half-hour before breakfast);
- Any kind of internal infection.

Externally, straight lemon juice may be used for the following:

- Insect bites and stings (mix juice with cornstarch and dab or pat onto affected area);
- Hemorrhoids (apply fresh juice directly onto affected area);
- Cuts and wounds -- especially bleeding wounds (squeeze juice directly onto affected area);
- Splinter -- in the finger (tie a cut lemon onto affected area overnight);
- Chapped lips -- mix juice with glycerine (pat onto affected area);
- Itchy skin -- pruritus (pat or dab juice onto affected areas);
- Sunburn (pat or dab juice onto affected areas);
- Migraine (tilt head back and place a few drops juice up either nostril);
- Skin problems in general (rub lemon rind onto affected areas);
- Stains on skin ("bleach" affected area with lemon juice);
- Corns on feet (bind cut lemon onto affected area and let stand overnight or rub juice directly into the corn);
- Warts (steep rind in apple cider vinegar for 24 hours and place inner part of "pickled" rind on wart for maximum of three to four hours daily);
- Blood poisoning (place cut half of lemon over inflamed site; also drink diluted lemon juice medicinally);
- Sprains and strains (pack affected area in lemon slices immediately);
- Acne, impetigo, eczema and other eruptive skin disorders (pat juice onto affected area and let dry);
- Poison ivy, oak or sumac (pat onto affected area and let dry);
- Sore and reddened hands and/or feet (first apply lemon juice, then rub olive oil, if available, into affected area afterwards).

Cut lemons may also be roasted for about a half-hour (until they start to crack), then the resulting juice taken orally and medicinally -- maximum of one tsp. before each meal and

bedtime -- for coughs, croup, colds or influenza.

ONIONS

Onions -- members of the garlic family -- have both internal and external medicinal uses.

Internally, they may be used for the following:

- Headache (mix crushed onions with honey and eat medicinally);
- Insomnia (eat several slices of raw onion before retiring);
- Asthma and other congestive lung disorders (eat several slices of raw onion medicinally);
- Pneumonia (eat slices of raw onion regularly, medicinally);
- Colds and influenza as well as other upper respiratory infections (crush onions into a thick juice, then drink medicinally);
- Some kinds of headaches (try spreading honey on raw onion slices, then eating medicinally).
- Externally, onions may be used for the following:
- Snakebite (crush onions with tobacco and salt and apply to affected area);
- Stings and bites (esp. of bees, wasps -- after removing stinger by dragging edge of fingernail across affected area backwards from the direction of stinger entrance, place sliced, raw onion onto site of sting);
- Boils, sties and carbuncles (place a poultice of crushed onion on to the affected area);
- Ringing in the ears (place crushed onion juice -- several drops -- into either ear, several times a week, medicinally);
- Fever (apply sliced raw onions on the chest and feet, medicinally);
- Pleurisy (place a poultice of crushed onions over affected areas);
- Sinusitis and other kinds of nasal congestion (place several drops of crushed onion juice in either nostril).

PEPPER (RED OR CAYENNE)

Red (cayenne or capsicum) pepper -- widely available either fresh or ground into powder -- may be mixed into a hot tea to reduce a fever. It is also useful for: digestive disorders; sore throat (gargle with hot cayenne tea); and hangover (cayenne pepper mixed with water, then drunk on the "day after").

It may be used externally for: bleeding wounds, or hemorrhage (sprinkle pepper directly into open wound to stop bleeding); cold feet (sprinkle some pepper in socks on cold mornings -- not too much); colds and influenza (use pepper as a tea -- infusion -- perhaps with other herbs to promote perspiration); indigestion (use as a tea or infusion, perhaps with other herbs, for fast relief, or simply eat powdered/whole pepper medicinally).

SALT

Salt -- one of the most easily abused common substances -- has a number of first-aid uses, both

externally and internally. But when taken internally, salt poisoning -- a potentially fatal condition -- may occur when quantities of more than a 1/2 tsp. are taken at a time, within a short period of time after each other. Use with extreme caution.

For internal use, salt is mixed with water -- generally cool water -- and taken only medicinally. It is useful in relieving: vomiting; colic (**DO NOT FEED INFANTS SALT UNLESS APPROVED BY YOUR PHYSICIAN**); intestinal cramps and spasms; malaria (esp. when taken at beginning of symptoms); and typhoid (also when taken at the beginning of symptoms).

