A PLAIN-ENGLISH GUIDE

NATURAL REMEDIES

Treating Common Illnesses and Injuries with Store-Bought and Wild-Found Helpers



ILLNESSES | INJURIES | FIRST AID | WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

What Works, What Doesn't, and When to Get Help

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TRINFINITY ENTERPRISES

Natural Remedies

Treating Common Illnesses and Injuries with Store-Bought and Wild-Found Helpers

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Natural Remedies: Treating Common Illnesses and Injuries with Store-Bought and Wild-Found Helpers

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Read This First

This book is for learning and for handling everyday, minor problems at home and outdoors. It is not medical advice, and it doesn't replace a doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or first aid training.

Call 911 for any emergency: trouble breathing, chest pain, signs of a stroke (face drooping, arm weakness, slurred speech), severe bleeding, a seizure, a person who is hard to wake, a severe allergic reaction, a snakebite, or a serious burn or injury.

Call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222 for any possible poisoning, including plants, mushrooms, medicines, and chemicals. It's free, confidential, and open 24 hours a day.

Call or text 988 (the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) any time you or someone else is thinking about suicide.

Natural remedies can help with comfort and with minor illness and injury. They don't cure infections that need antibiotics, they don't fix broken bones, and they don't replace emergency care. Every entry in this book ends with a **See a doctor when** box. Read it first.

Herbs are medicines, too. They can cause allergies and side effects and can interact with prescription drugs. Before using any herb, tell your doctor or pharmacist, especially if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, giving it to a child, or taking any medicine. Never give honey to a baby under 12 months old. Never eat a wild plant you can't identify with complete certainty.

Information in this book is current as of November 2026.

About This Book

When someone in the house gets sick or hurt, the first question is always the same: do we handle this at home, or do we go in? This book is built around that question.

For each common illness and injury, I tell you:

- what it is, in plain words
- the **self-care** steps that matter most, which are often simple things like rest, fluids, cool water, or pressure
- **store-bought remedies** you can find at a grocery store or pharmacy, like honey, ginger, oatmeal, aloe, and peppermint
- **wild-found helpers** that grow in the American West, especially the Great Basin where I live, like plantain, yarrow, mullein, pine pitch, and willow
- **when to see a doctor**, and what's an emergency
- **what not to do**, because some old remedies (like butter on a burn or cutting a snakebite) make things worse

Every remedy carries an evidence rating so you know how much to trust it:

Rating	What it means
Strong	Good human studies agree, and doctors and health agencies recommend it.
Moderate	Some good human studies show it helps.
Limited	Small, few, or mixed studies. It might help.
Traditional	Long history of use but little or no testing in people. Treat it as unproven.

Where a remedy is an herb, you'll find its full description, photo, and warnings in the companion book, *The Home Apothecary*. That's where to look before you use any plant for the first time.

The sources behind each entry are listed by number at the end of the entry and in full at the back of the book. They include the American Red Cross, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Wilderness Medical Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Dermatology, the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), and published clinical studies.

Part One covers getting ready: what to keep in a home remedy kit, the wild plants worth knowing, the warning signs that always mean a doctor, and first aid basics for the backcountry. Part Two covers common illnesses, A to Z. Part Three covers injuries and first aid. Part Four has a quick chart, a glossary, and the full source list.

Contents

Part One: Getting Ready **7**

The Home Remedy Kit 8
The Wild Medicine Cabinet 10
When to See a Doctor 12
First Aid Basics for the Backcountry 13

Part Two: Common Illnesses, A to Z **14**

Acne 15
Altitude Sickness 16
Anxiety and Stress 17
Athlete's Foot 18
Bad Breath 19
Bladder Infection (UTI) Prevention 20
Canker Sores 21
Cold Sores 22
Common Cold 23
Constipation 24
Cough 25
Dandruff and Dry Scalp 26
Dehydration 27
Diaper Rash 28
Diarrhea 29
Dry Skin and Eczema 30
Earache 31
Fever 32
Flu 33
Gas, Bloating, and Indigestion 34
Gout 35
Hangover 36
Hay Fever (Seasonal Allergies) 37
Head Lice 38
Heartburn and Acid Reflux 39
Heat Rash (Prickly Heat) 40
Hemorrhoids 41
High Blood Pressure (Support Only) 42
High Cholesterol (Support Only) 43
Hives 44
Insomnia 45
Joint Pain and Osteoarthritis 46
Low Back Pain 47
Menopause Hot Flashes 48
Menstrual Cramps 49
Migraine 50
Motion Sickness 51
Muscle Cramps 52
Nausea and Vomiting (Including Morning Sickness) 53
Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis) 54
Ringworm and Jock Itch 55
Shingles 56
Sore Throat 57
Stuffy Nose and Sinus Congestion 58
Tension Headache 59
Toothache 60
Warts 61

Part Three: Injuries and First Aid, A to Z **62**

Animal Bites 63
Bee and Wasp Stings 64
Blisters 65
Broken Bones (Suspected) 66
Bruises 67
Cactus Spines and Splinters 68
Chapped Lips and Windburn 69
Cuts and Scrapes 70
Fishhooks in the Skin 71
Frostbite and Cold Injury 72
Head Bumps and Concussion 73
Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke 74
Hypothermia 75
Ingrown Toenail 76
Insect Bites (Mosquitoes, Flies, Ants, Chiggers) 77
Minor Burns 78
Nettle Stings 79
Nosebleeds 80
Poison Ivy and Poison Oak Rash 81
Puncture Wounds 82
Scorpion Stings 83
Severe Allergic Reactions (Anaphylaxis) 84

Snakebite 85
Something in the Eye 86
Sore Muscles After Exercise or Work 87
Spider Bites 88
Sprains and Strains 89
Sunburn 90
Tick Bites 91

Part Four: Quick Reference 92

Quick Chart: First Steps That Work 93
Glossary 94
Sources 95
Acronym List 98

PART ONE

Getting Ready

Your remedy kit, the wild medicine cabinet, warning signs, and backcountry basics

The Home Remedy Kit

You don't need a cabinet full of supplements. Most of the useful natural remedies are already in a well-stocked kitchen. Here's what I'd keep on hand, what each is for, and the main caution. Check expiration dates once a year.

From the Kitchen and Grocery Store

Item	Main uses	Caution
Honey	Cough, sore throat, minor cuts and burns (medical-grade is best for wounds)	Never for babies under 12 months
Fresh ginger, candied ginger, or ginger tea	Nausea, morning sickness, upset stomach, menstrual cramps	Large amounts with blood thinners
Peppermint tea	Gas, cramping, nausea, tension headache (oil)	Can worsen heartburn; no oil on young children's faces
Chamomile tea	Calming, sleep routine, mild stomach upset, mouth rinse	Ragweed allergy
Table salt	Salt water gargles and rinses, oral rehydration solution	Don't swallow gargles
Sugar	Oral rehydration solution	Measure carefully
Baking soda	Paste for stings and itchy bites, mouth rinse	Not for regular use as an antacid
Plain oatmeal	Oat baths for itchy skin, rashes, sunburn, poison ivy; high-fiber breakfast	Makes the tub slippery
Garlic	Food for heart health and colds	Never taped raw onto skin (burns)
Lemons	Tea with honey for sore throats	Acid can sting canker sores
Prunes and kiwifruit	Constipation	Gas at first
Cranberry juice (unsweetened)	Preventing repeat bladder infections	Doesn't treat an active infection
Fennel seeds	Gas and bloating, breath freshener	Look-alike danger if picked wild
Thyme, sage, and rosemary	Teas and gargles for coughs and sore throats	Medicinal amounts not for pregnancy
Olive or coconut oil	Base for salves and dry skin	
Frozen peas or a gel pack	Sprains, bruises, stings	Wrap in a cloth

From the Pharmacy

Item	Main uses	Caution
Aloe vera gel (or a live aloe plant)	Minor burns, sunburn	Gel only, never the latex by mouth
Witch hazel	Itchy bites, hemorrhoids, minor skin irritation	External use only
Colloidal oatmeal bath packets	Eczema, poison ivy, chicken pox, sunburn	
Petroleum jelly	Cuts, scrapes, dry skin, chapped lips, nosebleed prevention	Not on fresh burns
Psyllium husk	Constipation, mild diarrhea, cholesterol	Always with plenty of water
Saline nasal spray and a sinus rinse bottle	Stuffy nose, allergies, dry nose	Only distilled or boiled water in rinses
Zinc lozenges	Shortening colds	Never zinc nose sprays
Elderberry syrup	Cold and flu symptoms	Store-bought or cooked berries only
Clove oil	Toothache while waiting for the dentist	Keep away from children; never swallow
Tea tree oil (and a carrier oil)	Acne, athlete's foot	Never swallow; dilute
Arnica gel	Bruises, sore muscles	Unbroken skin only; never swallow
Calendula ointment	Scrapes, chapped skin, diaper rash	Ragweed allergy
Oral rehydration packets	Diarrhea, vomiting, heat	
Epsom salt	Warm soaks for sore muscles	Not to drink unless a doctor says so
Fine-tipped tweezers, magnifier, white school glue, gauze	Ticks, splinters, cactus glochids	
Elastic bandage, adhesive bandages, non-stick pads, tape, moleskin	Sprains, cuts, blisters	
Digital thermometer	Fever	
Space blanket	Hypothermia, shock	
Epinephrine auto-injector (if prescribed)	Severe allergic reactions	Carry two; check dates

Keep a standard first aid kit and your usual over-the-counter pain relievers too. Natural remedies are a complement to them, not a replacement.

The Wild Medicine Cabinet

These are the wild plants of the Great Basin and the American West that show up most often in this book. Each one has a full entry, photo, and warnings in *The Home Apothecary*. Learn them with an expert before you use them, and pick only where it is legal, away from roads and sprayed ground.

Plant	Where you'll find it	Used for	Watch out for
Plantain (broadleaf and ribwort)	Lawns, paths, packed dirt	Stings, bites, splinters, minor scrapes	Sprayed lawns
Yarrow	Dry slopes, meadows, roadsides	Small cuts and nosebleeds, fevers, colds	Poison and water hemlock look-alikes; not in pregnancy
Mullein	Burned areas, roadsides, disturbed ground	Cough, ear oil	Strain the hairs from tea; foxglove look-alike
Pine (pinyon, ponderosa, Jeffrey)	Foothills and mountains	Pitch for splinters and small wounds, needle tea and steam for colds	Not in pregnancy; never yew
Juniper	Pinyon-juniper foothills	Steam for colds, gas	Not in pregnancy or with kidney disease
Big sagebrush	Valleys and foothills everywhere	Steam for congestion, wash for scrapes	Very strong; not in pregnancy
Willow	Creeks and rivers	Bark tea for aches and fever (adults)	Never for children; aspirin allergy
Wild rose (rose hips)	Creeks and ditches	Vitamin C tea for colds	Strain the hairs
Stinging nettle	Damp soil near streams and old corrals	Cooked greens, allergy tea	Stings when fresh; wear gloves
Dandelion	Meadows and yards	Greens and roots for digestion	Sprayed lawns
Prickly pear	Dry hillsides	Pads for burns and food, fruit	Glochids
Wild mint	Creek banks and irrigation ditches	Tea for nausea, gas, headaches	Pennyroyal look-alike
Chickweed	Shady, damp spots in spring	Poultice for itchy rashes	Scarlet pimpernel look-alike
Elderberry (blue elder)	Canyons and streamsides	Cooked berries for colds and flu	Never raw; water hemlock flower look-alike
Uva ursi (bearberry)	Dry, rocky mountain slopes	Short-term bladder support	One week maximum; not in pregnancy
Mormon tea	Dry hills and flats	Traditional tea	Heart disease and blood pressure

The two rules that keep foragers alive: be 100 percent sure of what you're picking, and learn the deadly look-alikes first. In Nevada that means poison hemlock and water hemlock along ditches and rivers, death camas in sagebrush flats, and corn lily and monkshood in mountain meadows. *The Home Apothecary* shows all of them.

When to See a Doctor

Natural remedies are for minor problems. These warning signs always mean it's time for professional care, no matter what you're treating.

Call 911 Right Away

- Trouble breathing, choking, or blue or gray lips
- Chest pain or pressure, especially with sweating, nausea, or pain spreading to the arm, back, or jaw
- Signs of a stroke: **BE FAST** (Balance loss, Eyes losing vision, Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech trouble, Time to call 911)
- Severe bleeding that won't stop with pressure
- Signs of a severe allergic reaction: swelling of the face or throat, hives all over, trouble breathing, fainting
- A seizure, fainting, or a person who is confused or hard to wake
- A sudden, severe "worst ever" headache
- Any snakebite, or a scorpion sting in a child with twitching or unusual eye movements
- Heat stroke: confusion and a high temperature after heat exposure
- Serious burns, or burns to the face, hands, feet, or genitals
- Possible poisoning with symptoms (call Poison Help if there are no symptoms yet)

See a Doctor the Same Day

- Any fever in a baby under 3 months old
- A fever of 104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, or a fever with a stiff neck, rash, or confusion
- Signs of dehydration: very little or dark urine, dizziness, no tears or wet diapers in a child
- A wound that is deep, gaping, dirty, or from an animal bite
- Signs of infection: spreading redness, warmth, swelling, pus, red streaks, or fever
- Burning urination with fever, back pain, or blood in the urine
- An injury where you can't bear weight, the limb looks crooked, or there is numbness

See a Doctor Soon

- A cough lasting more than 3 weeks
- Any symptom that keeps coming back, or isn't improving after a week of home care
- Unexplained weight loss, night sweats, or tiredness that won't go away
- Blood in the stool, black stools, or rectal bleeding you've never had checked

Trust your gut. If you feel something is wrong, or a child just "isn't acting right," get it checked.

