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BEAUTY
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(and they're not hotels)



to kill bacteria on contact. Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, praised the healing abilities of vinegar and prescribed to his patients a concoction of apple cider vinegar and honey to cure a number of ailments, including sore throat and colds.

Expert opinion: In his highly acclaimed book, *Folk Medicine*, traditional medicine expert Dr D.C. Jarvis states that an apple cider vinegar and honey concoction can cure colds and other ailments (such as arthritis). Dr Jarvis further suggests that the mixture can aid weight loss as it helps to burn fat easily, while the acidity of the vinegar helps to curb the appetite. Despite this, a study conducted by the Innsbruck Medical University in Austria suggests that consuming large amounts of apple cider vinegar may cause osteoporosis in some patients and can lower potassium levels in the body which could lead to health complications.

Verdict: We can't tell you what the long-term effects may be (or whether it will help you lose weight), but taking the mix when you have a sore throat does help. The acidity of the vinegar brings some relief, and it tastes a lot better than cough medicine.



GINGER FOR INDIGESTION

There's an ancient Indian proverb that says "everything good is found in ginger." It may not contain 'everything good' but the humble ginger plant is packed with lots of goodness. The root is widely used in herbal remedies throughout Asia as it's highly favoured for its anti-inflammatory properties.

Expert opinion: According to the American Cancer Society, ginger is approved by Germany's regulatory agency for herbs (Commission E) to aid indigestion and prevent motion sickness. However, based on a study published in the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*, there isn't enough evidence to prove that ginger can cure vomiting and nausea.

Verdict: We wouldn't recommend this method if you plan to spend the day around people, as it will cause you to release gas throughout the day. If that doesn't phase you, try adding thinly sliced pieces of raw ginger into a mug of hot water with a little honey or brown sugar. Depending on the severity of the indigestion, this ginger-infused drink can help to soothe a distressed tummy.



BEAUTY REMEDIES

RICE WATER AS A FACIAL CLEANSER

Female Japanese rice farmers claim that bathing in the water that was used to clean rice is one way to achieving translucent and dewy looking skin. On this side of the world, there is a traditional Malay beauty remedy that is used to clear the skin of blemishes called *bedak sejuk*.

The cooling powder is made from rice and is said to be made of the same components as rice water.

Expert opinion: According to an article on the International Dermal Institute's website, a chemical analysis on rice bran showed that it contains "a rich source of biologically active agents that are beneficial to the skin." But despite these findings, there isn't enough scientific evidence to prove that bathing in rice water will improve skin condition.

Verdict: Similar to a light cleanser, rice water leaves the skin feeling much cleaner after use. We can't tell if the method will give you dewy looking skin, however, as it didn't produce visible results.

GREEN TEA MASK TO TREAT ACNE

What is it that makes Japanese women's skin so flawless? It might be something in the water (rice water?), or the green tea that they drink. You don't have to drink your body weight in green tea to get glowing skin, however. Try slathering it on your face instead.

Expert opinion: Author of *The Beauty Diet* Lisa Drayer MA, RD suggests that topical green tea has been shown to treat acne and may even offer anti-ageing benefits. In her book, Drayer cites a study that "resulted in the prevention of UVB light-induced

inflammatory responses, immunosuppression and oxidative stress, the biomarkers of several skin diseases." She also adds that "green tea polyphenols are photoprotective in nature and may help prevent UVB light-induced skin disorders including photoageing, melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers."

Verdict: The easiest way to make a green tea mask is by mixing matcha green tea powder with water to create a paste. Some recipes add a bit of coconut oil. We suggest leaving the paste on for 20 minutes. The mask is a real treat and will leave your skin feeling pampered and silky soft.

TURMERIC TO TREAT INFLAMED SKIN

South Indian women use turmeric as part of their skincare routine. Sometimes called the *haldi* mask, the turmeric is grounded into a powder and mixed with water to create a thick paste. It is used to banish imperfections and is most often used by a bride-to-be the day before her wedding to ensure flawless skin on her big day.

Expert opinion: According to Drayer, "turmeric does have anti-inflammatory properties, so applying it topically may help with inflammatory skin conditions [such as] acne."

Verdict: Although it stings on application, the mask soothes the skin with a slight drying effect. That means the paste can help to dry out acne. We recommend a thorough rinse with a light cleanser after, as the yellow pigment can leave you looking like Marge Simpson for days. □

