



## The healing power of honey: From burns to weak bones, raw honey can help

by Kelly Joyce Neff



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Raw honey – which has not been pasteurized or filtered, and ideally taken directly from the hive – is a treasure chest of nutritional value and medicinal remedies. It contains an abundance of vitamins and minerals and is a natural and powerful medicine, both internally and externally.

The list of honey's beneficial functions is a long one. Honey increases calcium absorption; can increase hemoglobin count and treat or prevent anemia caused by nutritional factors; can help arthritic joints, when combined with apple cider vinegar; fights colds and respiratory infections of all kinds; can help to boost gastrointestinal ulcer healing; works as a natural and gentle laxative; aids constipation, allergies and obesity; provides an array of vitamins and minerals; and supplies instant energy without the insulin surge caused by white sugar. Many have found raw honey helpful for its positive effects against allergies and hay fever, and one or two teaspoons at night can help with insomnia. As an antiseptic, honey is also a drawing agent for poisons from bites or stings or infected wounds, and has outperformed antibiotics in treatments for stomach ulcerations, gangrene, surgical wound infections, surgical incisions and the protection of skin grafts, corneas, blood vessels and bones during storage and shipment.

"Raw honey is exceptionally effective internally against bacteria and parasites. Plus, raw honey contains natural antibiotics, which help kill microbes directly. Raw honey, when applied topically, speeds the healing of tissues damaged by infection and/or trauma. It

contains vitamins, minerals and enzymes, as well as sugars, all of which aid in the healing of wounds."

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So writes Dr. Cass Igram, D.O. in *The Survivor's Nutritional Pharmacy*. In a fascinating modern development, scientists and doctors are beginning to rediscover the effectiveness of honey as a wound treatment. In recent years, honey has been used effectively in clinical settings for the treatment of fist-sized ulcers extending to the bone, as well as for first-, second- and third-degree burns. Complete healing has been reported without the need for skin grafts and with no infection or muscle loss. It can be applied full strength to such conditions, covered with a sterile bandage, and changed daily. When the wounds are clean, honey acts as a healer. This also is the same procedure for infected wounds, ulcerations and impetigo. Garlic honey can also be applied directly to infected wounds, which will help clean up the area of infection.

Dr. Peter Molan, professor of biochemistry at Waikato University, New Zealand, has been at the forefront of honey research for 20 years. He heads the university's Honey Research Unit, which is internationally recognized for its expertise in the antimicrobial properties of honey. Clinical observations and experimental studies have established that honey has effective antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties. Astonishingly, it painlessly removes pus, scabs and dead tissue from wounds and stimulates new tissue growth. "Randomized trials have shown that honey is more effective in controlling infection in burn wounds than silver sulfadiazine, the antibacterial ointment most widely used on burns in hospitals," explains Dr. Molan.

Dr. Molan believes that if honey were used from the start in cases of septicemia, there would be far less tissue damage resulting. "The remarkable ability of honey to reduce inflammation and mop up free radicals should halt the progress of the skin damage like it does in burns, as well as protecting from infection setting in", says Dr. Molan. "At present, people are turning to honey when nothing else works. But there are very good grounds for using honey as a therapeutic agent of first choice."

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Researchers believe that the therapeutic potential of honey is grossly underutilized. With increasing interest in the use of alternative therapies and as the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria spreads, honey may finally receive its due recognition as a wound healer.

Indeed, it works: Raw honey makes a sterile, painless and effective wound dressing. Apply it directly to open cuts, abrasions and burns, and cover it with a piece of gauze. The results will occur quicker than with conventional alternatives, such as salves and creams.

Honey is also exceptionally effective for respiratory ailments. One Bulgarian study of almost 18,000 patients found that it improved chronic bronchitis, asthmatic bronchitis,

chronic and allergic rhinitis and sinusitis. It's an effective treatment for colds, flu, respiratory infections and a generally depressed immune system. Whereas sugar shuts down the immune system, a good quality honey will stimulate it into action.