First Aid Basics for the Backcountry

Nevada has a lot of open country where help can be hours away and there's no cell signal. A little preparation goes a long way.

Before you go. Tell someone where you're going and when you'll be back. Carry more water than you think you need (at least a gallon a person a day in summer), a first aid kit, a space blanket, a headlamp, a map, a lighter, and a whistle. A satellite messenger or personal locator beacon can call for help without cell service.

Clean water for wounds. The most important thing you can do for any wound is to clean it well. Use the cleanest drinkable water you have: boiled, filtered, or treated. Wilderness medicine guidelines say drinkable water works as well as sterile saline for cleaning wounds. Poke a pinhole in a clean plastic bag full of water and squeeze it to make a strong stream, and flush the wound with at least a quart.

Making water safe to drink. Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute (3 minutes above 6,500 feet), or use a filter rated for bacteria and protozoa, or water treatment tablets as directed. Clear stream water in the Sierra can still carry Giardia.

Splints. A sprained or broken arm or leg should be kept from moving. Pad it well and splint it to something stiff (a trekking pole, a stick, a rolled sleeping pad, or a folded magazine), covering the joints above and below the injury. Check that fingers or toes stay warm and pink.

Shock. After a bad injury, a person who becomes pale, cold, clammy, weak, confused, or has a fast, weak pulse may be in shock. Lay them flat, keep them warm and insulated from the ground, and get help. Don't give food or drink if they may need surgery.

Take a class. The single best thing you can do is take a first aid and CPR class from the American Red Cross or a similar group, and a wilderness first aid course if you spend time in the backcountry.

PART TWO

Common Illnesses, A to Z

From altitude sickness to warts

Acne

Pimples, blackheads, and whiteheads that form when oil and dead skin clog hair follicles and bacteria grow inside. It's most common in teens but can last into adulthood.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash your face twice a day with a gentle cleanser and lukewarm water. Don't scrub hard or pick, which can scar. Use oil-free, "non-comedogenic" products. Change pillowcases often.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Tea tree oil gel** at 5 percent (Limited; it worked more slowly than benzoyl peroxide in one study but had fewer side effects).
- **Aloe vera gel** with standard treatment (Limited).
- **Green tea** extract lotion (Limited). Over-the-counter benzoyl peroxide, salicylic acid, and adapalene gel are well proven and inexpensive.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None with good evidence.

- **Calendula** or **plantain** washes are used traditionally to calm irritated skin.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor or dermatologist for deep, painful cysts, acne that leaves scars or dark spots, acne that hasn't improved after 2 to 3 months of over-the-counter care, or acne that affects how you feel about yourself.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never put undiluted tea tree oil, lemon juice, or toothpaste on pimples; they burn the skin. Patch test new products on your arm first.

SOURCES: 1, 2, 3 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Altitude Sickness

Headache, nausea, tiredness, dizziness, and poor sleep that can start when you go above about 8,000 feet, especially if you climb fast. In northern Nevada, a drive from Reno (4,500 feet) to the top of Mount Rose Highway (8,900 feet) or a hike up a Sierra peak can do it. The cause is less oxygen in the thin air.

SELF-CARE FIRST

The best treatment is to stop going higher and rest until symptoms clear. If they get worse, go down 1,000 to 3,000 feet. Drink enough water to keep your urine pale, but more water doesn't prevent altitude sickness. Skip alcohol and sleeping pills the first night or two up high. To prevent it, go up slowly: above 10,000 feet, raise your sleeping altitude no more than about 1,600 feet a night.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Ginger tea or candied ginger** for the nausea (Limited).
- **Over-the-counter ibuprofen or acetaminophen** for the headache. A doctor can prescribe acetazolamide to prevent altitude sickness if you're heading high.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None that work. Ginkgo has been studied for prevention with mixed results, and the 2024 Wilderness Medical Society guidelines do not recommend it. Coca leaf and other folk remedies are not recommended.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Go down right away and get help if the person is confused, stumbling, unusually sleepy, or can't walk a straight line (signs of fluid on the brain), or is short of breath at rest, has a wet cough, or blue lips (signs of fluid in the lungs). These can kill within hours.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't keep climbing with symptoms. Don't assume being fit protects you.

SOURCES: 4 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Anxiety and Stress

Worry, tension, a racing heart, tight muscles, and trouble sleeping. Everyday stress is part of life. An anxiety disorder is when it's frequent, intense, and gets in the way of work, family, or sleep.

SELF-CARE FIRST

The things with the best evidence don't come in a bottle: regular exercise (even a daily walk), slow breathing (breathe in for 4 seconds, out for 6, for five minutes), cutting back on caffeine and alcohol, steady sleep, time outdoors, and talking to someone you trust. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) with a counselor works very well for anxiety disorders.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Chamomile tea** (Limited; small studies for generalized anxiety).
- **Lavender oil capsules** (Limited to Moderate; a specific product).
- **Lemon balm tea** (Limited).
- **Passionflower tea** (Limited).
- **Ashwagandha** (Limited to Moderate for stress; avoid with thyroid disease and in pregnancy).
- **Kava** works but carries a real risk of liver damage. I don't recommend it without a doctor.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Wild mint** tea from creek banks, or **catnip** tea, as a calming bedtime drink (Traditional).
- **Motherwort** has been used for a racing heart from nerves, but only after a doctor has ruled out a heart problem.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See your doctor if anxiety is affecting your daily life, comes with panic attacks, or keeps you from sleeping. **Call or text 988, the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, any time you or someone you love is thinking about suicide.** Chest pain with shortness of breath should be treated as a possible heart attack: call 911.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't mix calming herbs with alcohol, sleeping pills, or anxiety medicines. Don't stop a prescribed anxiety medicine suddenly.

SOURCES: 5, 6, 7 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Athlete's Foot

A fungal infection that causes itching, peeling, cracking, and redness between the toes or on the soles. It spreads in warm, damp places like locker rooms and sweaty shoes.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Keep feet clean and completely dry, especially between the toes. Change socks daily (or more often), wear breathable shoes and rotate them, and wear sandals in public showers.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

Tea tree oil, 25 to 50 percent solution, twice a day for 4 weeks (Limited; it helped in an Australian trial). Over-the-counter terbinafine or clotrimazole creams are well proven. Keep using treatment 1 to 2 weeks after the rash clears.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None with good evidence.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if the skin is very red, swollen, hot, oozing, or has red streaks (possible bacterial infection), if it doesn't clear in 2 to 4 weeks, or **if you have diabetes or poor circulation.** Foot infections can become serious quickly in people with diabetes.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't share towels or shoes. Tea tree oil can irritate skin; stop if it burns or blisters.

SOURCES: 1, 2 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Bad Breath

Most bad breath comes from bacteria on the back of the tongue and between the teeth, gum disease, dry mouth, smoking, or strong foods. Sometimes it comes from sinus, stomach, or other health problems.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Brush twice a day, floss once, and gently brush or scrape your tongue. Drink water through the day to keep your mouth moist. See a dentist twice a year.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Green tea** (Limited; it may reduce odor compounds).
- **Fennel seeds** chewed after meals (Traditional).
- **Sugar-free gum** to increase saliva (Limited).
- **Clove** (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Wild mint** leaves chewed fresh (Traditional).
- **Parsley** (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a dentist if bad breath doesn't improve with good mouth care, or if you have bleeding gums, loose teeth, or mouth sores. See a doctor if a dentist rules out the mouth as the cause.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Mints and mouthwash only cover odor for a short time.

SOURCES: 8 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Bladder Infection (UTI) Prevention

A urinary tract infection (UTI) causes burning when you urinate, a frequent and urgent need to go, cloudy or strong-smelling urine, and pressure in the lower belly. Most UTIs need antibiotics. Natural remedies are mainly for preventing repeat infections.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Drink plenty of water. Urinate when you feel the need and after sex. Women should wipe front to back.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cranberry** juice or capsules every day to prevent repeat infections (Moderate; a 2023 Cochrane review found it lowers the risk in women with repeat UTIs, children, and people after some procedures).
- **Water** (Moderate).
- **D-mannose** (Limited).
- **Uva ursi** for mild symptoms, short-term only (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Uva ursi (bearberry) leaves grow in Nevada's mountains (Limited; no more than one week, not in pregnancy).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for a suspected UTI, especially in men, children, pregnant women, or anyone with diabetes. **Get care the same day for fever, chills, back or side pain, nausea, vomiting, or blood in the urine**; these can mean a kidney infection. In older adults, a UTI can show up as sudden confusion.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Cranberry doesn't treat an active infection. Don't delay antibiotics for a true UTI.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 9 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Canker Sores

Small, round, painful white or yellow sores with a red edge inside the mouth, on the gums, cheeks, or tongue. Unlike cold sores, they aren't contagious. They usually heal in 1 to 2 weeks.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Avoid spicy, salty, acidic, and crunchy foods while the sore heals. Use a soft toothbrush.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Salt water rinse** (half a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) several times a day (Traditional).
- **Licorice root rinse** (Limited; it reduced sore size and pain in studies).
- **Honey** dabbed on the sore (Limited).
- **Chamomile tea** rinse (Traditional).
- **Baking soda rinse** (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Sage** or **self-heal** tea, cooled and used as a rinse (Traditional).
- **Yarrow** tea rinse (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor or dentist for sores larger than half an inch, sores that last more than 3 weeks, many sores at once, sores that keep coming back, or sores with fever, a rash, or trouble eating or drinking.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use mouthwashes with alcohol, which sting.

SOURCES: 7, 10 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Cold Sores

Small, painful blisters on or near the lips caused by the herpes simplex virus. Once you have the virus, it stays in your nerves and flares up with stress, sun, illness, or a cold.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Start treatment at the first tingle. Keep the area clean, don't pick, and don't share cups, towels, or kisses until it heals. Wear lip balm with sunscreen; sun is a common trigger.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Lemon balm cream** (Limited; small trials found faster healing).
- **Ice wrapped in a cloth** for a few minutes at a time to ease pain.
- **Over-the-counter docosanol cream** (not a herb, but approved and gentle) shortens outbreaks a little. Prescription antiviral pills work best for frequent outbreaks.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Self-heal** tea dabbed on with a cotton ball (Traditional; lab studies show antiviral effects).
- **Lemon balm** from the garden, crushed and applied (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if a sore doesn't heal in 2 weeks, if you get them often, if sores spread near the eye, or if you have a weak immune system. **Never let someone with a cold sore kiss a newborn baby;** herpes can be deadly to infants.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't put toothpaste, alcohol, or essential oils straight on a cold sore; they burn and irritate.

SOURCES: 2, 7, 11 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Common Cold

A virus infection of the nose and throat that causes a runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat, and cough. Adults average two or three colds a year. Most last 7 to 10 days, though a cough can hang on for 2 to 3 weeks.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Rest, drink plenty of fluids, and run a humidifier. Antibiotics don't work on colds. Wash your hands often.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Honey** in tea or straight, for cough and sore throat (Limited to Moderate; better than usual care in a 2021 review), never for babies under 1 year. **Zinc lozenges**, started within a day of symptoms (Limited to Moderate; may shorten colds; they can leave a bad taste).
- **Saline nose spray or a sinus rinse** with distilled or boiled water (Limited).
- **Elderberry syrup** (Limited).
- **Echinacea** (Limited; may slightly lower your chance of catching one).
- **Garlic** in your cooking (Limited). Vitamin C taken every day may slightly shorten colds, but starting it once you're sick does little.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Rose hip tea** for vitamin C (Traditional).
- **Yarrow** or **mint** tea to help you sweat and feel better (Traditional). **Pine needle tea**, from a true pine you are sure of, for vitamin C and congestion (Traditional; not in pregnancy).
- **Mullein** tea for a cough (Traditional; strain well).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if a fever goes above 102 degrees Fahrenheit or lasts more than 3 days, symptoms last more than 10 days or get better and then worse, you have ear pain, sinus pain with fever, trouble breathing, or wheezing, or you have asthma, COPD, or a weak immune system. Any fever in a baby younger than 3 months needs a doctor right away.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never use zinc nasal sprays or swabs; they have caused permanent loss of smell. Don't give honey to babies under 12 months. Don't give cough medicine to children under 4 unless a doctor says so.

SOURCES: 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Constipation

Fewer than three bowel movements a week, or stools that are hard, dry, and difficult to pass.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Add fiber slowly (aim for 25 to 35 grams a day) from fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains. Drink more water. Walk or move every day. Don't ignore the urge to go, and try sitting on the toilet at the same time each day, 15 to 30 minutes after breakfast. Raising your feet on a small stool helps.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Psyllium husk** (Strong).
- **Prunes or prune juice** (Moderate; in one trial prunes worked as well as psyllium).
- **Two kiwifruit a day** (Moderate; recommended in British dietitians' 2025 guideline).
- **Ground flaxseed** (Moderate). **Senna**, for short-term use only (Strong).
- **Magnesium oxide** (Strong; avoid with kidney disease).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Dandelion** greens and **purslane** as fiber-rich foods (Traditional).
- **Prickly pear** fruit (Traditional). Wild laxatives such as yellow dock and cascara are harsher than store-bought choices.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for blood in the stool, black stools, unexplained weight loss, severe belly pain, constipation that is new for you after age 50, constipation that lasts more than 3 weeks, or if you can't pass gas and your belly is swollen and painful (possible blockage).

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use stimulant laxatives (senna, cascara, aloe) every day for weeks. Always take fiber supplements with plenty of water.

