

HOME CURES AND POPULAR BELIEFS

CHAPTER

1

Everywhere on earth people use home remedies. In some places, the older or *traditional* ways of healing have been passed down from parents to children for hundreds of years.

Many home remedies have great value. Others have less. And some may be risky or harmful. Home remedies, like modern medicines, must be used with caution.

**Try to do no harm.
Only use remedies if you are sure they are
safe and know exactly how to use them.**

HOME CURES THAT HELP

For many sicknesses, time-tested home remedies work as well as modern medicines—or even **better**. They are often **cheaper**. And in some cases they are **safer**.

For example, many of the herbal teas people use for home treatment of coughs and colds do more good and cause fewer problems than cough syrups and strong medicines some doctors prescribe.

Also, the 'rice water', teas, or sweetened drinks that many mothers give to babies with diarrhea are often safer and do more good than any modern medicine. What matters most is that a baby with diarrhea get plenty of liquids (see p. 151).



FOR COUGHS, COLDS, AND COMMON DIARRHEA, HERBAL TEAS ARE OFTEN *BETTER*, *CHEAPER*, AND *SAFER* THAN MODERN MEDICINES.

The Limitations of Home Remedies

Some diseases are helped by home remedies. Others can be treated better with modern medicine. This is true for most serious infections. Sicknesses like pneumonia, tetanus, typhoid, tuberculosis, appendicitis, diseases caused by sexual contact, and fever after childbirth should be treated with modern medicines as soon as possible. For these diseases, do not lose time trying to treat them first with home remedies only.

It is sometimes hard to be sure which home remedies work well and which do not. More careful studies are needed. For this reason:

It is often safer to treat very serious illnesses with modern medicine—following the advice of a health worker if possible.