

The Wellness Family

Dr. Gerken Keeps You Informed

Home Remedies for the Family

More and more families are making the turn towards a natural lifestyle. As research is proving the dangers in the over-usage of over-the-counter and prescription medications, parents are looking for healthier options for their children. Health and wellness go hand-in-hand and it all starts at home; before reaching for a pharmaceutical chemical look for healthier choices.

Echinacea

It's that time of year again: the weather has turned colder and everyone is complaining about it being cold and flu season. There are tissue boxes all over the office and commercials on TV raving about the latest children's cough suppressant or over-the-counter cold remedy. The reality is that winter doesn't have to be "cold and flu season"; it can be just plain winter again.

By having your child's spine checked regularly you've taken the first step to a healthier winter. The second step is to build their immune system. Echinacea, commonly known as the purple coneflower, is one of the top-selling herbs in North America and best known for its ability to boost the immune system. Unlike antibiotics, which kill bacteria, Echinacea stimulates the production of white blood cells and helps your body attack viruses and fight colds, coughs, flu and other respiratory conditions.

Available in liquid and tablet form, this herb is a must have for a healthier family. If you know that your little one has been exposed to the cold or flu, talk to your Family Wellness Chiropractor about Echinacea and boosting your child's immunity.

Apple Cider Vinegar

If your child is one of the thousands fighting a cold, then you know how difficult it is to soothe their discomfort; they can't eat, sleep or breathe with their mouth closed. To speed along their healing it's important to break up that congestion. Boil one part vinegar to one part water in a sauce pan on the stove and help your child stand near the stove to inhale the steam. This will break up the congestion and with a more productive cough your child will soon feel better.

Perhaps a sore or raspy throat came with that cold. Put a teaspoon of vinegar in an 8 oz glass of water, gargle and swallow. Or, for something a little more palatable, try 1 cup hot water, 2 tablespoons of honey and 1 teaspoon of vinegar instead.

If your child is also suffering with a mild-fever, don't reach for an over-the-counter remedy, which are known to cause the following side-effects: headache, nausea, chest congestion and diarrhea. Instead reach for a bottle of Apple Cider Vinegar. Soak a pair of your child's socks in the vinegar, wring them out, and have him or her wear them until the socks are partially dry. This can be repeated throughout the day and will help to lessen your child's fever.

Vinegar has several more home remedy applications that have nothing to do with a cold or the flu. If applied directly to a sunburn, vinegar will soothe and remove the



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sting, while ¼ cup added to your bath water will relieve dry and itchy skin.

Before you reach for a chemical consider healthier options and spare your family the dangerous side-effects associated with most over-the-counter drugs.

Ginger Root

Chinese herbalists discovered the healing properties of this herb 2,500 years ago. Generally used to treat an upset stomach, Ginger root has been proven to have many healing properties.

For an upset stomach boil the root in water and sip like a ginger tea. This can also help to relieve morning sickness, bouts of indigestion, intestinal spasms, diarrhea, and other bowel related problems including food poisoning or other similar intestinal infections since it is an antiseptic.

Ginger root and ginger oil are also a good expectorant; effective in various respiratory problems associated with a cold, flu, asthma and bronchitis, they remove mucus from the throat and lungs. As with vinegar, boil the root and inhale the steam.

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Garlic

Earaches are the number one cause of pediatrician's visits. A child with an earache is practically inconsolable and fluid can easily build up in a child's middle ear, creating pressure on the eardrum and causing intense pain. On a positive note, most earaches and ear infections, while painful, are not serious.

Any parent holding a child that is screaming in pain and tugging at their ear has only one thing on their mind, relieve the pain. And this can be done without a visit to the pediatrician or an over-the-counter chemical. Herbal eardrops can be purchased at most any health food store or you can make your own by blending equal parts of garlic and olive oil.

To administer the ear drops, warm a spoon by running it under hot water, pour a few drops of oil onto the spoon to warm the oil, then put two to three drops in each ear while your child is lying on their side. Plug the ear loosely with a cotton ball and repeat two to three times a day for no more than four days.

Aloe Vera

Well known for its healing properties, aloe vera has been used to heal the skin for more than 2000 years. Besides being a pain reliever for sunburns, the gel from an aloe vera plant can reduce and even reverse scarring when used regularly. Slice the leaf and apply the gel directly to the skin or buy pure aloe vera gel at your local health food store; but be careful as it will stain clothing.

What is not well known is that aloe vera can also treat many oral health problems including canker sores, cold sores, herpes simplex viruses and gingivitis.

A study published by the Academy of General Dentistry reported that aloe vera accelerates healing and reduces pain associated with canker sores, which are blisters on

the lips or mouth. Aloe does not have a bad taste or sting when applied; just cut the leaf and squeeze the gel onto the affected area.

Probiotics

As you may know, the body has bacteria that work for us not against us; these friendly bacteria that live in our intestines are called flora. Flora help to regulate our digestion and stool patterns, but are constantly competing for space with yeast. The two normally keep each other in check, but one of the problems caused by antibiotics is that they kill every bacteria in sight including the flora.

Depleted flora in a child can lead to many serious health issues including thrush, vaginal yeast infections, diarrhea and diaper rash.

Acidophilus – the most commonly known and readily available probiotic – quickly and effectively increases flora. The most important and noteworthy fact is that the purest and most effective acidophilus will not be found in the dairy section of your local grocery store. Pure acidophilus should be purchased from your local health food store or whole foods store. Baby-dophilus, which has already been diluted to a healthy level for infants, is available online from www.country-life.com.

In Summary

Chiropractic care is the first step toward a healthier foundation; regular adjustments mean an improved nervous system and healthier immune system. Many progressive parents are choosing natural remedies when required. So, talk to your Family Wellness Chiropractor about healthier choices for your family.

For more information please visit the following websites:

www.icpa4kids.org
www.mothing.com
www.country-life.com

Dear Parent,

Dr. Gerken is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. Take a moment today to speak with your Family Wellness Chiropractor regarding natural and healthier choices for your entire family.

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