SOURCES: 7, 19 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Cough

Coughing clears mucus and irritants from your airways. Most coughs come from colds and get better within 3 weeks. A dry, tickly cough and a wet cough that brings up mucus are both common after a cold.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Drink warm fluids, use a humidifier, and avoid smoke. Sleeping with your head raised can help a nighttime cough. Hard candy or lozenges keep the throat moist.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Honey**, 1 to 2 teaspoons at bedtime for anyone over 1 year old (Limited to Moderate; the American Academy of Pediatrics supports it).
- **Thyme tea** with honey (Moderate for cough from bronchitis in European studies).
- **Marshmallow root** cold infusion or **slippery elm lozenges** for a dry, tickly cough (Limited).
- **Licorice root** tea (Limited; not with high blood pressure).
- **Ginger tea** with lemon and honey (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Mullein** leaf tea, strained through a coffee filter (Traditional).
- **Pine needle** steam or tea (Traditional).
- **Ribwort plantain** tea (Limited; approved in Europe).
- **Sagebrush** steam (Traditional).
- **Wild rose hip** tea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if a cough lasts more than 3 weeks, or comes with a high fever, shortness of breath, wheezing, chest pain, bloody mucus, or night sweats and weight loss. **Call 911 for severe trouble breathing, blue lips, or a child who is struggling to breathe or making a high-pitched sound when breathing in.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't give honey to babies under 12 months. Don't give over-the-counter cough and cold medicines to children under 4.

SOURCES: 7, 12, 13, 18 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Dandruff and Dry Scalp

Flaky, itchy scalp. True dandruff (seborrheic dermatitis) is linked to an overgrowth of a yeast called Malassezia that lives on everyone's skin.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash your hair often enough to keep oil down. Medicated shampoos work best when you lather and leave them on 5 minutes before rinsing.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Tea tree oil shampoo** at 5 percent (Limited; one trial found improvement).
- **Diluted apple cider vinegar** rinse (Traditional). Over-the-counter dandruff shampoos with zinc pyrithione, selenium sulfide, or ketoconazole are well proven.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None with good evidence.

- **Rosemary** tea as a final rinse is a folk remedy (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if your scalp is red, swollen, oozing, or very itchy, if thick crusts form, or if over-the-counter shampoos don't help after a month. Psoriasis and fungal scalp infections need different treatment.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never put undiluted tea tree oil on your scalp.

SOURCES: 1, 2 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Dehydration

Losing more fluid than you take in. In the high desert, low humidity means you lose water through your skin and breath without noticing much sweat. Signs include thirst, dark urine, dry mouth, headache, tiredness, and dizziness when standing.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Drink before you're thirsty, especially when hiking, working outside, or at altitude. Pale yellow urine is a good sign. Eat water-rich foods like fruit and soup.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Water** (Strong).
- **Oral rehydration solution** for heavy sweating, vomiting, or diarrhea (Strong). WHO homemade recipe: 6 level teaspoons sugar and half a level teaspoon salt in 1 liter of clean water.
- **Broth** with salt (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Prickly pear fruit** has been eaten for moisture in the desert (Traditional), but it is not a substitute for carrying water.
- **Never drink untreated stream or spring water;** boil it for 1 minute (3 minutes above 6,500 feet) or filter it.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for confusion, fainting, a very fast heartbeat, no urine for 8 hours, or a person who can't keep fluids down. Babies, young children, and older adults become dehydrated quickly.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't drink large amounts of plain water very fast during long, sweaty activity without any salt; it can dangerously lower blood sodium.

SOURCES: 20, 21, 22 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Diaper Rash

Red, irritated skin in the diaper area, caused by wetness, rubbing, and contact with urine and stool. A bright red rash with small red spots at the edges may be a yeast infection.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Change diapers often and let the skin air dry. Give some diaper-free time each day. Rinse with warm water and pat dry; skip wipes with alcohol or fragrance while the skin is raw. Fasten diapers loosely enough for air to reach the skin.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Zinc oxide paste or petroleum jelly** as a thick barrier at every change (Strong; recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics).
- **Calendula cream** (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None. Keep wild plants and essential oils off a baby's skin.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if the rash has blisters, pus, open sores, or bleeding, if the baby has a fever, if the rash spreads outside the diaper area, or if it isn't better after 2 to 3 days of good care (a yeast rash needs an antifungal cream).

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use talcum powder, which a baby can breathe in. Don't use adult creams with steroids, numbing medicine, or essential oils on a baby without a doctor's advice.

SOURCES: 2, 23 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Diarrhea

Loose, watery stools three or more times a day. Most cases come from a stomach virus or food and clear up in 1 to 3 days. The real danger is dehydration, especially in babies, young children, and older adults.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Drink, drink, drink. Small, frequent sips of an oral rehydration solution are best. The World Health Organization recipe: mix 6 level teaspoons of sugar and half a level teaspoon of salt into 1 liter (about 1 quart) of clean drinking water. Store-bought oral rehydration drinks work too. Eat normal, simple foods as soon as you feel like it. Wash your hands well.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Oral rehydration solution** (Strong).
- **Bananas, rice, applesauce, toast, crackers, and broth** (Traditional).
- **Chamomile tea** (Traditional; blends with chamomile helped children in a few studies).
- **Psyllium** can firm stools in mild, ongoing diarrhea (Moderate). Probiotics have mixed evidence.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Blackberry or raspberry leaf** tea, rich in tannins (Traditional).
- **Dried bilberries or huckleberries** (Traditional; approved in Germany for mild diarrhea).
- **Wild rose hip** tea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get care for signs of dehydration (very little urine, dark urine, dizziness, a dry mouth, no tears or wet diapers in a child), blood or black stool, a fever over 102 degrees Fahrenheit, severe belly pain, diarrhea lasting more than 2 days in an adult or 24 hours in a child, or diarrhea after travel, camping, or drinking untreated stream water (possible Giardia). Babies and older adults can become dehydrated quickly.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't drink straight sports drinks or soda as your only fluid; they're too sugary. Don't drink from streams and springs without boiling or filtering the water.

SOURCES: 7, 20, 21 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Dry Skin and Eczema

Dry, rough, itchy, sometimes cracked skin. Eczema (atopic dermatitis) is a long-lasting condition with patches of red, very itchy skin, often in the bends of the elbows and knees. Nevada's dry air and cold winters make both worse.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Take short, lukewarm (not hot) showers, pat dry, and apply a thick, fragrance-free moisturizer within 3 minutes while your skin is damp. Use a humidifier in winter. Wear cotton. Use mild, unscented soap and laundry detergent.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Colloidal oatmeal** bath or cream (Strong; FDA-approved skin protectant).
- **Petroleum jelly** (Strong for locking in moisture).
- **Coconut or sunflower seed oil** on the skin (Limited; small studies in eczema).
- **Aloe vera gel** (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Chickweed** poultice or salve for itchy patches (Traditional).
- **Calendula** and **plantain** salves (Traditional to Limited).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if itching keeps you up at night, skin cracks and bleeds, patches ooze, crust, or turn yellow (possible infection), or home care doesn't help after 2 weeks. Severe eczema has good prescription treatments.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Avoid scented lotions and essential oils, which often make eczema worse. Evening primrose oil taken by mouth was not shown to help eczema.

SOURCES: 2, 7, 24 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Earache

Ear pain can come from a middle ear infection (common in young children after a cold), swimmer's ear (an infection of the ear canal), earwax, pressure changes when flying or driving over a pass, or even a sore jaw or tooth.

SELF-CARE FIRST

A warm (not hot) washcloth held against the ear eases pain. Chewing gum or yawning helps pressure pain. Sleep with the sore ear up. Many middle ear infections in children over 2 clear on their own in 2 to 3 days; doctors often suggest watchful waiting with pain relief.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Warm compress** (Traditional).
- **Over-the-counter acetaminophen or ibuprofen** for pain.
- **Herbal ear oil drops** with garlic and mullein eased ear pain in children about as well as numbing drops in two Israeli studies (Limited), **only if the eardrum is intact.**

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Mullein flower oil has been used for ear pain for centuries (Traditional). Use it only on a healthy, unbroken eardrum, and only if it was made with fully dried flowers.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for a child under 2 with ear pain, a fever over 102 degrees Fahrenheit, fluid, pus, or blood draining from the ear, pain that lasts more than 2 days, hearing loss, dizziness, swelling or redness behind the ear, or a stiff neck. Swimmer's ear usually needs prescription drops.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never put any drops or oil in an ear that is draining, has tubes, or may have a ruptured eardrum. Don't stick cotton swabs into the ear canal. Ear candling doesn't work and has caused burns and blocked ears.

SOURCES: 7, 25 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Fever

A body temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or higher. Fever is the body's way of fighting infection and is not dangerous by itself in most children and adults. How the person acts matters more than the number.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Rest and drink plenty of fluids. Dress in light clothing and keep the room comfortable. A lukewarm sponge bath can help comfort. Treating a fever is about comfort, not about getting the number to normal.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Fluids**: water, broth, diluted juice, or oral rehydration solution (Strong for preventing dehydration).
- **Over-the-counter acetaminophen or ibuprofen** if the person is uncomfortable, dosed by weight for children.
- **Linden flower or elderflower tea** (Traditional; used in Europe to help you sweat out a fever).
- **Yarrow tea** (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Yarrow, **willow bark** (adults only), and **wild mint** have long been used for fevers (Traditional). Willow bark contains salicylates and must never be given to children or teens.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call a doctor right away for any fever in a baby under 3 months old. Get care for a fever over 104 degrees Fahrenheit, a fever that lasts more than 3 days, a stiff neck, severe headache, a rash that doesn't fade when you press a glass on it, confusion, trouble breathing, a seizure, signs of dehydration, or a person who is hard to wake. A fever after a tick bite, a trip abroad, or with a weak immune system also needs a doctor.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never give aspirin, willow bark, or meadowsweet to children or teenagers, because of the risk of Reye's syndrome. Don't use cold water, ice baths, or rubbing alcohol to cool a fever.

SOURCES: 7, 26 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Flu

Influenza is a virus that comes on suddenly with fever, chills, body aches, headache, extreme tiredness, cough, and sore throat. It's much harder on the body than a cold and can lead to pneumonia, especially in young children, people over 65, pregnant women, and people with heart or lung disease or diabetes.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Rest at home, drink fluids, and stay away from others until you've been fever-free for 24 hours without medicine. A yearly flu shot is still the best protection. Prescription antiviral drugs work best when started within 2 days of symptoms. Call your doctor early if you're high-risk.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Elderberry syrup** (Limited; early studies suggest it may ease symptoms).
- **Honey** for cough (Limited to Moderate).
- **Ginger and lemon tea** (Traditional).
- **Chicken soup** and broth (Traditional; easy fluids and nutrition).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Ripe, cooked elderberries** from wild elder shrubs (Limited); never raw.
- **Rose hip** tea (Traditional).
- **Yarrow** tea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Seek emergency care for trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, confusion, a seizure, blue lips, severe weakness, no urine, or symptoms that get better and then return with fever and a worse cough. In children, also watch for fast breathing, ribs pulling in with each breath, not drinking, and not waking up or interacting.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Elderberry is not a substitute for a flu shot or antiviral medicine. Never eat raw elderberries.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 27 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Gas, Bloating, and Indigestion

A full, bloated, gassy, or burning feeling in the upper belly, often after a big or fatty meal. Most of the time it's harmless and passes within hours.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Eat smaller meals, slowly, and don't lie down for 2 to 3 hours after eating. Cut back on carbonated drinks, chewing gum, and foods that bother you (common ones are beans, onions, cabbage, and dairy if you're lactose intolerant). A short walk after a meal helps move gas along.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Peppermint tea** for gas and cramping (Limited); for irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), **enteric-coated peppermint oil capsules** (Moderate to Strong; recommended by the American College of Gastroenterology). **Fennel seeds**, chewed or as tea, for gas (Limited).
- **Ginger tea** for a sour stomach (Limited).
- **Chamomile tea** (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Wild mint** and **yarrow** tea (Traditional).
- **Juniper berries** (a few crushed in tea) for gas (Traditional; not in pregnancy or with kidney disease).
- **Dandelion** greens and root as a bitter digestive (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if you have indigestion that keeps coming back for weeks, trouble swallowing, unplanned weight loss, vomiting blood or material that looks like coffee grounds, black or bloody stools, or you're over 60 with new symptoms. **Upper belly or chest pressure, especially with sweating, shortness of breath, or pain spreading to the arm or jaw, can be a heart attack. Call 911.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

Peppermint can make heartburn worse. Don't take baking soda regularly for indigestion; it's high in sodium.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 28 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Gout

Gout is a sudden attack of severe pain, heat, redness, and swelling in a joint, most often the big toe, caused by uric acid crystals. Attacks often start at night and can follow a heavy meal, beer, or dehydration.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Rest and raise the joint, and put a cold pack wrapped in a towel on it for 20 minutes at a time. Drink plenty of water. To lower the chance of the next attack, cut back on alcohol (beer most of all), sweetened sodas and drinks with high-fructose corn syrup, organ meats, and large portions of red meat and shellfish, and work toward a healthy weight.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Tart cherries or cherry extract** (Limited; a 2012 study found fewer attacks in people who ate cherries).
- **Coffee** (Limited; people who drink it have lower uric acid in large studies).
- **Low-fat milk and yogurt** (Limited). Vitamin C lowers uric acid slightly, but the American College of Rheumatology recommends against relying on it.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None proven.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

A hot, red, swollen joint with fever needs care the same day, because a joint infection can look like gout. See a doctor for a first attack so it can be confirmed, and for repeated attacks, because medicines that lower uric acid can prevent joint damage and kidney stones.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't take aspirin or willow bark for gout; salicylates can change uric acid levels and make attacks harder to control. Don't try a crash diet or fasting, which can trigger an attack.

