

Honey

NATURE'S RESCUE REMEDY

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SPECIFICATION

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HEATHER HONEY

Beehives nestle amongst wild flowers, hedgerows and moorland heather. The honey gathered throughout the year varies from season to season and is never identical. As the golden summer honey finishes and autumn beckons the bees become excited. They can literally 'smell' the deep aroma of heather nectar. One day they are nosing in wild flowers, the next day they have disappeared and a tremendous buzzing locates them dancing around millions of heather flowers. Heather honey is rich and dark in colour. As a general rule, the darker the honey, the higher the antibacterial activity and the richer the bioflavonoid content. Bioflavonoids are vital for maintaining the structure of ageing blood vessels and keeping the circulatory system in robust shape. The human body cannot make bioflavonoids – the beehive is a rich, rich source.

Introduction

Is your jar of honey in the wrong cupboard? In fact have you bought raw, unprocessed honey in the first place? The time has come to move this honey to your medicine cabinet where it will truly prove itself to be nature's golden healer.

The Egyptians had over 500 medical uses of honey and in death honey helped to preserve the body of their Pharaoh and accompanied him after death to the next world. This honey was still edible after 3,000 years.

The medical world is becoming sweet on honey – it is replacing the job of antibiotics on wounds which just refuse to heal or will not respond to clinical preparations. Did you know that all honey kills germs and some honeys even go that bit further and knock down superbug infections like MRSA too.

Honey is a natural antibiotic with a track record of over a hundred million years protecting as well as feeding the bees that made it.

It is due to honey and other unique beehive medicines that bees have been empowered to weather all storms and plagues throughout time. Today the beehive remains the most sterile place on the planet.

Want to live longer? Then turn to the remarkable bounty of the beehive. Learn how honey eaters and beekeepers often live longer, have healthier lives and enjoy the multiple health benefits of pollen, propolis and royal jelly. From eczema to the hell of hay fever, from stomach ulcers to aching joints, from insomnia to constipation – let the beehive be your pharmacy and feel the difference for yourself.

Honey

Honey has medicinal and healing properties that still baffle modern scientists. After the discovery of penicillin by Fleming in 1929 the use of honey in surgery and medicine began to take a back seat. Have we not learned a bitter lesson for we are now turning back towards the beehive for help. Health and healing that our ancestors took for granted and the new revolution in alternative treatments like honey, that work as a preventative as well as cure, are now receiving increasing credence and attention in medical institutions and research.

Honey has a multitude of actions against bacteria and herein lies its secret – honey acts as a whole with a long list of active ingredients and a self-protecting balance that has come about over millions of years. It has enabled bees not just to survive 100 million years, but to be capable of adjusting and altering their own hive antibacterials by going out and actively seeking special plant substances for specific purposes. What is more, bacteria have never become resistant to honey or antibacterial beehive drugs – this is the important difference between bee drugs and antibiotics. Bees have been miles ahead in their challenge to bacterial disease – the antibacterial effects throughout the hive have been patiently sustained (and probably changed) to cope with new onslaughts of resistant microbes so that the

beehive remains pure and sterile.

Honey is smart – it doesn't have a 'smash and grab' killer punch like antibiotics. Good raw honey just freezes the germs in time by sucking out water from each and every cell. Honey can stop bacteria dividing in their tracks as it dehydrates living bacterial cells by drawing out their natural and necessary water content. They are held in limbo – disabled and dormant.

Honey is not patented by pharmaceutical giants so they don't push it – there's not enough money in it. Honey is cheap in price and therefore a thrifty alternative to expensive over-the-counter medicines.

For example a spoonful of honey easily outperformed cough medicine in research done by US Pennsylvania State College of Medicine. Ian Paul, who led the researchers, said: 'We hope that medical professionals will consider the positive potential of honey as a treatment, given the lack of proven efficacy, expense, and potential for adverse effects associated with the use of dextromethorphan (DM)'. DM is the active ingredient in cough medicine and can cause severe involuntary muscle contractions and spasms. So, next time you have a cough, think natural – think honey. Not only has it been proven to be more effective, but it also has no side effects either.



