

## **Foods That Heal**

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For millennia foods such as garlic, onions, ginger, peppers, honey, cider vinegar and yogurt have been eaten and expounded upon as fountains of health and wellbeing within healing paradigms such as Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine as well as more recently within Naturopathic European and American medicine. Their use extends beyond foods that give and maintain health to medicinals for treatment of certain conditions, being utilized both internally and topically on the skin.

Their effectiveness comes from the complex structure of plants including amino acids, enzymes, vitamins, minerals, and in the case of fermented foods, specialized bacteria that have a symbiotic relationship with the human system.

Here is a brief example of common foods found in modern kitchens and some conditions that they help heal.

### **Common Foods and how they can be used in healing:**

**Aloe Vera:** Gel or juice applied topically as a remedy for insect bites, rashes, swellings, ringworm, burns, boils, blisters, cuts, scratches and sunburn speeds healing and offers anesthetic relief. Wound areas should be cleaned before application. Aloe is also used internally for gastrointestinal complaints to sooth the mucous membranes.

**Baking Soda:** Has an alkaline pH and when used in baths for itchy skin, is a soothing soak for irritated skin conditions, dissolve 1# per bathtub of water. Use internally, ½ tsp per 8oz h2O, for relief of upset stomach due to excess acid production and gas.

**Barley:** Cook and use the broth in baths and compresses to sooth and soften skin.

**Cabbage:** Cabbage leaf poultices have proven more beneficial than many modern medicines for the remediation of cuts, scratches, grazes, abscesses and infected wounds. Dip leaves in very hot water and apply to bruises, swellings, abscess, and to draw pus from sores. Pulp the leaves before application to small wounds. A poultice of pulped cabbage to the abdominal area can relieve digestive upsets.

**Carrots:** A poultice made from cooked mashed carrots, still warm, will bring down swelling and inflammation. They are strongly antiseptic and will draw out pus and stop infection.

**Garlic:** When used internally, preferably fresh and raw, it protects from disease. Topically it is an antiseptic and either the juice or a crushed clove wrapped in cloth can be applied. It can sting. Fill a jar with raw peeled garlic cloves and fill with honey, steep for two weeks at room temp, then strain off honey. Use 1 teaspoon at a time to sooth sore throat and cough. Apply topically to acne and small wounds.

**Ginger:** Is alleviates nausea, drink tea of 1 tsp fresh root in 8oz h20, or apply compress of half strength tea to forehead. An antimicrobial, it is very effective blended with garlic and honey to apply to infected wounds to disinfect and draw out pus.

**Honey:** Apply externally to skin conditions to kill bacteria and for its drying action. It is an anesthetic. Apply directly to little cuts and scrapes and open abscesses.

**Lemon:** Juice used internally will help morning sickness when diluted 1tsp in 8oz water and taken first thing upon awakening. Add 1 tsp of honey if taste dictates. It is cleansing to the body in this way too and helps the healing process of wounds, etc, by providing needed vitamins and minerals. Externally it acts a styptic to stop bleeding from cuts and to disinfect them, also eases itching.

**Oatmeal:** Grind and use to make poultices for poison ivy and other skin irritations. Add colloidal form of oatmeal (a very fine soluble form) to bathwater for soaking the whole body.

**Onion:** Use in raw or roasted form topically in poultices for bruises, swelling and to draw out pus from infected wounds.

**Potato:** Very effective at giving relief from itching and burning of the skin. Apply raw grated, sliced or juiced as poultices or compresses. Taken internally the juice of raw potatoes alleviates peptic ulcers.

**Vinegar:** Cider vinegar applied full strength topically in a compress will reduce heat and inflammation of swellings, bruises and sprains. Used as a wash on rashes it eases itching. 2 cups in bathwater is used for an allover soak. Internally dilute in water and use for relieving indigestion, 1 tablespoon honey + 1 tablespoon cider vinegar in 8oz H2O daily can help rebalance the body with its minerals.

**Yogurt:** Used internally for gastrointestinal complaints and to maintain a healthy immune system. Applied topically it soothes skin irritations and sunburn and is mixed with garlic or honey for an excellent soothing antimicrobial.

### **Conditions and symptoms that common kitchen foods can alleviate:**

**Bruises:** Bags of frozen veggies like corn or peas make great cold-packs. Cabbage leaf poultices contain healing properties and ensure quick recovery.

**Burns:** aloe gel, yogurt or buttermilk, raw potato all applied directly. Internally fresh fruits and vegetables to provide vitamins and minerals needed for healing.

**Cuts and Scrapes:** Require a styptic to stop bleeding. Cayenne powder or lemon juice applied topically work as styptics and disinfects.

**Abscesses:** cabbage leaf-pulped, onion-roasted, or potato cooked and mashed-applied topically to bring infection to surface(place onion in cloth first); eating fresh pineapple supplies bromelain, an enzyme that fights inflammation and aids healing; applying honey to external abscesses kills bacteria and helps dry them up. Eating seaweed in soup, sushi or salad supplies minerals that heal.

**Insect Bites/Stings:** a baking soda poultice neutralizes venom and relieves swelling and itching; a wash with sea salt added to water, 1 tablespoon added to 40z h2o, will draw out and disperses venom. Follow with a cabbage poultice. Use raw onion or garlic slices to relieve pain and draw out stinger, oatmeal paste for itching and swelling.

**Motion Sickness:** infusion of ginger root or peppermint leaf alleviates nausea and cramping. 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice in 8oz h2o taken upon awakening will also rebalance the body.

**Poison Ivy:** Apply aloe juice topically. Apply paste made of oatmeal, cornstarch, baking soda or Epsom salts.

**Sunburn:** aloe juice/gel, cider vinegar or yogurt topically. Bathing in cool bath with 13 baking soda added will also bring relief.

**Swellings:** Eat fresh pineapple which supplies bromelain, an enzyme that fights inflammation. Cabbage leaf poultices contain healing properties and draw out toxins in infected swellings.

**Toothache:** chewing on clove buds which are anesthetic and antimicrobial. Gargle with sea-salt solution, 1tsp per 8oz water, to disinfect and draw out infection. Apply poultices of pulped cabbage externally.