SOURCES: 29, 30 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Hangover

Headache, nausea, thirst, tiredness, and a pounding feeling after drinking too much alcohol. It peaks when blood alcohol drops back to zero.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Time, fluids, food, and sleep are the only reliable cures. Drink water between alcoholic drinks and before bed, eat before and while drinking, and stop sooner. Darker drinks such as whiskey and red wine tend to cause worse hangovers than clear ones.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Water or oral rehydration solution** (Traditional; helps the thirst and dry mouth).
- **Ginger tea** for nausea (Limited).
- **Bland food** such as toast and crackers. A 2005 review of hangover remedies found no remedy with convincing evidence. A small study of a prickly pear extract showed some reduction in symptoms (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Prickly pear** fruit (Limited).
- **Wild mint** tea for nausea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 for alcohol poisoning: confusion, vomiting while passed out, seizures, slow or irregular breathing, blue or pale skin, low body temperature, or a person who can't be woken. Turn an unconscious person on their side to prevent choking. If you're drinking more than you want to, or can't stop, talk to your doctor or call the SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for a hangover; alcohol and acetaminophen together can harm the liver. "Hair of the dog" just delays the hangover.

SOURCES: 7, 31 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Hay Fever (Seasonal Allergies)

Sneezing, an itchy, runny, or stuffy nose, and itchy, watery eyes caused by pollen, dust, mold, or pet dander. In northern Nevada, tree pollen peaks in spring, grass in early summer, and sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and weed pollen in late summer and fall.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Check pollen counts and keep windows closed on high days. Shower and change clothes after time outdoors. Use a HEPA filter in the bedroom. Rinse your nose with saline.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Saline nasal rinse** with distilled or boiled water (Moderate).
- **Local honey** is a popular idea, but studies haven't shown it helps allergies (not supported).
- **Butterbur** leaf extract (Limited; use only PA-free products, with liver risk).
- **Freeze-dried nettle leaf** (Limited). Over-the-counter antihistamines and steroid nose sprays work well.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Nettle leaf tea (Limited). Wear gloves to pick it, then dry or cook it.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if allergies aren't controlled with over-the-counter care, if you also have asthma or wheezing, or if you get frequent sinus infections. Allergy shots can help for years. **Call 911 for swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat, or trouble breathing.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

People allergic to ragweed or sagebrush may react to chamomile, echinacea, and other daisy-family herbs.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 16 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Head Lice

Tiny insects that live on the scalp and lay eggs (nits) glued to hairs close to the scalp. They spread by head-to-head contact. They're annoying but don't spread disease and aren't a sign of poor hygiene.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wet combing works: wet the hair, add plenty of conditioner, and comb section by section with a fine-toothed metal lice comb, wiping the comb after each pass. Repeat every 3 to 4 days for 2 weeks. Wash bedding and hats used in the last 2 days in hot water, or seal items in a bag for 2 weeks.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

Conditioner and a lice comb (Moderate). Over-the-counter permethrin or pyrethrin treatments, and newer prescription treatments, are well studied. Tea tree and other essential oils don't have enough evidence and can irritate the scalp.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if over-the-counter treatment fails twice, the scalp looks infected, or the child is under 2.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never use kerosene, gasoline, or pet flea products on a person. Avoid mayonnaise and olive oil "smothering" methods; they don't reliably work. Don't use essential oils on young children.

SOURCES: *6*, 32 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Heartburn and Acid Reflux

A burning feeling behind the breastbone, sometimes with a sour taste, when stomach acid splashes up into the esophagus. It's often worse after big meals, lying down, or bending over.

SELF-CARE FIRST

The best evidence is for lifestyle changes: eat smaller meals, stop eating 3 hours before bed, raise the head of your bed 6 to 8 inches (blocks under the legs, not just pillows), lose extra weight, and stop smoking. Notice your own triggers (common ones are alcohol, coffee, chocolate, fatty or spicy food, citrus, and tomato).

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **DGL licorice** chewable tablets before meals (Limited).
- **Chamomile tea** (Traditional).
- **Slippery elm** or **marshmallow** drinks to coat the throat (Traditional).
- **Ginger** in small amounts (Traditional). Over-the-counter antacids work quickly for occasional heartburn.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Marshmallow's** cousin, **common mallow**, made into a cold infusion (Traditional).
- **Plantain** leaf tea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if you have heartburn more than twice a week, trouble or pain when swallowing, food that sticks, weight loss, vomiting, black stools, or if over-the-counter medicine doesn't help after 2 weeks. **Chest pain or pressure can be a heart attack, not heartburn, especially with shortness of breath, sweating, or pain into the arm, back, or jaw. Call 911.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

Peppermint makes reflux worse for many people. Regular licorice (not DGL) can raise blood pressure. Don't lie down right after eating.

SOURCES: 7, 33 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Heat Rash (Prickly Heat)

Tiny itchy or prickly bumps where sweat gets trapped under the skin, usually on the neck, chest, armpits, groin, and skin folds. It is common in hot, humid weather and in babies who are dressed too warmly.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Cool the skin down. Move to shade or air conditioning, take a cool shower, and let the skin air dry. Wear loose, light cotton. Don't overdress babies.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Calamine lotion** (Limited).
- **A fan and cool water** (Moderate; removing the heat is the treatment).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Shade, a breeze, and cool creek water (common sense, not a remedy).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if the bumps fill with pus, the rash gets more painful or swollen, you have a fever or chills, or it isn't better in 3 to 4 days of keeping cool. Treat any confusion, vomiting, or a very high body temperature in the heat as heat illness (see Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke).

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't put thick ointments or heavy creams on heat rash; they block sweat glands and make it worse.

SOURCES: 2, 22 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Hemorrhoids

Swollen veins in or around the anus that can itch, ache, or bleed bright red blood on the toilet paper. Straining, constipation, sitting a long time, heavy lifting, and pregnancy are common causes.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Soften your stools with fiber and water so you don't strain. Don't sit on the toilet longer than you need to. **Sitz baths** (sitting in a few inches of warm water for 10 to 15 minutes, two or three times a day) ease pain and swelling.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Psyllium or other fiber** (Strong; the main treatment recommended by colon and rectal surgeons).
- **Witch hazel pads** (Moderate; FDA-approved astringent).
- **Aloe vera gel** on the outside (Traditional).
- **Cold packs** wrapped in cloth (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Yarrow or **plantain** tea, cooled, used as a wash (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Always have rectal bleeding checked by a doctor at least once, because it can also be a sign of colon cancer or other disease, especially if you're over 45. See a doctor right away for a lot of bleeding, dark or maroon blood, black stools, severe pain, a hard painful lump, or bleeding with dizziness.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use numbing creams or steroid creams for more than a week without a doctor.

SOURCES: 7, 34 (see Sources at the back of the book)

High Blood Pressure (Support Only)

Blood pressure of 130/80 or higher, which over years damages the heart, brain, kidneys, and eyes. It usually has no symptoms. That's why it's called the silent killer.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Lifestyle changes really work and are recommended for everyone: the DASH eating plan (lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, beans, and nuts), cutting salt, regular exercise (150 minutes a week), losing extra weight, limiting alcohol, and quitting smoking. Together these can lower blood pressure as much as a medicine.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Hibiscus tea**, 3 cups a day (Limited to Moderate; a U.S. study lowered systolic pressure about 7 points).
- **Garlic** (Limited; a modest drop).
- **Beet juice** (Limited).
- **Potassium-rich foods** such as bananas, potatoes, and beans, unless your doctor has told you to limit potassium.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None proven.

- **Hawthorn** berries are a traditional heart herb but can interact with heart drugs. Use only with your doctor.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Have your blood pressure checked regularly. **Never stop or replace blood pressure medicine with herbs. Call 911 for a reading over 180/120 with chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness or weakness, vision changes, or trouble speaking.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

Licorice raises blood pressure. Avoid decongestants such as pseudoephedrine, ephedra, and bitter orange.

SOURCES: 6, 35, 36 (see Sources at the back of the book)

High Cholesterol (Support Only)

High LDL ("bad") cholesterol builds up in the artery walls and raises the risk of heart attack and stroke. Like high blood pressure, it causes no symptoms.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Eat more soluble fiber, nuts, fish, and olive oil, and less saturated fat (fatty meat, butter, cheese) and fried foods. Exercise, lose extra weight, and don't smoke.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Oatmeal and oat bran** (Strong; FDA heart-health claim).
- **Psyllium** (Strong; FDA heart-health claim).
- **Ground flaxseed** (Limited).
- **Garlic** (Limited to Moderate; a modest effect).
- **Green tea** (Limited; a small effect).
- **Plant sterol** spreads and foods (Strong).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Purslane**, a weed rich in omega-3 fats (Limited).
- **Prickly pear pads** for fiber (Limited).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get your cholesterol checked as your doctor recommends. **Don't replace a prescribed statin with herbs,** especially if you've had a heart attack, stroke, or have diabetes. Red yeast rice contains the same chemical as the statin drug lovastatin and carries the same risks, without quality control.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Garlic and fish oil supplements can add to bleeding risk with blood thinners.

SOURCES: 7, 37 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Hives

Raised, itchy, red or skin-colored welts that come and go, often within hours. Hives can follow a food, a medicine, an insect sting, heat, cold, pressure, or a virus, but often no cause is found.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wear loose, soft clothing and keep the skin cool. Take cool showers rather than hot ones. Avoid anything you think set it off, and keep a simple diary of foods, medicines, and activities if hives keep coming back.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Non-drowsy antihistamines** such as cetirizine, loratadine, or fexofenadine (Strong).
- **Cool compresses** (Limited, but low risk).
- **Colloidal oatmeal bath** (Limited).
- **Calamine lotion** (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Cold creek water compress (Traditional; it is just cooling).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 if hives come with swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat, trouble breathing or swallowing, dizziness, or vomiting. That is anaphylaxis (see Severe Allergic Reactions). See a doctor if hives last more than 6 weeks, keep coming back, or come with fever, joint pain, or bruising.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't rely on an antihistamine if a person has trouble breathing; use epinephrine and call 911.

SOURCES: 2, 38 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Insomnia

Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking too early, with tiredness during the day. Short-term insomnia often follows stress. Chronic insomnia lasts 3 months or more.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) is the first choice for chronic insomnia, recommended over sleeping pills by sleep doctors. Its core habits: get up at the same time every day, only go to bed when sleepy, get out of bed if you can't sleep after about 20 minutes, use the bed only for sleep, keep the room cool, dark, and quiet, put screens away an hour before bed, and avoid caffeine after noon and alcohol in the evening.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Chamomile tea** (Limited; one study found no benefit for insomnia, but it's a pleasant bedtime routine).
- **Valerian** (Limited; sleep doctors recommend against it for chronic insomnia because results are inconsistent).
- **Lemon balm** with valerian (Limited).
- **Passionflower tea** (Limited).
- **Ashwagandha** (Limited to Moderate).
- **Tart cherry juice** (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Catnip** or **wild mint** tea (Traditional).
- **Hops** in a pillow or tea (Limited).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if insomnia lasts more than a few weeks, if you snore loudly, gasp, or stop breathing in your sleep (possible sleep apnea), if you have restless legs, if you fall asleep while driving, or if insomnia comes with depression or anxiety.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't mix sleep herbs with alcohol, sleeping pills, or other sedatives, and don't drive if you feel drowsy the next morning.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 39 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Joint Pain and Osteoarthritis

Osteoarthritis is wear and tear of the cartilage that cushions the joints, most often in the knees, hips, hands, and spine. It causes aching, stiffness (especially in the morning or after sitting), and sometimes swelling. It's the most common kind of arthritis.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Movement is medicine. Regular low-impact exercise such as walking, swimming, cycling, and tai chi, plus strengthening the muscles around the joint, reduces pain and keeps you moving. Losing even 10 pounds takes a lot of load off the knees. Heat before activity loosens stiff joints; ice after activity eases soreness. A cane on the opposite side helps a painful hip or knee.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Capsaicin cream** (Moderate to Strong; give it 2 weeks).
- **Turmeric or curcumin** (Limited to Moderate for knee pain; watch for liver warnings).
- **Boswellia** (Limited to Moderate).
- **Ginger** (Limited).
- **Rose hip powder** (Limited).
- **Comfrey cream** on unbroken skin (Moderate for back and joint pain in European trials). Glucosamine and chondroitin have mixed results; many large studies found little benefit.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Willow bark** tea, adults only (Limited to Moderate).
- **Nettle** leaf rubbed on the skin or as tea (Limited; an old remedy called urtication).
- **Sagebrush** or **juniper** warm compresses (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if a joint is hot, red, and swollen (possible infection or gout), if pain started after an injury, if you can't bear weight, if several joints are swollen with morning stiffness lasting more than an hour (possible rheumatoid arthritis), or if pain keeps you from sleeping or doing daily tasks. **A hot, red, swollen joint with fever needs care the same day.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't combine willow bark with aspirin, ibuprofen, or blood thinners. Herbs that thin the blood (turmeric, ginger, boswellia in large amounts) add up.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 40 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Low Back Pain

Aching or stiffness in the lower back, usually from a strained muscle or ligament after lifting, bending, or twisting, or from long hours sitting. Most back pain gets better on its own within a few weeks.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Keep moving. Bed rest slows recovery. Walk, stay as active as pain allows, and return to normal activity gradually. Heat (a heating pad or warm bath) for 15 to 20 minutes at a time helps more than ice for most back pain. Learn to lift with your legs, keep loads close, and don't twist while lifting.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Heat wraps and heating pads** (Moderate; recommended by the American College of Physicians as a first step).
- **Massage** (Limited to Moderate).
- **Capsaicin cream** (Moderate).
- **Willow bark extract** (Limited to Moderate; a Cochrane review).
- **Devil's claw extract** (Limited to Moderate; the same review).
- **Comfrey cream** (Moderate). Exercise therapy, yoga, tai chi, and spinal manipulation also have evidence.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Willow bark** tea, adults only (Limited to Moderate).
- **Sagebrush** or **juniper** warm compress (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for back pain with loss of bladder or bowel control, numbness in the groin or inner thighs, or new weakness in the legs. See a doctor for back pain after a fall or injury, with fever, unexplained weight loss, a history of cancer, pain that's worse at night or lying down, pain that shoots below the knee, or pain that isn't improving after 4 weeks.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't stay in bed. Never take willow bark if you're allergic to aspirin.

