

## Home Medicinal Remedies

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### From Heather E. Chapman

All of the talk about cultural foods, recipes, etc. has lead to talk about herbs, etc. which in turn has made me remember some of the old home remedies my mother used to use. I will never forget how she cured blood poisoning with a mustard poultice. The poisoning was well established at the time, too, and I was suffering from nausea and had the red and blue streaks leading from the wound. As things like penicillin are no longer having as much effect anymore, perhaps we should be going back to more of the old home remedies.

Does anyone know what there is about the mustard that worked? It was used for so many things, wasn't it? Also had to wear those mustard plasters on our chests when we had a bad chest cold - something I'm sure everyone else here remembers as well. I don't know if these were traditional German remedies or not, though.

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### From Rodney A. Metzler

I remember my Grandma Metzler, (Mary Schwabenland) cut herself rather badly one time and she went to the cupboard and took out a can of Watkins ground black pepper. She opened the top of the can and dumped it on the gaping cut. It stopped the bleeding, and according to our old physician, Dr. Dahlgren, saved her from bleeding to death. I was only about 5 when this happened, but it scared me so I remembered it vividly.

Also, we had a practice of when we got sort of upset or had a funny feeling in our stomachs, as kids, from too much horseplay or other excitement, my Grandma and my Mom used to say our "navels" had popped out and had to be pulled back in. They would make us lie down on our stomachs, and carefully pull the skin directly behind our navels in a sort of popping fashion. We then had to lie very still for a half an hour curled up in a ball on our sides. Worked every time.

My navel hardly ever pops out any more. Think the cure was permanent?

The juice of cooked cherries was a great way to clear out a bad stomach and eating a peach with the fuzz still on it always cured constipation. I could go on...we lived on a grape farm, made raisens and wine.

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### From Allyn Brosz

My father told me that my grandmother treated his earache by filling a sock with oats and heating it in the oven, then applying it to his ear. He said that this remedy caused significant drainage from his ear and seemed to solve the problem.

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**From Elliot R. Dreger**

When my father, born in Sergeyvka, Wohlynia, had indigestion or just generally felt sluggish, he would brew a tea made from an herb he called "Scharfskarben." He learned this from his family in Wohlynia. The tea was dark, bitter, and had a strong smell.

I later looked this up in an encyclopedia of herbs and found the English name: yarrow. Its flower looks somewhat like wild carrot or the Queen Anne's Lace plant. It grows in southern Wisconsin and probably all of the American Upper Midwest.

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**From Mary Hill**

There are two kinds of camomile--Roman camomile which is a perennial ground cover and German camomile which is a taller annual (it reseeds easily once you have it established.) Both have flowers that look like a prominent yellow half-globe surrounded by small white rays. Both smell like apples when cut or brushed and both have an apple-like taste in tea. However, drinking the tea (especially without sweetener. I like honey in it) can be an acquired taste.

Could you have gotten some other stuff in with your flowers? Camomile can be very tedious to harvest and all the short-cuts allow room for foreign matter to stray into your herb.

Could your Sweetwood be Sassafras? Pieces of sassafras root were used like you describe when I was a child.

You only use about a teaspoon full of the flowers and you steep about 15 minutes (or until it smells right. Use your judgement.)

Good luck with the herbs....

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**From Vera Beljakova-Miller**

We've heard a few ditties, such as below. But are they real "Braeuche" (Soothsaying, witchdoctor stuff) or just ditties, nursery rhymes to pacify crying children?

I mean, for example, my Oma used onion skins to get rid of warts.

What do you think of this?

Heile heile saeege,  
drei Daag Raeege  
drei Daag Schnee  
tuet's em Chindli nuemme weeh...

Heile Heile Segen  
Heile Heile Segen  
Drei Tage Regen

Drei Tage Schnee

Tut 's dem Kindlein nimmer (or nicht mehr) weh

Heal, heal blessing

Three days of rain

Three days of snow

Then it won't hurt (the child) any more.

Heile, Heile Katzendreck

Morgen frueh is Alles weck!