Here are some more ways to utilize the healing power of honey :

**BURNS** - Apply freely over burns. It cools, removes pain and aids fast healing without scarring. Apart from being a salve and an antibiotic, bacteria simply cannot survive in honey.

**BED WETTING** - A teaspoon of honey before bed aids water retention and calms fears in children.

**INSOMNIA** - A dessertspoon of honey in a mug of warm milk aids sleep and works wonders.

**HYPERACTIVITY** - Replace all use of white sugar with honey. White sugar is highly stimulating with no food qualities. Honey provides the energy without the "spike."

**NASAL CONGESTION** - Place a dessertspoon of honey in a basin of water and inhale fumes after covering your head with a towel over the basin. Very effective!

**FATIGUE** - Dissolve a dessertspoon of honey in warm water or quarter honey balance of water in a jug and keep in the fridge. Honey is primarily fructose and glucose, so it's quickly absorbed by the digestive system. Honey is a unique natural stabilizer: Ancient Greek athletes took honey for stamina before competing and as a reviver after competition.

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**FACIAL DEEP CLEANSER** - Mix honey with an equal quantity of oatmeal, and apply as a face pack. Leave on for half an hour, then wash it off. Great as a deep cleanser for acne and other unwanted blemishes.

**POOR DIGESTION** - Mix honey with an equal quantity of apple cider vinegar and dilute to taste with water. This is also wonderful for the joints – and promotes weight loss.

**HAIR CONDITIONER** - Mix honey with an equal quantity of olive oil, cover head with a warm towel for half an hour then shampoo off. Feeds hair and scalp. Your hair will never look or feel better!

**SORE THROATS** - Let a teaspoon of honey melt in the back of the mouth and trickle down the throat. Eases inflamed raw tissues.

**FOR STRESS** - Honey in water is a stabilizer, calming highs and raising lows. Use approximately 25 percent honey to water.

ANEMIA - Honey is the best blood enricher by raising corpuscle content. The darker the honey, the more minerals it contains.

FOOD PRESERVATIVE – If you replace the sugar in cake and cookie recipes with honey, they'll stay fresher longer due to honey's natural antibacterial properties. Reduce liquids in the mixture by about one-fifth to allow for the moisture present in the in honey.

BABY'S BOTTLE - Four teaspoons of honey to a baby's bottle of water is an excellent pacifier and multivitamin additive. If the baby's motions are too liquid, then reduce the honey by half a teaspoon; if too solid increase by half a teaspoon. (Caution: Don't give raw honey to babies under 1 year old; it's just too rich.) For teething, honey rubbed on a baby's gums is also a mild sedative and anesthetic.

OSTEOPOROSIS - Research has shown that a teaspoon of honey per day aids calcium utilization and prevents osteoporosis – probably not a bad idea for anyone over 50.

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LONGEVITY - The most long-lived people in the world are all regular users of honey. An interesting fact, yet to be explained, is that beekeepers suffer less from cancer and arthritis than any other occupational group worldwide.

MIGRAINE - Use a dessertspoon of honey dissolved in half a glass of warm water. Sip at the start of a migraine attack, and, if necessary, repeat after another 20 minutes.

CONJUNCTIVITIS - Dissolve honey in an equal quantity of warm water. When cooled, apply as a lotion or eye bath.

COUGH MIXTURE – Combine 6 ounces (170 grams) liquid honey, 2 ounces (55 grams) glycerin and the juice of two lemons. Mix well. Bottle and cork firmly, and use as required.

Raw honey may become granulated, as some does after a week and another maybe only after several years. If the granulations bother you, simply place the honey into a pan of hot water (not boiling) and let it stand until becoming liquid again.

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(Concept: water)

**About the author:**

Kelly Joyce Neff has an interdisciplinary degree in Celtic Studies which includes work in cultural anthropology, history, linguistics, language, and literature. She is a traditional midwife and herbalist, a reiki master, and an active craftsperson. She lives in San Francisco. [Click here to read more about Kelly Joyce Neff.](#)

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