SOURCES: 7, 41, 42, 43 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Menopause Hot Flashes

Sudden waves of heat, sweating, and flushing, sometimes with a racing heart, that happen around and after menopause. Night sweats are hot flashes during sleep.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Dress in layers, keep the bedroom cool, use a fan, and notice triggers like alcohol, spicy food, and hot drinks. Cognitive behavioral therapy and clinical hypnosis are recommended by The Menopause Society. Weight loss and not smoking help.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Black cohosh** (Limited to Moderate; rare liver warnings).
- **Sage** tea (Limited).
- **Soy foods** (Limited).
- **Red clover** (Limited; inconsistent). The Menopause Society does not recommend most herbal supplements, because the evidence is weak. Hormone therapy and some non-hormone prescriptions work well; ask your doctor.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Sage** is grown, not wild, but easy to grow (Limited).
- **Motherwort** has been used traditionally (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for any bleeding after you've gone 12 months without a period, or if hot flashes disrupt your sleep and life. Talk to your doctor before using any herb if you've had breast cancer.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Avoid estrogen-like herbs (red clover, hops, soy supplements) if you've had a hormone-sensitive cancer.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 44 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Menstrual Cramps

Cramping pain in the lower belly before or during a period, caused by prostaglandins, chemicals that make the uterus contract.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Heat works. A heating pad or hot water bottle on the lower belly eased cramps about as well as pain relievers in several studies. Regular exercise and staying active during your period also help.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Ginger** capsules or strong ginger tea, started a day or two before your period (Limited to Moderate; a 2015 review found it reduced pain).
- **Fennel** tea (Limited).
- **Chamomile** tea (Traditional). Over-the-counter ibuprofen or naproxen, started at the first sign of cramps, remains the standard choice.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Yarrow** tea (Traditional).
- **Wild mint** tea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if cramps are severe enough to keep you home from work or school, get worse over time, start after age 25, come with very heavy bleeding, fever, or unusual discharge, or if pain happens outside your period. These can be signs of endometriosis, fibroids, or infection. **Sudden severe pain on one side with a missed period can be an ectopic pregnancy, which is an emergency.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use herbs that stimulate the uterus (such as mugwort, motherwort, or dong quai) if there's any chance you could be pregnant.

SOURCES: 7, 45 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Migraine

A throbbing, often one-sided headache with nausea and sensitivity to light and sound, lasting 4 to 72 hours. Some people see flashing lights or zigzags (an aura) beforehand.

SELF-CARE FIRST

At the first sign, rest in a dark, quiet room with a cold pack on your forehead or neck. Keep a headache diary to find triggers (common ones are skipped meals, poor sleep, stress, alcohol, certain foods, weather, and hormone changes). Regular sleep, meals, and exercise help prevent migraines.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Magnesium** (Limited to Moderate for prevention).
- **Riboflavin (vitamin B2)** at 400 mg a day (Limited to Moderate for prevention).
- **Feverfew** (Limited; mixed results; not in pregnancy).
- **Butterbur** (Moderate, but no longer recommended by neurologists because of liver concerns).
- **Ginger** powder at the start of a migraine (Limited).
- **Peppermint oil** on the temples (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Willow bark tea, adults only (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 for a sudden, explosive headache, a headache with weakness, numbness, confusion, trouble speaking, or loss of vision, or a first-ever aura after age 50. See a doctor if migraines happen more than four times a month, change pattern, or don't respond to over-the-counter medicine. Many effective prescriptions exist.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Overusing pain relievers more than 2 or 3 days a week can cause more headaches.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 46 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Motion Sickness

Nausea, sweating, pale skin, and dizziness in a car, boat, plane, or on a ride, when your eyes and inner ear send your brain mixed signals.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Sit where motion is least: the front seat of a car, over the wing of a plane, the middle of a boat. Look at the horizon, not a book or phone. Get fresh air. Eat a light meal before travel and avoid alcohol.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Ginger** capsules or candied ginger before travel (Limited; most studies show little help for motion sickness, though some people find it useful).
- **Peppermint** candy or tea (Traditional).
- **Acupressure wristbands** (Limited). Over-the-counter meclizine or dimenhydrinate, or a prescription scopolamine patch, work well.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Wild mint leaves chewed or smelled (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if dizziness happens without motion, comes with hearing loss, ringing in the ears, or a severe headache, or doesn't go away after you stop moving.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Motion sickness pills can cause drowsiness. Don't drive after taking them.

SOURCES: 6, 47 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Muscle Cramps

A sudden, painful, hard tightening of a muscle, often the calf or foot, that can last seconds to minutes. Common at night, during exercise, and with dehydration.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Stretch the muscle gently: for a calf cramp, pull your toes toward your knee or stand and lean into a wall with the heel down. Massage it. Walk around. Drink fluids, especially in heat, and stretch before bed.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Heat** on a tight muscle, or **cold** if it's sore afterward (Traditional).
- **Pickle juice** is a popular remedy for exercise cramps (Limited; one small study).
- **Magnesium** is widely used, but a Cochrane review found it is unlikely to help cramps in older adults (not supported). Bananas and other potassium-rich foods (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None with good evidence.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if cramps happen often, are severe, come with muscle weakness, swelling, redness, or warmth in the leg (possible blood clot), or started after a new medicine (some water pills and statins can cause cramps).

WHAT NOT TO DO

Quinine (including tonic water) is no longer recommended for leg cramps because of serious side effects.

SOURCES: 48 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Nausea and Vomiting (Including Morning Sickness)

An upset stomach and the urge to vomit, from a stomach bug, food, motion, pregnancy, migraine, or medicines.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Sip small amounts of clear fluids often. After vomiting stops, try bland foods: crackers, toast, rice, bananas, applesauce. Rest. Fresh air and avoiding strong smells help.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Ginger** tea, candied ginger, or capsules (Moderate for pregnancy nausea; doctors who care for pregnant women list ginger as an option).
- **Peppermint** tea or aroma (Limited).
- **Oral rehydration solution** to replace fluids (Strong).
- **Vitamin B6** for pregnancy nausea, with your doctor (Moderate).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Wild mint tea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for vomiting blood or coffee-ground material, severe belly pain, a stiff neck and fever, confusion, signs of dehydration, or vomiting after a head injury. See a doctor if vomiting lasts more than 24 hours in an adult (12 in a child), if a pregnant woman can't keep down fluids, or if nausea keeps coming back.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Pregnant women should check with their doctor before taking ginger supplements; food amounts are fine.

SOURCES: 6, 20, 49 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)

Pinkeye is redness and irritation of the thin clear layer over the white of the eye. Viruses cause most cases, often along with a cold. Bacteria, allergies, smoke, and dust cause the rest. Viral and bacterial pinkeye spread easily by hands and towels.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash your hands often and keep them away from your eyes. Use a clean washcloth for each compress and don't share towels, pillows, or eye makeup. A cool compress soothes allergic pinkeye; a warm compress helps loosen crust from viral or bacterial pinkeye. Stop wearing contact lenses until your eyes are clear, and throw out the lenses and case you were using.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Preservative-free artificial tears** (Moderate for comfort).
- **Antihistamine eye drops** for allergic pinkeye (Strong).
- **Cool or warm compresses** (Limited, but low risk). Most viral pinkeye clears in 1 to 2 weeks on its own.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None. Nothing from the wild is clean enough to put in an eye.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get care the same day for eye pain, blurred vision that doesn't clear with blinking, strong sensitivity to light, or a red eye after a chemical splash or an injury. See a doctor for pinkeye in a newborn, in a contact lens wearer, in anyone with a weak immune system, or if it isn't improving after a week.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't put herbal teas, tea bags, eyebright washes, honey, or breast milk in the eye. Homemade eye washes aren't sterile and can cause a serious infection.

SOURCES: 50, 51 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Ringworm and Jock Itch

Ringworm isn't a worm. It is a fungus that makes an itchy, scaly, ring-shaped rash with a clearer center. On the groin it is called jock itch; on the feet it is athlete's foot. It spreads by skin contact, shared towels, locker rooms, and pets.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Keep the area clean and fully dry, especially skin folds. Change socks and underwear daily, and wear loose cotton. Wash towels and bedding in hot water. Have a veterinarian check a pet with patchy hair loss.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Antifungal creams** such as terbinafine, clotrimazole, or miconazole (Strong). Keep using the cream 1 to 2 weeks after the rash clears.
- **Tea tree oil** (Limited; small trials for athlete's foot; dilute it).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None proven.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for ringworm on the scalp or in the beard (it needs pills, not cream), a rash that is spreading, raw, or oozing, one that isn't better after 2 weeks of cream, or any skin infection in a person with diabetes or a weak immune system.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use a steroid cream such as hydrocortisone by itself on a fungal rash. It can hide the rash while the fungus spreads.

SOURCES: 1, 2 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Shingles

Shingles is a painful, blistering rash, usually in a stripe on one side of the body or face. It comes from the chickenpox virus waking up years later. It is more common after age 50 and in people with a weak immune system. Pain can last for months afterward.

SELF-CARE FIRST

See a doctor within 3 days of the rash appearing. Antiviral medicine works best when started early. Keep the rash clean, dry, and covered, and stay away from pregnant women, babies, and anyone who hasn't had chickenpox or the vaccine until the blisters crust over.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cool, wet compresses** (Limited, but low risk).
- **Calamine lotion** (Limited).
- **Colloidal oatmeal bath** (Limited).
- **Capsaicin cream** for nerve pain that lingers after the rash heals (Limited to Moderate; never on open blisters).
- **The shingles vaccine** for adults 50 and older (Strong; it prevents most cases).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None proven.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get care the same day if the rash is on the face near the eye or on the tip of the nose, because shingles can damage vision. See a doctor promptly for any shingles rash, and right away for a rash that is spreading widely, or with high fever, confusion, or a weak immune system.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't put essential oils, tea tree oil, or herbal pastes on open blisters.

SOURCES: 2, 52 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Sore Throat

A scratchy, painful throat, usually from a cold virus. Strep throat, a bacterial infection, is less common and needs antibiotics.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Rest your voice, drink warm fluids, and use a humidifier.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Salt water gargle** (half a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) several times a day (Traditional).
- **Honey** in warm tea (Limited to Moderate).
- **Slippery elm** lozenges or **marshmallow root** cold infusion (Limited).
- **Licorice** tea or gargle (Limited).
- **Sage** tea gargle or throat spray (Limited).
- **Chamomile** tea (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Sage** or **self-heal** tea gargle (Traditional).
- **Common mallow** cold infusion (Traditional).
- **Rose hip** tea (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for a sore throat with fever and no cough (possible strep), white patches on the tonsils, swollen neck glands, a rash, or a sore throat lasting more than a week. **Get emergency care for trouble breathing or swallowing, drooling, a muffled voice, or being unable to open the mouth fully.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

No honey for babies under 12 months. Don't use oil of oregano or other essential oils on the throat.

SOURCES: 7, 12, 13 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Stuffy Nose and Sinus Congestion

A blocked or runny nose and pressure in the face, usually from a cold or allergies. Most sinus infections are caused by viruses and clear up without antibiotics in 7 to 10 days.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Breathe steam, use a humidifier, drink fluids, and sleep with your head raised.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Saline nasal rinse** with a neti pot or squeeze bottle (Moderate), using **only distilled, sterile, or boiled-and-cooled water. Steam inhalation** with thyme, peppermint, or a few drops of eucalyptus oil (Limited; adults only).
- **Menthol or eucalyptus chest rubs** (Limited; for comfort).
- **Spicy food** with cayenne or horseradish (Traditional; it can make the nose run and feel clearer).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Sagebrush** or **pine** needle steam (Traditional).
- **Juniper** steam (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if symptoms last more than 10 days, get better then worse, come with a fever over 102 degrees Fahrenheit, severe face pain, swelling or redness around the eye, vision changes, a stiff neck, or confusion.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never use tap water in a neti pot without boiling it first. Rare, deadly brain infections from an amoeba have been linked to tap water rinses. Don't use decongestant nose sprays for more than 3 days.

SOURCES: 7, 12, 16 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Tension Headache

A dull, tight, band-like ache across the forehead, temples, or back of the head, often from stress, poor sleep, eye strain, skipped meals, dehydration, or tight neck and shoulder muscles.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Drink a glass or two of water. Eat something if you've skipped a meal. Rest your eyes, stretch your neck and shoulders, and take a walk. A warm compress on the neck or a cool one on the forehead can help. Regular sleep and exercise prevent headaches.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Peppermint oil**, diluted and rubbed on the temples and forehead (Limited; a German review found it eased tension headaches about as well as acetaminophen).
- **Ginger tea** (Traditional).
- **Caffeine** in a cup of coffee or tea can help some headaches, but too much daily caffeine causes them.
- **Lavender aroma** (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Willow bark tea, adults only (Traditional; the original source of aspirin's chemistry). **Wild mint**, crushed and smelled or rubbed on the temples (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 for a sudden, severe "worst headache of my life," a headache with confusion, weakness or numbness on one side, trouble speaking, vision loss, a stiff neck with fever, or a headache after a head injury. See a doctor for headaches that are new after age 50, get steadily worse, wake you up, or happen more than a couple of times a week.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Keep peppermint oil away from your eyes, and never use it on a baby's or young child's face. Taking pain relievers more than 2 or 3 days a week can cause "rebound" headaches.

