

3 Natural Remedies You Forgot from Childhood

If you think back to your childhood, chances are there was a handful of things your parents seemed to use for just about everything.

From plumbing to managing wounds or resolving boredom issues, these iconic items vary from home to home and from family to family. Here are three items that my parents seemed to employ more than others, as well as some that were popular in the homes of friends and family members.

As you look through this list, you are likely to find a few that were also popular in your home. While working on your survival stockpile, do not forget these iconic remedies and how well they have already withstood the test of time and experience. From your every day carry bag to more extensive bug out gear, including these items can be a life saver.

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White Vinegar or Apple Cider Vinegar

Even though apple cider vinegar may not be the best tasting thing all by itself, it certainly does help manage a number of woes. Here are just a few ways I have used, and still use apple cider vinegar:

- Mixed with water and swallowed to relieve sinus pain and pressure. I found apple cider vinegar tends to work better than white vinegar
- Take away the redness and swelling from insect bites

- Speed healing of sunburn
- Relieve stomach irritation and stress
- Kill bacteria in salad greens and other foods. To this day, I do not eat salad greens or any other raw vegetable without dousing it in vinegar first. Acetic acid is capable of killing gram negative bacteria such as salmonella and ecoli.
- Marinating meat – if you are tired of spending a lot of money on meat hoping for more tender cuts, vinegar can solve your problems. Just marinate even the toughest cuts of meat in vinegar for a few hours or overnight to make them more tender. You can also add other spices that will produce a good taste once the meat is cooked.
- Use apple cider vinegar instead of conditioner after washing your hair. Unfortunately, today even “organic” shampoos are filled with all kinds of toxins such as heavy metals and other hidden contaminants. The only way to stay away from these chemicals that will make you sick is to get completely away from commercial body care products. Washing and bathing with home made lye/aloe soap will keep your body clean and help you avoid all kinds of chemicals. Likewise, rubbing some apple cider vinegar into your hair after washing it makes an ideal conditioner that actually works better than commercial options. If your hair tends to tangle or is hard to manage, you will find that apple cider vinegar makes an enormous difference after just a few washings.
- Cut grease – from cleaning the stove to the floors, laundry, and spills in the refrigerator, vinegar is a safe option that gets the job done. If you are tired of your health and immune system being destroyed by modern soaps and perfumes, give vinegar a try.
- Keep feet clean – apple cider vinegar is capable of killing of fungal infections and other pathogens that lead to foot fungus and other diseases. If you do a lot of walking, there is no getting away from sweat and heat building up in your shoes and socks. Spraying your feet

and shoes daily will help keep the diseases at bay and ensure your feet stay as healthy as possible.

- Stave off the flu and TB – in [laboratory tests](#), vinegar was able to kill off both the flu virus and TB. During the cold and flu season, it never hurts to spray your hands and face with some vinegar to make sure these germs have fewer chances of getting into your body.
- Remove Ink from clothes and walls – from exploding pens to children's doodles in inappropriate places, sometimes it seems like ink based pens are more trouble than they are worth. Nevertheless, you can use vinegar to liquefy the ink and make it easier to remove. Depending on the surface, you may need to apply the vinegar several times and then be careful of how the ink puddle spreads. For example, if you need to remove stray ink marks from garments, I recommend putting a blotter under the fabric so that the marks don't spread out as much.
- Disinfect surfaces – from cutting boards and counters to sinks and toilets, vinegar will get rid of just about any kind of bacteria and many viruses.
- Air freshening – vinegar can be used to neutralize many odors as well as the pathogens that cause air to smell bad. Just don't forget that the vinegar itself has a strong odor that will quickly permeate the air. Once it is gone, however, the original offending odor will also be gone. You can use vinegar to get rid of damp oriented odors as well as ones produced by cooking and smoke.
- Vinegar can also be used to get rid of fleas. You can use it to wash the floors as well as animal bedding. Just be sure to air the furnishings out as cats and many other animals do not like the smell of vinegar.
- Get rid of mildew on rugs and other furnishings – if you live in a damp climate or a house with ventilation problems, mildew is bound to be a problem. Simply spray vinegar on rugs, garments, and fabric to keep mildew from setting in. Just don't forget to test the fabrics first in a hidden area to make sure the dyes and fabric

itself will not be damaged by the vinegar.

