

SURPRISING HEALTH FACTS OF EVERYDAY PRODUCTS





As we get older and our healthcare needs grow more complex, the medicine cabinet can get more and more crowded. Fortunately, there are simple solutions to many of your problems ready at hand. All you have to do is look at a few common, everyday products that you may already have around the house.

Many of these can be found in the pantry or refrigerator. Did you know that lemon juice is a powerful guardian against diabetes and heart disease? Or that just by buying a different type of salt, you can decrease the likelihood of a whole range of health conditions?

As you'll learn, there could be items sitting around your house that could help protect against illness and disease.

Protection from:

- Malnutrition or poorly balanced diet
- High blood sugar
- Infection from poor sanitation
- Poor circulation

Not only that, you'll find that many of these products have surprising beauty and cleaning applications. You can replace many of the toxic cleaners normally used around the house with a few organic ingredients that have been just waiting to give you more mileage.

Are you ready to be surprised? Read on to find out how the things around the house you've taken for granted could change your life for the better.



BUTTER

What better news could we give than this? One of the fattiest and most delicious foods in your fridge could be your hero.

Americans used to consume on average more than four times as much butter as they do today. In the 1960s, a researcher proposed that saturated fat and cholesterol were to blame for heart disease, and the idea caught on. By the 1970s, many people had switched to margarine.

Since then, countless studies have failed to conclusively back up the claims villainizing butter. Meanwhile, research shows that the hydrogenated and processed, polyunsaturated oils of margarine are detrimental to your health.

Real butter is rich in vitamins, minerals, and nutrients that have the benefits of:

- Metabolizing cholesterol (not clogging the veins with it!)
- Preventing the calcification of joints and hardening of arteries and cataracts
- Preventing tooth decay
- Preventing cancer
- Preventing gastrointestinal infections in the very young and the elderly

In other words, butter isn't the decadent "junk food" many people have come to see it as, but rather a delicious health food that can be consumed in moderation!

Before 1960, the average American consumed 18 pounds of butter per year - as opposed to the 4 pounds consumed today.

LEMON JUICE

Lemon juice contains the highest natural acidity of any food. This is the source of many of its health benefits. If you can tolerate its flavor, you're bound to benefit from this sweet and sour savior!

If you can tolerate its sour flavor, lemon juice is a great substitute sweetener because unlike other fruits, it has a low glycemic index. This means the sugars in its juice are absorbed into the blood very slowly, keeping blood sugar levels from spiking.

Not only that, lemon juice also prevents the sugar from other foods from entering the bloodstream as quickly. This means that incorporating lemon juice into your recipes or drinking a glass of lemon water after a meal could help keep blood sugar levels stable.

Health Benefits of lemon juice:

- Alkalize body's pH (decreases inflammation, increases cell repair)
- Sanitize kitchen surfaces - the acidity will kill most bacteria
- Relieve sore throats - the acidity is antibacterial when ingested
- Vitamin C and free radicals protect against colds and cancer alike
- Eliminate waste and promote regular bowel movements

There are many more health and medical applications of lemon juice, but it's highly recommended that you consult a physician to make sure there is no interaction with any medications you're currently using.

acidities compared

pH Values

(lower values mean higher acidity)

2 Lemon juice and vinegar

3 Orange juice and soda

4 Tomato juice and acid rain

5 Black coffee

7 Pure water



VINEGAR

Think of vinegar as lemon juice on steroids. Many of its benefits are derived from its acidity, which is about the same level as lemon juice but without the tasty citrus flavor!

Just like lemon juice, a main benefit of vinegar is it lowers blood sugar, which can help fight diabetes, obesity, and heart disease. If you like sour dishes, you're in for some great health benefits! Apple cider vinegar or rice vinegar are the most popular cooking vinegars, although white vinegar can also liven up a dish.

Vinegar's strong acidity also creates an inhospitable environment for bacteria, mold, and fungus. This makes it a great topical solution and surface cleaner. Some applications of vinegar:

- Natural deodorant (kills bacteria causing armpit odors)
- Dandruff treatment (kills fungus causing dandruff)
- Mouthwash
- Whiten teeth
- Hair rinse (removes mineral buildups deposited by tap water)
- Treat acne
- Remove warts

Note: especially for topical uses, be sure to dilute vinegar. Concentrated vinegar can burn the skin.

