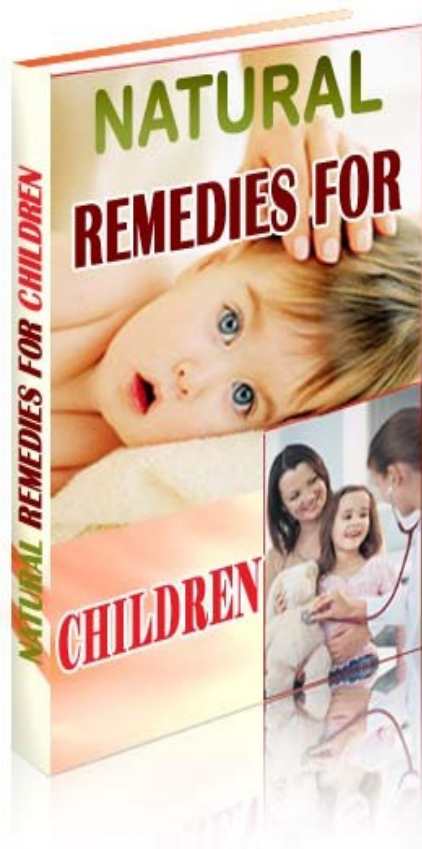


NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN



NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Table of Contents

<u>Dental Caries</u>	<u>Chicken Pox</u>
<u>Diarrhea</u>	<u>Rheumatic Fever</u>
<u>Indigestion</u>	<u>Meningitis</u>
<u>Vomiting</u>	<u>Boils</u>
<u>Dysentery</u>	<u>Ringworm</u>
<u>Abdominal Pain</u>	<u>Impetigo</u>
<u>Infantile Colic</u>	<u>Scabies</u>
<u>Constipation</u>	<u>Eczema</u>
<u>Gastro-Enteritis</u>	<u>Head Lice</u>
<u>Intestinal Worms</u>	<u>Psoriasis</u>
<u>Anal Fissure</u>	<u>Warts</u>
<u>Appendicitis</u>	<u>Anaemia</u>
<u>Cholera</u>	<u>Epilepsy</u>

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

<u>Common Cold</u>	<u>Febrile Convulsion</u>
<u>Tonsillitis</u>	<u>Headaches</u>
<u>Tuberculosis</u>	<u>Diabetes</u>
<u>Bronchitis</u>	<u>Conjunctivitis</u>
<u>Asthma</u>	<u>Defective Vision</u>
<u>Croup</u>	<u>Stye</u>
<u>Mumps</u>	<u>Ricket</u>
<u>Pleurisy</u>	<u>Scurvy</u>
<u>Whooping Cough</u>	<u>Teething Problems</u>
<u>Influenza</u>	<u>Bedwetting</u>
<u>Malaria</u>	<u>Childhood Obesity</u>
<u>Typhoid Fever</u>	<u>Depression</u>
<u>Measles</u>	<u>Nephritis</u>

Dental Caries

The treatment of dental caries consists of the removal of decayed regions of the tooth and filling the cavities. If the cavities have reached the pulp, it may become necessary to extract the affected tooth.

Proper cleaning is the most important step towards healthy and sparkling teeth. Ideally, teeth should be cleaned after every meal, but one thorough cleansing each day will be far better than any number of hurried brushing. A quick brushing is a waste of time. The teeth may appear clean, but they will still be coated with a layer of plaque, a sticky, transparent substance. It is invisible, but it can be felt as a fuzzy coating on the teeth. It is this substance which leads to decay. In fact, even with a normal brushing, one can still miss removing as much as 80 per cent of the plaque.

There are many theories on how best to clean the teeth. The consensus of dental opinion, however, seems to back using a circular motion with the brush, so as to ensure that all dental surfaces are cleaned. The child should not be afraid to touch the gums with the brush, as this gentle stimulation improves the blood circulation in the gums.

Toothpaste is not in fact essential for the removal of plaque, although most

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

people prefer to use it. It does help to keep the mouth fresh. The flouride, which is not being added to an increasing number of pastes, also helps to strengthen the outer enamel and this renders it less susceptible to decay.

The mineral fluorine is essential for tooth-building. Studies on dental caries in human beings have shown that the incidence is high in areas where the drinking water contains less than 0.5 ppm. fluorine and low in areas where the water contains 1 to 2 ppm. fluorine. It has further been shown that the addition of 1 ppm. fluorine to drinking water significantly reduces the incidence of dental caries.

Diet plays a vital role in dental health. The condition of the teeth, after they are formed, depends upon the foods one eats from day to day. Dental decay, the destruction of the bone around the teeth, and infections of the gums can be prevented with an appropriate diet. In fact, with a proper diet, the teeth and jaw- bones can be made harder and healthier as the years go by.

All types of sweets and refined foods and all products made from white flour and white sugar should be avoided as fibreless refined foods allow particles to accumulate on the teeth. It is important to ensure that the diet includes plenty of raw vegetables and whole meal bread. Whole foods are ideal. They are good for the teeth. The gums need friction to keep them firm and whole foods also help remove plaque. They are therefore called 'detergent foods' by

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

some dentists. Millet and sesame seeds are especially beneficial. Sesame seeds are extremely rich in calcium.

Onions are considered beneficial in the prevention of tooth decay. Latest researches by Russian doctors have confirmed the bactericidal properties of onion. According to these findings, if a person consumes one raw onion every day by thorough mastication, he will be protected from a host of tooth disorders. The Russian doctor, B.P.Tohkin, who has contributed to this research, has expressed the opinion that chewing raw onions for three minutes is sufficient to kill all the germs in the mouth. Toothache is often allayed by placing a small piece of onion on the bad tooth or gum.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Diarrhea

Diarrhea for prolonged periods can lead to certain definite complications. Among these, dehydration poses a serious problem, especially when disease is accompanied by vomiting. It can even be fatal if not treated early. Dehydration is characterised by hot, dry skin over the abdomen, sunken eyes, dry mouth, intense thirst and reduced flow of urine. This can usually be prevented if the child-patient is given plenty of liquids with electrolytes.

A simple diarrhoea, resulting from digestive disturbances, is severe. It can pass off with the removal of the cause. The child should be given the juice of an orange diluted with water on 50:50 basis for a day. This will help in improving the condition. Correct dietary method will prevent further occurrences of the trouble.

In case of infective diarrhoea, the child should rest in bed. He should be given warm-water enema daily, for the first two or three days of the treatment to cleanse the toxins in his bowels. It will expel gas and check diarrhoea by decreasing rectal tenesmus. He should be given orange juice and water for a few days. Milk and solid foods should be avoided at all costs. As soon as the condition improves, the child may be put on an exclusive diet of fresh fruits for two or three days.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Thereafter, he may be allowed to gradually embark upon a regular, well-balanced natural diet, according to his age, with emphasis on milk, fruit juices, fresh fruits and steamed vegetables.

Certain home remedies have been found effective in curing diarrhoea. These include carrot soup, pomegranate and the butter milk. Carrot soup supplies water to combat dehydration, replenishes sodium, potassium, phosphorus, calcium sulphur and magnesium. It also supplies pectin and coats the intestine to allay inflammation. It also checks the growth of harmful intestinal bacteria and prevents vomiting. Half a kg. of carrots may be cooked in 250 ml. of water until it is soft. The pulp should be strained and boiled water added to make a litre. Three-quarter tablespoon of salt may be mixed. This soup should be given in small amounts to the patient every half an hour.

Pomegranate has proved useful in controlling diarrhoea, on account of its astringent properties. It is especially beneficial in case of weakness due to profuse and continues purging. The patient should be given about 50 ml. of pomegranate juice to drink at frequent intervals.

The use of buttermilk is also found beneficial in the treatment of diarrhoea. It helps overcome intestinal flora and reestablish the benign or friendly flora. The acid in the butter milk also fights germs and bacteria. A cup of buttermilk mixed with a pinch of salt may be taken

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

three or four times a day for controlling this disease.

The best water treatment for diarrhoea is the application of abdominal compress at 60 o F. It should be renewed every 15 to 20 minutes. A cold hip bath for 10 minutes will be beneficial for older children suffering from diarrhoea. For this bath, ordinary bath tub can be used. It should be filled with cold water (50 o to 65 o F), so as to cover the hips when the patient sits in it. In case of abdominal pain, hot fomentation for 15 minutes should be administered every two hours.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Indigestion

Indigestion is a common ailment in children today and is caused by direct errors. It is a condition of the stomach in which digestive juices are incorrectly secreted, resulting in discomfort.

The only effective home treatment for indigestion in children is a thorough cleansing of the digestive tract, and adoption of sensible diet thereafter. The best way to begin the treatment is to put the child on raw juices for a day or two. He may be given orange juice mixed with hot water on 50 : 50 basis during this period. If orange juice does not agree, carrot juice, mixed with water, may be given. If possible, the bowels should be cleansed once daily with a small warm-water enema. In the alternative, a glycerine suppository may be applied for this purpose. If this is done, the symptoms will soon disappear.

The child should then be placed on an all-fruit diet for a further day or two. With regards to this, he should be given juicy fruits such as apple, pineapple, pear, peach, orange and papaya. This may be followed by a restricted diet of easily digestible foods, consisting of lightly -cooked vegetable, juice fruits and buttermilk for two days or so and thereafter, he may be allowed to embark upon a well-balanced diet suited to his age.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The use of fruits in general is beneficial in the treatment of indigestion. They flush out undigested food residue and accumulated faeces and re-establish health. Being rich in water, they clean body mechanisms thoroughly. The best fruit for treating indigestion is the lemon. Its juice reaches the stomach and attacks the bacteria, inhibiting the formation of acids. Lemon juice removes indigestion by dislodging this acid and other harmful substances from the stomach, thereby strengthening and promoting healthy appetite.

The orange is another effective remedy for chronic indigestion. It supplies nutrition in a most easily assimilable form. It also stimulates the flow of digestive juices, thereby improving digestion and increasing appetite. It creates suitable conditions for the development of friendly bacteria in the intestines.

Grapefruit is also useful for indigestion. It is a light food which acts immediately on indigestion and relieves heat and stomach irritation. Pineapple is also valuable. It acts as a tonic for indigestion and relieves digestive disorders.

The child suffering from indigestion should be encouraged to follow the under-mentioned rules regarding eating :

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

- ❖ Water should not be taken with meals, but half an hour before or one hour after a meal.
- ❖ Never hurry through a meal. Eat very slowly and chew the food as thoroughly as possible.
- ❖ Never eat to a full stomach.
- ❖ Do not eat if appetite is lacking.
- ❖ Do not mix too many foods in the same meal.

Hydrotherapy can also be used beneficially in the treatment of indigestion. Useful measures in this direction include wet girdle pack applied at night, application of ice bag over the stomach half an hour before meals and a hot water bag over the stomach half an hour after meals, a daily cold friction bath and alternate hot and cold hip baths at night.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Vomiting

The treatment for vomiting will depend upon the actual cause of the trouble in each individual case. In case of gentle vomiting, if it does not occur of its own, it should be induced by tickling of the throat with a feather dipped in oil.

If the parents cannot ascertain the cause, the child should be kept in bed. He should not be given anything but hot water to drink. Co-operative children can be given warm-water enema to cleanse the bowels. They can be given fresh fruits and liquid diet after the acute symptoms are over. Thereafter, they may be allowed gradually to embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to their age, with emphasis on fresh fruits and lightly-cooked vegetables.

In case of vomiting resulting from emotional disorders, the parents and schools teachers should avoid using harsh words while speaking to the child and they should behave with him in such a manner that he looks upon them as friends. The child should be encouraged and entertained so that he forgets what has happened.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of vomiting. The most important of these is the use of time, which is very

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

valuable for stopping bilious vomiting. Half a teaspoon of fresh lime juice should be mixed with equal quantity of honey and licked two or three times daily in treating the condition.

Ginger is extremely useful in the treatment of vomiting resulting from dyspepsia, flatulence, colic spasms and other painful affections of the stomach and the bowels, not accompanied by fever. A quarter teaspoon or 15 drops of fresh ginger juice, mixed with half a teaspoon each of fresh lime and mint juices and a teaspoon of honey, constitutes an effective medicine for treating this condition. It should be taken twice daily.

The juice of red beet is another effective remedy for vomiting due to billiousness. About half a cup of the juice with equal quantity of water may be given twice daily. Adding half a teaspoon of lime juice to this juice will increase its medical value.

The tender coconut water is also an excellent remedy for vomiting. It has a soothing effect on the stomach and the condition caused by irritation of the stomach may be relieved by drinking half a cup of this water twice daily.

Application of ice bag over the stomach and the spine opposite to it is

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

also an effective method in controlling this condition. Wet abdominal pack or heating compress, applied for one hour, is another valuable remedy for persistent vomiting. This is a cold compress covered in such a manner as to bring warmth.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Dysentery

Dysentery in children may be acute or chronic. The acute form is characterised by pain in the abdomen, diarrhoea and dysenteric motions. Yellowish white mucus and sometimes only blood from the intestinal ulcers is passed with stools. The evacuations are preceded by pain and tenesmus. The child feels a constant desire to evacuate his bowels, although there may be nothing to throw off except a little mucus and blood. There is a feeling of pain in the rectum and along the large intestine. With the advance of disease, the quantity of mucus and blood increases.

The treatment of dysentery should aim at removing the offending and toxic matter from the intestines and for alleviating painful symptoms, stopping the virulence of the bacteria and promoting healing of the ulcer. The child-patient should be kept on liquid diet for the first 24 hours. The use of butter milk will be especially beneficial as it combats offending bacteria and helps establishment of helpful micro-organisms in the intestines.

The child may be given about 15 to 20 ml. of castor oil with milk. This will facilitate quicker removal of offensive matter, minimise the strain during motion and also act as a lubricant to the ulcerated surfaces. The child should be kept on complete bed rest as movement induces pain

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

and aggravates distressing symptoms. Hot water bag may be applied over the abdomen.

After acute symptoms are over, the child may be allowed rice, curd, fresh ripe fruits, especially bael, banana and pomegranate and skimmed milk. Solid foods should be introduced very careful and gradually according to the pace of recovery. Fresh fruits and vegetable salads which have a detoxifying and cleansing effect upon the intestine, should form the major portion of the future diet. Flesh foods of all kinds should be avoided in future as far as possible. Other foods which should be avoided are tea, coffee, white sugar, white flour and products made from them.

Among specific food remedies, bael fruit is, perhaps, the most efficacious in the treatment of dysentery of both the varieties. A sherbet can be made from this fruit by mixing 30 grams of the pulp in 60 ml. of water. This sherbet should be administered to the child in doses of two teaspoons thrice daily. In acute cases of dysentery with inflammation of mucous membrane, best results can be obtained when dried bael or its powder is used. The unripe or half ripe fruit should be sliced and dried in the sun. These slices may be powdered and preserved in bottles. This powder may be administered in one gram dosage to the child twice daily.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The use of pomegranate rind is another effective remedy for dysentery. About 60 grams of the rind should be boiled in 250 ml. of milk. It should be removed from the fire when one third of the milk has evaporated. It should be administered to the patient in three equal doses at suitable intervals. It will relieve the disease very soon.

Lemon juice is very effective in dealing with ordinary cases of dysentery. Two medium sized lemons, peeled and sliced, should be added to 250 ml. of water and boiled for a few minutes. The strained infusion should be administered thrice daily.

Mashed banana together with little salt is a very valuable remedy for dysentery. According to Dr. Kirticar, a combination of ripe plantain, tamarind and common salt is most effective in treating dysentery. He claims to have cured several cases of both acute and chronic dysentery by this treatment. When children have dysentery, ripe bananas mashed and beaten to cream must be used.

Apple is also considered beneficial in the treatment of acute and chronic dysentery in children. Ripe and sweet apples should be turned into soft pulp by steaming and given to the child several times a day, from one to four tablespoons, according to age. The American Medical Association has also advocated the use of apples as therapeutic agent in dysentery.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Abdominal Pain

Abdominal pain is a common complaint of children, especially in the age group between five and ten years. It is estimated that about 10 to 18 per cent of school-going children suffer from recurrent pain in the abdomen.

The treatment of abdominal pain in children will depend upon the underlying causes. The only effective treatment for this problem, resulting from digestive disturbances, is a thorough cleansing of the digestive tract and adoption of a sensible diet thereafter. The best way to begin the treatment is to put the child on a diet of fresh fruit or vegetable juices for a day or two. Orange juice will be especially beneficial. It can be given diluted with warm water on 50 : 50 basis. If possible, the bowels should be cleansed daily with a small warm-water enema. If this is done, the symptoms will soon disappear. The child can thereafter be placed on an exclusive diet of fresh juicy fruits such as orange, apple, pear, grapes, pineapple and papaya for a further day or two. This may be followed by a restricted diet consisting of lightly-cooked vegetables, juicy fruits and buttermilk for about two or three days and thereafter he may be allowed to embark upon a well-balanced diet, suited for his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and steamed or lightly-cooked vegetables. The patient should avoid acid-forming foods, very hot and very cold foods as well

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

as concentrated sweets.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of abdominal pain caused by digestive disorders. The most important of these is the use of ginger. It is extremely useful in stomach-ache resulting from dyspepsia, flatulence, colic, spasm and other painful affections of the stomach and the bowels, not accompanied by fever. Quarter teaspoon of fresh ginger juice, mixed with half a teaspoon of honey constitutes as an effective medicine for treating this condition in children. It should be taken twice daily.

