

HONEY

In traditional medicine, honey has long been used in remedies for a variety of health problems. Found to possess antioxidant and antibacterial properties, honey contains many vitamins and minerals (including vitamin B2, vitamin B6, iron, and manganese). Common honey remedies include the treatment of wounds, allergies, cough, and colds.

Although honey's health effects have yet to be extensively researched, some studies suggest that honey remedies may be useful for certain conditions. Here's a look at several key study findings:

Honey Remedies for Sinus Problems

In a test-tube study published in 2009, researchers found that honey can kill three types of drug-resistant bacteria known to cause sinusitis. In fact, study results showed that honey knocked out the bacteria (*Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and methicillin-resistant and -susceptible *Staphylococcus aureus*) more effectively than commonly used antibiotic drugs.

While these study results indicate that honey remedies may be of some use to people with sinusitis, it's important to seek medical attention in treatment of sinusitis in order to reduce risk of serious complications (such as meningitis and vision problems).

Honey Remedies for Cough

When it comes to easing the cough and sleep problems associated with childhood upper respiratory tract infection, honey may be preferable to standard cough suppressants. That's the main finding of a 2007 study, in which 105 children with upper respiratory tract infections were given a single dose of honey, dextromethorphan, or no treatment a half-hour before bedtime. When comparing the effects of honey and dextromethorphan, researchers found no significant differences.

In a report published in 2010, however, researchers concluded that there is "insufficient evidence to advise for or against the use of honey for acute cough in children."

Honey Remedies for Allergies

Some honey proponents claim that regular consumption of locally harvested honey can help protect against allergies (such as hay fever). To test this theory, researchers in a 2002 study assigned 36 people with rhinoconjunctivitis (allergy-induced runny nose and itchy, watery eyes) to eat a tablespoon of locally collected honey, nationally collected honey, or honey-flavored corn syrup each day. Study results showed that neither group of honey-consuming study members experienced significantly greater improvement in their symptoms (compared with the placebo group).

How to Use Honey Remedies

More research needs to be conducted before honey remedies can be recommended as a treatment for any health condition. However, since honey is generally considered a safe, healthy substance, it's unlikely that use of honey remedies will produce any adverse effects. In addition to using honey as a remedy, you can increase your honey consumption by using it as a sweetener in a number of health-promoting beverages, such as black tea and green tea.

Feeling cold? Stuffy? Sore throat? Honey Lemon Ginger Tea will cure what ails you. The heat and the ginger warms you right up, the steam and the lemon and the ginger help clear those sinuses, and the ginger and the honey soothe that scratchy throat. I've been known to add a shot of whiskey to the mix, but I'm old school.

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp. freshly grated ginger (no need to peel it)
- 1 Tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. honey, plus more to taste

Preparation:

1. Put the ginger in a tea pot or medium bowl. Pour 1 cup boiling water over it and let it steep for 3 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, put the lemon juice and the honey in a large mug. Strain the ginger tea into the mug.
3. Stir to dissolve the honey, taste, and add more honey or lemon juice if you like.

Makes 1 mug **Honey Lemon Ginger Tea**.