Applying vinegar topically will change the pH balance of the skin. Be sure to consult a physician before tampering with the body's pH level.

Vinegar was used as early as 5,000 B.C. by the ancient Babylonians as a condiment and preservative.

A photograph of several yellow onions in a woven basket on the left, and a few more onions on a wooden cutting board with a knife on the right. The background is a dark wooden surface. A green horizontal bar is overlaid on the top of the image, containing the word "ONIONS" in large white letters.

ONIONS

Onions turn out to be not only tasty, but handy. If you can handle the smell, onions have quite a few useful benefits.

Raw:

- Insect repellent: rub a slice of onion so the juice coats any exposed skin. Voila! You've become that much less appealing to pests.
- Soothe insect bites and stings: if you were too late applying it as insect repellent, try rubbing a slice of onion over bites and stings. Many people find the onion soothes the wound.
- Ease pain of burns: rubbing a slice of onion on a burn can calm it down (only do this on minor burns).
- Other skin ailments: you can place onion over bruises, warts, and boils to treat them!
- Remove splinters: bandage a slice of raw onion over a splinter overnight to help your skin expel the splinter.

Cooked:

- Soothe sore throats: like pretty much any vegetable, you can make tea by boiling chopped onions for a few minutes. Onion tea is known to alleviate sore throats.
- Cure earaches: steam or bake an onion until soft, then press the juice from it. Using an eyedropper, put a few drops into the offending ear.

Aside from minced on a condiment-loaded chili dog, most people wouldn't think of using a raw onion - but it turns out rubbing it on your skin has a lot of benefits!

And onion juice eardrops or onion tea probably never made it into your bucket list of things to try, but you'll probably think of onions next time you have an earache.

Onions are the 6th most popular vegetable in the world, based on amount produced.

A photograph of four garlic bulbs with purple-tinged white skin, arranged in a row against a warm, brownish background. The bulbs are partially obscured by a dark green horizontal band that contains the title.

GARLIC

Perhaps one of the most clinically studied foods for medical purposes, garlic is useful and potent stuff. Not only is it packed with nutrients yet low in calories, it has many documented health benefits. Here are a few.

- Treat colds: taking garlic regularly is shown to reduce the incidence and duration of colds.
- Treat high blood pressure/hypertension: regular garlic use is known to lower blood pressure significantly.
- Lowers cholesterol levels: consuming garlic can lower total and LDL ("bad") cholesterol levels, reducing the risk for heart disease.
- Anti-aging: garlic contains antioxidants known to prevent cell damage, aging, and Alzheimer's disease.
- Remove heavy metals: garlic consumption is shown to reduce heavy metal toxins from the blood.

Garlic is a potent medicine in its own right. As always, consult a doctor before using it for any medical purpose.

The record of most cloves of garlic eaten in one minute is 34, and is held by Deepak Sharma Bajagain of Nepal.



GINGER

Like garlic, ginger not only tastes good, but it's another common plant with many medicinal uses. Some of its best documented uses are for treatment of nausea and inflammation, but it can also treat other pain and disorders, both superficial and internal.

- Nausea and vomiting: complementing HIV/AIDS treatments, complementing chemotherapy treatments, morning sickness, and post-surgical nausea.
- Digestion: calms upset stomachs.
- Bones and joints: oral consumption or ginger-infused oils can decrease osteoarthritis inflammation (instead of ibuprofen or glucosamine) and joint pain.
- Pain relief and other uses: decreases pain of menstrual periods, eases hangovers, decreases all kinds of inflammation, opens the throat of stroke victims having trouble swallowing, and calms insect bites.

Ginger has also been proven effective at treating a variety of other ailments in conjunction with other herbs - the trouble has been discerning whether the ginger, the other herbs, or the combination was producing the results observed. More study of ginger is needed to be certain.

Remember that herbal medicines contain chemical compounds as powerful as many prescription drugs. Check with a doctor before using ginger as medicine, especially when pregnant or using other medications.

in the 13th and 14th century Europe, the cost of a pound of ginger was equivalent to the cost of one sheep!



SALT

Salt is one of the most vital nutrients in our bodies. It regulates heartbeats, blood pressure, nerve function, cell acidity, blood sugar level, power generation in cells, muscle function, mucus clearing, saliva production, sleep regulation, and more.