Coriander is another effective remedy for abdominal pain, arising from digestive disorders. A teaspoon of coriander juice, added to half a glass of fresh buttermilk may be given to the child twice daily in treating this condition. A chutney made from dry coriander, green chillies, grated coconut, ginger and black grapes, without seeds, is also useful in abdominal pain due to indigestion and can be given to the child in small quantities.

Bishop's weed is also a valuable remedy for stomach ache resulting from diarrhoea, dysentery, atonic dyspepsia, cholera, colic, flatulence and indigestion. Half a teaspoon of these seeds with a little rock salt may be given twice daily in treating this condition. The volatile oil extracted from the seeds is also useful and should be given in doses of

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

one or two drops.

Application of hot fomentations over the site of the pain will give relief. Pain in the stomach can often be relieved by a general hot bath when other measures have failed. The temperature of the water should be increased after the patient enters the bath, as hot as can be borne, say 100 ° to 120 ° F. In several cases, drinking a couple of glasses of hot water will give relief. The temperature of the water should be as hot as can be swallowed without inconvenience. Cramps in the stomach can also be relieved in the same way. Application of radiant heat over the abdomen twice or thrice daily will also give great relief.

In case of recurrent abdominal pain arising from psychological and emotional factors, skilled help from a psychiatrist will be necessary to discover the cause of his worries and prescribe the methods of cope with every day problems.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Infantile Colic

Colic is a painful stomach condition. Babies between the age of three and six months usually suffer from this condition. It is characterised by pain in the abdomen as a result of complete or partial blockage of one of the hollow tubes - intestines, ureters and bile ducts. The muscles lining the tube contract in order to expel the contents but cannot, and the resulting tension produces the pain. Typically, colic occurs between the six O'clock and ten O'clock evening feeds.

The baby should be given a little tepid water to sip. A small warm-water enema should be given to cleanse the bowels, if possible. This will be most effective in overcoming the problem. Feeding should not be resumed until all signs of colic have disappeared.

The mother should, in addition, look very carefully at her own diet, and regulate it according to the dietary restrictions for adults. The emphasis should be on natural foods, specially whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw vegetables. She should also avoid overfeeding of the child in future. Four-hourly feeds and, if possible no night feeding, should be the rule.

Sometimes, the milk of the mother is affected from a psychological

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

cause, such as bad temper, worry and great excitement. The baby should never be fed when the mother is in such a state. The home atmosphere should be kept quiet and calm, for all babies react to nervous tension and stress.

In case of bottle-feed babies, it should be ensured that the nipple is clean and that the hold is neither too large, nor too small. If the colic is caused by swallowing of the air, it can not be expelled while the baby is lying flat. He should therefore be held in vertical position and the swallowed air is likely to come up fairly quickly and this may relieve the pain. When the problem becomes severe, two firm pillows should be placed beneath the mattress at the head end so that the mattress will be steep enough to raise the baby's head well above the level of his feet, but so not so steep that he slides down. Application of heat to the abdomen in the form of a small towel wrung out of hot water and squeezed will also help recovery.

A mild tea made from the herb chamomile is regarded as a gentle and effective home remedy for infantile colic.

This tea should be prepared by infusing one teaspoon of the herb in a cup of boiling water. It should then be strained through a filter and sweetened with a little honey. It should be given to the infant in one teaspoon dose.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

A liquid prepared from fennel seeds is considered beneficial in the treatment of colic suffered by older babies. This liquid is prepared by boiling one-fourth tea spoon of fennel in a little milk for five minutes and then strained.

An infusion of a carway seeds is another effective remedy for colic in older infants. A tablespoon of these seeds should be infused in a cup of boiling water. It should be allowed to stand for 20 minutes, and then strained through a filter. One teaspoon of this infusion should be given to the child from time to time till the pain subsides.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Constipation

The treatment for constipation will depend upon the age of the child whether he is a small baby or a child, four or five years of age. When a baby is on breast-feeding, constipation is usually the result of wrong feeding on the part of the mother, and it must be corrected. The baby should be kept on water and orange juice for a day, and small enema of warm water given. In the alternative, a glycerine suppository may be applied. Laxative should be avoided as far as possible. Also if the baby is artificially fed, the cause is wrong feeding, and this should be rectified.

For a child of two years or more, an all-fruit diet for two or three days and the adoption of a sensible diet formula thereafter, according to the child's age, will soon cure the condition. On no account should purgatives be given. A small warm-water enema should be given daily while the child is on all-fruit diet, and the older child should be encouraged to take plenty of exercise. A little olive oil, given preferably with the salad meal, will help.

The most important factor in curing constipation is a natural and simple diet. This should consist of unrefined foods such as whole grain cereals, bran, honey, molasses and lentils ; green and leafy vegetables,

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

especially spinach, french beans, tomatoes, lettuce, onion, cabbage, cauliflower, turnip, pumpkin, beets and carrot ; fresh fruits, especially pears, grapes, figs, papaya, mangoes, gooseberries, guava and orange ; dry fruits such as figs, raisins, apricots and dates ; milk products in the form of butter, ghee and cream.

Sugar and sugary foods should be avoided because sugar steals the B vitamins from the body, without which the intestines cannot function normally. Foods which result in constipation are products made of white flour, pulses, cakes, pastries, biscuits, cheese, flesh foods, preserves, white sugar and hard boiled eggs.

Drinking water is beneficial not only for constipation but also for cleansing of the system, diluting the blood and washing out poisons. Water should, however, not be taken with meals, as it dilutes the gastric juices essential for proper digestion. Water should be taken either half an hour before or an hour after meals.

Generally, all fruits, except banana and jackfruit, are beneficial in the treatment of constipation. Certain fruits are, however, more effective. Bael fruit is regarded as best of all laxatives. It cleans and tones up the intestines. Its regular use for two or three months throws out even the old accumulated faecal matter. It should be preferably used in its original form and before dinner. About 30 grams of the fruit will

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

suffice for a child. Pears are regarded the next best fruit beneficial in the treatment of constipation. In ordinary cases, a medium-sized pear taken after dinner or with breakfast will have the desired effect.

Grapes have also proved highly beneficial in overcoming constipation. The combination of the properties of the cellulose, sugar and organic acid in grapes make them a laxative food. Their field of action is not limited to clearing the bowel only. They also tone up the stomach and intestines and relieve the most chronic constipation. The child should take atleast 150 grams of grapes daily to achieve the desired results. When fresh grapes are not available, raisins soaked in water can be used. Drinking hot water with sour lime juice and a little salt is also an effective remedy for constipation.

The child-patient may be given abdominal massage which is beneficial in the treatment of constipation. It stimulates the peristalsis of the small intestines, tones up the muscles of the abdomen walls and mechanically eliminates the contents of both large and small intestines.

For constipation accompanied by abdominal pain and tenderness, the hot fomentation is a remedy for great value and can be used with beneficial results. A cloth wrung out of hot water should be applied to the abdomen. It should be renewed every five or six minutes. Three

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

successive application may be made at a time, while applying hot fomentation to the abdomen, the feet should be kept warm by applying hot water bottles.

They should also be encouraged to under-take outdoor games, walking, swimming and other exercises, all of which play an important role in strengthening and activating the muscles, thereby preventing constipation.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Gastro-Enteritis

Gastro-enteritis is an acute inflammatory sensation on the lining of the stomach and small bowel. It usually results from infection from contaminated food or water. Children are frequently affected by this disease.

Gastro-enteritis attacks occur within two to four hours after taking the contaminated foods. Most of these attacks only last a few hours and are followed by complete recovery. In outbreaks of gastro-enteritis, a number of people are usually involved, all of whom have eaten the same food at the same time. The disease is also spread by contamination of water supply to sewage and overflow of sewage in the rains.

The child-patient should be kept in bed. He should not be given any food as long as the nausea and vomiting persists. Application of gentle heat to the abdomen will help relieve spasm or pain. To treat dehydration, he should be given plenty of boiled water to drink with electrolyte formulation. An oral rehydration solution can be made at home by extracting the juice of half a lemon in half a glass of water and adding a pinch of salt and two teaspoons of sugar. This solution should be given to the child several times a day.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

To check vomiting, ice-bag should be applied over stomach, throat and spine. Cold compresses can also be applied over the abdomen with beneficial results. They should be changed every 15 or 20 minutes.

When the vomiting subsides, the child should be given sips of some warm drink, such as barley or rice water. After the acute symptoms are overcome, he should be given a bland diet like rice, curds, apples, and ripe bananas. Oily and spicy foods should be avoided. After complete recovery, the patient should be allowed to gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, raw and lightly- cooked vegetables and fresh fruits.

Gastro-enteritis in children can be prevented by discouraging them from taking uncooked outside food or stale food at home, especially in the monsoon or summer season. They should not drink outside water and should always be given boiled water during monsoon. All fruits and vegetables should be washed in a solution of potassium permagnate before eating them. Hands should be thoroughly washed before taking food. Nails must be trimmed atleast once in a week. Foods must be stored in cool place free from flies and should be well-ventilated. All persons who handle food, plates and containers used in cooking and serving should strictly observe the rules for personal

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

cleanliness. The kitchen must be kept thoroughly clean and no rubbish should be allowed to accumulate. It should be ensured that there is no sewage drain near water supply.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Intestinal Worms

The worms and other intestinal parasites which infest human beings are more common in tropical and subtropical areas. Most of these worms and parasites gain entry into the body either through the mouth or through the skin of the feet. Children are more prone to infection from these worms than adults.

The modern medical system prescribes drugs to kill the parasites. They may give temporary relief, but they are more likely to harm the digestive process and create other complications. Nature cure methods, on the other hand, aim at strengthening the intestine so as to purge the parasites.

The treatment for intestinal worms should begin with diet. The child-patient should be kept on exclusive diet of fresh fruits for two days or so. If possible, a small warm-water enema, mixed with the juice of half a fresh lime, may be administered daily during this period to cleanse the bowels. This would help expel mucus and threadworms from the intestine. Bed clothes of the patient must be exposed to sun everyday and he should stay in a well-ventilated room.

After spending two or three days on exclusive fresh fruit diet, the child

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

may be allowed to take raw and boiled vegetables in addition to fruits. This diet may be continued for two or three days, after which he may be allowed to have porridge, or gruel. Thereafter, he may gradually embark upon a well-balanced light diet consisting mainly of fruits, vegetables, milk and wholemeal bread. The diet should exclude fatty foods such as butter, cream, and oil, refined foods and all flesh foods. This diet should be continued till the parasites are completely eliminated. Mud packs and cold compresses applied to lower part of the abdomen will help in the initial stages of the treatment.

Several home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of intestinal worms. Of these, the use of coconut is most effective. It is an ancient remedy for expelling all kinds of intestinal worms. A teaspoon of the freshly-ground coconut should be taken at breakfast. This should be allowed by a dose of 15 to 30 ml. of castor oil mixed in 125 to 175 ml. of lukewarm milk after three hours. The process may be repeated till the cure is complete.

Garlic has been used for expelling intestinal worms from ancient times. The juice of one or two garlic cloves, mixed in half a cup of fruit or vegetable juice, can be given. It will kill the parasites without harming the patient.

The carrot is valuable in the elimination of threadworms in children as

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

it is offensive to all parasites. A small cup of grated carrot taken every morning, with no other food added to the meal, can clear these worms quickly.

The digestive enzyme papaia in the milky juice of the unripe papaya is a powerful anthelmintic for destroying roundworms. A teaspoon of fresh papaya juice and equal quantity of honey should be mixed with two tablespoons of hot water and given as dose to children in the age group of seven to 10 years.

This should be followed two hours later by a dose of castor oil as in case of ground coconut. This treatment should be repeated for two days, if necessary.

The child-patient should be given dry friction bath daily during the period of treatment to build-up general health. Older children should also be encouraged to take alternate hot and cold hip baths daily.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Anal Fissure

Anal fissure refers to a tiny crack in the skin surrounding the anus, the excretory opening from the bowel. The irritation usually extends down to the muscle fibres. This ailment is quite common in infancy and early childhood and causes a great deal of concern to parents.

Anal fissure is very painful. The child feels a sharp pain while passing motion. The pain may continue for sometime even after defecation. Often the child suppresses the stools to avoid pain. There may be slight bleeding and very often itching round the anus. Any scratching of this area causes intense distress.

The most common use of anal fissure is chronic constipation and the resultant hard motions, which damage the tissue and tear the mucous membrane. Once this has been done, the fissure is reopened at the passage of subsequent motions and further infected by the faeces. The root cause of this disorder, as in case of constipation is, wrong feeding.

The pain of anal fissure can be best relieved by hot applications to the anus. Older children can be made to sit on a pail or jar, half- filled with hot water, while moving the bowels. The hot steam relaxes the sphincter, and exercises a powerful analgesic effect upon the painful

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

tissues. Other helpful measures are hot anal douche with little pressure, fomentation over buttocks and hot rectal irrigation.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Appendicitis

The child should be put to bed immediately at the first symptoms of severe pain, vomiting and fever. Rest is of utmost importance in the treatment of this disease. NO solid food should be given for one or two days. The child should be given plenty of water to drink. He may also be given fruit juices diluted with water. Low enemas of warm water may be administered in early stage to cleanse the bowels, if the child can tolerate it. An ice bag should be used again for 15 minutes, followed by hot application for three minutes. The alternate use of the ice bag and hot applications may be continued until the pain has subsided.

After the acute symptoms have subsided, the child may be placed on a diet of liquid foods and fresh juicy fruits such as oranges, lemon, pineapple, apple, grapes and papaya for further two or three days. Thereafter, he may be gradually allowed to embark upon a well-balanced diet according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw vegetable salad.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of appendicitis. Green gram has proved effective in the acute phase of the disease. A handful of this pulse should be soaked overnight in water.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

This water is used as a medicine for treating this condition. It may be given in small quantities of one teaspoon to the child two or three times daily.

Regular use of tea made from fenugreek seeds has proved helpful in preventing the appendix from becoming a dumping ground for excess mucus and intestinal waste. This tea is prepared by putting half a tablespoon of the seeds in 250 ml. of cold water and allowing it to simmer for half an hour over a low flame. It should be allowed to cool to a bearable temperature and then strained. It can be given to the child once daily.

Certain vegetable juices, especially carrot juice, in combination with the juices of beet roots and cucumbers, have been found valuable in appendicitis. In this combination, 50 ml. each of beet root and cucumber juices should be mixed with 150 ml. of carrot juice. It may be given to the child-patient twice daily. The use of buttermilk is beneficial in the treatment of chronic form of appendicitis. About 250 ml. of buttermilk may be used for this purpose.

The patient of appendicitis should adopt all measures to eradicate constipation, if it is habitual. Much relief can be obtained by daily application of hot fomentation and heating compresses. Once the waste matter in the caecum has moved into the colon and thence

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

eliminated, the irritation and inflammation in the appendix will subside and surgical removal of the appendix will not be necessary.

When all the measures have failed and infection is so severe that there are chances of perforation or formation of appendicular abscess then only surgical removal of appendix is necessary.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Cholera

Before the onset of dehydration, the treatment should aim at combating the loss of fluids and salts from the body. To allay thirst, water, soda water or green coconut water should be given for sipping, although these may be thrown out by vomiting, therefore, only small quantities of water should be given repeatedly, as these may remain for sometime within the stomach and a stay of every one minute means some absorption. Ice may be given for sucking. This will reduce internal temperature and restrict the tendency to vomit. Once the child is dehydrated, intravenous infusions of saline solution should be given to compensate for the loss of fluids and salts from the body. The child may require two litres or more a day. Care should, however, be taken to avoid waterlogging. Potassium may be added to the infused fluids, if there are signs of heavy potassium loss.

After the acute stage of cholera is over, the child may be given green coconut water and barley water in very thin consistency. When the stools begin to form, he should be given buttermilk. As he progresses towards recovery, rice cooked to semi-solid form, mixed with curd, may be given.

The child should not be given solid food till he has fully recovered.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Liquid and bland foods are the best which he can ingest without endangering a reoccurrence of the malady. Lemon, onion, green chillies, vinegar, and mint should be included in the daily diet during an epidemic of cholera.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of cholera. The foremost among these is the use of lemon. The juice of this fruit can kill cholera bacilli within a very short time. It is also a very effective and reliable preventive food item against cholera during the epidemic. It can be taken in the form of sweetened or salted beverages for this purpose. Taking of lemon with food as a daily routine can also prevent cholera.

The root bark of guava is another valuable remedy. It is rich in tannins and can be successfully employed in the form of concentrated decoction in cholera. About 15 grams of the root bark should be used in 250 ml. of water to make the decoction. The water should be boiled till it is reduced by one-third in quantity. It can be taken twice daily. It will arrest vomiting and symptoms of diarrhoea.

Onion is very useful in cholera. About 15 grams of this vegetable and four black peppers should be finely pounded in a pestle and given to the child-patient. It allays thirst and restlessness and the patient feels better. The fresh juice of bitter gourd is another effective medicine in

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

early stages of cholera. A teaspoon of this juice, mixed with equal quantity of white onion juice and half a teaspoon of lime juice, should be given.