- Trap and Get rid of Insects – when mixed with a drop of dish detergent and something sweet, vinegar is the perfect lure for all kinds of insects that like to inhabit the kitchen and other areas where food is being prepared or stored. You can also make a DIY bug trap for around the house and yard that will be much safer and more effective than insecticides.
- Prevent frost from building up on windows – from fall through spring, frost is always a nuisance for drivers. Simply spray a solution of 1 part water to 3 parts white vinegar on your windows to prevent frost from building up. This solution will last about a week per application, but will not prevent snow from accumulating on vehicle windows.
- Prevent garment dyes from running – when you buy new clothes, soak each new garment in vinegar for about 15 minutes before washing. This is especially useful for garments with red dyes and others that are prone to running.
- Use as a fabric softener and static preventer – as with many commercial soaps, fabric softeners and dryer sheets are full of carcinogens and other toxic chemicals. You can avoid having all these toxins close to your skin by adding a cup of vinegar to the rinse cycle of your wash. The vinegar will also brighten and disinfect your clothes as well as help prevent mold and mildew from growing on them.
- Accelerate seed germination – if there is one thing I love using vinegar for, it is speeding up the rate at which seeds germinate in the spring. Depending on the thickness of the seed coat, you may or may not need to rub them lightly with sandpaper. In most cases, just soak them overnight in a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of apple cider vinegar to 1 pint of water.
- Rescue acid loving plants – azaleas, roses, rhododendrons, and many acid loving plants can quickly

develop yellowing leaves when the soil pH goes too high. Just spray the soil weekly with 2 tablespoons of vinegar to 1 quart of water per week. Needless to say, this can also help reduce fungal and mold buildup on the soil in situations where there is not enough air flow around the plants. While you can and should take steps to correct the air flow problem, at least you can keep the mold, mildew and fungus at bay as you find a suitable way to improve air flow. You can also use the same solution to kill off rust and other plant diseases. Just remember to spray the plants on days when it is not sunny or hot, as vinegar can strip the plant's leaves of oils that are vital for preserving moisture inside the leaf.

- Get rid of rust – from tools left out in the rain to rusty hinges, nuts, and bolts, you can soak them all in vinegar to remove the rust.

Duct Tape

While I can't say as I ever got my mouth taped shut, I most certainly heard of parents that used duct tape for this purpose. I usually keep at least one roll of duct tape in every room and one or two extras in the garage and in the car. For pocket carry, every day carry, and light weight bug out bags, I have also been known to tear off bits of duct tape and fold them up to make compact mini rolls. Even though I am more concerned about the strength and quality of the duct tape, you can also find it in many different colors and use it for organizing and tagging various items.



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Here are just a few ways duct tape was used at home when I was growing up, as well as some ways that I use it to this day:

- Hold gauze, dressings, and splints in place – if you do not have surgical tape or other wrapping agents, duct tape will get the job done.
- Support for a sprained joint – there are few things worse than having a sprained ankle or wrist, and all the limitations that come with them. In an emergency situation where you must remain mobile and able to move things around with your hands, being able to provide support for these and other joints is essential. Wrapping some duct tape around a wrist or ankle will give them the needed support and reduce the risk of increasing the injury while you go about your tasks.
- Make slings and support straps – you can use the duct tape folded to half its width for smaller straps, or fold the duct tape in half length wise to create a wider strap. Wider straps are useful if you need to create a litter or stretcher and do not have rope or other materials available to make a harness for pulling.
- Repair leaks – I have used duct tape to repair everything from vacuum hoses to sink drains. As long as the surface will not get too hot, you can use duct tape

to seal holes and make other temporary repairs. Just be sure to wrap the duct tape tightly and make several layers around the leaking area plus at least two or three rounds above and below the leak.

- Join together plastic bags – from shopping bags to contractor bags, duct tape is excellent for taking these smaller pieces of plastic and making them into bigger ones. I have used duct tape in this capacity to make everything from disposable ponchos to sleeping bags and other body coverings. You can also use duct tape to join together plastic bags to make rope and “yarn”.
- Patch holes in your shoes and boots – insert the tape inside your shoes to block off the holes. You can also use this method to increase heat retention in your shoes. Do not forget that it is never a good idea to close off all air circulation in your shoes or boots. If you do decide to close your shoes off completely because of snow or icy conditions, do not forget to open up your shoes every few hours in order to let moisture escape and air your feet out. Infections and skin breakdown can be every bit as dangerous as frostbite.
- Keep wires and ropes out of the way – if you must run wires around the office or other parts of your home, simply tape them to the wall with duct tape. You can also use duct tape to reduce the risk of damaging the coating of wires that run along the floor in high traffic areas. This is especially important if chairs or other movable furniture are in the area and likely to be rolled or scraped over the wires.
- Seal up holes around the house – from holes in windows and screens to mouse holes, there are bound to be all kinds of spots that need repair. Duct tape is a cheap, easy way to make these repairs so that no further damage can occur. As you may be aware, gases and bio-warfare agents can all get into the air and do serious damage if they are deployed and get into your home. No matter how good your filtration system may be, it is still

important to keep as many toxins out of your home as possible. Duct tape is very important for sealing up leaky windows, door frames, and other areas that may let these toxins into your home. You should survey your home at least once a month to keep up with any drafts or new holes that might pose a problem in an emergency situation. Taking care of them now means less time you will have to spend hunting these areas down and addressing them in a time of need. Do not forget to check floor boards and ceiling areas for additional air leak sources.