In addition, it has a few other very handy uses:

- Clean wounds: add 2 tbs of salt per quart of water, then rinse and scrub wounds to clear away dirt and naturally disinfect wounds.
- Clean vegetables before eating: use a handful of salt as a gritty abrasive to scrub dirt from vegetables while disinfecting them. Then use the above solution to rinse them clean and disinfect them. This works especially well with commonly dirty leafy greens like spinach.
- Prevent falls: salt your walkways and driveway to keep them clear of ice in the winter. If you don't have rock salt available, any type of table salt you have handy will do the trick in a pinch.

Salt was so important and valuable in ancient times that Roman soldiers were sometimes paid in salt, which is where the English word "salary" comes from.

The quality of our salt is what most of us tend to overlook. The prevalence of refined table salt in our food can cause as many health problems as it prevents, including high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, liver failure, interference with medications, and interference with nerve and muscle activity. The key is to use salts with a more balanced mineral content. Refined table salt is mostly sodium chloride with some synthetic iodine added in.

A simple change that could vastly boost your health is to avoid refined table salt (found in most processed foods) and switch it out for natural sea salt or Himalayan rock salt. These are rich in potassium, magnesium, calcium, and other minerals so your body can function more optimally.



COCONUT OIL

Coconut oil is truly amazing. It has nutritional properties that are incredibly beneficial for our health, like a good balance of healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals.

Research has indicated a variety of benefits, like balancing hormones, increasing fat burning, boosting immunity, preventing bone loss, sleep aid, digestive support, blood sugar stabilizer, cholesterol level balancer, and eczema and psoriasis treatment.

But coconut oil shines when it teams up with other simple, everyday products, like the baking soda found next on this list. Coconut oil makes the perfect base for all kinds of personal care products that will keep you healthy and beautiful.

There are almost too many uses to list:

- **Cooking and eating:** coconut oil nutrients don't break down at high temperatures, it's perfect for cooking like stir frying; also try it as coffee creamer; in dressings; a straight spoonful as a snack; butter toast with it, bake it into desserts, popcorn topping, make mayonnaise with it...you name it, coconut oil can be used in it!
- **Skincare:** deodorant, sun protection (it's naturally SPF 4), wound care, anti-fungal, exfoliate skin, soap, massage oil, personal lubricant, insect repellent, nail cuticle oil, soothing foot rub, face wash, makeup remover.
- **Oral care:** toothpaste, mouthwash, oil pull, throat lozenge, teeth whitener (with baking soda or activated charcoal).
- **Hair care:** shampoo, conditioner, hair detangler, hair shine.

To get the most of its natural nutritional benefits, try to find virgin, organic, non-refined coconut oil produced by wet-milling and separated by fermentation. Other production processes can break down nutrients to various degrees.

Coconut oil was the world's most-used vegetable oil until the 1960s, when low cost soybean oil took the lead.



BAKING SODA

Baking soda, or sodium bicarbonate, is one of the most useful, and by far the cheapest, home remedy readily found in everyone's kitchen.

As a naturally gentle abrasive, deodorizer, and pH balancer, baking soda works well on its own or in combination with other products, like coconut oil or vinegar, to clean, freshen, and soothe.

- Oral care: polish teeth, freshen breath.
- Ingestion: relieve heartburn and muscle soreness from exercise.
- Skin and hair care: shampoo, deodorant, exfoliant, soak feet, and relieve skin irritation, diaper rash, and insect bites.
- Cleaning and household use: clean surfaces, clean brushes and combs, soak oral appliances, deodorize refrigerator.

Recipes abound online for baking soda uses. Don't be surprised to find it used in combination with other products on this list - for example, used with coconut oil as a shampoo after giving the hair a vinegar rinse.

In principle, baking soda is extremely easy to use. Either apply it directly, make it into a paste or dissolve it with water, or mix it with coconut oil. Then use it to either scrub, soak, or apply and let sit, and it will work its cleaning and deodorizing magic!

Combining water and baking soda creates a fizzing chemical reaction that not only can be used to simulate a volcano in science experiments, but can be used to clean hard-to-reach places like drains and garbage disposals!