The intense visceral congestion can be relieved by maintaining warmth and activity of the skin. This can be achieved by applying hot-blanket pack or by taking hot full-bath followed by vigorous cold rubbing with towel until surface is red. To check vomiting ice-bag should be applied over stomach, throat and spine. Cold compresses can also be applied over the abdomen with beneficial results. They should be changed every 15 or 20 minutes.

Cholera can be controlled only by rigid purification of water supplies and proper disposal of human wastes. In cases of slightest doubt about contamination of water, it must be boiled before use for drinking and cooking purposes. All foodstuffs must be kept covered and vegetables and fruits washed with a solution of potassium permanganate before consumption. Other precautions against this disease include avoiding all uncooked vegetables, through washing of hands by all who handle food, and the elimination of all contacts with the disease.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Common Cold

No drug has so far been invented to cure cold. To treat a cold by means of customary suppressive drugs like aspirin and codeine will only pave the way for further trouble of more serious nature. For such a treatment puts a sudden stop to the eliminative processes then taking place and forces the toxic matter back into the tissues again. Moreover, drugs have no effect on the duration of the cold. It has been aptly said that a cold can be cured in a week by taking medicines, otherwise it will subside in seven days.

Proper dietary control alone can prevent the appearance of cold in the child. When a cold is already present, the child should be put on the fruit juice, preferably orange or pineapple juice, for at least one day. Enema given alongside helps considerably in cleansing the bowels during this period. This may be followed by an exclusive fruit diet for a further day or two. The child tends to lose appetite even when he has a mild cold. As such, he should not be urged to eat more than what he needs. Milk and its derivatives should be avoided. Fluids like barley water, tender coconut water, sub-acid fruit juices and plain water make very good food items for the child at this stage. A hot water drink, mixed with honey is very soothing, if the child coughs or sneezes for considerable periods.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The child should avoid foods which form mucus in the system, as well as tea and coffee. He should also avoid foods which induce catarah such as cakes, pastries, chocolates and other foods that are largely composed of white flour or white sugar.

Lime is the most important among the many home remedies for common cold. It is beneficial in all types of cold and fevers. Vitamin C-rich lime juice increases resistance, decreases toxicity and reduces the duration of illness. Half a lime should be squeezed in a glass of warm water, and a teaspoon of honey should be added to it and given to the grown-up children daily. In case of infants, half the quantities would suffice.

Garlic soup is an ancient remedy to reduce the severity of cold. Garlic contains antiseptic and antispasmodic properties, besides several other medicinal virtues. The volatile oil in this vegetable helps to open up the respiratory passages. In soup form, it flushes out the system of all toxins and thus helps bring down fever. This soup is prepared by boiling one or two cloves of garlic in half a cup of water and it can be given to the child once daily.

Ginger is another excellent remedy for colds and coughs. About five frams of this vegetable should be cut into small pieces and boiled in

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

half a cup of water. It should then be strained and half a teaspoon of honey added to it. This mixture should be given to the child when hot.

Turmeric with its antiseptic properties, is an effective remedy for colds and throat irritations. A quarter teaspoon of fresh turmeric powder mixed in 15 ml. of warm milk is a useful prescription for these conditions in children. Turmeric powder should be put into a hot ladle. Milk should then be poured in it and boiled over a slow fire. In case of a running cold, smoke from the burning turmeric should be inhaled. It will increase the discharge from the nose and will bring quick relief.

Fomentation of the sinuses of the nose with cloth dipped in warm water for 10 to 15 minutes will relieve the inflammation of the sinuses. This treatment is helpful in opening the blocked nasal passages. Steam inhalation, two or three times every day, will reduce the irritating condition of the mucous lining, facilitate the expulsion of mucus and keep the child's nasal passages clean. Hot foot bath is also beneficial. It reduces congestion by drawing blood from the upper part of the body. Wet packs to the throat and chest, applied two or three times a day, will relieve congestion in these areas and help in eliminating the accumulated mucus.

The natural hydrotherapeutic treatments and dietary control will help the child recover most naturally. Once this is achieved, he should be

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

allowed to build up slowly his powers of resistance by gradual exposure to cold weather and allergens.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Tonsillitis

Tonsillitis is one the most common ailments encountered at childhood. Its incidence is especially high among children in the age group between five and 10 years. It is indicative of a toxic condition of the system and is a continuous source of distress both for the child and his parents.

The treatment of tonsillitis by means of painting and spzaying is both harmful and suppressive. It does not help to rid the system of toxins, which at the root of the trouble. In fact, it forces these toxins back into the system, which may cause more serious trouble later on. The removal of tonsils by surgery, in case of chronic tonsillitis, may appear as a simple measure. But it is responsible for serious ill-health in later life, as the system of the child concerned will be working at a permanently impaired level of efficiency.

The correct natural way to treat the disease is to cleanse the system of toxic waste through proper dietary and other natural methods. The child should be kept isolated in bed. The bedroom should be well-ventilated. He should not be given solid foods and should be encouraged to take sufficient fluids and juices. Orange and lemon juices, diluted with water and mixed with honey, will be especially

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

beneficial. If the child shows reluctance to take juices, he may be given fresh juicy fruits such as apple, grapes, orange, pears, pineapple, peach and melon. In no circumstances, he should be given foods which produce or increase acidity. He should be persuaded to take warm-water enema to cleanse the bowels for the first few days of the treatment. If he is reluctant, he may be given glycerine suppository.

A heating compress should be applied to the throat. It is a very valuable measure to relieve sore throat and reduce swelling and inflammation. The patient will feel warm within a short time and this will have a soothing effect on the throat. This compress should be changed every eight hours.

The throat may be gargled with hot water mixed with a little salt and lime juice several times daily. This will help draw out fluids from the inflamed throat, thereby relieving discomfort. Gargling with solutions made from the fenugreek seeds is effective in severe cases. To make such a gargle, two tablespoons of fenugreek seeds should be allowed to simmer for half an hour in a litre of water and then set aside to cool. The entire quantity should be used as a soothing gargle in a day with beneficial results. Hot packs may be applied to the neck. A warm-water bath will also be helpful.

After the acute symptoms of tonsillitis are over, the childpatient may

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

be allowed to gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on fresh fruits, raw vegetables , whole grain cereals and milk.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of inflamed tonsils. One of the most effective of these remedies is the use of lime. Half a fresh lime squeezed in a glass of warm water , mixed with two teaspoons of honey and little salt, should be sipped slowly in such cases.

The use of milk has been found valuable in this disease. A glass of pure boiled milk, mixed with a pinch of turmeric powder and pepper powder, should be taken every night for three nights. It will provide great relief.

Raw vegetable juices are also beneficial in the treatment of tonsillitis. The juices of carrot, beet and cucumber, taken individually or in combination, are especially valuable. Formula proportions found helpful, when used in combination, are carrot 150 ml. beet 50 ml. and cucumber 50 ml. to prepare 250 ml. of combined juice.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Tuberculosis

Most children who are infected with tuberculosis anywhere in the body apparently look well, with no symptoms or signs. A few have a milk fever for a few weeks, may become cheerless and lose a little weight or fail to gain weight. In most cases, the primary focus heals with no further trouble. In some cases, however, clinical disturbances do occur at different stages of the disease process.

Tuberculosis is no longer considered incurable, if it is tackled in the early stages. An all round scheme of dietic and vitality- building programme along natural lines is the only method to overcome the disease. As a first step, the child-patient should be put on the exclusive fresh fruit diet for two or three days. He should have three meals a day of fresh juicy fruits, such as apples, grapes, pears, peaches, oranges and pineapple or any other juicy fruit in season.

After the all-fruit diet, the patient should adopt a fruit and milk diet for eight to 10 days. For this diet, the meals are exactly the same as the all-fruit diet, but with milk added to each fruit meal. Thereafter, the child may be allowed to embark upon a well- balanced diet, according to his age. The diet should mainly consist of seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruits.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The patient should avoid all devitalised foods such as white bread, white sugar, refined cereals, puddings, pies, tinned, canned and preserved foods. He should also avoid strong tea, coffee, condiments, pickles and sauces.

The chief therapeutic agent needed for the treatment of tuberculosis is calcium. Milk, being the richest food source for the supply of organic calcium to the body, should be taken liberally. It should be sipped very slowly so as to be thoroughly mixed with saliva which dilutes it and to a great extent promotes its digestion.

The liberal use of custard apple is one of the most valuable remedies for tuberculosis. It contains the qualities of rejuvenating drugs. The Ayurvedic practitioners prepare a fermented liquor called sitaphalasava from this fruit, in its season, for use as a medicine in the treatment of this disease. It is prepared by boiling custard apple pulp and seedless raisins in water on slow fire. It is filtered when about one third of water is left, and then mixed with powdered sugar candy and also the powder of cardamom, cinnamon and certain other condiments.

Indian gooseberry is another valuable remedy for tuberculosis. A teaspoon each of fresh amla juice and honey mixed together should be

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

given to the child every morning in treating this disease. Its regular use will promote vigour and vitality in the body within a few days.

The juice of pineapple has proved beneficial in the treatment of tuberculosis. It has been found to be effective in dissolving mucus and aiding recovery. This juice was used regularly in the past in treating this disease when it was a more common disease.

The use of orange has proved useful in curing tuberculosis. The juice of this fruit should be mixed with a pinch of salt and a teaspoon of honey and taken regularly by the patient. Due to its saline action in the lungs, it eases expectorations and protects from secondary infection.

The use of bottle gourd is considered an effective remedy for tuberculosis. According to Dr.C.D. Mehta of Bengal, T.B. Sanitorium, bottle gourd is one of the best vegetable useful for tuberculosis patients. He has carried out extensive researches which confirm that regular use of cooked bottle gourd helps in developing immunity against tubercular germs.

The patient should take complete rest, both mentally and physically. Any type of stress will prevent healing. Fresh air is always important in curing the disease and the patient should spend most of his time in

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

open air and should sleep in a well ventilated room. Sunshine is also essential as tubercle bacilli are rapidly killed by exposure to sunrays. Sunlight should be applied directly to the exposed body surface and the child-patient should remain in sunshine as much as possible. The best results can be obtained if the sunlight can be made to fall directly upon the affected tissues. This will not only kill the consumption germ but will also vitalize and energise the body and increase its power of resistance.

Other beneficial steps towards curing the disease are avoidance of stress, light massage and deep breathing exercises. Certain yogic asanas are also beneficial in the treatment of tuberculosis in its early stages, and the grown-up children should be encouraged to undertake them. These include asanas like viparitakarani, sarvangasana and shavasana and jalnetikriya and anulama-viloma pranayama.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Bronchitis

Bronchitis is the most common disease of childhood next to indigestion and diarrhoea. It is especially prevalent in children who are just starting to mix with other children at playgroup or nursery school. They have no in-built immunity till then to all the infections they are likely to contact for the first time. And, so, coughs, colds and bronchitis can occur with monotonous regularity in his age group, particularly in allergic children.

The child-patient should be kept in a room with warm and even temperature. He should not be given any solid foods till the acute symptoms are present. He may be given plenty of fruit juices. Orange juice diluted with water will be especially beneficial. In case of constipation, the child-patient should be given warm- water enema to cleanse the bowels. If he shows reluctance, a glycerine suppository may be applied. Often this simple treatment is all that is needed for a mild attack. Steam inhalations will be valuable, if the wheezing is pronounced and particularly troublesome.

After the acute symptoms are over, the child may be given milk, other liquid foods and fresh fruits for further one or two days and thereafter he may be allowed to gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet,

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

according to his age. He should avoid meats, sugar, tea, coffee, condiments, pickles, refined and processed foods. He should also avoid soft drinks , candies, ice-cream and all products made from sugar and white flour.

Certain home remedies have been found useful in the treatment of bronchitis. One of the most effective of these is the use of the turmeric powder. A quarter teaspoon of this powder should be administered with 30 ml. of milk two or three times daily. It acts best when taken on an empty stomach.

Another effective remedy for bronchitis is the mixture of dried ginger powder, pepper and long pepper taken in equal quantities of a quarter teaspoon three times a day with honey. The powder of these three ingredients have anti-pyretic qualities and are effective in dealing with fever accompanied with bronchitis. They also tone up the metabolism of the patient.

Onion has been used as a food remedy for centuries in bronchitis. It is said to possess expectorant properties. It liquifies phelgm and prevents its further formation. The intake of half a teaspoon of raw onion juice first thing in the morning will be beneficial in such cases.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Hydrotherapy can be employed beneficially in the treatment of bronchitis. Hot towels wrung out and applied over the chest are helpful. After applying three hot towels in turn for two or three minutes each, one should always finish off with a cold towel. A wet pack or heating compress may also be applied to the upper chest several times daily in case of acute conditions. In acute cases, full warm bath for 10 to 15 minutes will be beneficial. In irritable cough with expectoration, sipping very hot water, and gargling with hot water will be useful. In painful cough, hot fomentation should be applied to the chest and throat every two hours, followed by heating compressed. Copious drinking of hot water will also be beneficial in both acute and chronic cases of bronchitis.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Asthma

The child suffering from asthma appear to be struggling for breath. Actually, they have more trouble in exhaling than inhaling because the air passage of the small bronchi become clogged and constricted with mucus, thus making it difficult for the patient to breathe out. All asthamatics have more difficulty in the night, especially when asleep.

The natural way to treat asthma consists of stimulating the functioning of slack excretory organs, adopting appropriate diet patterns to eliminate morbid matter and reconstruct the body.

No one should be allowed to smoke in the child's bedroom and no member of the family should smoke in the house, as the tobacco smoke in the atmosphere can harm the asthmatic children. Emotional upsets at home should be avoided as they make the asthmatic child worse. And above a,, the parents should always remain cool and calm when their children get attacks of asthma.

Diet plays an important role in the treatment of asthma. Ideally, the diet of child patient should contain a limited quantity of carbohydrates, fats and proteins which are acid forming foods, and a liberal quantity of alkaline foods consisting of fresh fruits, green vegetables and germinated gram. Foods which tend to produce phelgm such as rice, sugar, lentils and curd and also fried and other difficult-

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

to-digest foods should be restricted. The last meal should preferably be taken at least two hours before going to bed.

Children with asthma should be encouraged to eat less than their capacity, eat slowly and chew their food properly. They should drink six to eight glasses of water a day, but should avoid taking water or any liquid with meals. Spices, chilies and pickles, too much tea and coffee should also be avoided.

Honey is considered beneficial in the treatment of asthma. It is said that if a jug of honey is held under the nose of an asthma patient and he inhales the air that comes into contact with the honey, the breathing becomes easier and deeper. The effect lasts for about an hour or so. Honey usually brings relief whether the air flowing over it is inhaled or whether it is eaten or taken either in milk or water.

Turmeric is regarded as an effective remedy for bronchial asthma. The child-patient should be given half a teaspoon of turmeric powder with half a glass of milk two or three times daily. It acts best when taken on an empty stomach.

The use of garlic has also been found beneficial in the treatment of asthma. One clove of garlic boiled in 15 ml. of milk can be given daily

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

as an effective medicine to the child-patient in the early stages of asthma.

During the attack, mustard oil mixed with little camphor should be massaged over the back of the chest. This will loosen up the phelgm and ease breathing.

Parents who suffer from some kind of allergy should take special precaution for their children. Breast-fed infants have much less chances of getting allergic to certain things than bottle- fed babies. It is believed that the major cause of allergy in children lies in feeding babies foods such as cereals, meat, corns, whole milk , etc. before they reach the age of 10 to 12 months. These foods cause allergic reactions as babies lack the proper enzymes needed for their digestion before that age. Babies should be breast-fed for at least eight months as this is nature's way of providing all the required nutrients during this period.

Other precautions considered necessary for preventing asthma in children are boiling milk before giving, delaying of inclusion in the daily diet foods which commonly cause allergy such as egg, whest, fish, and coco, keeping children in environment free from dust, air pollution and damp climate, keeping away pet animals from the house and adopting all possible measures to protect children against bacterial and viral infections.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Croup

When children are affected with croup, they lose their usual cheerfulness and become irritated. There is a high pitched cracking noise with the intake of each breath. Some of them develop barking cough. They complain of a slight obtuse pain in the wind- pipe somewhat below its orifice. Slight swelling is formed on the outer side of the throat opposite the same place. It aches a little when pressed with a finger. The face seems red and looks puffed up. There is fever with hard and very quick pulse. The breathing becomes difficult, frequent and shorter. Some children are obliged to remain in bed, while others feel better at times and are able to walk about. Their voice becomes hoarse and sharp.

The use of antitoxin for the treatment of this disease may apparently prove successful, but it is harmful in the long run. The disease can be prevented by following a proper diet and avoidance of indigestion and constipation.

The real treatment for this disease, as with all other fevers, is avoidance of solid foods for first few days of the treatment. The child-patient should be given only orange juice and water in small quantities so long as the fever lasts.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The child with croup should be kept in bed and isolated from others. Cold-packs applied, after every two hours, to the throat will be effective.