TRADITIONAL REMEDIES

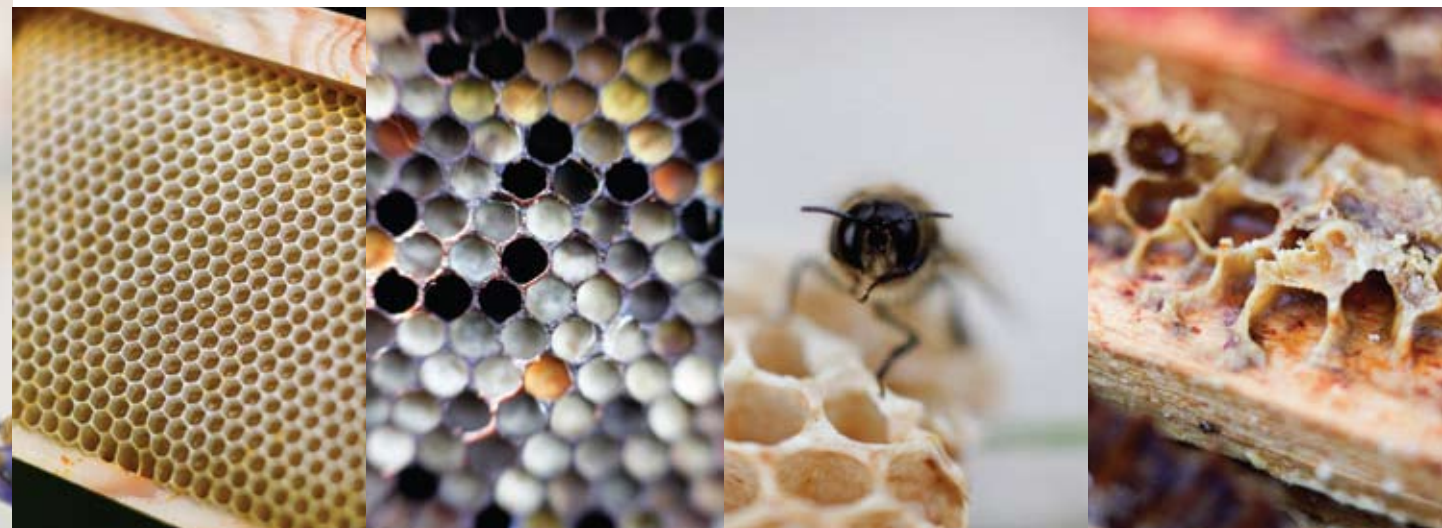
Honey is widely used as a complementary remedy for relief of the symptoms of colds, coughs, sore throats and 'flu. For a sore throat, take spoonfuls of raw honey or why not mix the following remedy. Stir 2 teaspoons of runny honey with one teaspoon of cider vinegar. Dilute with water, gargle and drink slowly throughout the day.

Adding warm lemon juice and eucalyptus oil will also help soothe congestion.



BEESWAX HAND CREAM

Pour 30ml boiling water over 3 lavender flower heads and set aside until cool, then strain through muslin. Set a china bowl over a saucepan of boiling water and add the infused water along with 30g beeswax, 1 teaspoon emulsifying wax, 125ml almond oil and 10 drops of lavender essential oil. Use a small whisk to beat until you have a thick cream. Spoon into a clean jar.



Beeswax

When we lift the lid off summer beehives the perfume, the aromatics emanating from soft golden yellow beeswax, the wholesome sweet smell, entwined and entombed is unforgettable and evocative. You instinctively know and recognise that, here, there is something very different to anything else ever encountered. If smells could be devoured the smell of beeswax would be a five-star gourmet meal! Beeswax is unique to honeybees. It is their patent alone.

Beeswax comes at a price for bees, as they consume 4.5kg of honey to produce 900g of wax, severely depleting the hive's honey stocks. Beeswax is a critical product, manufactured by young bees only, aged around 10–18 days old, at a critical temperature of 35°C in the hive. The bees can only produce beeswax at this temperature and at a time when the hive needs to breed more bees or store more honey. The bees produce the

wax directly from the underside of their bodies, squeezing it out between the sections of the abdomen – like toothpaste from a tube. The wax then dries like flakes resembling fish scales, which are the wax building bricks of the hive. These flakes are then sculpted into the distinctive hexagonal honeycomb structure by older bees.

Beeswax is one of the oldest of ancient raw ingredients used in toiletries, creams and cosmetics. It is antibacterial, antifungal, antiallergenic, and is an antioxidant which simultaneously softens and rejuvenates the skin. Beeswax is a rich source of beta carotene, a bioflavonoid converted by the body into vitamin A, which is excellent for eyes and skin and the regeneration of bodily cells generally. The cosmetics industry today uses beeswax to manufacture lip salves, hand and face creams, eyebrow pencils, eyeliner, mascara and lip gloss.



Flower Power

Bees don't need gardens of Eden but they do need flowering plants, weeds, bushes and trees where they can sip liquid food or nectar. Their only lifeline is flower power. Surely you are aware of the thousands of acres of fields and meadows devastated by excavator buckets in the name of progress. Flowers and shrubs, which have provided precious habitats for birds and bees are now sterile areas of concrete or fashionable mosaic pavers. The lament echoes 'there aren't many bees about - are there?' Their very survival has depended, and now depends more than ever, on the wealth and diversity of flowering plants and tree gums and resins.

Tips for a bee-friendly garden

* Brighten up your garden with some bee-friendly flower seeds. Plant the following wildflower seeds in your garden, patio pots or window boxes to provide essential nutrition for bees.

- Alyssum
- Annual coreopsis
- Annual scabious
- Bee sage
- Borage
- Candytuft
- Catmint
- Chives
- Clover
- Comfrey
- Dahlias
- French marigold
- Larkspur
- Mexican hat
- Nasturtium
- Sage
- Sea holly
- Sedum
- Sunflower
- Sweet William
- Tobacco plant

* Allow a patch of grass to grow long and densely plant an area of your flowerbed to provide bees with shelter from the rain or a sudden drop in temperature.

* Reduce the use of pesticides in your garden – the widespread use of pesticides has been implicated in Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) where whole hives of bees have been found abandoned.

* Bees need water – put pebbles in a shallow dish of water and you will be bombarded with bumble and honey bees after a few days. Keep it replenished and they will keep returning. Bees have good memories.