ACTIVATED CHARCOAL

Activated charcoal is not commonly found in households, but is readily available at most pharmacies in either powder (usually in a capsule) or stick form.

The power of activated charcoal lies in its ability to bind with all kinds of things - dirt, minerals, nutrients, poisons, and more. It can sometimes remove the toughest stains with ease, and as you'll see, it could even save your life in an emergency.

Some uses for activated charcoal:

- Remove teeth stains: make powdered charcoal into a paste and let it sit. It will bind with tea, coffee, cinnamon, and remove stains that scrubbing has no effect whatsoever on (and keep in mind that hard brushing can wear down tooth enamel).
- Cleanse skin and hair: a charcoal paste or shampoo will bind with dirt in your skin, pores, and hair and leave them clean in a way soap alone can't achieve.
- Deodorant: a thin paste will help bind with odor-causers and odor molecules to neutralize body odors.
- Water purifier: charcoal is used in household water filters to purify water. You can make your own water purifier by simply dropping a stick of activated charcoal into a glass or pitcher of water. The stick will be effective for months before it needs to be changed out
- Air purifier: place a stick of activated charcoal in the fridge or other confined space, and it will absorb odors just like baking soda.
- Poison neutralizer: ingesting activated charcoal is a common emergency treatment to neutralize poisons that were consumed orally. Make sure to call poison control before attempting this at home.

Charcoal is activated by heating it in the presence of gases like argon, oxygen, or nitrogen to open up millions of tiny pores between the carbon atoms of the charcoal. These pores are what allow it to easily trap or bind with chemicals and particles.

There are many other uses of activated charcoal, from filtering flatulence to relieving bloating and gas discomfort, but most of these involve ingesting charcoal, which carries its own risks. Activated charcoal will bind with anything in the stomach - including all the good nutrients that your body needs - so it's best to seek other internal remedies first.



TENNIS BALLS

You may have heard that tennis balls can fluff your laundry in the dryer, help park your car precisely by dangling it from a string in the garage, or help you find your car in a parking lot by sticking one on your car antenna.

But did you know tennis balls can help keep your body and mind safe and well? Some fantastic tennis ball uses:

- **Foot massager:** either standing or seated, roll your bare foot over and around a tennis ball. The massage provided by the ball will improve circulation, work out trigger points, loosen up muscles and joints.
- **Back massager:** simply lay on one or more tennis balls and roll yourself up and down, back and forth. Tennis balls are just the right firmness to gently work out trigger points in the back, which takes the burden of muscular stress in the body. This is also a surprisingly good, light workout!
- **Mood improver:** have you ever passed or tossed a ball back and forth between your two hands? Doing so produces an effect called bilateral stimulation which helps the brain process information and work through negative thoughts. This helps get you into a better mood and even think more creatively.
- **Childproof corners:** corners and other pointy edges can be dulled and softened by cutting a tennis ball open and placing it over them. This is especially useful in walkways, areas with lots of furniture with corners like tables, and places where falls are likely.
- **Walker ends:** if your walker doesn't have wheels and it's hard for you to lift it, try putting tennis balls around the ends of the legs. The walker will glide more easily across floors.
- **Hand strengthener/stress reliever:** keep your hands and forearms strong and active by squeezing a tennis ball a few times a day. This makes a great outlet for stress, too!

About 300 million tennis balls are produced each year. Be sure to recycle them for the above uses when you're done hitting them! Also, did you know that tennis balls used to be white?

Compared to the rest of the items on this list, this everyday product may seem like the oddball (pun intended), but as you see tennis balls have some surprising health benefits most people have never thought of.

These are only some of the solutions provided by these everyday household products - they also have plenty of other household or more specialized uses. These uses are just the ones most directly applicable to your health, wellbeing, and beauty.

These products are especially useful for seniors, who benefit more than others from the nutritional, sanitary, and safety solutions of these products. Seniors or their caregivers need only open the cupboard or make a trip to the supermarket to get their hands on the products we have outlined.

While these uses may seem new and clever, many have been used for thousands of years and have been common wisdom in certain cultures. We're just "discovering" them again today, or bringing scientific rigor to understanding the uses of these items.

Remember, many of these products are simple but powerful. As noted throughout, make sure you consult a physician before adding the use of these products to your daily routine.

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