If the child's breathing becomes difficult and he seems to be struggling to get his breath, immediate action should be taken to provide warm, moist, air to restore the normal humidity of the room. This can be done by boiling a pan of water on a stove in a corner of a small room, adding a few drops of eucalyptus or menthol oil. This will moisten the air and help the child to breathe more easily. In case of a older child, fill a kettle with sprout, half full of hot water, adding a little oil of eucalyptus. The child should be made to inhale steam ensuing from this water. This simple remedy helps to open the wind-pipes and relieve the congestion.

If the above treatment is faithfully carried out, the fever will run its course without any trouble and complication or serious after-effects. The child can then be placed on an all fruit diet for few days. He may eat fresh juicy fruits like apple, mango, pineapple, papaya, grapes, pear, peach, and melon during this period. Thereafter he may be allowed to gradually adopt a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, raw or lightly-cooked vegetables or fresh fruits.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

An excellent home remedy for croup is the use of garlic. Chewing a clove of garlic dissolves the membranes, reduces temperature and relieves the patient. About 15 gms. of garlic can be used in this way after every three or four hours for a week. After the membrane disappears, the same quantity of garlic should be chewed daily. The croup patient has no sense of taste or smell and merely finds the garlic hot.

Onion is another effective home remedy for croup. Onions should be roasted on hot ashes and juice extracted from them. This juice should be taken by the patient in doses of half a teaspoon mixed with equal quantity of honey three times daily.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Mumps

Mumps are caused by a virus which attacks the salivary glands of the mouth, particularly the parotid glands located on each side of the face just below and in front of the ear. The infecting organism is paramyxovirus. After a child is exposed to a case of the mumps, it takes about two weeks for the disease to appear. Improper diet is the root cause of trouble.

The child-patient should take bedrest for several days until the temperature returns to normal. He should be kept on a diet of fruit juices and other liquid foods. Orange juice diluted with warm water on 50 : 50 basis for few days will be especially beneficial. Other fruits and vegetables which can be used for juices are mosambi, apple, pineapple, grapes, and carrot. The child should be encouraged to take warm-water enema daily during this period. Hot and cold fomentations should be applied after every two hours during the day for about 10 minutes, and should consist of two or three hot applications, followed by a cold one. The face should be cleaned with an antiseptic wash.

The child-patient should adopt an all fruit diet for a day or two, till the swelling has subsided and he can swallow food comfortably.

Thereafter, he may gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet of

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

natural foods, with emphasis on fresh fruits, raw and lightly- cooked vegetables and whole grain cereals.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of mumps. The most important of these is the use of chebulic myrobalan. A thick paste should be made from this herb by rubbing in water and applied over the swelling. It will give relief.

The leaves of peepal tree are also used as an effective home remedy for this disease. These leaves should be smeared with ghee and warmed over a fire. They should then be bandaged over the inflamed part.

The use of the herb Indian aloe is a well known remedy for inflamed and painful part of the body. A part of a leaf of this herb should be peeled on one side and sprinkled with a mixture of turmeric and extract of Indian barberry and bandaged over the swelling after warming.

The seeds of asparagus are also valuable in mumps. The seeds combined with the seeds of fenugreek should be ground together to the consistency of a paste. This paste can be applied over the swelling.

The use of dry ginger is considered beneficial in the treatment of

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

mumps. It should be ground to a paste and applied over the swollen parts. As the paste dries, the swelling will reduce and the pain will also subside.

The leaves of margosa are also useful in the treatment of mumps. The leaves of this tree with little turmeric should be ground into a paste and applied externally over the affected parts. It will bring good results.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Pleurisy

Pleurisy is an inflammation of the pleura, a serous membrane which envelopes the lungs and also lines the inside of the chest. It may be acute or chronic, and mild or severe. The disease may be limited to one side of the chest or it may include both the sides.

Like any other viral infection, pleurisy can occur in small epidemics. The disease is quite common in young children, but it is generally secondary to pneumonia and usually follows the wrong treatment of the latter.

The child-patient should be kept in bed until the temperature becomes normal and remains so for several days. At the first sign of the disease, hot fomentations should be applied to the chest directly over the painful area twice or thrice daily. These should be thick and large, and must be applied under the arm from sternum to spine while the patient lies on the opposite side. They should be continued till the pain is relieved. The movement of Strapping the chest with tight muslin should restrict lungs bandage or adhesive plaster. Ice bags should never be applied to the chest in pleurisy. Radiant heat may be applied to the chest after convalescence to absorb exudate.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The child-patient should be given only liquid diet till the acute symptoms are over. Orange juice mixed with warm water will be especially beneficial. Minimum two or three glasses of water should be given daily for the first few days. The quantity of water should be gradually increased to four or five more glasses each day.

After the acute symptoms have subsided, the child-patient should be put on an exclusive fresh fruit diet for further two or three days. In this regime, he should take fresh juicy fruits such as orange, apple, pineapple, and papaya. Thereafter, he may be allowed to embark upon a well-balanced diet according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole-grain cereals, fresh fruits and lightly-cooked vegetables.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of pleurisy. The use of celery is one such remedy. It is known to have antispasmodic properties. The seeds of this plant are also useful in treating this infection.

The use of the herb hog weed is beneficial in the treatment of pleurisy. It helps remove catarrhal matter and phelgm from the bronchial tubes. The powder of the root can be taken in small quantities three times a day.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Linseed is also valuable in this disease. A loose poultice of the seeds can be applied with excellent results. The counter-irritant effect of the poultice can be enhanced by dusting mustard powder over it.

As soon as the patient has gained slightly in strength, he should undertake moderate exercise as a routine, avoiding fatigue. Air bath, sun bath and dry friction bath are of particular importance. If there is any particular disease present along with pleurisy, whether as a causative or as a complicating condition, the same should also be given appropriate attention.

Chronic pleurisy should be treated in the same manner with regards to diet and the application of the heat. All efforts should be made to increase the vitality, reduce toxæmia and restore normal freedom of chest movements.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Whooping Cough

Unlike some other diseases, a new born baby has no immunity to whooping cough, and can get it any time after birth. It commonly affects infants during the first year of life, if they are not immunised. Many causes of whooping cough occur in children upto five years of age. In some cases, children upto 12 years may also be affected.

Good nursing care is essential to the treatment of whooping cough. The child-patient should be isolated from others and kept in a well-ventilated room. He should wear loose clothes and must be given plenty of liquids in between the attacks of coughing. Orange juice will be especially beneficial. It can be given diluted with warm water on 50 : 50 basis. In case of constipation, a mild laxative, preferably castor oil, should be administered. This will also relieve the pain in the abdominal muscles which are usually strained during the paroxysms of coughing.

After the more severe symptoms have cleared, the patient should be placed on an exclusive diet of fresh fruits and milk for a few days. In this regimen, he should be given fresh juicy fruits such as apple, orange, pineapple and papaya with a cup of milk sweetened with honey. After further recovery, he can adopt a regular well-balanced

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

diet, according to this age. The emphasis should be on fresh fruits, fruit and vegetable juices and milk. When the convalescent has been reached, the child should be encouraged to spend as much time as possible outdoors.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of whooping cough. The most effective of these remedies is the use of garlic. The syrup of garlic should be given in doses of five drops to a teaspoon two or three times a day for treating this condition. It should be given more often if the coughing spells are frequent and violent.

Use of ginger is another effective remedy for whooping cough. A teaspoon of fresh ginger juice, mixed with a cup of fenugreek decoction and honey to taste, is an excellent diaphoretic. It acts as an expectorant in this disease.

A syrup prepared by mixing a teaspoon of fresh raddish juice with an equal quantity of honey and a little rock salt, is beneficial in the treatment of this disease. It should be given thrice daily.

Almond oil is also valuable in treating whooping cough. It should be given mixed with 10 drops each of fresh white onion juice, daily three times for a fortnight.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Influenza

Influenza, like all other acute diseases, is a natural attempt at self-cleansing and if rightly treated in a natural way, immense good can ensure so far as the future health of the patient is concerned.

In acute stage of influenza, the patient should abstain from all solid foods and take only liquid foods for two or three days. Vegetable and fruit juices will be especially beneficial. These juices can be diluted with water on 50 : 50 basis. The liquid diet should be continued till the temperature comes down to normal. The child-patient should be encouraged to take warm-water enema daily during this period to cleanse his bowels. Hot fomentations may be applied to the spine or back and chest. Simultaneously, cold compresses should be applied on the head. One or two glasses of hot water intake daily during this period will be beneficial.

After fever subsides the patient may adopt a diet of fresh fruits and milk for further two or three days. In this regimen, he should take fresh juicy fruits such as apple, pear, grapes, orange and pineapple, with a cup of milk sweetened with a teaspoon of honey. Thereafter, the patient may adopt a well -balanced diet consisting of seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruits. He should avoid tea, coffee, meat,

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

refined ,processed , stale and tinned foods.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of influenza. The most important of these is the use of long pepper. A quarter teaspoon of long pepper powder mixed with a teaspoon of honey and a quarter teaspoon of juice of ginger should be given to the child-patient thrice daily. This will help greatly if taken in the initial stages of the disease. It is especially useful in avoiding complication which follows the onset of the disease, namely, the involvement of the larynx and the bronchial tube.

Garlic is an excellent remedy for influenza. It is useful as a general antiseptic and should be given as much as the patient can bear. The juice of this vegetable may also be inhaled by the patient.

Turmeric is valuable in curing influenza. Half a teaspoon of turmeric powder should be mixed in half a cup of warm milk and should be given to the child three times daily. It will prevent complications arising from influenza and also activate the liver which becomes sluggish during the attack.

Onion is also an effective remedy for influenza. Equal amounts of onion juice and honey should be mixed and two or three teaspoons of

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

this mixture should be taken daily in the treatment of this disease.

Ginger is an excellent remedy for influenza. Half a teaspoon of fresh ginger juice, mixed with half a cup of fenugreek decoction and honey to taste may be given to the child- patient. It is an excellent diaphoretic mixture which increases sweating to reduce fever in this disease.

Another effective remedy for this disease is the green leaves of basil plant. About half a gram of these leaves should be boiled along with some ginger in quarter litre of water till about half the water is left. This decoction should be taken as tea. It gives immediate relief.

Fumigation of burnt flour of finger millet is useful in influenza. It should be inhaled gently. It will increase the blood circulation in the nasal mucosa, and will reduce the local congestion, and open the stuffy nose.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Malaria

Malaria is caused by a tiny parasite called plasmodium. The parasite grows in the liver of a person for a few days and then enters the blood stream where it invades the red blood cells. The disease is spread by the female anopheles mosquito. She draws a small quantity of blood containing the parasites, when she bites a person who has malaria. These parasites then pass through several stages of development within the mosquito's body and finally find their way to its salivary glands. There they lie in wait for an opportunity to enter the bloodstream of the next person the mosquito bites. The malaria-carrying mosquito breeds in stagnant water.

The secondary cause of malaria, however, as in case of other infectious diseases, is wrong diet and faulty style of living, resulting in the system being clogged with accumulated systemic refuse and morbid matter. It is on this soil that the malaria germs breed. The liberal use of denatured foods of today, such as white sugar, white flour and products made from them, as well as tinned foods, strong tea and coffee, lower the vitality of the system and paves the way for the development of malaria.

There are four main types of malaria. These are vivax, falciparum,

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

malariae and ovale. They are commonly called benign tertian malaria, quartan malaria, malignant tertian malaria and tertian fever. The most common symptom of all types of malaria is high fever, which may come every day, on alternate days or every fourth day. The fever is accompanied by chills, headache, shivering and pain in the limbs. The temperature comes down after some time with profuse sweating.

The onset of malaria in children is usually gradual. The child becomes dull and restless. He is disinterested in food and often vomits. Other common symptoms are abdominal pain, flatulence and diarrhoea. The temperature may rise between 38 and 40 C.

The fever may be continuous or may come in intervals. The child may have stiff neck and convulsions in case of high fever.

One of the main effects of malaria is anaemia, which develops more rapidly in children. Other complications of the disease are kidney failure and dysentery.

The child-patient should be kept in bed. He should be given plenty of fluids, especially orange juice diluted in warm water for the first few days of the treatment. An ice bag should be applied to his head. Co-operative children can be given warm-water enema daily during this

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

period to cleanse the bowels. After the fever has subsided, the patient may be placed for one or two days on an exclusive diet of fresh juicy fruits such as orange, grape- fruit, apple, pineapple, mango and papaya. Milk may be added to the fruit-diet after this period and this diet may be continued for further few days. Thereafter, the patient may be allowed gradually to embark upon a well-balanced diet of natural foods, consisting of seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruits, with emphasis on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw or lightly -cooked vegetables.

The child-patient should avoid tea, coffee, refined and processed foods, fried foods, condiments, pickles, white sugar, white flour and all products made from them. He should also avoid flesh foods.

The best way to reduce temperature naturally, during the course of the fever, is by means of the cold pack, which can be applied to the whole body.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Typhoid Fever

Typhoid fever is an infectious disease and children contract it from those who have had it, or from carriers. The condition is common in tropical countries with poor sanitation and the menace of flies.

Typhoid fever usually develops in a child who has a great accumulation of toxic waste and other putrefactive material in his intestine, resulting from wrong diet and faulty style of living. The germ of typhoid fever flourishes upon this morbid condition of the intestine. The disease is more common in children who eat much meat or other flesh foods, as it is the nature of such foods to decompose and putrefy readily within the intestines.

A complete bed rest and careful nursing is essential for the child-patient. He should be given liquid diet like milk, barley and fruit juices. Orange juice will be especially beneficial. In fact, the exclusive diet of orange juice diluted with warm water can be taken from the first few days of the treatment with highly beneficial results. In typhoid fever, the digestive power of the body is seriously hampered, and the patient suffers from blood poisoning called toxæmia. The lack of saliva coats his tongue and often destroys his thirst for water as well as his desire for food. The agreeable flavour of orange juice helps greatly in

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

overcoming these drawbacks. It also gives energy, increases urinary output and promotes body resistance against infections, thereby, hastening recovery.

Cold compresses may be applied to the head in case the temperature rises above 103 F. If this method does not succeed, cold pack may be applied to the whole body.

After the temperature has come down to normal and the tongue has cleared, the child-patient may be given , for further two or three days, fresh fruits and other easily digestible foods. For drinks, unsweetened lemon water or plain water, either hot or cold, may be given.

Thereafter, the child-patient may be allowed to gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet according to his age. The emphasis should be on fresh fruits and raw or lightly- cooked vegetables.

The disease can be prevented by ensuring a clean water supply, proper disposal of sewage and implementation of anti-fly measures. All drinking water should be either boiled or thoroughly purified. Milk should be pasteurized or boiled. People who handle food should be carefully screened to be sure that they are not carrying the germs of typhoid.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Measles

A child can be suspected to have caught the measles if he has not yet had this disease, and if he lives in a place where the disease has now spread. The first symptoms, which appear during seven to 14 days after exposure to the virus, are feverishness, cold, watering of the eyes and dry cough. The face appears to be a little puffed up. The eye-lids are swollen and they can be opened with difficulty. The eyes themselves grow red because of conjunctivitis and cannot bear the light. The child may also complain of weakness, heaviness of the head and pain in the throat and he has a disliking for food. Croup may also develop in younger children.

In the beginning of the treatment, the patient should take fresh fruit juices especially orange and lemon, mixed with water on 50 : 50 basis frequently. This is sufficient as the child suffers from lack of appetite during this period. He should be kept in a well- ventilated room. As light has a detrimental effect upon the eyes during measles, the room should have subdued light.

The treatment should aim at bringing down the temperature and eliminating the toxins from the system. A helpful measure would be to persuade the child to take warm water enema, every morning, to cleanse the bowels. Mud packs may be applied to the abdomen and wet

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

packs on the chest twice a day in the morning and evening. Lukewarm water baths can be given every day to ease itching. Addition of extracts of neem leaves to this water will prove beneficial.

As the condition improves, the child can be placed on an all- fruit diet for further two or three days. In this regimen, he should take three meals of fresh juicy fruits such as apple, pear, pineapple, orange, mango and peach. Thereafter he may gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw or lightly cooked vegetables.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of measles. The most valuable among these is the use of orange. When the digestive power of the body is seriously hampered, the patient suffers from intense toxaemia, and the lack of saliva coats his tongue and often destroys his thirst for water as well as his desire for food. The agreeable flavour of orange juice helps greatly in overcoming these drawbacks. Orange juice is the most ideal liquid food in this disease.

The juice of lemon is another remedy. It also makes an effective thirst-quenching drink in measles. About 15 to 25 ml. of lemon juice should be taken diluted with water for this purpose.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Turmeric is beneficial in the treatment of measles. Raw roots of turmeric should be dried in the sun and ground to a fine powder. This powder, mixed with a few drops of honey and the juice of few bitter gourd (karela) leaves, should be given to the patients suffering from measles.

Powdered liquorice has been found valuable in relieving the cough, typical of measles. The child patient should be given this powdered liquorice mixed with honey.

The use of barley water has proved beneficial in case of troublesome cough in measles. This water should be taken frequently, sweetened with the newly -drawn oil of sweet almonds.

The seeds of egg plant are stimulant. According to Dr. Sanyal of Calcutta, intake of half a gram to one gram of these seeds daily for three days will help develop immunity against measles for one year.

