

Foods THAT heal

Chocolate for coughs?
Tea for fever? Here are
some neat food fixes

CHOCOLATE – for coughs

It might not help your diet, but if you're looking to beat a garden variety cough, 50g of dark chocolate (or two cups of drinking cocoa) was found to be more effective than codeine, in a study by the Imperial College London. This is because chocolate contains bromine, a chemical thought to suppress the "itch" in the vagus nerve that causes coughing.

On the upside? Chocolate is relatively harmless. Cough medicines (which contain codeine) have possible side-effects, and "there is no good evidence that cough medicines work," says GP Dr John Gullotta. The downside? "Any cough that lasts for more than a week or keeps recurring should be investigated by a doctor. Sinusitis, bronchitis, pneumonia and asthma can develop into long-term chronic problems – and chocolate won't fix these."



GARLIC – for colds

One clinical trial of nearly 150 people found those who took garlic had much less chance of getting a cold (24 people got colds in the 12-week follow-up) compared to non-garlic folks (65 of whom got colds).

Source: Cochrane Collaboration.



TOP TIP
"Garlic in hot water with a little honey, lemon, ginger and fresh thyme is a great hot toddy for a cold," says naturopath Narelle Stegehuis.



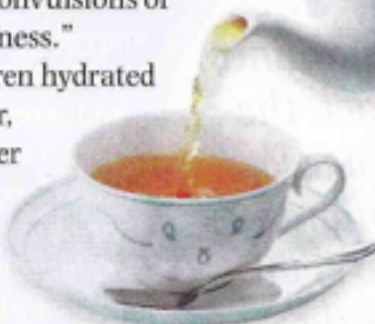
LINDEN FLOWER TEA – for fever

Linden flower tea can reduce fever, says naturopath Narelle Stegehuis, from MassAttack in Melbourne. "It stimulates the hypothalamus (part of the brain that controls temperature), and it dilates blood vessels to induce sweating.

"For small kids it's hard to use tea, so try Hydralyte iceblocks from the chemist, or a tepid bath.

"A fever is considered to be body temperature more than 37 degrees, and fevers above 38 warrant a trip to the doctor, especially for kids, or if your child is listless or sick, suffers from febrile convulsions or has neck stiffness."

Keep children hydrated during a fever, and if the fever persists for more than 24 hours see your doctor.



Try this

If you feel nauseous, infuse fresh ginger in hot water or try a ginger tea. Even ginger ale or a ginger biscuit can help. For motion sickness, take a couple of ginger tablets before your journey.



CALCIUM FIX

Looking for a healthy beverage? So Good Rice Milk, made from wholegrain brown rice, has a third of your daily calcium requirement per serve, and is cholesterol free, low in fat, and lactose and gluten free.



3 top headache sorters

1 Tiger Balm

Tiger Balm provides similar relief to paracetamol when rubbed on the temple and repeated at 30 minutes, according to a study reported in the *Australian Family Physician Journal*. "This study suggests that Tiger Balm is indicated for tension headache and that as a topical preparation it may [give more rapid relief] than oral analgesics," study authors concluded.

2 Keep a diary

"Keeping a migraine diary and working out potential triggers can help," says Narelle Stegehuis,

naturopath from MassAttack in Melbourne. "Make a note of triggers such as foods like cheese, red wine, citrus fruits, chocolate, caffeine and alcohol. Or stress, poor sleep, bright lights, falling oestrogen before a period, noise and weather."

Scary fact

Kids get migraines, too. In fact, the average age for onset of migraines is five to eight years old.

3 Try natural treatments

"Feverfew [a medicinal herb] may help to reduce the levels of nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light associated with migraines," says Narelle. "If you have hormonal migraines, evening primrose oil and omega-3 fatty acids can help."