Externally, a diluted salt water solution may be "snuffed" up the nose for relief of nasal congestion (caution: use only a small amount as excess may cause serious nasal congestion). Salt water may be used for eyes that are sore, weakened or tired (use salt water as eye wash); or for immersing bleeding cuts and wounds. Mix salt and saliva (or water) and pat onto itching areas of skin.

When salt is mixed with onion and tobacco -- or egg yolk or vinegar -- it is reputedly helpful for relieving snakebite. Bee stings may be relieved -- again after removing the stinger by dragging the edge of the fingernail across the affected area backwards from the direction of the stinger's entrance -- either with salt by itself or dampened with cream and patted onto affected area.

Sprains and strains may be relieved by using salt and vinegar (pref. apple cider), mixed into a paste and patted directly onto affected area. And, of course, salt by itself is a most useful general antiseptic. Pouring salt on open wounds is a classical -- if painful -- way to prevent infection.

SUGAR (REFINED SUCROSE)

While nearly any kind of sugar has medicinal qualities, the plain, grocery store variety -- white sugar -- when used in small and medicinal amounts, may have important internal and external benefits.

Internally, it may be used for: cough or croup (make a paste of butter plus a small amount of sugar and feed medicinally); hiccups (eat a small amount of sugar alone); colds, influenza and other upper respiratory problems (spread sugar between layers of sliced onions and eat the syrup that is formed, medicinally); hunger control (a little sugar -- taken medicinally -- can temporarily relieve inconvenient hunger).

Externally, sugar may be used for: Boils, sores, inflammations, insect bites, wounds, etc. (make a paste of sugar plus hot water and apply to affected areas); inflamed eyes (make an eye rinse or wash using a little sugar in hot water and apply in an eye cup); skin ulcers (mix sugar with Vaseline™ or other petroleum jelly as a salve and apply locally; use powdered, not granulated, sugar).

VINEGAR (PREF. APPLE CIDER)

Natural (vs. white or chemical) vinegar -- pref. apple cider or wine vinegar -- has numerous internal and external uses. Internally, it is frequently mixed with honey and/or water for problems of the gastrointestinal or respiratory system. Travelers often use this as a "cocktail" before each meal in certain foreign lands to prevent food poisoning or bacterial infections.

Honey is not necessary -- only helpful in making this beverage more palatable.

The same vinegar cocktail may be helpful in temporarily relieving stress and tension (because of its ability to change the body's pH) and may be helpful in preventing colds, influenza and similar problems if taken immediately after first symptoms appear. Used medicinally, vinegar diluted with water is helpful in relieving vomiting. A sore throat is quickly relieved by gargling vinegar diluted with water, then swallowing.

Vinegar is often used externally for: itching areas of the body (rub or pat into affected area and let dry); burns and scalds (esp. sunburn -- pat onto affected area); poison ivy, oak or sumac (pat onto affected area); insect bites and stings (use in place of alcohol); and similar skin disorders. Athlete's foot responds particularly well when the affected area is dabbed with straight vinegar.

Sprains and strains are quickly relieved when packed in a mixture of iodized salt plus vinegar. When used as a cooling rub, vinegar helps quickly lower fever.

Vinegar also helps deodorize feet and other potentially smelly parts of the body when mixed with water and used as a rinse. Ear infections quickly respond to a rinse of diluted vinegar plus water, while bruises are relieved with a compress of hot vinegar plus salt.

A hot salt water plus vinegar compress is helpful in treating pneumonia (when laid across chest and upper back), while a migraine may be relieved by boiling vinegar in water and using the steam that results to produce a vaporizer effect (put towel over the head to form a tent and breathe 50 to 75 breaths to bring relief -- also for migraine: plunge hands repeatedly into any source of hot water). Dry or itchy skin -- especially of the hands or feet (including impetigo and eczema) -- is quickly relieved by rinsing the affected area in either straight or diluted vinegar. When splashed on cuts and wounds, vinegar helps promote healing and reduce swelling.

While the internal use of any of these remedies may be contrary to strict dietary practices, their limited use in emergency situations may well spell the difference between suffering -- possibly even foreshortening a long-anticipated vacation -- and relief