SOURCES: 6, 7, 53 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Toothache

Pain in or around a tooth, usually from a cavity, a cracked tooth, an infection, or gum disease. Home remedies only buy time until you can see a dentist.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Rinse with warm salt water. Floss gently to remove trapped food. Keep your head raised. A cold pack on the outside of the cheek, 15 minutes at a time, helps swelling.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Clove oil**, a drop diluted in olive oil and dabbed on the gum with a cotton swab (Limited to Moderate; a study found a clove gel numbed about as well as benzocaine).
- **A whole clove** held near the tooth (Traditional). Over-the-counter ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Yarrow** leaf, chewed and held against the gum (Traditional; Native peoples of the West used it for toothache).
- **Pine pitch** placed in a cavity as a temporary filling (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a dentist as soon as you can for any toothache lasting more than a day or two. **Go to the emergency room for swelling in the face or neck, fever, trouble breathing or swallowing, or a swelling that spreads.** A tooth infection can spread to the neck and become life-threatening.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never put aspirin directly on the gum (it burns). Never swallow clove oil, and keep it away from children.

SOURCES: 7, 54 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Warts

Small, rough, skin-colored bumps caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), common on fingers and the soles of the feet (plantar warts). Many go away by themselves within 1 to 2 years.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Don't pick or shave over warts, which spreads them. Keep feet dry and wear sandals in public showers.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Over-the-counter salicylic acid** (made from the same chemistry as willow bark) applied daily after soaking and filing the wart (Moderate; a Cochrane review found it works).
- **Duct tape** covering the wart (Limited; results are inconsistent).
- **Tea tree oil** (Limited; small reports).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Dandelion's milky sap and **milkweed sap** are old folk remedies (Traditional only). Milkweed sap can burn skin and eyes.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for warts on the face or genitals, warts that bleed, change color, or spread quickly, or if you have diabetes or poor circulation in your feet (don't treat foot warts yourself).

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use salicylic acid on irritated or broken skin, or near the eyes.

SOURCES: 2, 55 (see Sources at the back of the book)

PART THREE

Injuries and First Aid, A to Z

From animal bites to tick bites

Animal Bites

Bites from dogs, cats, and wild animals can tear skin and carry bacteria deep into the wound. Cat bites are small but deep and get infected often. Bats, skunks, foxes, raccoons, and coyotes can carry rabies, which is almost always fatal once symptoms start, and can be prevented with shots given soon after the bite.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash the wound right away with soap and lots of running water for at least 5 minutes. Let a minor bite bleed a little, then press with a clean cloth to stop it. Cover with a clean bandage.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Soap and clean water** (Strong).
- **Honey** on a minor, clean scrape afterward (Limited; see Cuts and Scrapes).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Use the cleanest drinkable water you have to flush the wound. Nothing from the wild replaces medical care for a bite.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor the same day for any bite that breaks the skin from a wild animal, a cat, or an unknown dog; any deep or large bite; bites on the face, hands, feet, or genitals; and any bite in a person with diabetes or a weak immune system. Call animal control or your health department about wild animal and stray bites. **Any contact with a bat, even if you aren't sure you were bitten, needs a call to your doctor or health department about rabies shots.** Watch for infection: redness, swelling, warmth, pus, red streaks, or fever.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't close a bite wound with tape or glue yourself.

SOURCES: 56, 57 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Bee and Wasp Stings

A sharp, burning pain followed by a red, swollen, itchy bump. Honeybees leave their stinger behind; wasps and yellow jackets can sting again and again. For most people it's painful but harmless. For people allergic to stings, it can be deadly within minutes.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Get away from the area. **Remove a honeybee stinger as fast as you can,** by scraping or pulling; speed matters more than method. Wash with soap and water. Put a cold pack on it for 10 minutes. Raise the arm or leg if it swells.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cold pack** (Traditional; eases pain and swelling).
- **Baking soda paste** (Traditional).
- **Honey** (Traditional). Over-the-counter antihistamines and hydrocortisone cream help itching.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Plantain** leaf, crushed or chewed and held on the sting (Traditional; one of the most widely used folk remedies).
- **Wet mud** is an old cowboy remedy for cooling a sting (Traditional; keep it off broken skin).
- **Yarrow** leaf (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 right away for any signs of a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis): trouble breathing, wheezing, swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat, hives spreading over the body, dizziness, fainting, or vomiting. Use an epinephrine auto-injector if the person has one. Also get care for many stings at once (10 or more in a child, or dozens in an adult), stings inside the mouth or throat, or swelling that keeps spreading after 48 hours.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't wait to see if an allergic reaction gets better. Anyone who has had a severe reaction should carry two epinephrine auto-injectors and see an allergist.

SOURCES: 7, 58, 59 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Blisters

A bubble of fluid under the skin, usually from rubbing (like new boots on a hike), burns, or frostbite. The skin over it protects the raw skin underneath.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Leave small, unbroken blisters alone. Cover them with a loose bandage or moleskin cut in a donut shape. If a large, painful blister must be drained, wash your hands and the blister, sterilize a needle with rubbing alcohol, poke a small hole near the edge, let the fluid drain, **leave the skin flap in place,** and cover it with petroleum jelly and a bandage. Prevent blisters with well-fitted boots and moisture-wicking socks, and stop to tape a hot spot before it becomes a blister.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Petroleum jelly** and bandages (Strong for wound care).
- **Moleskin or blister pads** (Traditional).
- **Honey** on a broken blister (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Plantain** leaf poultice on a broken blister after cleaning (Traditional).
- **Pine pitch** to hold a dressing (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if a blister shows signs of infection (pus, increasing redness, warmth, red streaks, fever), if you have diabetes or poor circulation, or if blisters appear without a clear cause.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't peel off the top skin of a blister.

SOURCES: 7, 60 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Broken Bones (Suspected)

A bone may be broken if there is a deformity, swelling, bruising, severe pain when moving or pressing on it, or a snap heard at the time of injury. You can't always tell a bad sprain from a break without an X-ray.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Don't try to straighten the limb. Stop any bleeding with firm pressure. Splint the injury in the position you found it, padding the splint and tying it above and below the injury. Put a cold pack wrapped in cloth on it for up to 20 minutes and raise it if you can. Check fingers or toes past the splint for warmth, color, and feeling, and loosen the ties if they turn pale, blue, cold, or numb.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **SAM splint or padded board** and **elastic wrap** from a first aid kit (Strong for keeping the bone still).
- **Cold pack** (Moderate for pain and swelling). Good calcium, vitamin D, and protein during recovery support healing (Moderate for bone health in general).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Straight sticks, a trekking pole, a rolled sleeping pad, or a folded jacket can make a splint, padded and tied with bandannas or strips of cloth (common first aid practice). Comfrey's old name "knitbone" is folklore for this purpose; never take comfrey by mouth.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 for a suspected break of the neck, back, hip, pelvis, or thigh; a bone poking through the skin; heavy bleeding; or a limb past the injury that is cold, blue, or numb. Don't move a person with a possible neck or back injury unless they are in danger where they are. Every suspected break needs an X-ray and a doctor.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't let the person walk on a possible broken leg. Don't give food or drink if surgery may be needed soon.

SOURCES: 58, 59 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Bruises

Blood leaking from small vessels under the skin after a bump, which turns the skin purple, then green, then yellow as it heals over 1 to 2 weeks.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Put a cold pack wrapped in a cloth on the bruise for 15 to 20 minutes at a time in the first day or two. Raise the area above the heart if you can. After 48 hours, warmth can help the body clear the blood.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cold pack** (Traditional).
- **Arnica gel or cream** on unbroken skin (Limited; some studies show less pain and bruising).
- **Witch hazel** compress (Traditional to Moderate as an astringent).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Yarrow** and **plantain** poultices (Traditional).
- **Comfrey** leaf poultice on unbroken skin, short-term only (Moderate for bruises and sprains as a cream; never by mouth).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for bruises that appear without a known injury, happen very easily, are very large or painful, come with swelling that keeps growing, or appear with bleeding gums, nosebleeds, or blood in urine or stool. Bruising after a hard blow to the head, belly, or chest needs a doctor. People on blood thinners should call their doctor after a significant injury.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never put arnica or comfrey on broken skin or swallow them.

SOURCES: 7, 58 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Cactus Spines and Splinters

Large cactus spines, wood splinters, and thorns are usually easy to see and grab. Prickly pear and cholla also carry glochids, tiny barbed hairs that come off by the hundreds, are hard to see, and itch and burn for days.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Large spines and splinters: clean the skin, grasp the end with clean tweezers, and pull it out at the same angle it went in. A sewing needle sterilized with rubbing alcohol can lift the skin over a shallow splinter. Wash and cover afterward. **Cholla:** use a comb to flick the segment away from you; don't use your hand. **Glochids:** spread a thin layer of white school glue over the area, cover with a layer of gauze, let it dry completely, and peel it off. A study found this removed most glochids. Then use tweezers and a magnifying glass for the rest. Sticky tape works for a few.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Tweezers, white glue, and gauze** (Limited; tested in a small study).
- **Soap and water** to clean (Strong).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Pine pitch, warmed and applied over a splinter for a day, was used by Native peoples and settlers to draw it to the surface (Traditional). A **plantain** poultice was used the same way (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for a splinter that's deep, under a fingernail, in or near the eye, or that you can't remove; for any puncture that shows infection; and if it's been more than 5 years since your last tetanus shot (10 for clean, minor wounds).

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't dig deep with a needle. Don't rub skin covered in glochids; it drives them in.

SOURCES: 58, 61 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Chapped Lips and Windburn

Dry, cracked, sore lips and skin from wind, cold, sun, and dry air. A constant problem in the high desert.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Use a plain lip balm or petroleum jelly often, especially before bed and before going outside. Drink water. Use a humidifier at home. Wear a scarf or neck gaiter in the wind. Stop licking your lips; saliva dries them further.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Petroleum jelly** (Strong for locking in moisture).
- **Beeswax lip balm** with sunscreen (Traditional to Strong).
- **Honey** dabbed on cracked lips (Traditional).
- **Coconut oil** or **shea butter** (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Calendula** or **plantain** salve made with beeswax (Traditional).
- **Pine pitch** salve (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for cracks at the corners of the mouth that won't heal, lips that crust, bleed, or swell, a sore or scaly patch on the lip that doesn't heal in a few weeks (sun damage can lead to lip cancer), or lips that stay dry despite care.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Avoid lip products with menthol, camphor, phenol, or strong flavors, which can dry and irritate lips further.

SOURCES: 2 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Cuts and Scrapes

Minor cuts and scrapes break the skin and bleed a little. Most heal well in 1 to 2 weeks if they're cleaned and kept covered.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Stop the bleeding with firm, steady pressure on a clean cloth for 10 minutes without peeking. **Clean the wound** by rinsing it under running drinkable water for several minutes and washing the skin around it with soap. Remove dirt with clean tweezers. **Cover it** with a thin layer of petroleum jelly or honey and a bandage, and change it daily. In the backcountry, flushing a wound with plenty of drinkable water squeezed through a hole in a plastic bag works well.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Clean water and soap** (Strong).
- **Petroleum jelly** (Strong; keeps the wound moist so it heals faster with less scarring). **Honey**, ideally medical-grade (Limited to Moderate).
- **Calendula** ointment (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Yarrow** leaf, crushed and pressed on a small cut to slow bleeding (Traditional; its name comes from Achilles' battlefield use).
- **Plantain** leaf poultice (Traditional).
- **Pine pitch** to seal a small cut (Traditional). Use them only on small, clean wounds, after washing.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 or get emergency care for bleeding that soaks through dressings or spurts, or won't stop after 10 minutes of pressure. See a doctor for cuts that are deep, gaping, longer than half an inch, on the face or a joint, caused by a dirty or rusty object or an animal bite, have something stuck in them, or show signs of infection (more pain, redness, warmth, swelling, pus, red streaks, or fever). Cuts that need stitches should be seen within 6 to 8 hours. Get a tetanus shot if it's been more than 5 years for a dirty wound.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't pour hydrogen peroxide or rubbing alcohol into a wound repeatedly; they damage healing tissue. Don't use cobwebs, dirt, or tobacco on wounds.

SOURCES: 7, 57, 59, 62 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Fishhooks in the Skin

A fishhook that goes in past the barb can't be pulled straight back out without tearing the skin. Shallow hooks in the hand or arm can often be removed in the field.

SELF-CARE FIRST

If the barb is not in, back the hook out the way it went in. If the barb is in and the hook is shallow, the string-yank method works well: loop strong fishing line around the bend of the hook, press down on the shank to free the barb, line the string up with the shank, and give a quick, firm pull. Wash the wound with soap and water and cover it.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Soap and clean water** (Strong).
- **Petroleum jelly or honey** under a bandage (see Cuts and Scrapes). Wire cutters to snip the line or a treble hook's other points.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Flush with the cleanest drinkable water you have.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Don't try to remove a hook from the eye, eyelid, face, near a joint, or near a large blood vessel. Tape it in place so it doesn't move and get to a doctor; for the eye, cover both eyes and go to the emergency room. See a doctor if you're not up to date on a tetanus shot (more than 5 years for a dirty wound), or for any signs of infection.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't twist and dig at a barbed hook. Don't push a hook through near a joint or blood vessel.

SOURCES: 57, 63 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Frostbite and Cold Injury

Frozen skin and tissue, usually fingers, toes, nose, ears, and cheeks. Frostnip, the early stage, causes numb, pale skin that recovers fully with warming. Frostbite makes skin white or grayish-yellow, hard, waxy, and numb, and can cause permanent damage.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Get out of the cold and check for hypothermia first (see Hypothermia). **Rewarm frostbitten skin in warm water, 99 to 102 degrees Fahrenheit (warm to a normal hand, not hot), for 15 to 30 minutes,** until the skin is soft and color returns. Expect pain as it thaws. Then loosely wrap with dry, clean gauze between fingers and toes. For frostnip, skin-to-skin warming (hands in armpits) works.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Warm water** (Strong).
- **Aloe vera gel** on thawed skin (Limited; recommended by wilderness medicine guidelines).
- **Ibuprofen** for pain and swelling (recommended by wilderness medicine guidelines).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None. Shelter, dry clothing, and warmth come first.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

All true frostbite needs a doctor, especially if the skin stays numb, turns blue or black, or blisters. Newer hospital treatments can save tissue if given within 24 hours.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never rub frostbitten skin or rub it with snow. Don't use a heater, fire, or heating pad to thaw it; numb skin burns easily. **Don't thaw it if there's a chance it will refreeze;** that does more damage. Don't walk on frostbitten feet once they're thawed.

