

**WHAT AILS YOU:**  
**Sore muscles**

**OLD-SCHOOL FIX:**  
Smelly pain-relieving creams containing methyl salicylate. If you're taking a prescription blood thinner, the interaction could lead to dangerous side effects.

**NEW-SCHOOL REMEDY:**  
**Tart cherry juice**

Sipping two 10-ounce glasses of this highly anti-inflammatory drink may be enough to ease the damage you did in yesterday's spin class. A 2010 study showed that when runners downed a glass of cherry juice twice daily for a week before a race, they reported 67 percent less postexercise pain than those who didn't drink it.

**WHAT AILS YOU:**  
**Second-degree burn**

**OLD-SCHOOL FIX:**  
Antibiotic gels. Two active ingredients, neomycin and bacitracin, can cause an itchy-rash allergic reaction.

**NEW-SCHOOL REMEDY:**  
**Honey**

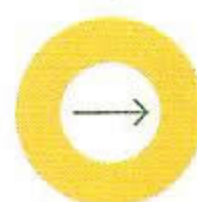
First- and second-degree burns treated with honey can heal almost twice as fast as those treated with a traditional burn cream, according to a study in the *Indian Journal of Plastic Surgery*. Honey's antibacterial properties can help burns become sterile more quickly, lessening the chance of infection. Gently clean the burn with cool water. Then apply a thick layer of honey to a nonadherent pad, place it over the injured area, cover with another pad, and tape. (If you see no improvement in a few days, consult your doctor.)

**WHAT AILS YOU:**  
**Migraine**

**OLD-SCHOOL FIX:**  
Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory meds like ibuprofen. They can upset your

# Nature's First Aid Kit

These alternative remedies may match—and even trump—conventional treatments.



**WHEN MINI EMERGENCIES ARISE**, like a minor burn from a hot stove or a pounding headache, antibiotic creams and ibuprofen are often the first line of defense. While these old standbys can help, research shows that more-natural cure-alls may be the ultimate win-win, producing faster relief and fewer side effects. For at-home triage, consider these healthy swaps. —LESLIE GOLDMAN



stomach and damage your kidneys.

**NEW-SCHOOL REMEDY:**  
**Feverfew and ginger**

A small 2011 study found that an elixir made from feverfew (a short bush with daisylike flowers) and ginger eliminated or significantly lessened migraine pain within two hours in 63 percent of sufferers. (In a separate analysis of people who took ibuprofen, only about half experienced relief in the same time frame.) Feverfew may block multiple migraine triggers in the brain, and ginger may help alleviate the inflammation that contributes to the skull-busting pain. Even though the average headache is nowhere near as disabling as a migraine, study coauthor Roger Cady, MD, director of the Headache Care Center in Springfield, Missouri, says the herbal combination should likely help milder tension-type discomfort, too.

**WHAT AILS YOU:**  
**Common cold**

**OLD-SCHOOL FIX:**  
Over-the-counter decongestants and cough medicines. While they can relieve symptoms, they won't speed recovery.

**NEW-SCHOOL REMEDY:**  
**Elderberry extract**  
When adults were given elderberry syrup or a placebo within the first 48 hours of feeling flu symptoms, those who took the elderberry (one tablespoon of the antiviral syrup four times a day for five days) felt better on average four days sooner. The purplish extract has been shown to be effective against ten strains of influenza virus, likely by increasing the production of chemical messengers that stimulate the immune system. Bonus: It tastes a little like blueberry candy. **O**