Children having measles should not be allowed to mix with others. They should take complete rest. Hygienic conditions along with the above mentioned treatment will lead to speedy recovery. Medications should be strictly avoided, except in case of complications.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Chicken Pox

Chicken pox is a common infectious and highly contagious disease of children. It occurs more frequently in cooler weather. Children between the ages of five and nine are most commonly affected and account for 50 per cent of all cases. Other cases occur between the ages of one to four and 10 to 14 . Infants under six months seem to have some immunity against this disease. In most cases, the older the child, the more severe the attack.

The child-patient should be kept in bed in a well-ventilated room in isolation until all the scabs fall off. The nails should be cut short to prevent frequent scratching, as scratching can introduce infection and the spots thus infected will take longer time to heal, and may leave permanent scars. Wearing cotton gloves at night will avoid the risk of scratching while the child is asleep. Itching can be reduced by the application of talcum powder.

The child-patient should be given plenty of fruit and vegetable juices in the beginning of the treatment. Lemon juice will be especially beneficial . Co-operative children can be given a small warm-water enema daily during this period to cleanse the bowels. In the alternative, glycerine suppository may be applied in case of

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

constipation.

As the condition improves, the patient can be placed on an all- fruit diet for further two or three days. Thereafter he may be allowed to gradually adopt a well-balanced diet, with emphasis on fresh fruits and raw vegetables.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of chicken pox. The use of cider vinegar is one such remedy. Half a cup of cider vinegar should be added to a bath of warm water. This will relieve irritation of the skin.

A bath of oatmeal is considered a natural remedy for relieving the itch due to chicken pox. This bath is prepared by cooking two cups of oat meal in two litres of water for 15 minutes. This mixture is then put into a cloth bag, preferably cotton, and a string is tied tightly at the top. This bag is allowed to float in a tub of warm water, swishing it around, until the water becomes milky. It should, however, be ensured that the bag is not broken. The child can splash and play in the water. The water should go over all the scalds. The child should, however, not be allowed to catch cold.

Green pea water is another effective remedy for relieving irritation of

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

the skin. The water in which the fresh peas have been cooked can be used for this purpose.

Baking soda is also a popular remedy to control the itching in chicken pox. Some baking soda should be put in a glass of water. The child should be sponged with this water, so the soda dries on the body. This will keep the child from scratching the eruptions.

A soup prepared from carrots and corriander has been found valuable in chicken pox. About 100 gms. of carrot and 60 gms. of fresh corriander leaves should be cut into small pieces and boiled for a while. The residue should be discarded and the soup should be taken once a day.

The use of vitamin E oil is also useful in treating chicken pox. This oil should be rubbed into the body. It will have a healing effect. The marks of chicken pox will fade away by this application.

A mild sedative herbal tea can also prove beneficial in the treatment of this disease. This tea can be prepared from any of the herbs like camomile , basil , magigold and lemon balm . A little cinnamon honey and lemon may be added to this tea. It should be sipped slowly several times a day.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Rheumatic Fever

Rheumatic fever of inflammatory rheumatism is a very serious chronic disease. It mainly affects children and adolescents. It is thought to be an allergic condition which affects the joints, heart and nervous system.

The child-patient should be kept in bed until the swelling of the joints subsides and fever settles. He should be nursed carefully and not allowed to exert himself. He may be given plenty of fruit juices in the beginning of the treatment. Orange juice will be especially beneficial. It can be given diluted with water on 50 : 50 basis. If possible, the bowels should be cleansed daily with warm- water enema.

Hot and cold compresses should be applied several times daily to relieve swelling and pain in the joints. Cold packs should also be applied to the trunk. A cold pack to the throat will also be beneficial.

The patient may adopt an all-fruit diet when the temperature has come down to normal and the tongue has cleared. In this regimen, he should take fresh juicy fruits such as apple, pineapple, peach, pear, grapes, orange and papaya or any other juicy fruit in season. Thereafter, he may gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

vegetables and their juices.

A useful remedy for rheumatic fever is the use of asparagus seeds, black cumin , fenugreek and ajwain. All the four herbs should be taken in equal quantity and ground into powder. Three grams of this powder should be swallowed with water every morning. This will control the swelling of rheumatism.

Another useful remedy to relieve the pain of rheumatic fever is to grind finely 1.25 decigrams of white arsenic, one dried grape and four decigrams of pepper and make into 24 pills. One pill should be taken daily after breakfast.

As for local application, one kilo of root of castor tree should be boiled in eight litres of water. The mixture should be expressed and strained when one-fourth of the liquid is left. It should be boiled in half kg. of castor oil till all the water has evaporated. This oil should be rubbed over the affected parts and they should be bandaged with cotton wool.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Meningitis

Meningitis is a severe inflammation of the meninges or inner lining of the brain and spinal cord. This may result from invasion of bacteria or virus into meninges. The infection usually spreads from the base of the brain up over the surface and down the spinal cord. It appears to reach the inside from the throat and nose via the bloodstream. It is perhaps the most serious of all the acute diseases of childhood.

In most children who develop meningitis, the source of infection is from throat, nose, ear or lungs. But if they are subjected to damp cold and overcrowded atmosphere, the organism is liable to pass into the blood stream. The incubation period is short, ranging between one and five days, and the onset is sudden. Children with this disease usually have a high fever and they may go into convulsions. They have severe headache and pain and stiffness in the neck and back. The child tends to lie in a curled position with the knees drawn up towards the chin and the eyes turn away from light. He becomes drowsy and confused and may become unconscious. There may also be a skin rash and an obstinate constipation. Vomiting is common in meningitis.

The child with meningitis should be placed on complete bed rest and nursed very carefully. He should be given the juice of an orange diluted

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

in a glass of warm water several times daily for the first few days of treatment. This will provide energy, increase urinary output and promote body resistance against infection, thereby facilitating recovery. Co-operative children should be given warm-water enema daily during this period to cleanse the bowels.

Cold compresses may be applied to the head in case the temperature rises above 103°F. If this method does not succeed, cold pack may be applied to the whole body. The procedure is to wring out a sheet or other large square piece of linen material in cold water, wrap it twice right round the body and legs of the patient. This pack should be applied every three hours during the day while temperature is high and kept on for an hour or so each time.

After the temperature has come down to normal and the tongue has cleared, the child may be given liquid foods and fresh juicy fruits like apple, pear, grapes, orange, pineapple, peach and melon for further two or three days. For drinks, unsweetened lemon water or plain water, either hot or cold, may be given. Thereafter, he may be gradually allowed to embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw or lightly-cooked vegetables. Normal feeding should be restored to only after complete recovery.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The grown-up children should take neutral immersion bath as this bath is very useful in organic diseases of brain and spinal cord, including meningitis. This bath should be taken for 20 to 30 minutes at a water temperature ranging from 26o to 28oC (92o to 98oF) before retiring at night. A cold wet cloth should be applied to the head and forehead before entering the bath. This bath will equalize the circulation so as to reduce the amount of blood in the brain and spinal cord. Application of hot fomentation to the spine every two hours with spinal ice bag during intervals will also be beneficial in the treatment of meningitis.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Boils

The boils, known as Furuncle in medical parlance, are tender swellings in the skin surrounded by large red areas. They are infections of the sweat glands or hair follicles of the skin. They are common in children, and appear especially during summer season.

A thorough cleansing of the system is essential for the treatment of boils. To begin with, the child should be placed on an exclusive diet of fresh juicy fruits for two or three days. A warm water enema should be administered daily, if possible, during this period to cleanse the bowels.

After the all-fruit diet, the child may be allowed to adopt a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, raw vegetables and fresh fruits. Further continuation of an all-fruit diet may be necessary, depending on the general health-level and bodily condition of the child. In case constipation is habitual, all possible measures should be adopted to overcome it.

The child-patient should avoid tea, coffee, starchy and sugary foods, especially, cakes, pastries, sweets, chocolates, white sugar and white

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

bread. He should also avoid all condiments, pickles and sauces.

The use of garlic and onion has proved most effective among the several home remedies found beneficial in the treatment of boils. The juice of garlic or onion may be applied externally on the boils to help ripen them and also to break them and evacuate the pus. Equal quantity of the juices of these two vegetables can also be applied with beneficial results.

Bitter gourd is another effective home remedy for boils. Half a cup of fresh juice of this vegetable, mixed with half a teaspoon of lime juice, should be taken, sip by sip, on an empty stomach daily for few days in treating this condition.

Betel leaves are a valuable remedy for boils. A leaf is gently warmed till it gets softened. It is then coated with a layer of castor oil. The oiled leaf should be spread over the inflamed part. It should be replaced every few hours. After a few applications the boil will rupture, draining all the purulent matter. The application can be made at night and removed in the morning.

Cumin seeds too are beneficial in the treatment of boils. The seeds of black cumin should be ground in water and made into a paste. This

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

paste can be applied to boils with beneficial results.

An application of turmeric powder to boils speeds up the healing process. In case of fresh boils, a paste made of a few dry roasted roots of turmeric crushed and dissolved in half a cup of water and applied over the affected portion will enable the boils to ripen and burst.

Warm moist compresses should be applied three or four times a day over the tender area. This will help to bring the boil to ripen and encourage easy drainage. Other helpful measures in the treatment of boils are daily dry friction in the morning, cold sponge, physical and breathing exercises. Fresh air and outdoor exercises are also essential for toning up the system.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Ringworm

Ringworm infection occurs in the scalp, the body, the feet and the nails. Ringworm of the scalp is most common in children, because of the lack of protective fatty acids in their scalps. These fatty acids are produced only in adult life and make the scalp of an adult person resistant to ringworm infection. The infection is more frequent in boys than in girls because boys have shorter hair and the scalp is relatively less protected.

The use of suppressive lotions or ointments for the treatment of ringworm may give temporary relief but does not eradicate the root of the disease. The best way to deal with this disease is to cleanse the blood stream and the body.

To begin with, the child should be placed on an all-fruit diet for two or three days. He should take fresh juicy fruits, such as apple, orange, papaya, pineapple and pomegranate, during this period. This will help eliminate morbid matter from the body and lead to substantial improvement, a warm-water enema may be administered during this period to cleanse the bowels, if possible.

Fruits, salt-free, raw or steamed vegetables accompanied with whole wheat chappatis may be taken after the all-fruit diet. After a few days,

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

curd and milk may be added to the diet. The child- patient may thereafter gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, raw or lightly-cooked vegetables and fresh fruits. This diet may be supplemented with vegetable oils, honey and yeast.

The child should avoid tea, coffee, and all condiments and highly flavoured dishes, as well as sugar, white flour products, denatured cereals and tinned or bottled foods.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of ringworm. One of the most effective of these is the use of mustard seeds. A paste made from these should be applied extgernally over the areas affected with ringworm. Before application of this paste, the skin should be washed thoroughly with hot water.

The use of new papaya has also been found beneficial in the treatment of ringworm. A few slice of this unripe fruit should be rubbed on the ringworm patches twice daily. A paste made from dry seeds of papaya can also be applied beneficially on these patches.

The use of castor oil, is valuable in case of ringworm of the head. This oil should be rubbed liberally on the affected parts. Noticeable

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

improvement will take place within two or three days.

Raw vegetable juices, especially carrot juice in combination with spinach juice, have proved beneficial in the treatment of ringworm. The formula proportion considered helpful in this combination are carrot juice 150 ml. and spinach 100 ml. to make 250 ml. of combined juice.

The child-patient should get as much fresh air as possible. He should drink plenty of water and bathe twice daily. The skin with the exception of part affected with ringworm, should be vigorously rubbed with the palms of the hands before taking a bath.

Coconut oil may be applied to the portions affected with ringworm. It will help the skin to stay soft. Sunbathing is also beneficial and should be resorted to early in the morning. A light mud pack applied over the sites of the ringworm is also helpful. The pack should be applied for half an hour twice daily.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Impetigo

Impetigo is an extremely contagious skin infection. This is essentially a disease of childhood, though it may also occur frequently in adults. It is usually prevalent in infants and younger children following a cold. The infection can spread rapidly from one child to another by close contact, especially during the early years in schools. The disease is more common in the areas with unhygienic conditions.

Early and adequate treatment of the first small patch of impetigo can prevent the spread of the disease. The childpatient should be kept isolated until the condition is cleared up, so as to prevent the spread of infection. He should be prevented from scratching the scabs. He should have his own sponge and towel. No other member of the family should use these articles. They should be changed frequently and washed seperately. The use of harsh detergent should be avoided . Clothes should be thoroughly rinsed.

The treatment of impetigo is essentially constitutional and it should consist of proper diet, correct hygiene and fresh air. The best way to commence the treatment is to place the patient on an all-fruit diet for two or three days. In this regimen, he should be given fresh juicy fruits such as orange, apple, pineapple, grapes, pear, peach and papaya. In

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

case of older children, however, it would be advisable to commence the treatment by placing him on a diet of orange juice and water for about three days. This may be followed by an all-fruit diet for further three days.

After the all-fruit diet, the patient may embark upon a well balanced diet consisting of milk, seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruits. The emphasis should be on fresh fruits, raw salads, fresh milk and whole meal bread. The use of these foods is of utmost importance in the future dietary. The child-patient should avoid tea, coffee and all condiments and highly flavoured dishes as well as sugar, white flour products, denatured cereals and tinned or bottled foods.

It will be desirable to administer warm-water anema daily during the first few days of the treatment to cleanse the bowels. If constipation is habitual, all natural methods should be adopted for its eradication.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of impetigo. The use of turnip is one such remedy. A few chopped turnip pieces after thorough cleaning should be immersed in rice starch or any natural vinegar for about six hours. They should then be eaten by the patient.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Garlic is useful in relieving constant itching caused by this disease. This vegetable should be crushed and spread over irritated areas. One or two cloves of garlic should be chewed for better results.

Other helpful measures for treating this disease are sun and air baths, a daily dry friction, sponge and breathing and other light exercises.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scabies

Scabies is a skin infection, popularly known as itch. It is caused by the mite *sarcoptes scabiei* or itch-mite. It is a contagious disease and is more common among people who live in crowded places under unhygienic conditions. The incidence of scabies is highest in children under the age of 15 years.

As the disease is contagious, the suffering patient and all the affected members of the family should be treated simultaneously. The oldest and the most effective of treatments is the application of a paste, prepared by mixing two teaspoons of sublimed sulphur with either tablespoons of coconut oil. The whole body should be soaked for 20 minutes in a warm-bath using plenty of soap. Particular attention should be paid to the itching areas, scrubbing them thoroughly. After the bath, the sulphur paste, should be rubbed well over the entire skin surface, below the chin line, but particularly over the involved areas. This should be done for three successive nights, wearing the same under-clothing during this period. About 10 to 12 hours after the last application, a hot soap bath should be taken and a clean under-clothing and outside clothing should be worn. All clothes next to the skin, bed sheets, pillow cases should be boiled in hot water and occasionally sun-dried.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Another effective treatment is that of Benzyl Benzoate. After a warm soap bath, as mentioned above, a mixture of equal parts of soft soap, ethyl alcohol and benzyl benzoate should be brushed for five minutes, while still wet. It should be allowed to dry and again painted for five minutes. After it dries, the same old clothes should be worn. A bath should be taken after 24 hours and clean clothing should be worn.

Benzyl-benzoate, being an irritant, should be diluted to half the strength, when treating scabies. Any of the other regimes can be used in the treatment of young children. If burrows are present on the head and neck areas in babies, these can be treated with topical Eurax cream.

During the period of treatment, the child should be given light foods, preferably fresh juicy fruits such as orange, apple, pineapple, pear, peaches, and melon. All steps should be taken to ensure regular bowel movements either by warm-water enema or application of glycerine suppository.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of scabies. The use of apricot leaves is one such valuable remedy. Fresh juice of these leaves should be extracted and applied with beneficial results in scabies. Application of the juice of mint over the affected

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

areas has also proved valuable in treating this disease.

The use of bitter gourd has proved beneficial in the treatment of this disease. A quarter to half a cup of juice of this vegetable, depending on the age of the child should be given mixed with half a teaspoon of lime juice. This juice should be sipped slowly on an empty stomach once daily for a week or so.

The flour of unroasted Bengal gram is a very effective cleansing agent. Washing the skin with this flour will be beneficial in treating scabies.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Eczema

Eczema is a very common skin disease of children. If the baby develops eczema at the very early age of two or three months, there is often a family history of eczema or asthma. However, if a young baby does have eczema, it does not necessarily mean that he will suffer from this irritating skin condition all his life. Many children outgrow infantile eczema by the time they are around three years old.

Skin applications to cure eczema may give temporary relief, but if the exudation is suppressed, some other more serious disease of childhood may develop. The best way to deal with this disease is to cleanse the blood stream and the body.

In case of small babies, mild cases of eczema can be treated by placing them on an orange juice and water for a day or so. Olive oil may be applied to the dry, scaly patches. This will be sufficient to keep the rash under control.

The other very important aspect of treatment of eczema in babies is to prevent them from scratching the rashes. This can be done by cutting short finger nails and by applying cotton mitts to cover the hands when

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

they are sleeping. This will reduce scratching to the minimum.

