

FACTS ABOUT HONEY USED IN FOLK MEDICINE

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Honey and propolis have been and still are largely used in the folk medicine of many countries. Lately, even the traditional medicine has started to resort to the means of treatment used in the folk medicine. All the natural substances, biologically active, prove to be sufficiently efficient in the prophylaxy and treatment of many diseases. Moreover, these substances are less toxic than the wide range of products obtained through the synthesis of chemical compounds.

Folk medicine frequently uses infusions, concoctions, juices of plants and fruits in treating many diseases such: acné, furunculosis, dermic mycosis, seborrhoea, hyperhidrosis, dandruff and baldness, cold etc. The apitherapeutical practice approves of the combination of apicultural products and substances of vegetal origin. The simplicity, the accessibility and the possibility of preparing such products home even, the absence of any noxious substances, all these are the elements which allow us to recommend them to all the readers.

The juice of cucumbers and honey is used in the treatment of acné. Take three tablespoons of finely chopped cucumber and pour in a glass of boiled water. Let for infusion 2-3 hours. Filter and add a teaspoon of natural honey. Mix well until completely dissolved. Either wash the face and apply a cotton buffer soaked in this juice, or just wet it. Let until the liquid evaporates. After 30-40 minutes, wash the face with cold water.

If acné or seborrhoea breaks out, an infusion of garden sage with honey may also be used. Take a tablespoon of garden sage leaves and por over it 1-1 ½ glass hot water. Let for infusion covered for 30-40 minutes (or boil 5 minutes on gentle heat). Filter and add ½ teaspoon honey. Mix well. Soak compress in this warm infusion and apply 2-3 times/day.

Many of us have at home infusion of royal marigold (*Calendula officinalis* L.) either bought from the drug store or prepared at home. Take a glass of hot water and add one teaspoon honey and one teaspoon infusion of royal marigold. Mix well. It is used in the treatment of acné eruptions, fat skin complexion. Apply compress.

Folk medicine also uses the juice of fresh potatoe in the treatment of eczema, burns, ulcerations, piodermatitis, phlegmonous acné and painful callosities. If honey is also added, the antiinflammatory qualities of the juice will be higher.

Preparation mode: Wash well and peel the fresh potatoe. Pass it through a very fine sieve. Add one teaspoon honey to ½ glass of the mixture. Mix well. Put this mixture on a compress or gauze napkin. Apply on the affected zone of the skin. The layer of mixture on the gauze should be of at least 1 cm. Fix with bandage and let for at least 2 hours. When the napkin is removed, take a spatule and remove the part of the mixture which has pierced through the gauze. Make such dressings several times/day. By night you may also apply on the affected zone a dressing with propolis ointment. The next day apply again the dressing with potatoes and honey. Beware, first check if you are allergic to propolis.

While being in Romania, I had the opportunity to find out facts on using propolis and oak's bark in treating feet's perspiration, hands' eczema.

Make a concoction of oak's bark (1 portion bark, 5 portions water). Add one teaspoon of propolis tincture (30-40%) to one glass of concoction. Apply this solution on skin. In the case of feet's perspiration make baths with a diluted concoction of propolis tincture. Bath's temperature should not be above 38 °C. and the period of procedure – 20 min. 10 days will be enough for such a treatment.

In the treatment of seborrhoea, add one teaspoon honey to one glass of oak's bark. Rub the face or hair's skin with this solution.

Ears' eczema, ears' pruritus in sick men inclined to have allergic reactions towards antibiotics and other drugs are treated successfully with a mixture of propolis tincture and nuts' infusion. The product is very efficient and easy to be prepared. Some words about nuts: beside a great quantity of ascorbic acid, the shell of green nuts also contains a substance called iuglon with strong bacterial properties. This substance destroys almost the entire mycotic flora. The yeasts from the genus *Candida*, the calamity of contemporary antibioticotherapy, are significantly sensitive towards this substance.

To prepare the infusion, crumb the shell of green nuts (better use some rubber gloves) and let macerate in 70% ethilic alcohol (10 g crumbed shell to 100 ml alcohol). Filter after 4-5 days through 2-3 layers of gauze and add an equal quantity of tincture of propolis. If pruritus occurs, rub the skin of the external auditory conduct with this solution. If eczema occurs, make dressings of gauze soaked in this solution (propolis and nut shell) and put into ears. Keep 30-40 minutes. Repeat 2-3 times/day. Usually, the treatment does not take longer than 10 days. If mycosis occurs, make a pause of 2 days after 7-10 days of treatment. Take culture samples from ears and make laboratory analysis.

