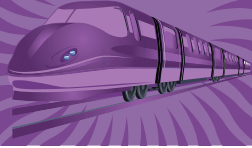


The Wellness Express™



Jump on the train to good health

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Honey - A Sweet Medicine?

Presented by: Total Health Systems

TotalHealthSystems.com

Introduction

“A spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down” as the old song lyric goes but perhaps they should change it from “sugar” to “honey,” as this sweet natural substance not only helps the medicine go down, it can actually *be* the medicine! You may want to consider honey the next time you get that itch in the back of your throat.



History of Honey

Honey is produced by honey bees and is derived from the nectar of flowers. It is a mixture of sugar and several other substances. The taste and texture of honey can vary, both due to the type of flowers that the bees access as well as how the honey is processed.

Honey has a long relationship with humans, stretching as far back as our cave dwelling ancestors. An ancient cave painting in Spain shows women collecting honey from beehives. Although first gathered as a food source, honey was also used as an ingredient in religious rituals. The ancient Egyptians held honey in high regard, as it was offered to their goddess of fertility and used prominently in baked goods of that era. The Egyptians even used honey in the embalming process of their dead. In the Western hemisphere, the Mayans collected honey and believed it to be sacred. The sweet substance is mentioned in the literature of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism.

Honey in Folk Medicine

In traditional Chinese medicine, honey is recommended for invigorating the health of the lungs, spleen and stomach. Herbal doctors in China would also give patients honey to treat dehydration, pain, fatigue and boost Chi energy. Other folk and herbal medicine traditions used honey for coughs, bronchitis and bolstering immunity. Honey was also added to other medicinal ingredients to improve



Presented by: 43740 Garfield Road, Clinton Township (586) 228-0270
28098 23 Mile Road, Chesterfield (586) 949-0123
57911 Van Dyke Road, Washington (586) 781-0800



taste and make it more palatable to patients.

Modern Research

Most scientific studies on honey have looked at its effects on coughs, bacterial infections and damaged skin. As mentioned, honey has been used for centuries as a throat soothing elixir, natural cough suppressant and decongestant. The *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* published a study of 100 children (between the ages of 2 and 18) with upper respiratory infections who were given either buckwheat honey, dextromethorphan or nothing at all. According to their parents, the kids who received the honey had the best relief from symptoms compared to the other methods. The study authors wrote in their conclusion, "Honey may be a preferable treatment for the cough and sleep difficulty associated with childhood upper respiratory tract infection."¹



The University of Ottawa conducted a study using manuka honey, which is sourced from New Zealand's manuka bush. Using this honey, scientists were able to destroy bacteria involved in the development of chronic sinusitis, which inflames the nasal cavity and may impact sufferers for months.²

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The immune system of a honey bee contains a protein called defensin-1, which is passed into the honey when bees create it from flower nectar. Scientists believe this is the major antibacterial property within honey. The success of honey as an antibacterial may help develop new types of antibiotics that can overcome current drug-resistant bacteria.



Healing Wounds and Burns

Long before modern medicine began exploring honey for its therapeutic benefits, people used honey to treat wounds and burns. The antibacterial ingredients in honey may help stop infection and nourish new tissue growth. Its anti-inflammatory properties may also reduce swelling and scarring. In a review of 19 medical studies on honey, evidence revealed honey can speed the healing of moderate burns by up to four days sooner.³

Honey Hazard

Honey should **NOT** be given to infants under 2 years of age, as it can contain botulism spores. The immature digestive system of an infant can't kill these spores and could lead to poisoning and death, although this is rare. Consult a qualified health care professional on using honey for medicinal purposes.

Quote to Inspire

"Life is the flower for which love is the honey."

Victor Hugo

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Writer: David Coyne
Design: María Camille Almirañez
Production: Troy Butler