SOURCES: 59, 64, 65 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Head Bumps and Concussion

A bump on the head is usually minor, but a jolt to the head can cause a concussion, a brain injury that changes how the brain works for a while. Signs include headache, confusion, dizziness, nausea, feeling foggy, trouble remembering, and sensitivity to light or noise. Loss of consciousness doesn't always happen.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Put a cold pack wrapped in cloth on a bump for 20 minutes. After a concussion, rest your body and brain for the first day or two, with less screen time, reading, and hard thinking, then return to normal activity a little at a time as symptoms allow. Keep someone with the injured person for the first 24 hours. No sports or rough activity until a doctor clears you.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cold pack** (Moderate for the bump).
- **Acetaminophen** for headache (talk to a doctor; some advise avoiding aspirin and ibuprofen for the first day).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Cold creek water on a cloth for the bump (common sense).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for: one pupil larger than the other, drowsiness or can't be woken, a headache that gets worse and won't go away, repeated vomiting, seizures, slurred speech, weakness or numbness, growing confusion or strange behavior, or any loss of consciousness. Older adults and people on blood thinners need to be checked after any hard hit to the head. See a doctor for any suspected concussion.

WHAT NOT TO DO

No alcohol after a head injury. Don't take willow bark or other blood-thinning herbs. Don't go back to sports the same day.

SOURCES: 59, 66 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

Heat illness happens when the body can't cool itself. **Heat exhaustion**: heavy sweating, cool clammy skin, weakness, headache, nausea, dizziness, and muscle cramps. **Heat stroke**: body temperature 104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, confusion, slurred speech, fainting, seizures, and hot skin (sweating may or may not stop). Heat stroke is a life-threatening emergency.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Heat exhaustion: move to shade or air conditioning, loosen clothing, lie down with legs raised, cool the skin with wet cloths and fanning, and sip cool water or an electrolyte drink. Rest the rest of the day. **Heat stroke:** call 911, then cool the person as fast as possible. The best method is cold water immersion up to the neck in a tub, stream, or tarp filled with cold water. If you can't do that, soak them with cold water, fan them hard, and put cold packs or ice on the neck, armpits, and groin.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Water and oral rehydration solution** (Strong).
- **Cold water and ice** (Strong for heat stroke).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Shade and cold creek water for cooling (Strong for cooling). In the desert, rest in the heat of the day and travel early and late.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 for any confusion, fainting, seizure, vomiting, or a temperature of 104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Get care if heat exhaustion symptoms get worse or last more than an hour.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't give fluids to someone who is confused or not fully awake. Don't give aspirin or acetaminophen for heat stroke; they don't help and may harm. Never leave a child or pet in a parked car.

SOURCES: 22, 59, 67 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Hypothermia

Body temperature that drops below 95 degrees Fahrenheit. It can happen above freezing when you're wet, tired, and in the wind, as on a rainy fall hike in the Sierra or after falling into Lake Tahoe or a cold river. Early signs: shivering, clumsiness, and "the umbles" (stumbles, mumbles, fumbles, grumbles). Later: confusion, drowsiness, and shivering stops.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Get the person out of the wind and wet. **Handle them gently.** Replace wet clothes with dry ones, or cover them right over wet clothes with a vapor barrier such as a tarp or plastic, and wrap them in sleeping bags and blankets with insulation underneath. Cover the head and neck. If they're alert and can swallow, give warm, sweet drinks and high-calorie food. Put warm (not hot) water bottles in the armpits and on the chest, wrapped in cloth.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

Dry clothing, blankets, a space blanket, and warm sweet drinks (Strong).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Shelter and fire (Strong). Insulate from the ground with pine boughs or dry grass (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 for anyone who is confused, very drowsy, has stopped shivering, or is unconscious. Keep them lying flat and still, and handle them gently, because rough movement can cause a deadly heart rhythm. If they're not breathing, start CPR.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't give alcohol. Don't rub the arms and legs. Don't put a very cold person in a hot bath. Don't let a person with moderate or severe hypothermia walk or exert themselves.

SOURCES: 59, 64, 65 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Ingrown Toenail

The edge of a toenail, usually on the big toe, grows into the skin, causing pain, redness, and swelling. Tight shoes and cutting nails too short or rounded are the common causes.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Soak the foot in warm water for 15 to 20 minutes, 3 or 4 times a day. After soaking, gently lift the nail edge and tuck a small piece of cotton or dental floss under it, changing it daily. Wear roomy shoes or sandals. Trim toenails straight across and not too short.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Warm water soaks** (Limited, but low risk).
- **Petroleum jelly** and a bandage over the sore skin (Limited).
- **Epsom salt** in the soak (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None needed.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor or foot doctor if there is pus, spreading redness, red streaks, or fever, if it keeps coming back, or right away for any foot problem in a person with diabetes or poor circulation. A simple office procedure fixes most stubborn ingrown nails.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't cut a V in the nail or dig out the corner yourself. People with diabetes shouldn't treat foot problems at home.

SOURCES: 2, 58 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Insect Bites (Mosquitoes, Flies, Ants, Chiggers)

Itchy, red bumps from insect bites. In Nevada, mosquitoes can carry West Nile virus, so preventing bites matters.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash the bite with soap and water. Put a cold pack on it. Try not to scratch. Prevent bites with long sleeves, pants tucked into socks, and an EPA-registered repellent: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Empty standing water around the house.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cold pack** (Traditional).
- **Colloidal oatmeal** bath or paste for many bites (Moderate).
- **Witch hazel** dabbed on (Traditional).
- **Aloe vera gel** (Traditional).
- **Baking soda paste** (Traditional).
- **Oil of lemon eucalyptus** as a repellent (Moderate to Strong; recommended by the CDC; not for children under 3).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Plantain** leaf, crushed or chewed and pressed on bites (Traditional).
- **Catnip** rubbed on the skin repels mosquitoes for a short time (Limited).
- **Sagebrush** smoke was used to drive off insects (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for a bite that becomes very swollen, hot, and red, with red streaks or pus (infection); fever, headache, and body aches after mosquito bites (possible West Nile virus); or signs of a severe allergic reaction (call 911).

WHAT NOT TO DO

"Pure lemon eucalyptus essential oil" is not the same as the registered repellent oil of lemon eucalyptus and hasn't been tested the same way.

SOURCES: 7, 58, 68 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Minor Burns

First-degree burns (red, painful, like a mild sunburn) and small second-degree burns (red, painful, blistered) from heat, hot liquids, or steam. Deeper or larger burns need medical care.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Cool the burn right away under cool (not ice cold) running water for at least 10 minutes, and up to 20. This is the single most important step, and it helps even if you start a few minutes late. Remove rings, watches, and tight clothing before swelling starts. Cover loosely with a clean, non-stick dressing or plastic wrap. Leave blisters alone.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cool running water** (Strong).
- **Aloe vera gel** after cooling, for minor burns (Limited; may speed healing and ease pain). **Honey**, medical-grade if possible, on a small, clean partial-thickness burn (Limited to Moderate; a Cochrane review found honey may heal these burns faster than some dressings). Over-the-counter pain relievers.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Aloe** from a houseplant (Limited).
- **Prickly pear** pad, spines and glochids removed, split open and laid on a minor burn (Traditional).
- **Plantain** poultice (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for burns that are larger than the palm of the person's hand, deep (white, leathery, or charred), or on the face, hands, feet, genitals, or a major joint; burns from chemicals or electricity; burns with trouble breathing or after a fire in a closed space; and burns in babies and older adults. See a doctor for any burn that shows signs of infection.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never put butter, oil, toothpaste, mustard, egg white, or ice on a burn. They trap heat or damage the skin. Don't pop blisters.

SOURCES: 3, 58, 59, 62 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Nettle Stings

Brushing against stinging nettle injects histamine and other chemicals through tiny hollow hairs, causing an immediate burning, itchy rash with small white bumps that usually fades within a day.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Don't touch or rub the area for 10 minutes. Then wash with soap and cool water. Remove leftover hairs with sticky tape or a wax strip. A cold compress helps.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cold compress** (Traditional).
- **Baking soda paste** (Traditional).
- **Colloidal oatmeal** or **aloe vera gel** (Traditional). Over-the-counter hydrocortisone or an antihistamine for itching.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Yellow dock** or **plantain** leaves, crushed and rubbed on the sting (Traditional; dock often grows near nettles, and the old rhyme says "Nettle in, dock out").
- **Jewelweed** juice (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if the rash spreads, blisters, or lasts more than a few days. **Call 911 for any trouble breathing or swelling of the face or throat.**

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't scratch.

SOURCES: 7, 69 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Nosebleeds

Most nosebleeds come from small vessels in the front of the nose, made fragile by dry air, nose blowing, picking, or colds. They're common in Nevada's dry climate, especially in winter.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Sit up and lean forward (not back) so blood doesn't run down your throat. **Pinch the soft part of the nose** just below the bony bridge, firmly, and breathe through your mouth for 10 to 15 minutes without letting go to check. A cold pack on the bridge of the nose may help. Prevent them with a humidifier, saline spray, and a thin layer of petroleum jelly inside the nostrils.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Saline spray and petroleum jelly** to prevent dryness (Moderate).
- **Humidifier** (Moderate).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Yarrow leaf, rolled and placed gently in the front of the nostril, is a folk remedy that gave it the name "nosebleed plant" (Traditional). Keep it clean and don't push it deep.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for a nosebleed that lasts more than 20 to 30 minutes with pressure, is very heavy, follows a head injury, makes you dizzy or short of breath, or happens while taking blood thinners and won't stop. See a doctor for frequent nosebleeds.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't tilt your head back or lie down. Don't blow your nose or bend over for several hours afterward.

SOURCES: 58, 59 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Poison Ivy and Poison Oak Rash

An itchy, red rash with streaks of blisters caused by urushiol, an oil in poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac. It appears 12 to 72 hours after contact, lasts 1 to 3 weeks, and isn't spread by the blister fluid, only by oil still on skin, clothes, tools, or pets.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash the skin with soap and cool water as soon as possible, ideally within 30 minutes, and scrub under fingernails. Wash clothes, tools, gloves, and pets. For the rash, use cool compresses, short cool baths, and calamine lotion. Try not to scratch.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Soap and water or a degreasing dish soap** (Strong if used early).
- **Colloidal oatmeal baths** (Moderate).
- **Calamine lotion** (Moderate).
- **Aloe vera gel** (Traditional).
- **Baking soda paste** (Traditional). Over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream helps mild rashes.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Jewelweed** juice is a famous folk remedy (Traditional; studies show it works no better than plain soap).
- **Plantain** or **chickweed** poultice for the itch (Traditional).
- **Cool creek water** to rinse the oil away quickly (Strong if done right away).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for trouble breathing or swallowing, or if you breathed smoke from burning poison ivy or oak. See a doctor for a rash on the face, eyes, lips, or genitals, a rash covering a large part of the body, signs of infection, or a rash that isn't better after a week. Prescription steroid pills help severe cases.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Never burn poison ivy or poison oak. Don't use hot water, which can spread the oil and worsen itching.

SOURCES: 2, 7, 24 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Puncture Wounds

A deep, narrow wound from a nail, thorn, fishhook, knife tip, or tooth. They don't bleed much and look small, but they push dirt and bacteria deep inside, so they get infected more easily than cuts.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash your hands, let the wound bleed a little to flush it, then rinse it under running water for 5 minutes and wash around it with soap. Remove anything visible on the surface with clean tweezers. Cover with petroleum jelly or honey and a bandage. Watch it closely for several days.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Clean water and soap** (Strong).
- **Petroleum jelly or honey** dressing (Strong / Limited to Moderate).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Pine pitch and **plantain** were used to draw out splinters and thorns (Traditional). Never pack a deep puncture with plant material.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor for punctures that are deep, through a shoe (especially stepping on a nail), from an animal or human bite, on the hand or foot, with something stuck inside, or that won't stop bleeding. Get a tetanus shot if it's been more than 5 years. Watch for infection: increasing pain, redness, swelling, warmth, pus, red streaks, or fever.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't try to dig out deep objects. **Don't pull out a large object that's stuck in the body;** pad around it and get help.

SOURCES: 57, 58, 59 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Scorpion Stings

Scorpions live throughout Nevada. Most cause a painful sting like a bee's. The Arizona bark scorpion, found in southern Nevada, Arizona, and nearby desert areas, is the one dangerous species in the United States. Its venom can cause numbness, tingling, muscle twitching, and in small children, wild eye movements and trouble breathing.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash the sting with soap and water. Put a cold pack on it for 10 minutes at a time. Keep calm and still. Call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222 for advice on any scorpion sting.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

Cold pack (Traditional). Over-the-counter pain relievers for adults.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None. Shake out boots, gloves, and bedding in scorpion country.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Call 911 for a child stung by a scorpion who has unusual eye movements, drooling, muscle twitching or jerking, trouble swallowing or breathing, or restlessness. An antivenom exists for bark scorpion stings. Adults with spreading numbness, trouble swallowing, or breathing problems also need emergency care.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't cut the sting or try to suck out venom.