- Seal bags and boxes – if you buy large bags of food or other supplies, forming a water tight and air tight seal can be a problem. Use duct tape to re-seal these bags and keep the items fresh and secure.
- Secure air filters to a fan – this is one of my personal favorites. As smog and other air pollutants increase, there is no question that filtering air is going to become a priority for more people. Duct tape is an easy way to secure air filters to fans while you are figuring out which filters and filter arrangements will work best for your needs. Later on, you can always purchase pre-fabricated brackets or make your own.
- Labeling – if you are looking for durable tape for color coding items, you will find that modern duct tape comes in many colors. Alternatively, you can also use the original gray duct tape and a permanent marker to write down pertinent information.

Discipline and Self Control

Given the concern many people are having these days about mental health, I thought it might make sense to talk about a remedy that was applied to all kinds of mental and emotional woes when I was growing up. Unfortunately, today, words like discipline, self control, and even morality are dirty words that one only uses among people that actually understand what

they are and place value on them.



Do you recognize this Tree? (All Parts are edible)

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Contrary to the beliefs of some in our society, discipline isn't about "beating" children into "submission", nor it is about punishment.

Discipline is a tool and a life long skill that helps you focus on your goals and meet your objectives. It is about doing tasks and fulfilling your promises even if you'd rather be watching a movie or out visiting with friends. When I was growing up, here are just a few things discipline and self control served as a valuable remedy for:

- Boredom – as a child raised mostly alone, I would often find it hard to enjoy play time because there was no one around to share my interests with. Since I was not the type to play with tea cups and dolls (I need real people to talk to!), I soon found that the best way to occupy my mind was to engage in craft activities such as whittling, gardening, and assembling various contraptions from cardboard and rubber bands.
- Getting into mischief – no matter how bored I was, there were definitely things that were off limits and stayed that way with little to no intervention from my parents. Mom's butcher knife, dad's shotgun, matches, and the candy jar were always within sight, however I was instilled with the discipline to leave those things alone until my parents felt I was mature enough to use them properly and responsibly.
- Achieving goals – sometimes I look around these days and am amazed at the number of youths and adults that cannot sit down for five minutes and fill out a form or drive

down the road without having to yack on the cell phone or send a text message. What happened to staying with a task until you complete it? If there is one valuable remedy for all the mayhem on the roads these days, I must say self control is one of the most important. When you put your focus on something and are able to see it through, it prevents a world of woes and injuries.

- Emotional distress – I don't think there is an adult in this country that hasn't fallen in love only to find out the relationship was doomed from the get-go. Many other things impact our emotions every day, however that does not mean we should over react or resort to insane actions that lead to more distress. When all is said and done, there is a time to cry, a time to be angry, a time to grieve, and a time to get on with life. Contrary to the beliefs of those who endlessly preach all kinds of weird psychobabble, self discipline and self control does not mean you bottle your emotions up or keep them tamped down. It simply means you release them and express them in a time and place where they pose no threat or harm to yourself or others. Taking responsibility for your emotional health is important, and that includes being able to manage when and how you express them.
- Panic and anxiety – have you ever been driving along, only to find yourself boxed in with some other vehicle speeding and hopping from lane to lane? Even at relatively sedate speeds, this is the kind of situation that can make you feel very stressed. Without self control and self discipline, the panic you feel can become overwhelming and prevent you from ensuring your own safety.

As contentious as the following statement may be, I feel that many people who turn to drugs for panic and anxiety would do well to spend some time going back over the fundamentals of self discipline and control. Knowing how to stop destructive

thought processes is important, as is being able to focus on what needs to be done instead of all the emotions building up and trying to spill out. Remember, you can let them out later on when it is safe to do so and the situation has passed. Unfortunately, we live in a society where immediate gratification has taken the place of a sense of timing and the discipline to see things through over longer time periods.

- Managing an unexpected emergency or crisis – your car breaks down, a hurricane is on the way, or the school nurse calls to tell you that your child is sick and needs to be picked up. Emergencies like this aren't ones that can wait. You will still need self discipline and control so that you can focus on how to manage these situations and get through them as well and safely as possible. Today, many people confuse financial assets and objects with the kind of discipline and focus required to manage emergencies. Never forget that if you are driven to a state of panic or you wind up getting flustered in an emergency, not all the money or tools in the world will help you. Clarity of mind and the ability to channel your will and resources into meeting a goal still requires discipline and the ability to control every aspect of yourself and your responses.

No doubt, items like aspirin, salt water, baking powder, Epsom salts, twine, pocket knives, and even the Bible were, and continue to be seen as iconic cures in many households. As you look back on the days of your own childhood or during the days when you were raising your own children, you are sure to find at least three items that were reliable and useful in many diverse situations. I'd love to hear more about the three most memorable remedies from your childhood, and how you feel about including them in your own survival gear and plans.



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