



Health WellNews

SPRING has arrived...

What's Inside Your Medicine Cabinet?

Springtime is a natural time for cleansing, whether in terms of cleansing the diet or clearing out the garage. In this article, we'll offer some spring cleaning for your medicine cabinet: natural remedies to allow you to literally clear out old bottles and internally cleanse your body of synthetic medications.

We all have a medicine cabinet, drawer or cupboard in our homes filled with seemingly harmless over-the-counter drugs, bandage material and other toiletries. Unfortunately, many of the things in your medicine cabinet can be potentially dangerous and even lethal. The good news is, a lot of these items can be replaced with natural substitutes.

1 Painkillers / Anti-inflammatories

Painkillers like ibuprofen and naproxen can be effective for relieving a headache or reducing inflammation in the joints. But these medications were not designed to be taken on a long-term basis and here's why: Long term usage of NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) has been proven to eat away at the lining of the gastrointestinal tract, which can then lead to ulcers. They also can increase the risk of heart attack, heart failure and stroke, even in people who have no existing heart conditions. So, when you have achy joints or a headache, reach for something more natural. Turmeric and/or ginger are wonderful natural substitutes that can be taken daily to help reduce the pain and inflammation associated with achy joints. For headaches, try a dab of peppermint or wintergreen essential oil on the temples. You can also try eating pineapple regularly. Pineapple contains an enzyme called bromelain. Bromelain is known to reduce inflammation.

2 Heartburn and Indigestion Medications

Many people suffer from heartburn and indigestion and then reach for proton-pump inhibitors (PPIs) like omeprazole or pantoprazole. These medications are proving to be more harmful than helpful, though. Numerous studies have linked long term use of PPIs to kidney failure and even dementia. But for those who suffer with heartburn, it's a really tricky balancing act that ultimately comes down to what they eat. The pain can be excruciating. PPIs reduce stomach acid in the gastrointestinal tract, thus reducing pain. Over time though, users of PPIs can wean themselves off these sometimes harmful medications. Substitutes like aloe vera juice, organic apple cider vinegar, baking soda and cranberry juice can all help reduce excess stomach acid production naturally. Ginger and peppermint can soothe the pain associated with acid reflux, heartburn and indigestion.

3 Cough Syrup and Cold Medications

Even the healthiest of people will get sick at some point. Over-the-counter (OTC) cough and cold medicines are abundant and while some may work, they can come with some potentially harmful side effects. Dextromethorphan hydrobromide is a cough suppressant and promethazine is an antihistamine. Both are commonly found in OTC cold medications. These drugs can cause hives, difficulty breathing, facial swelling, dizziness, anxiety, restlessness and nausea, just to name a few of the side effects. There is also the potential for abuse if

not taken properly. But again, there are natural substitutes that have no side effects and in many cases work more effectively. Honey not only helps with a cough, but it also soothes a sore throat. Pineapple juice is another great cough suppressant. Peppermint and thyme are also good for suppressing coughs and opening the sinuses.

When opening up that medicine cabinet, think about this: Nearly every OTC medication was once derived from a natural precursor. Aspirin, for instance, is derived from willow bark, and the main reason it is now produced in synthetic-pill form is that somebody saw an opportunity to make money. So before you pop a pill, consider seeking a natural remedy first. This includes things like traditional Chinese medicine. Acupuncture plus herbal formulas can be a wonderful alternative to those harmful medications. Also, don't forget to evaluate your daily diet. Diet can play a big role in how your body heals. Making minor adjustments to your eating habits and adding acupuncture to your health regimen can alleviate stress, decrease pain and boost your immunity. Remember, you ultimately have the choice when it comes to your health and what you put in your body. Be sure to take the time to make informed decisions that aren't detrimental.



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