In case of young children, the child should be placed on an all- fruit diet for two or three days. During this period, he should take fresh juicy fruits such as apple, orange, papaya, pineapple, pear, peach and pomegranate. This will help eliminate morbid matter from the body and lead to substantial improvement. A warm water anema may be administered during this period to cleanse the bowels, if possible.

Fruits, salt-free, raw or steamed vegetables along with whole wheat chappatis may be taken after the all-fruit diet. After a few days, curd and milk may be added to the diet. The child-patient may thereafter gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruit. This diet may be supplemented with vegetable oils, honey and yeast.

The child -patient should avoid tea, coffee and all condiments and highly flavoured dishes, as well as sugar, white flour products, denatured cereals and tinned or bottled foods.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of eczema. One of the most effective of these remedies is musk melon. In fact, an exclusive diet of melons for a few days can be adopted by older

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

children which has beneficial results. Only sweet and fresh fruits of the best variety should be used for this purpose. The juice of the fruit is also beneficial as a lotion in chronic and acute cases of eczema.

Raw vegetable juices, especially carrot juice in combination with spinach juice, have proved beneficial in the treatment of eczema. The formula proportions considered helpful in this combination are carrot 150 ml. and spinach 100 ml. to make 250 ml. of combined juice.

The green leaves of finger miller are valuable in chronic eczema. The fresh juice of these leaves should be applied over the affected areas in the treatment of this condition.

Use of black strap molasses has been found beneficial in the treatment of this disease. This is presumably due to its high nutritive properties. One tablespoon of molasses mixed in half a glass of milk should be taken twice daily by grown-up children. Improvements will be noticeable within two weeks time.

Certain liquids have been found useful as washing lotions for cleaning the affected parts. These include water in which margosa leaves have been boiled, rice starch obtained by decanting cooked rice and turmeric water prepared by boiling water to which a little turmeric

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

powder has been added.

The child should get as much fresh air as possible. He should drink plenty of water and bathe twice daily. The skin with the exception of part affected with eczema, should be vigorously rubbed with the palms before taking a bath.

Coconut oil may be applied to the portions with eczema. It will help the skin to stay soft. Sunbathing is also beneficial as it kills the harmful bacteria and should be resorted to early in the morning, in the first light of dawn.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Head Lice

Head Lice, known as *Pediculus Humanus* in medical parlance, are tiny, flat, wingless insects which often find their way into the scalp as parasites. They suck the blood by biting the skin. This results in an irritation which, in chronic cases, causes thickening and pigmentation of the skin. Head lice occurs more frequently in children than in adults.

As with any other unhealthy condition, the first step towards treatment of head lice is thorough cleanliness. This should be observed by all members of the household. They should not share towels, pillows, combs and hair brushes. The comb and hair brushes of infected children should be disinfected daily by scrubbing with soap and water, and boiling them after they are used. A special comb with close-knit teeth, which is easily available, should be used. This will help remove the lice from the hair.

However, lice cannot be got rid of only with the help of a comb, they can be destroyed by certain effective methods also. One of these methods is to soak the scalp and hair for 24 hours with a mixture of equal parts of kerosene and vinegar. The head should be covered with a cap or towel. The head and hair should then be shampooed

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

thoroughly with soap and hot water and dried with a towel. The nits should be removed with a fine comb dipped in hot vinegar. The kerosene kills the lice and the vinegar loosens the eggs or nits, so that they can be easily combed out. This treatment should be repeated two or three times and the hair should be combed with a fine-toothed comb many times between each treatment to remove the loosened eggs. Great caution must be exercised in keeping the child away from a heated stove or a flame because of the danger of igniting the hair.

Another method to destroy the head lice is to dust five per cent DDT powder in 95 per cent inert talc into the hair and scalp. Care should be taken to keep the powder out of the eyes by protecting them with gauze squares. The entire head should be wrapped in a scarf or clean towel. The scarf should be removed after several hours, preferably at bedtime. The next morning, the hair should be carefully combed with a fine tooth comb to get rid of the nits and dead lice. On the seventh day of the treatment, the hair should be washed with soap and warm water and allowed to dry. Thereafter, the DDT powder should be applied again in the same manner as before. On the 14th day, the hair should be given a final shampoo. Normally, two courses of treatment are sufficient. In some cases, it may be necessary to repeat this treatment for the third time.

The third effective method is to thoroughly cleanse the whole body from the scalp to the toes, using plenty of soap and water. Next, five

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

per cent benzy and benzoate emulsion should be applied to all the itching areas. This should be rubbed well into the scalp at night, especially if the hair has been invaded by the parasites.

As the child affected with head lice can infect other children and members of the family, it is essential to examine the heads of all of them and treat them if lice and nits are found. Any head-dress worn by a child with lie should be sterilised by spraying with five per cent DDT solution.

The condition can be prevented by the maintenance of personal cleanliness and the avoidance of infected persons and their clothing. The clothing of individuals suffering from pediculosis should be soaked in boiling water and washed. As children are more likely to suffer from this problem, it would be advisable to keep their hair short.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Psoriasis

Psoriasis is one of the most stubborn skin diseases. It is characterised by thick, red silvery scaled patches of skin. This disease may appear at any age, though it is rare in infancy and early childhood. The incidence increases throughout childhood, after the age of five years, to reach a peak at adolescence. Girls suffering from this disease outnumber boys by two to one.

Since psoriasis is a metabolic disease, it would be desirable to cleanse the system in the beginning of the treatment. For this purpose, the child-patient should be encouraged to take vegetable and fruit juices for about two days. Carrots, beats, cucumbers and grapes may be used for juices. Juices of citrus fruits should be avoided. Child should be persuaded to take warm-water enema daily during this period to cleanse the bowels. Thereafter, he may be allowed to gradually embark upon a well balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, raw or lightly cooked vegetables and fresh fruits.

All animal fats, including milk, butter and eggs should be avoided. Refined or processed foods and foods containing hydrogenated fats or white sugar, all condiments, tea and coffee should also be avoided.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

After noticeable improvement, goat's milk , yoghurt and home made cottage cheese may be added to the diet.

The cabbage leaves have been successfully used in the form of compress in the treatment of psoriasis. The thickest and greenest outer leaves are most effective for use as compresses. They should be thoroughly washed in warm water and dried with a towel. The leaves should be made flat, soft and smooth by rolling them with a rolling pin after removing the thick veins. They should be warmed and then applied smoothly to the affected part in an overlapping manner. A pad of soft woollen cloth should be put over it. The whole compress should then be secured with a elastic bandage.

The use of curd in the form of buttermilk has proved useful in psoriasis, and the child-patient should drink it in liberal quantities. The application of buttermilk compresses over the affected parts will also be useful in treating this condition.

The oil of avocado has been found beneficial in the treatment of this disease. It should be applied gently to the affected parts. The oil extracted from the outer shell of cashewnut has also been found valuable in psoriasis. It is acrid and rubefacient and can be applied beneficially on the affected areas.

Too frequent baths should be avoided. Soap should not be used.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Regular sea-water baths and application of sea water externally over the affected parts once a day are beneficial. After a bath, a little olive oil may be applied. The skin should be kept absolutely clean by dry friction or sponge.

In many cases, psoriasis responds well to sunlight. The affected parts should be frequently exposed to the sun. The daily use of a sunlamp or ultra-violet light are also beneficial.

The use of mud packs in the treatment of psoriasis have also been found highly beneficial. The packs are made by mixing the clay with a little water and applying to the affected areas. After the clay has dried, it is removed and a fresh pack applied. Mud packs are eliminative in their action. They absorb and remove the toxins from the diseased area.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Warts

Warts are mainly caused by virus infection. Viruses usually penetrate the skin via small abrasions. Warts are unpredictably contagious and the child-patient may infect himself in different places. Thus for instance, he may get wart on the lips, if he sucks a wart on the finger. Infection can also spread from one member of family to other members. Constitutional factors also appear to be at the root of the trouble. These factors lead to some defects in the proper development of the skin surface in certain areas.

It is important to treat a simple wart as soon as it appears, otherwise it may spread . Dietary measures can be helpful in treating this condition. To begin with, the child -patient should be kept on an all-fruit diet for about two or three days. During this period, he should take fresh juicy fruits such as grapes, orange, apple pineapple, mango, pear and papaya. Warm-water enema should be taken to cleanse the bowels during this period and afterwards, if necessary.

After the all-fruit diet, the child may be allowed to embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw or lightly-cooked vegetables. Further short periods of two or three days on an exclusive diet of fresh fruits at

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

monthly intervals may be necessary until the skin condition improves.

The patient should avoid tea, coffee, white flour, sugar and all products made from them. He should also avoid all refined foods, tinned and frozen foods, as well as spices, condiments and pickles.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of warts. The most important of these is the use of castor oil. This should be applied generously over the affected parts every night. The treatment should be continued for several months.

Milky juice of figs is another valuable remedy. This juice should be extracted from the fresh, barley ripe fruits and applied on warts several times a day. The treatment should be continued for two weeks.

Raw potatoes have been found beneficial in the treatment of warts. The potatoes should be cut and rubbed on the affected area several times daily. This should be continued for at least two weeks. It will bring good results.

Onions are also valuable in warts. They are irritating to the skin and they stimulate the circulation of the blood. Warts sometimes disappear when rubbed with cut onions.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The herb merigold has also been found beneficial in the treatment of warts. The juice of the leaves of this plant can be applied over warts with good results. The sap from the stem has also effective use in the removal of warts.

The oil extracted from the shell of the cashewnut, being acrid, vesicant and rubefacient, has also proved useful in treating warts. It should be applied externally over the affected area.

Certain other external applications which have proved beneficial include juices of papaya and pineapple fruits and chalk powder mixed with water.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Anaemia

Anaemia is the most common blood disorder of childhood and is widely prevalent early in life. It denotes a shortage of rich red blood cells and colouring matter called haemoglobin. The disease is more often frequent in premature infants, in twins or in infants whose mothers had an inadequate diet during pregnancy.

Diet is of utmost importance in the treatment of anaemia. Almost every nutrient is needed for the production of red blood cells, haemoglobin and the enzymes required for their synthesis. Refined food like white bread, polished rice, sugar, and desserts rob the body of the much-needed iron. Iron should always be taken in its natural organic form. The common foods rich in natural organic iron are wheat and wheat grain cereals, brown rice and rice polishings, green leafy vegetables, cabbage, carrot, celery, beets, tomatoes, spinach, fruits like apples, berries, cherries, grapes, raisins, figs, dates, peas and peaches. The diet should also be adequate in proteins of high biological value such as those found in milk, cheese and egg.

Vitamin B12 is must for preventing anaemia. This vitamin is usually found in animal protein and especially in organic meats like kidney and liver. A heavy meat diet is often associated with a high haemoglobin

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

and high red cell count, but it has its disadvantages. One cause of anaemia is intestinal putrefaction, which is primarily brought on by a high meat diet. There are, however, other equally good alternative sources of vitamin B12 such as dairy products, like milk, eggs, and cheese, peanuts. Soyabeans also contains some amount of vitamin B12.

For prevention of anaemia, it is essential to take the entire B complex range which includes B12, present in the natural foods mentioned above. Eating lacto-avo products, which are complete proteins, and which also contain vitamin B12, is a good insurance against the disease.

Mention must be made of beets which are extremely important in treating anaemia. Beet juice contains potassium, phosphorous, calcium, sulphur, iodine, iron, copper, carbohydrates, fat, protein, vitamins B1, B2, niacin, B6, C and vitamin P. With its high iron content, beet juice regenerates and reactivates the red blood cells, supplies the body with fresh oxygen and helps in performing the normal function of the organs.

A cold water bath is among the most valuable secondary curative measures in anaemia and the child-patient should be encouraged to take this bath twice daily. Cold friction for five to 10 minutes once a week is also useful. Full sun baths are especially beneficial as sunlight

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

stimulates the production of red cells. Deep breathing exercises are also valuable in the treatment of anaemia.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Epilepsy

Epilepsy refers to a chronic condition in which repeated fits or attacks of unconsciousness occur with or without convulsions. It is a serious disorder of the central nervous system caused by abnormal electrical activity of the brain. It occurs in both children and adults. Most attacks, however, occur in childhood and in early adult life. Attack rates show a progressive decline in frequency with age.

The most important aspect of treatment of epilepsy is the diet. To begin with, the child should be placed on an exclusive fruit diet for a few days. During this period, he should take fresh juicy fruits such as oranges, apples, grapes, grapefruit, peaches, pears, pineapple and melon. Thereafter, he may gradually adopt a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, raw or lightly-cooked vegetables, and fresh fruits. The diet should include a moderate form of milk, preferably goat's milk and milk products such as curd, butter and homemade cottage cheese.

The diet should eliminate completely all animal proteins, except milk, as they not only lack in magnesium but also rob the body of its own magnesium storage as well as of vitamin B6. Both these substances are needed in large amounts by the epileptics. Best food sources of

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

magnesium are raw nuts, seeds, soyabeans, green leafy vegetables such as spinach, and beet roots. The patient should avoid all refined foods, fried and greasy foods, sugar and products made with it, strong tea, coffee, condiments and pickles. He should avoid over-eating and take frequent small meals, rather than a few large ones. He should not eat large meals before going to bed. Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of epilepsy. The most important of these is the use of grape juice. The child should take about 250 ml. of the juice of fresh grapes thrice a day for three months. It will provide immense relief and help in the cure of the disease. Certain vegetable juices, especially carrot juice in combination with juices of beets and cucumber have also been found valuable in epilepsy. Formula proportions considered helpful in this combination are 150 ml. of carrot juice and 50 ml. each of beet and cucumber juices to prepare 250 ml. of combined juices.

Vitamin B6 or pyridoxine is considered useful in epilepsy. This vitamin is involved in critical functions of the nervous system. The valuable vegetable sources of this vitamin are milk, brewer's yeast, cereals, legumes, green leafy vegetables, carrots and peanuts.

The herb brahmi booti, botanically known as *Herpestis monniera* has been found valuable in epilepsy. Half a teaspoon of the juice of this plant, sweetened with equal quantity of honey, should be given to the patient thrice daily. The herb Indian spikenard is also considered

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

useful in epilepsy. It soothes the nervous system and induces tranquility of the mind. It should be given in very small doses of half a gram each.

The herb valerian has acquired great reputation in recent years as a cure for epilepsy. It has been used traditionally in functional disturbances of nervous system. The drug exercises depressant action on the central nervous system. An infusion, prepared by infusing 15 grms of the herb in 250 ml. of boiling water, should be taken in small quantities thrice daily.

Mud packs applied to the abdomen twice daily help remove toxic conditions of the intestines and thereby hasten improvement of epileptic conditions. The application of alternate hot and cold compresses to the base of the brain, that is at the back of the head will be beneficial. The procedure is to dip the feet in a bucket of hot water and apply first a hot towel and then a cold one to the base of the brain. The alternate hot and cold towels should be kept for two or three minutes four times. The process should be repeated twice every day.

If the sufferer from epilepsy has taken strong drugs for many years, he should not leave off entirely all at once. The dosage may be cut down to half to begin with and then gradually reduced further until it can be left off completely.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The epileptic child should be encouraged to lead as normal a life as possible but some activities are unacceptably risky like swimming and driving vehicle and should be avoided. Thus for instance, bicycle riding on the main road may be fatal if the child has a convulsion. Similarly, unsupervised swimming should be prohibited. The child should be allowed to undertake certain activities, which involve considerable risk, only in the presence of a responsible adult.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Febrile Convulsion

A febrile convulsion refers to a convulsion or fit which occurs with a rapid rise in body temperature. It disrupts family life and gives most unpleasant experience to both the child and his parents. Children in the age group of six months to five years are especially prone to this condition. This is because the child's brain is not fully developed and also there is genetic predisposition for febrile convulsions.

During the time the convulsion is in progress, no attempt should be made to restrain the child's movements. However, all sharp objects like toys and furniture should be removed from the immediate vicinity of the child to avoid the possibility of an injury. No attempt should be made to put anything in the child's mouth. The child should be turned gently to his sides, so as to ensure that his breathing is not obstructed and does not choke himself.

As soon as the convulsion has ceased, the child should be given lots of love and comfort. This is necessary, as, being unaware of what has happened to him over the past few minutes, he may feel confused and frightened. As soon as he feels reassured, his temperature should be noted down. The next action must be to cool him. This can be done by placing a small ice bag on his forehead and covering his body with a

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

wet towel. His clothing should be loosened and windows opened. He should be sponged with tepid water.

The child's bowel should be cleansed by giving him warm- water enema. He should not be given anything to eat for at least 24 hours. He may be given only warm water to drink.

A home remedy found beneficial in the treatment of convulsion in children caused by high fever is the use of mustard seeds. These seeds should be powdered and a teaspoon of this powder should be mixed in a gallon of warm water. This can be used as a therapeutic bath for the child-patient.

Once having witnessed a febrile convulsion, parents will be aware of the circumstances which can lead up to this frightening event. So, should a similar situation arise again in future, that is, a high temperature associated with an infection somewhere in the body, immediate cooling action, as outlined above, can be taken. This will reduce the chances of occurrence of febrile convulsion.