In the USSR, one may find in the perfumer's shop a shampoo with honey, produced in Bulgaria. However, we are also able to prepare a solution with similar properties, for hair softening. Take 30 g of horse gowan. Pour over it 100 ml boiled water. Let rest 1 hour, then filter. Add 1 teaspoon honey. Soak the newly washed hair in this solution. Wash with warm water. If the hair is too dry, apply the solution once every 10-12 days. If it's oily, apply the solution once every 6-7 days.

Folk medicine recommends for cough black radish with honey. Take a brush and wash it very well. Cut the upper portion and hollow out the core. Pour in it 2 tablespoons of fluid honey. Place the black radish vertically (in a bowl). Cover it with a paper. Let rest 3-4 hours. The dose for adults and children is 1 teaspoon syrup, 3-4 times/day, before each meal. We recommend to take the syrup before going to sleep too.

Once, when I was in Greece, I saw a woman rubbing the head's skin of a child with a paste. It smelled like onion. Later I found out from my translator that in Greece the onion juice with honey is used traditionally for the growth and regeneration of hair. Scrape the onion and add honey (4 portions scrapped onion – 1 portion honey). Rub head's skin very well. Let as such for 30 min. Wash with warm water. If the hair is very dry do as follows: add a small quantity of olive oil to the scrapped onion with honey. One hour before washing the hair, rub the head's skin with this paste. Put on a rubber head-piece. Wash the hair as usual.

In the treatment of inflammatory pharynx we use an infusion with propolis and St. John's wort. Take a tablespoon of St. John's wort and pour over it a glass with boiled water. Let for infusion for 15-20 minutes. Filter. For a throat wash, one glass of the infusion will be enough, together with 20 drops of propolis tincture. We recommend to make a throat wash 2-3 times/day. This flavoured substance has strong anti-inflammatory properties.

The juice of red beet and honey is very efficient against colds. We suggest to use a solution of 30% honey and the juice of red beet, 5-6 drops in each nostril, 4-5 times/day, in the case of acute colds. It may even help in chronic colds. The solution has a most efficient effect for children having cold caused by adenoid vegetations from the nose-pharynx. Obviously, these drops will never eliminate the vegetations. However, before an operation they meliorate the nasal respiration and temporary stop the dripping of nose mucosity.

Folk medicine recommends the use of pumpkin seeds and honey as an efficient vermifuge. Honey is also most efficient in constipations. For such cases folk medicine suggests the use of honey with pumpkin core-either pumpkin paste or boiled pumpkin and honey.

The following product is most suited for the activation of the eliminatory function of the intestine. Take 400 g dry apricots, 400 g dry stoneless plums, 1 pack leaves of *Folium Sennae*. Pass all through the mincing machine. Add 200 g pure honey. Mix well. Honey should be liquid. The usual dose is one teaspoon after each meal, with a little warm water. However, it's best to have your own choice on the optimum dose.

Fried corn cobs with honey are recommended in the treatment of infections of gall bladder and biliary ducts.

The juice of honey and aloe is being used for a very long time in the treatment of pharynx' inflammations, nose-pharynxlarynx, trachea and dermic affections of the ears. It can also be used in the prophylaxy of radiological epithelitis in patients ambulatory treated with rays.

Preparation mode: Take the inferior leaves of aloe and wash well. Chop finely 0.5 cm thick plates. Pass them through the manual press to obtain the juice. Add honey (ratio 1:5). The fresh mixture is administered before each meal (one teaspoon). The procedure will take 1-2 months.

Honey combined with garlic is very efficient in treating the affections of inferior limbs (endarteritis, varicose dilatations of veins), ischaemic cardiopathy. Take 250 g peeled garlic and pass it through the sieve. Mix it with 350 g liquid honey. Let macerate for 1 week. Take one tablespoon of the mixture 40 minutes before each meal, three times/day, for 1-2 months.

Folk medicine recommends the vegetable juice in combination with honey for arterial hypertension. Follow such a recipe: beet juice, carrot juice, radish and honey juice. Mix in equal quantities (for i.e. one glass of each one of them). The mixture is administered three times/day, before each meal. The quantity should be one tablespoon, for 2-3 months. The mixture should be kept in a cool place, protected against light.

Since ancient times, plantain juice with honey has been widely recommended for stomach diseases. It is indicated for the cases of hypersecretion and normal secretion of the gastric juice. Combine 500 g honey with 500 g plantain juice. Boil on very gentle heat for 20 minutes. Drink the juice when cold before each meal, one tablespoon, three times/day.

When warm, this mixture might be used in the treatment of cough, being a sedative for convulsive cough.

Folk medicine also recommends against cough the following preparation: Add two tablespoons anise seed and a little salt to one teaspoon honey. Pour over one glass water. Boil, filter and let cool. Take two tablespoons every two hours.

For children we recommend the following preparation against cough: (especially against convulsive cough): combine honey with warm olive oil (ratio 1:1). The dose should be 1 teaspoon several times/day.