SOURCES: 70, 71 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Severe Allergic Reactions (Anaphylaxis)

Anaphylaxis is a sudden, whole-body allergic reaction to things like stings, nuts, shellfish, or medicines. Signs include hives, swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat, trouble breathing, wheezing, vomiting, dizziness, and fainting. It can kill within minutes.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Use an epinephrine auto-injector right away, then call 911. Inject into the outer thigh, through clothing if needed. Have the person lie flat with legs raised, or sit up if breathing is hard. If symptoms don't improve in 5 to 15 minutes and a second injector is on hand, give it. Go to the hospital even if the person feels better, because symptoms can come back.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

Epinephrine auto-injector (Strong; it is the only first treatment that works). Antihistamines may help hives and itching afterward but do not treat anaphylaxis.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None, ever.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Every case of anaphylaxis needs 911 and an emergency room. Anyone who has had a severe reaction should see a doctor or allergist and carry two epinephrine auto-injectors.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't wait to see if it gets better, and don't use an antihistamine or inhaler instead of epinephrine. Don't have the person stand or walk.

SOURCES: 38, 59 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Snakebite

Rattlesnakes are the venomous snakes of Nevada and the Great Basin. A bite causes immediate burning pain and swelling, and venom can damage tissue, cause bleeding, and affect the heart and breathing. With fast hospital care and antivenom, deaths are rare. **There is no home or wild remedy for snakebite.**

SELF-CARE FIRST

Move away from the snake. Call 911 and get to a hospital as fast as safely possible. Keep the person calm and still. Remove rings, watches, and tight clothing before swelling starts. Keep the bitten arm or leg at about the level of the heart. If you're far from help, walk out slowly or have help come to you. Note the time of the bite and mark the edge of the swelling with a pen every 15 minutes.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

Nothing. Your phone and your car keys.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Nothing.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Every rattlesnake bite is an emergency, even if it doesn't hurt much at first. About a fifth to a quarter of bites are "dry" (no venom), but you can't tell at first. Pets bitten by snakes also need a vet right away.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Do not cut the bite, suck out venom, use a suction pump, put on a tourniquet, ice the bite, apply electric shock, or drink alcohol. All of these are old remedies that don't work and cause harm. Don't try to catch or kill the snake; a photo from a safe distance is enough.

SOURCES: 59, 72 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Something in the Eye

Dust, sand, an eyelash, or a speck of sawdust in the eye causes pain, tearing, redness, and a gritty feeling.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash your hands. Don't rub. Blink several times and let tears flush it out. Rinse the eye with clean, lukewarm water or saline: lean over a sink and pour water from a cup into the eye from the inner corner outward, or hold the eye open under a gentle stream. For chemicals in the eye, rinse with running water for at least 15 minutes, then get help.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Clean water or sterile saline** (Strong).
- **Eye cup** (Traditional).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Only the cleanest drinkable water you have. **Never put plant juices, teas, or other folk remedies in the eye.**

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for chemicals in the eye (after rinsing), anything stuck in the eye, metal or glass fragments, a cut or puncture of the eye, blood in the eye, vision loss, or severe pain. See a doctor if pain, redness, or blurry vision continues after the object is out.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't try to remove something stuck on the colored part of the eye. Don't use chamomile or other teas as eyewashes; they can cause infection or allergic reactions.

SOURCES: 51, 59 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Sore Muscles After Exercise or Work

Aching, stiff muscles that start 12 to 48 hours after hard or unusual exercise or work, and fade over a few days.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Keep moving gently: walking, light stretching, and easy activity speed recovery more than total rest. Drink fluids and eat protein. Ease into new activities.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Warm bath**, with or without Epsom salt (Traditional; the warmth is what helps).
- **Massage** (Limited to Moderate).
- **Capsaicin cream** for longer-term muscle and joint aches (Moderate).
- **Arnica gel** (Limited).
- **Tart cherry juice** (Limited).
- **Ginger** (Limited).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Sagebrush** or **juniper** in a warm bath or compress (Traditional).
- **Willow bark** tea for adults (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for severe muscle pain with weakness and dark, cola-colored urine after intense exercise or heat, which can mean rhabdomyolysis, a dangerous breakdown of muscle. See a doctor for pain in one spot that doesn't improve, swelling, or a muscle that won't work.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use capsaicin cream with a heating pad.

SOURCES: 7, 58 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Spider Bites

Most "spider bites" are actually other things, often a skin infection. Most spider bites cause only a red, itchy bump. Two spiders in Nevada matter: the black widow (shiny black with a red hourglass on the belly), whose venom causes severe muscle cramps and pain, and, rarely, recluse spiders. The desert recluse lives in southern Nevada; true brown recluses do not live in Nevada.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Wash the bite with soap and water. Put a cold pack on it for 10 minutes on and 10 off. Raise the area. If you can do so safely, take a photo of the spider.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Cold pack** (Traditional).
- **Soap and water** (Strong).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

Plantain poultice for a minor bite (Traditional). Folk remedies don't help a black widow bite.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get emergency care for severe pain, belly cramps, muscle spasms, sweating, nausea, trouble breathing, or a fast heartbeat after a bite (possible black widow), and for any spider bite in a young child. See a doctor for a bite that becomes a growing blister, a dark sore, or an open ulcer, or that shows signs of infection (spreading redness, warmth, pus, fever). Call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222 for advice.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't cut the bite or try to suck out venom.

SOURCES: 71, 73 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Sprains and Strains

A sprain is a stretched or torn ligament, usually at the ankle, knee, or wrist. A strain is a stretched or torn muscle or tendon, often in the back or hamstring. Both cause pain, swelling, and bruising.

SELF-CARE FIRST

For the first 2 or 3 days: **protect** the joint, **rest** it from activities that hurt, **ice** it for 15 to 20 minutes every 2 to 3 hours with a cloth between ice and skin, **compress** it with an elastic bandage (not too tight), and **elevate** it above the heart. After that, start gentle movement and gradually return to activity as pain allows. Most mild sprains heal in 2 to 6 weeks.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Ice or a bag of frozen peas** (Traditional to Limited).
- **Elastic bandage** (Moderate).
- **Comfrey cream** on unbroken skin (Moderate; European trials found it eased ankle sprain pain and swelling).
- **Arnica gel** (Limited). Over-the-counter ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Comfrey** leaf poultice on unbroken skin, short-term only (Traditional to Moderate; never by mouth).
- **Cold creek water** to soak a sprained ankle (Traditional). A sturdy stick or folded sleeping pad as a splint in the backcountry.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor or urgent care if you can't put weight on it or take four steps, if there's tenderness right on the bone, if the joint looks crooked or deformed, if there's numbness, tingling, or a cold, pale hand or foot, or if you heard a pop and it swelled fast. These can be fractures or serious tears. See a doctor if it isn't improving after a week.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't put ice directly on the skin. Never take comfrey or arnica by mouth.

SOURCES: 7, 43, 59 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Sunburn

Red, hot, painful skin from too much ultraviolet light, sometimes with blisters. Nevada's high altitude, thin dry air, and many sunny days mean you can burn faster than at the beach, even in winter on snow.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Get out of the sun. Take cool showers or baths, and apply cool compresses. While the skin is still damp, apply a gentle moisturizer. Drink extra water. Leave blisters alone. Wear loose clothing that covers the area. Prevent burns with shade, hats, long sleeves, and broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher sunscreen, reapplied every 2 hours.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Aloe vera gel** (Limited; soothing).
- **Cool compresses and baths** (Traditional).
- **Colloidal oatmeal bath** (Moderate).
- **Moisturizer with soy** (Traditional). Over-the-counter ibuprofen eases pain and swelling.

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

- **Aloe** plant (Limited).
- **Prickly pear** pad, cleaned of spines and glochids, split and laid on the skin (Traditional).
- **Plantain** poultice (Traditional).

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

Get care for a sunburn with blisters over a large area, fever, chills, headache, confusion, nausea, or fainting, or a severe burn on a baby. These can mean sun poisoning or heat illness.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Skip "-caine" numbing sprays and petroleum jelly on fresh burns, which can trap heat or irritate the skin.

SOURCES: 3, 74 (see Sources at the back of the book)

Tick Bites

Ticks attach to the skin and feed for days. In Nevada and the West, ticks can carry Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tick-borne relapsing fever (around Lake Tahoe cabins), Colorado tick fever, and tularemia. Lyme disease is less common here than in the East and the far West coast, but possible.

SELF-CARE FIRST

Remove the tick as soon as you find it. Grasp it with fine-tipped tweezers as close to the skin as possible and pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk. Clean the area and your hands with soap and water or rubbing alcohol. Put the tick in a sealed bag with a date in case you get sick. After time outdoors, check your whole body, especially the scalp, armpits, groin, and behind the knees, and check pets.

STORE-BOUGHT REMEDIES

- **Fine-tipped tweezers** (Strong).
- **Soap and water** (Strong).
- **Permethrin-treated clothing** and **EPA-registered repellents** (Strong for prevention).

WILD-FOUND HELPERS

None. Wild remedies don't remove ticks or prevent disease.

SEE A DOCTOR WHEN

See a doctor if you get a fever, chills, headache, body aches, or a rash within a few weeks after a tick bite, or a red, expanding rash at the bite. Tell the doctor about the bite. Rocky Mountain spotted fever can be deadly if not treated early, and antibiotics work best when started fast.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't use a hot match, nail polish, petroleum jelly, or essential oils to make a tick back out. These don't work and may cause the tick to release more germs.

SOURCES: 58, 68 (see Sources at the back of the book)

PART FOUR

Quick Reference

Quick chart, glossary, and sources

Quick Chart: First Steps That Work

This chart lists the best-supported first step for common problems. Read the full entry before you act, and always check its See a Doctor box.

Problem	Best-supported first step	Helpful natural extras
Burn (minor)	Cool running water 10 to 20 minutes	Aloe gel, honey
Cut or scrape	Pressure, then flush with clean water	Petroleum jelly or honey dressing
Nosebleed	Lean forward, pinch the soft nose 10 to 15 minutes	Saline and petroleum jelly to prevent
Sprain	Rest, ice, compression, elevation, then gentle movement	Comfrey or arnica cream on unbroken skin
Bee sting	Remove the stinger fast, cold pack	Plantain poultice, baking soda paste
Tick	Pull straight up with fine-tipped tweezers	None
Snakebite	Call 911, keep still, go to the hospital	None, ever
Poison ivy or oak	Wash with soap within 30 minutes	Oatmeal baths, calamine
Heat exhaustion	Shade, cooling, fluids	Cold creek water
Heat stroke	Call 911, cold water immersion	None
Hypothermia	Out of the wind and wet, dry insulation, warm sweet drinks	Fire and shelter
Frostbite	Rewarm in 99 to 102 degree water, only if it won't refreeze	Aloe gel afterward
Diarrhea	Oral rehydration solution	Rice, bananas, tannin teas
Cough	Honey (over age 1)	Thyme tea, marshmallow, mullein
Cold	Rest, fluids, zinc lozenges early	Elderberry, saline rinse
Sore throat	Salt water gargle	Honey, slippery elm, sage
Constipation	Fiber and water	Psyllium, prunes, kiwifruit
Nausea	Small sips of fluid	Ginger, peppermint
Tension headache	Water, food, rest, stretch	Peppermint oil on the temples
Insomnia	Sleep habits (CBT-I)	Chamomile, lemon balm, valerian
Toothache	See a dentist	Clove oil while you wait
Itchy, dry skin	Lukewarm baths, moisturize while damp	Colloidal oatmeal

Glossary

Anaphylaxis. A severe, whole-body allergic reaction that can close the throat and drop blood pressure. It needs epinephrine and a 911 call.

Antivenom. A hospital medicine that neutralizes snake or scorpion venom.

Astringent. Something that tightens and dries tissue, like witch hazel or tannin-rich teas.

CBT and CBT-I. Cognitive behavioral therapy, a kind of talk therapy, and its version for insomnia.

Colloidal oatmeal. Oats ground into a very fine powder that stays suspended in bath water.

Decoction. A tea made by simmering roots, bark, or seeds.

Dehydration. Losing more fluid than you take in.

Demulcent. A soothing, slippery substance that coats irritated tissue, like honey, marshmallow, or slippery elm.

Enteric-coated. A capsule coating that doesn't dissolve until it passes the stomach.

Glochid. The tiny barbed hairs on prickly pear and cholla cactus.

Infusion. A tea made by steeping leaves or flowers in hot water.

Oral rehydration solution (ORS). A mix of water, sugar, and salt that the gut absorbs faster than plain water.

Poultice. Mashed fresh or moistened dried plant material placed on the skin.

Reye's syndrome. A rare but dangerous illness of the brain and liver linked to giving aspirin or salicylates to children and teens with viral infections.

Rhabdomyolysis. A dangerous breakdown of muscle after extreme exertion or heat, signaled by dark urine.

Sitz bath. Sitting in a few inches of warm water to soothe the rectal and genital area.

Urushiol. The oil in poison ivy, oak, and sumac that causes the rash.

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Acronym List

BE FAST: Balance, Eyes, Face, Arms, Speech, Time (stroke warning signs)
CBT: Cognitive behavioral therapy
CBT-I: Cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia
CDC: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COPD: Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CPR: Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
DASH: Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension
DEET: N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, an insect repellent
DGL: Deglycyrrhizinated licorice
EPA: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FDA: U.S. Food and Drug Administration
HEPA: High-efficiency particulate air
HPV: Human papillomavirus
IBS: Irritable bowel syndrome
IR3535: Ethyl butylacetylaminopropionate, an insect repellent
LDL: Low-density lipoprotein
NCCIH: National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health
NIH: National Institutes of Health
ORS: Oral rehydration solution
PA: Pyrrolizidine alkaloid
SAMHSA: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SPF: Sun protection factor
UTI: Urinary tract infection
WHO: World Health Organization