There is no need to take drastic measures to cool the child, if he only has a low-grade fever. But he should be made as comfortable as possible and kept generally cool when he has a fever. This is necessary

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

as the young child's brain is still too immature to cope with a high temperature.

It is of utmost importance that the parents should not panic, but remain cool and calm in facing the situation. If they do do and carry out the treatment outlined above, they will save their children from long-term harm.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Headaches

Headaches can be a problem in some children in the rather turbulent, teenage years. While there can be outlined definite physical causes for a headache, it is more often a sign of emotional strain. However, before attributing emotional cause for the headache, all possibilities of physical illness like meningitis, brain tumor etc. must be eliminated.

The best remedy to prevent headaches is to build up physical resistance through proper nutrition, exercise and constructive thinking. As a first step, the patient should subsist for two or three days on citrus fruit juices, diluted with water. The juices may be taken six times daily. By taking the load off the digestion, the patient will at once save nervous energy which can be utilised for more important purposes. The blood and lymph will also be relieved of a great burden. After a short period on fruit juices, the diet should be fixed in such a way as to put the least possible strain on the digestion. Breakfast may consist of fruits, both fresh and dried. Lunch may consist largely of protein foods. Starchy foods such as whole wheat bread, cereals, rice, potatoes may be taken at dinner along with raw vegetable salads. Spices, condiments, pickles, sour buttermilk and oily foodstuffs should be avoided. Drinking a glass of water (warm water in winter and cool water in summer), mixed with a teaspoon of honey first thing in the

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

morning, is useful in headaches.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of various types of headaches. Lemon is useful in bilious headache. The juice of two or three slices of this fruit should be squeezed in a cup of warm water and consumed by the patient for treating this condition. The crust of lemon, which is generally thrown away, has been found useful in headaches caused by heat. Lemon crusts should be pounded into a fine paste in a mortar and applied on the forehead. It will bring relief. Applying yellow rind of lemon, newly pared off, to each temple will also give relief.

Apples are valuable in treating all types of headaches. A ripe apple, after removing the upper rind and the inner hard portion, should be taken with a little salt every morning for about a week.

Cinnamon is useful in headaches caused by exposure to cold air. A thin paste of this spice should be prepared by mixing it with water and should be applied over the temples and forehead to obtain relief.

The flowers of henna have been found valuable in headaches caused by heat. A plaster of the flowers should be prepared by rubbing in vinegar and applied over the forehead. It will soon bring relief.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Hot foot baths have proved valuable in chronic headaches. The patient should keep his legs in a bucket filled with hot water at a temperature of 40o C to 45o C for 15 minutes every night before retiring. This will give relief.

Copious drinking of water will be beneficial in the treatment of headaches. Certain water applications help relieve headaches. These include taking enema with water temperature at 98.6o F, a wet throat pack, frequent applications of towels wrung out from very hot water to the back of the neck. A cold compress at 40o to 60o F applied to the head and face or an alternate spinalcompress. Hot fomentations over the abdominal region just before retiring relieve headaches due to stomach and a liver upset.

Certain yogic practices are also beneficial in the treatments of headahes and older children should be encouraged to undertake them. These include yogic kriyas like jalneti and kunjaj, pranayamas like anuloma-viloma, shitali and sitkari and asanas such as uttanpadasana, sarvangasana, paschimottanasana, halasana and shavasana.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Diabetes

Diabetes occurs in all age groups, from young infants to the elders, although it occurs rarely below the age of two years. There are, however, differences between the disease as it occurs in children and young adults, as against the middle aged and elderly. There is growing evidence that juvenile diabetes mellitus may be associated with environmental factors.

Any successful method of diabetes treatment should aim at removal of the actual cause of the disease and building up of the whole health level of the patient. Diet plays a vital role in such a treatment. Fruits, nuts and vegetables, whole meal bread and dairy products form a food diet for the diabetic. These foods are best eaten in as dry a condition as possible to ensure thorough ensalivation during the first part of the process of digestion. Cooked starchy foods should be avoided.

The diabetic should not be afraid to eat fresh fruits and vegetables which contain sugar and starch. Fresh fruits contain sugar fructose, which does not need insulin for its metabolism and is well-tolerated by diabetics. Fats and oils should be taken sparingly, for they are apt to lower the tolerance for proteins and starches. Emphasis should be on raw foods as they stimulate and increase insulin production. For

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

protein, homemade cottage cheese, various forms of soured milk and nuts are best. The patient should avoid overeating and take four or five small meals a day rather than three large ones.

Celery, cucumbers, string beans, onions and garlic are especially beneficial. String bean pod tea is an excellent natural substitute for insulin and highly beneficial in diabetes. The skin of the pods of green beans is extremely rich in silica and certain hormone substances which are closely related to insulin. One cup of string bean tea is equal to one unit of insulin. Cucumbers contain a hormone needed by the cells of the pancreas for producing insulin. Onion and garlic have proved beneficial in reducing blood sugar in diabetes.

Recent scientific investigations have established that bitter gourd is highly beneficial in the treatment of diabetes. It contains an insulin-like principle, known as plant-insulin which has been found effective in lowering the blood and urine sugar levels. It should therefore, be included liberally in the diet of the diabetic. For better results, the child patient should take juice of one or two fruits every morning on an empty stomach. It can also be used in the form of decoction by boiling the pieces in water or in the form of dry powder.

Indian gooseberry with its high vitamin C content, is considered valuable in treating diabetes. A teaspoon of its juice, mixed with half a

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

cup of bitter gourd juice, taken daily for two months will stimulate the islets of Langerhans, i.e. the isolated group of cells that secrete the hormone insulin. It thus reduces the blood sugar level in diabetes.

Jambul fruit is another effective home remedy. It is regarded in traditional medicine as a specific against diabetes because of its effect on the pancreas. The fruit, the seeds and fruit juice are all useful in the treatment of this disease. The seeds contain a glucoside 'jamboline' which is believed to have the power to check the pathological conversion of starch into sugar in cases of increased production of glucose. They should be fried and powdered. This powder should be taken in doses of three to six grams by the child mixed in milk, curd or water.

The child patient should avoid tea, coffee and cocoa because of their adverse influence on the digestive tract. Other foods which should be avoided are white bread, white flour products, sugar, tinned fruits, sweets, chocolates, pastries, pies and refined cereals.

The most important nutrient in the treatment of diabetes is manganese which is vital in the production of natural insulin. It is found in citrus fruits, in the outer covering of nuts, grains and in the green leaves of edible plants. Other nutrients of special value are zinc, B-complex vitamins and poly-unsaturated fatty acids.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Fresh air exercises are also an important factor in the treatment of diabetic child. Light games, Jogging and swimming are recommended. Yogic asanas such as bhujangasana, shalabhasana, dhanurasana, paschimottanasana, sarangasana, halasana and shavasana, yogic kriyas like jalaneti and kunjai and pranayam such as kapalbhati, anuloma-viloma and ujjai will be beneficial and the grown-up children should be encouraged to undertake these practices regularly.

Bathing in cold water greatly increase the circulation and enhances the capacity of the muscles to utilise sugar. The diabetic should eliminate minor worries from his daily life. He must endeavour to be more easy-going and should not get unduly worked up by stress, strain of life.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Conjunctivitis

The treatment of conjunctivitis through salves and ointments does not cure the disease. To be effective, treatment must be constitutional. A thorough cleansing of the system and adoption of natural laws in diet and general living alone can help eliminate conjunctivitis.

The best way to commence the treatment is to adopt an exclusive fresh fruit diet for about two or three days. The diet may consist of fresh juicy fruits in season such as apple, orange, pear, peach, grapes, pineapple and papaya. Bananas should, however, not be taken. Thereafter, the patient may adopt a well-balanced diet consisting of seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruits. The emphasis should be on fresh fruits and raw vegetable salad or lightly-cooked vegetables.

The patient should avoid an excessive intake of starchy and sugary foods in the form of white bread, refined cereals, potatoes, puddings, pies, pastry, sugar, jams and confectionery, which cause the general catarrhal condition as well as conjunctivitis. He should also avoid meat and excessive quantities of other protein and fatty foods, tea and coffee, too much salt, condiments and sauces.

Raw juices of certain vegetables, especially carrots and spinach, have

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

been found valuable in the treatment of conjunctivitis. The combined juice of these two vegetables have proved very effective. About 100 ml. of spinach juice should be mixed with 150 ml. of carrot juice in this combination.

The leaves of ribbed gourd are useful in granular conjunctivitis in children. A few drops of the juice of this plant should be dropped in the eyes for treating this condition.

The juice of Indian gooseberry, mixed with honey, is useful in conjunctivitis. It reduces intraocular tension in a remarkable manner. A tablespoon of this juice should be taken mixed with half a teaspoon of honey twice daily in treating this condition. Lime is also useful cure. A few drops of this juice should be instilled in the eyes.

The juice of margosa leaves has been found beneficial in the treatment of pain due to conjunctivitis. A few leaves should be rubbed with a little water to obtain the juice and then strained through a clean piece of cloth. This juice should be warmed a little and a few drops into the ear opposite the ailing eye. This will give great relief and eyes will be cured after a few applications.

Vitamin A and B too has proved useful in conjunctivitis. The patient

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

should take liberal quantities of natural foods rich in these two vitamins. The vitamin A rich foods are whole milk, curds, butter, carrots, pumpkin, green leafy vegetables, tomatoes, mangoes and papaya. Foods rich in vitamin B2 are green leafy vegetables, milk, almonds, citrus fruits and tomatoes.

As regards local treatment to the eyes themselves, a cold foment renders almost immediate relief by chasing away an overactive local blood supply. The procedure is as follows : Fold a small hand towel. Saturate it with cold water. Squeeze out excess water and mould towelling gently over both eyes. Cover it with a piece of warm cloth to retain the temperature. Repeat the process as soon as the foment gets warmed. Carry out the procedure for one hour. After terminating the wet pack, cover the eyes with a dry towel. Lie back and relax. The damaged eye tissue will quickly return to normal. The treatment should be repeated every night for a week, even though the problem may clear up with the first treatment itself.

The patient should also resort to palming which is beneficial in removing strain and relaxing the eyes and its surrounding tissues. The procedure is as follows : Sit comfortably in an arm chair or on a settee and relax with your eyes closed. Cover your eyes with your palms, right palm over the right eye and the left over the left eye. Do not, however, press down on the eyes. With your eyes closed thus, try to imagine blackness which grows blacker. Palming reduces strain and relaxes the

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

eyes and its surrounding tissues.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Defective Vision

Defective vision is a common problem in children nowadays. The main reasons for eye defects are reading in bad light (either too dim or excessively bright), excessive reading, reading in moving trains, buses or cars, watching too much television, seeing too many films and eating artificial foods.

The eyes need to be properly supplied with blood and nerve force for proper vision. Any factor capable of interfering either with the bloodvessles or with the nerves of the eyes could cause defective vision. The muscles covering the upper portion of the spine at the back of the knee are the main seat of mechanical interference with the blood and nerve supply to the eyes.

The foremost consideration in the treatment of defective vision is to loosen the strained and contracted muscles surrounding the eyes. The following eye, neck and shoulder exercises will help in achieving this objective :

- ❖ Keep your head still and relax. Gently move the eyes up and down six times. Repeat the same movement twice or thrice at two second intervals. The eyes should move

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

slowly and regularly as far down as possible and then as far up as possible.

- ❖ Move the eyes from side to side as far as possible, without any force or effort six times . Repeat two or three times.
- ❖ Hold the index finger of your right hand about eight inches in front of the eyes, then look from the finger to any other large object ten or more feet away - the door of window will do. Look from one to the other ten times . Do this exercise fairly rapidly.
- ❖ Move the eyes up gently and slowly in a circle, then move them low in the reverse direction. Do this four times in all. Rest for a second and repeat the movement two or three times, using minimum effort. All eye muscles exercises should be performed while seated in a comfortable position, rotate the neck (a) in circles and semi-circles , (b) move the shoulders clock-wise and anti-clockwise briskly, drawing them up as far as possible several times (c) allow the head to drop forward and backward as far as possible, (d) return the head to the right and left as far as possible several times. These

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

exercises help to loosen up contracted neck muscles which may restrict blood supply to the head.

Natural, uncooked foods are the best diet for defective vision. These include fresh fruits such as oranges, apples, grapes, peaches, plums, cherries, green vegetables like lettuce, cabbage, spinach, turnip tops, root vegetables like potatoes, turnips, carrot, onions and beet roots, nuts, dried fruits and dairy products.

Cereals are also necessary, but they should only be consumed sparingly. Genuine wholemeal bread is the best and most suitable. Nans, cakes, pastries, white sugar, white bread, confectionery, tea, coffee, etc. together with meat, fish or eggs soon play havoc with the digestion and the body.

The value of vitamin A for improving vision must be stressed. The intake of sufficient quantities of this vitamin is essential as a safeguard against or treatment of defective vision or eye disease of any kind. The best sources of this vitamin are cod-liver oil, raw spinach, turnip tops, cream, cheese, butter, egg yolk, tomatoes, lettuce, carrot, cabbage, soya beans, green peas, wheat germ, fresh milk, oranges and dates.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Stye

The term stye refers to a small painful boil, an inflamed hair follicle or an infection of a sebaceous gland in the edge of the eyelid. The infecting organism is usually a staphylococcus. This disease occurs due to debilitated condition of the system. Some children seem more prone to these infections than others.

The stye usually disappears on its own in two or three days. The progress of the condition can be curtailed by pulling the eyelash at the site of the inflammation. Periodic application of moist warm compresses brings the pus out enabling its easy drainage. Sometimes it has to be evacuated by an incision with a knife. As stye can spread from an infected child to other members of the family, it is essential that the child-patient is given a separate face flannel and towel at least while his stye is at the discharging stage, and he should be discouraged from scratching.

To be effective, the treatment for the stye should be constitutional. A thorough cleansing of the system and adoption of the natural laws in diet and general living alone can help eliminate stye. To begin with, the child-patient should be placed on an exclusive diet of fresh fruits for two or three days. In this regimen, he should be given three meals a

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

day of fresh juicy fruits such as orange, apple, pineapple, pear, peach and papaya. If possible, warm-water enema should be given daily during this period to cleanse the bowels.

Thereafter, he may be allowed to gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet according to his age. The emphasis should be on whole grain cereals, fresh fruits and raw or lightly-cooked vegetables.

The patient should avoid an excessive intake of starchy and sugary foods, meat and other protein and fatty foods, strong tea and coffee, too much salt, condiments and sauces.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of styes. The most important of these is the use of clove. This spice should be rubbed in water and applied over the sty. This will give relief. Another useful application is red lead. About 1.25 decigrams of this substance should be moistened with a few drops of water and applied over the styes. The stone of a date rubbed with water can also be applied over styes with beneficial results.

The patient should be encouraged to adopt various methods of relaxing and strengthening the eyes. These include eye exercises like moving the eyes gently up and down, from side to side and in a circle, clock-wise

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

and anti-clockwise, rotating the neck in circles and semi-circles and briskly moving the shoulders in clockwise and anti-clockwise direction.

The patient should also resort to palming which is beneficial in removing strain and relaxing the eyes and its surroundings tissues. The procedure is as follows : Sit comfortably in an arm chair or on a settee relax with your eyes closed. Cover your eyes with your palms, right palm over the right eye and the left over the left eye. Do not, however, press down the eyes. With your eyes closed thus, try to imagine blackness, which grows blacker. Palming reduces strain and relaxes the eyes and its surrounding tissues.

Styes can be prevented by good hygiene, proper diet and by adopting various methods for relaxing and strengthening the eyes, as outlined above.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Ricket

The word ricket is derived from the Anglo-Saxon 'wrikken' which means 'to twist'. It is a deficiency disease of infancy and early childhood in which the bones are softened and deformed. The disease most likely makes its first appearance at the time of teething. It is known as disease of poverty and darkness and is more prevalent in children of poor class.

The child becomes restless, fretful and pale, with flabby and toneless muscles, which cause the limbs to assume unnatural postures. Excessive sweating in the head is common. The child's abdomen protrudes. He may suffer from diarrhea and anemia. The bones become soft and bend easily. Under the constant pull of the muscles, the joints lose their shape and are unable to function normally. In young infants there may be a marked softening of the bones of the skull. The chest is also deformed due to softening of ribs and is called pigeon breast. The marked weakness in the bones delays the child's ability to sit up, crawl and walk. The weight of his body may bend the bones and joints out of shape, causing such deformities as bow-legs, and knock-knees.

The rickets are generally curable especially in the initial stages. Proper

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

nursing of the child, however, is very essential and all factors that might promote the disease must carefully be removed.

Diet is of utmost importance in the prevention and treatment of this disease. As far as possible, the child should be breast-fed for the first year of its existence. He should be given goat's or cow's milk, diluted with water according to his age, wherever breast feeding is not possible. Other foods should be introduced gradually, with emphasis on fruits, steamed vegetables, whole grain cereals and milk.

Adequate intake of vitamin D and calcium is very essential for recovery. The child-patient should be given liberal quantities of vitamin D rich foods such as milk, cream and butter, eggs, and cod liver oil. Vitamin D can also be given in supplement from 1000 to 4,000 I.U. per day for six to 12 weeks, depending on the severity of the disease. This can be followed by daily supplements of 200 to 400 I.U., which are adequate to prevent the development of the disorder in otherwise normal children.

For severe cases, a supplement of calcium lactate should also be given orally. The diet after weaning may include, with advantage, an egg daily and butter. An adequate intake of iron and ascorbic acid is also necessary.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Besides proper diet and adequate intake of nutrients outlined above, all efforts should be made to improve the hygienic environment of the child. The child should be clothed sparsely and if he was previously confined indoors, he should be allowed outdoor as much as possible to enjoy the sunshine and fresh air.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scurvy

Scurvy is caused by lack of vitamin C or ascorbic acid. Inadequate intake of fresh fruits and vegetables can lead to this condition. The disease is likely to attack the rich as well as the poor, because it arises in the system not from an insufficient diet quantitatively, but from a diet lacking in organic mineral salts so essential to health and vitality.

The disease is more common in artificially fed infants. Cow's milk contains less than half the vitamin C found in breast milk. This is reduced further if the milk is boiled or processed. Scurvy may also occur in older children who are mentally retarded and cannot chew, and are consequently fed on sloppy foods.

The most important factor in the prevention and treatment of scurvy in children is proper feeding. All children after their birth should be breast-fed for at least six months, as this is the best natural way to provide all the essential nutrients during this period. If for any reasons, it is not possible to breast-feed the child, he should be fed on either on cow's milk or commercially available milk formulas. As far as possible, the baby should not be given artificially prepared, patent or tinned milk foods.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The child with scurvy should be given liberal quantities of vitamin C-rich foods. This vitamin is found in fresh fruits and vegetables, but is largely destroyed in cooking especially if baking soda is used. The amount of this vitamin required is between 10 and 29 mg. daily. The normal diet, however, contains much less amount than this. It can, therefore, if necessary, be taken as a tablet of ascorbic acid.

One of the best remedies for scurvy is the use of Indian gooseberry, which is the richest known source of vitamin C. The powder of dry amla , mixed with equal quantity of sugar, should be given in half a teaspoon doses thrice daily, with milk. If fresh amla is available, it should be cooked like vegetable and eaten.

As rich sources of vitamin C , lemon and lime are regarded as foods or exceptional therapeutic value in scurvy. The juice of either or both these fruits should be consumed by the patient diluted in warm water and mixed with honey.

Another effective remedy for scurvy is the use of amchur, a popular article of diet in Indian house, consisting of green mangoes, skinned, stoned, cut into pieces and dried in the sun. Fifteen grams of it is believed to be equivalent to 30 grams of good lime on account of its citric content.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Besides a well-balanced diet, the child-patient should be given liberal quantities of vitamin C -rich foods like orange, bitter gourd, tomatoes and leafy vegetables such as spinach and cabbage. The child should also be allowed as much fresh air and sunshine as possible. A cold towel rubbed twice daily and a gentle massage twice or thrice a week will also be beneficial in the treatment of scurvy.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Teething Problems

Teething usually commences in an infants, from the sixth month. The temporary or milk teeth appear first. Before the baby is born, the teeth buds, placed under the gum, are soft and under developed. After the baby's birth, the teeth begin to grow up by absorbing the covering material and gum, thus converting them into bone. The teeth make their appearance with the removal of the covering capsule.

The milk teeth generally appear in pairs and the process of cutting all the 20 temporary teeth is completed by the middle of the third year. These milk teeth continue to function upto the sixth or seventh year. Then the permanent teeth begin to push them out gradually. They fall off one by one and the vacant spaces are taken up by growing permanent teeth.

The period of teething is one with many changes in many directions. During this period the child becomes irritable and very susceptible to digestive or nervous disturbances. Many diseases may coincide with the time of teething, but it would be wrong to presume that the various ailments suffered by the child at this period are due to teething.

Teething will be both early and easy, if the child is born of healthy

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

parents after a full period of pregnancy, his mother has followed a proper nutritious diet and fed her child with wholesome breast milk. A healthy child thus cuts teeth without disorders. In case of a weak child, however, his constitutional defects are accentuated. If his nervous system is weak and unstable, the child may have sleeplessness and even convulsions. Those who have a habitually weak digestive system develop diarrhoea and those who have a weak respiratory system will develop bronchitis. Deficiency in proper feeding, vitamin and calcium deficiency, unhygienic bringing up conditions are mostly responsible for these susceptibilities and the deficiencies and errors should be found out and corrected.

A tooth before it can shoot out must first pierce the gums. In case the teeth are not hard enough, they cannot work their way through. Similarly, if the gums are too thick, more time will be required for piercing them. This causes irritation and pain, both of which cause a heat in the mouth, a greater flow of body humours (fluids) to the affected part, swellings, inflammations and restlessness. The teething will therefore become an easy process if the gums are made thin and insensible and hard. This can be achieved by gently rubbing of the gum and by giving the child the wholesome mother's milk. The child should also be given something hard such as sugarcane, sugar- free rusks, carrot, rubber ball and plastic blocks to chew.

It is also necessary to relax the gums and to reduce the painful

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

sensation caused by the pressure of the tooth. The gums may be softened and relaxed frequently by massaging the tumid and pained part with warm honey, or some oil of olives or almonds or butter. The inflamed part may be pressed with roasted fig, or a fine sponge dipped in a warm decoction of carrots, or in milk boiled with figs.

At the time of teething, food should be curtailed by one fourth of the normal quantity. No changes in food should be made at this time as digestive organs become irritated. A gentle diarrhea is beneficial on these occasions. However, a violent condition will be harmful and should be avoided and treated naturally, if it occurs.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Bedwetting

Enuresis or bed-wetting refers to involuntary passage of urine while asleep. It is a common problem in infants and young children. It is regarded as a period of adjustment. By the time a child reaches the age of two years, he can usually learn to control the passage of urine during the day. However, it may be another year or so before he can achieve control all through the night.

Punishment plays no part in the successful treatment of this condition. The child should not be made to feel guilty. This may cause him to lose confidence in himself and rob him of his self- respect.

The parent should ensure that the child who faces this problem has plenty of sleep and rest and a pleasant home environment. The following suggestions may help the child overcome the problem of bed-wetting.

- ❖ Reduce the amount of fluid just before child goes to bed. Do not be unreasonable, especially on a hot night, for the more concentrated urine may be irritating the child and causing him to lose control of his bladder during sleep.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

- ❖ Do not be overanxious about this problem. Making an issue of it may only prolong the problem. Try to keep the child relaxed, even if he is a little slow in overcoming this habit.
- ❖ Make the child void his bladder before going to sleep, especially if this is a frequent problem.
- ❖ Be sure to reward him in an appropriate manner when he succeeds in keeping dry at night. Do not punish him when he fails.

Give your child a happy home of which he can be truly proud. Try to remove all friction within the family. This may help to solve not only the bed-wetting but all other nervous problems as well.

In regard to physical treatment, the child should be placed on an all-fruit diet for few days. If possible, he should be given warm water enema daily during this period to cleanse the bowels. He should also be given cold sitz bath daily. The procedure is to fill an ordinary bath tub with cold water to a depth of four inches or so. The child should sit in it in such a way so that his feet and sexual organs are immersed for the most part in water. Only the seat and feet should touch the bottom

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

of the tub, while the knees are always above the water.

The knees should be kept apart and the water should be vigorously dashed over the abdomen with the hollow of the hand. The throwing of the water is then followed by a brisk rubbing of the abdomen with both hands. After this process has been carried on for a while, all the parts immersed in the water except the sexual organs themselves, should be rubbed vigorously with open hand and then dried with a rough towel. When the child becomes stronger, the rubbing -dry process should be carried out with the hands. This is in itself a good exercise and improves the condition of the skin.

This will help tone up the bladder. Bed-wetting in children of fairly advanced stage is usually due to mental strain, induced by over-stimulation of the brain through excessive school work, and incitement by parents to learn too much. In these cases, the child should be given plenty of rest and quiet and freedom from all undue mental activity and nervous excitement.

An excellent home remedy for bed-wetting is the use of mixture of sesame seeds and bishop's weed. About 24 gms. of sesame seeds should be mixed with 12 gms of ajwain and 36 gms. of jaggery. About 6 gms. of this confection should be given to the child in the morning and evening. This will bring good results.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

Fresh air and outdoor games are also helpful in the treatment of bed-wetting in children. The child should be encouraged to spend as much time outdoors as possible and play outdoor games in preference to indoor ones.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Childhood Obesity

There is now growing realisation that much adult obesity has its origin in infancy, childhood and adolescence. The prevention of obesity should therefore begin in infancy. The prevalence of obesity in children is estimated to be 25 per cent in the first year, less than five per cent at 5 years and nine per cent at 15 years. It is however, not necessary that fat babies become fat children, but obese five-years-old are more likely to become fat adolescents.

A suitably planned course of dietetic treatment, in conjunction with suitable exercise and other measures for promoting elimination, is the only scientific way of dealing with obesity. To begin with, the child should be put on a liquid diet for three to five days. Fresh fruit juices will be especially beneficial. Lemon, orange, pineapple and cabbage may be used for juices.

After the liquid diet, taking three meals a day of fresh juicy fruits, such as orange, grapefruit, pineapple and papaya. Thereafter, he may gradually embark upon a low-calorie well-balanced diet consisting of seeds, nuts and grains, vegetables and fruits, according to his age. The emphasis should be on fresh fruits, raw or lightly-cooked vegetables and fresh fruit and vegetable juices.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

As with an obese adult, an obese infant may be overfed or underactive. It is, therefore, essential that the daily food intake and activity and sleep pattern of the infant should regularly be appraised throughout the first year of life in a health care setting. No more than 120 kcal, per kilogram per day is appropriate for the very young infant and no more than 100 kcal, per kilogram, for the older infant. The food intake should be co-related with the activity and sleep pattern. Severe energy-restricted diets are, however, not advised for children prior to the completion of the adolescent growth spurt. An inadequate energy intake before and during the growth spurt can lead to growth retardation. If the actual energy and nutrient intake is greatly in excess of that recommended for age, the diet should be planned in such a way as to contain energy and nutrients appropriate for the age.

The food which should be drastically curtailed or altogether avoided are high -fat foods such as butter, cheese, chocolate, cream, ice cream, meats, fried food and gravies, high carbohydrate foods like bread, candy, cake, cookies, cereal products, legumes, potatoes, sugar and rich puddings and beverages such as all fountain drinks.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of the obesity. The most important of these is to spend few days on lime juice-honey water. In this mode of treatment one spoon of fresh honey

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

should be mixed with a juice of half a lime in a glass of lukewarm water and taken at regular interval.

The leaves of jujube or Indian plum is another valuable remedy for obesity. A handful of leaves should be soaked over night in water and this water should be taken in the morning, preferably on an empty stomach. This treatment should be continued for atleast one month to achieve beneficial results.

Cabbage is considered to be an excellent home remedy for obesity. Recent research has discovered in this vegetable a valuable content called tartaric acid which inhibits the conversion of sugar and other carbohydrates in fat. Hence it is of great value in weight reduction. Helping of cabbage salad would be the simplest way to stay slim, painless way of dieting.

Tomatoes are also valuable in treating obesity. One or two tomatoes taken early morning, without breakfast, for a couple of months is considered a sage method of weight reduction and at the same time it also supplies the essential food elements to preserve the health.

Finger millet is an ideal food for obese people, because its digestion is slow and due to this the carbohydrate takes longer time to get

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

absorbed. By eating ragi preparations, the constant desire to eat will be curbed, reducing the daily caloric intake. At the same time, it supplies abundance of calcium, phosphorous, iron, vitamin B 1 and prevents malnutrition inspite of restricted food.

Exercise also plays an important role in weight reduction plan. It helps to use up calories stored in body fat. Certain yogic asanas beneficial in the treatment of obesity are sarvagasana, halasana, bhujangasana, shalabhasana, dhanurasana, chakrasana, paschimottanasana, vajrasana, yogmudra and trikon-asana. The older children should be encouraged to practice these asanas or undertake some form of exercise. The child-patient should also be encouraged to adopt measures which bring an excessive perspiration such as steam bath and massage. They help to reduce weight.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Depression

Childhood is considered to be the best phase of life. The tears and trauma of childhood seems trivial to the problems in adult life.

However, children's own view about their lives is quite different. They consider their lives as troubled and problematic as the adults views about their lives. Up and downs, sunny days and gloomy one are part of their lives too. There are days when they feel very happy and jubilant and the days when they are gloomy and depressed.

Depression thus is also a part of childhood.

A child's depression is not a scale down version of an adult's emotion. Children experience and express depression differently. The usual sign is withdrawl from his previous activities and friends. A depressed child is in a low mood, talks less and has few interactions. In some cases, however, a depressed child may be over-aggressive and hyperactive. This is just to cover up his depression. It is natural for a child to feel sad and distressed when he is hurt, but if the respnse is prolonged, beyond the usual natural duration, it becomes a cause for concern to parents. Fortunately, these negative feelings do not last for long with children.

Parents can do a lot to help their children when they are depressed.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

They should not snub the child. In case he does not want to talk to his parents about his problems, he should be encouraged to give vent to his feelings to a person whom he can confide in.

Diet plays an important part in depression. The child patient should be encouraged to take liberal quantities of fresh fruits, milk and green vegetables. The diet should exclude tea, chocolate, and cola drinks as well as white flour products and condiments.

Certain home remedies have been found beneficial in the treatment of depression. The use of apple is one such remedy. The fruit should be eaten with milk and honey. This will act as a very effective nerve tonic and recharge the nerves with new energy and life.

The use of cardamon has proved valuable in depression. Powdered seeds should be boiled in water and a tea prepared in the usual way. It gives a very pleasing aroma to tea which can be used as a medicine in the treatment of this condition.

The cashewnut is another effective remedy for general depression. It is rich in vitamins of B group, especially thiamine and therefore useful in stimulating appetite, and nervous system. It is also rich in riboflavin which keeps the body active, gay and energetic.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

The depressive mood can be overcome by activity and the child patient should be encouraged to keep himself occupied. The grown up child should also be encouraged to undertake light exercise which not only keeps the body physically fit but also provides recreation and mental relaxation. It also gives the feeling of accomplishment and thus reduces the sense of helplessness.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Nephritis

Nephritis refers to an inflammation of the kidneys. It is a serious condition and may be either acute or chronic. A synonym for nephritis is Bright's Disease. It was Bright, (1789 - 1858), who described examples of many different diseases which can be included under this term.

This disease most often strikes in childhood. It can become progressively worse and result in death, if not treated properly in the initial stages. In the alternative, it may turn into a chronic stage.

As there is damage to the kidneys in nephritis, the treatment should essentially be directed towards reducing the workload of kidneys. This can be achieved by giving rest to the body and to the kidneys. The body should be covered with warm clothing and blankets. Lurking infections of the throat or other parts of the body should be treated through natural methods.

Diet also plays an important role in the treatment of nephritis. The intake of fluid, salt and protein should be restricted. The intake of fluid can be gradually increased as the output of urine increases. The intake of salt causes the retention of water in the tissues and it should

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

therefore be completely eliminated from the diet. The intake of protein should also be kept to the minimum as the breakdown of protein substances results in the formation of urea and it is not excreted freely by the damaged kidney. The diet given must supply adequate calories from carbohydrate and fat sources.

In early stages of the disease the child-patient should be given barley water, fruit and vegetable juices with small quantities of milk. Vegetables juices such as carrot, celery and cucumber will be especially beneficial. If possible, warm water enema should be given each day during this period to cleanse the bowels.

After noticeable improvements, the child-patient may adopt fruit and milk diet for further three or four days. In this regimen he should take juicy fruits such as apple, grapes, orange, pear, peach, and pineapple with a cup of milk, preferably goat's milk, sweetened with honey added to each fruit meal. Thereafter, the child -patient may be allowed gradually to embark upon a well-balanced diet, according to his age. The emphasis should be on fresh fruits and raw or lightly cooked vegetables.

The patient should avoid vegetables containing large quantities of oxalic acids such as spinach and rhubarb. Chocolate and cocoa also contain oxalic acid and must not be used. The patient should also avoid

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

white bread, sugar, cakes, pastries, puddings, refined cereals, greasy, heavy or fried foods. He should also avoid tea, coffee, all flesh foods, condiments, pickles and sauces.

Garlic, parsley, watercress, cucumber and celery are excellent vegetables for nephritis. Best fruits are papaya and bananas. Both have healing effect on kidneys. A small amount of soured milks and home-made cottage cheese can be included in the diet. Five or six small meals should be taken in preference to a few large ones.

Half a glass of carrot juice with a teaspoon of honey and half a teaspoon of fresh lime juice, is a very effective home remedy for nephritis. It should be taken everyday in the morning before breakfast.

Bananas are also valuable in nephritis because of their low protein and salt contents and high carbohydrates contents. They should be consumed liberally by the child-patient.

All measures should be adopted to relieve the kidneys of over work by increasing elimination through other channels. Fresh air and outdoor exercises will be of great benefit in all cases of nephritis and grown-up children should be encouraged to undertake them whenever possible.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR CHILDREN

If the above treatment is faithfully carried out, the patient of acute nephritis will soon be on the way to recovery. Even in advanced cases of chronic nephritis, the sufferer's condition will improve with this treatment.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)