

# LET'S GET PRACTICAL

## Do-it-Yourself Healthy Hacks



There's plenty to love about summer: long, sunny days, outdoor picnics, and cool dips in the pool. But along with those perks come a few less-appealing qualities like insects and sunburns. Here are a few simple DIYs that keep you prepared and allow you to enjoy all that summer has to offer.

### ESSENTIAL OIL BUG REPELLENT SPRAY

Many essential oils are known for being excellent natural insect repellents and certain oils work especially well for specific pests.



**MOSQUITOS**

citronella · geranium · catnip · eucalyptus · peppermint · basil · thyme · lavender · clove · lemongrass



**FLEAS**

cedarwood · orange · citronella · pine · eucalyptus · tea tree oil · lavender · lemongrass



**TICKS**

Rose geranium · juniper · rosewood · thyme · oregano · grapefruit

#### What you need:

- 4 oz spray bottle (ideally dark-coloured glass)
- 2 oz distilled or boiled water
- 1 oz witch hazel
- 50-75 drops of essential oils

Add all ingredients to the spray bottle. Shake well. Spray onto skin or clothing, avoiding eyes. Reapply every 2 hours or as needed. Store away from heat and sunlight.

You can use this spray on your dog's collar to help keep pests away, but do not use it on cats, as many essential oils are toxic to cats.

### BUG BITE BALM

Sometimes no matter how much we protect ourselves, those bugs still bite. Here's a DIY that will help stop the itch.



#### What you need:

- 10 ml small jar
- 15 drops lavender essential oil
- 10 drops tea tree essential oil
- 10 drops peppermint essential oil
- Coconut oil

For children ages 3 to 9, eliminate the peppermint oil and reduce the lavender and tea tree oils to 8 and 5 drops respectively.

Add the essential oils to the jar and fill the remaining space with coconut oil. Mix ingredients together to combine (repeat before each use). Apply directly to bug bite as often as needed.

### AFTER SUN SPRAY

Sunscreen is a must if you're in the sun, but after the fun, rehydrate your skin and reduce redness and inflammation with this spray.



#### What you need:

- 4 oz spray bottle (ideally dark-coloured glass)
- 1-2 tbsp aloe vera gel
- 10 drops lavender essential oil
- 10 drops peppermint essential oil
- ½ cup witch hazel

Add the aloe vera gel, oils, and a ¼ cup of the witch hazel. Secure the lid tightly and shake vigorously to ensure ingredients are mixed well and not stuck to the side of the bottle. Add the remaining witch hazel and shake again to combine. Shake well before each use.

### A FEW NOTES ABOUT ESSENTIAL OILS

- Lavender and tea tree oils are the only essential oils that can be applied directly to the skin. All others must always be diluted.
- Do your research when using essential oils as some individuals (e.g. pregnant women, children) should avoid certain varieties or quantities.
- You can read more details on using essential oils safely [here](#).

## FRUIT & VEGETABLE WASH

Give your produce a fresh cleanse before they make it to your dinner table or snack bowl. Between pesticides, bugs, and bacteria, there's always something lurking in your produce. These DIY fruit and veggie soaks and sprays offer an easy and all-natural solution.

### VINEGAR & LEMON SOAK & SPRAY

#### For the soak:

- 1 cup white or apple cider vinegar
- 4 cups filtered water
- ½ cup lemon juice

#### For the spray:

- ½ cup white vinegar or apple cider vinegar
- 1 ½ cups filtered water
- ¼ cup lemon juice (bottled or freshly squeezed)



### BAKING SODA & LEMON SPRAY

#### What you need:

- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 tbsp baking soda
- 1 ½ cups filtered water



### SALT & VINEGAR SOAK

#### What you need:

- 2 tbsp kosher salt
- ¼ cup white or apple cider vinegar
- 1 ½ cups filtered water



**For the soak:** Combine ingredients in a large bowl. Add your fruit or vegetables to the bowl and let them sit for at least 10 minutes and up to 1 hour. Rinse produce under cold water and pat dry.

**For the spray:** Add all ingredients into a 16-oz spray bottle. Be careful as it will foam up. Shake gently to mix, then spray on fruit or veggies. Allow to sit for about 2-5 minutes then rinse under cold water. Pat produce dry. Refrigerate unused spray for future use.

Although the recipes are meant to ensure there is no lingering aftertaste, some people's palettes are more sensitive. Adjust the ratio of ingredients to suit your taste buds.

## HOMEMADE REMEDIES TO BEAT THE BURN

While avoiding sunburn entirely is the best approach, sometimes fun in the sun gets the best of us. Give these DIY remedies a try when you need some sunburn relief.

### SUNBURN CUBES

Aloe vera is a common sunburn remedy, but it can be more effective when paired with the anti-inflammatory and antiviral properties of witch hazel.

#### What you need:

- ½ cup aloe gel (fresh or bottled)
- ½ cup witch hazel
- ½ cup water

Blend all ingredients together. Pour into ice trays and freeze. Store in the freezer.

To use, rub a cube gently over your skin, continually moving. Alternatively, you can thaw a cube in the fridge before use. Air dry, or gently rinse with cool water.

### SUNBURN COMPRESS

The magnesium in Epsom salt is anti-inflammatory, making it a good choice to use to relieve painful sunburn.

#### What you need:

- 1 cup Epsom salt
- 4 cups warm water
- Hand towel

Dissolve Epsom salt in water. Using a towel, apply the solution to the affected area for 15-30 minutes. Repeat as needed.

Alternatively, you can add about 2 cups of Epsom salt to your bath water. If you put the Epsom salt directly under the running water it will dissolve most easily.



Sources: [tasty-yummies.com/homemade-essential-oil-insect-repellent-spray](https://tasty-yummies.com/homemade-essential-oil-insect-repellent-spray) | [www.happyhomehappyheart.com/natural-bug-bite-remedy](https://www.happyhomehappyheart.com/natural-bug-bite-remedy) | [skinnyms.com/3-all-natural-diy-fruit-and-veggie-wash-and-spray-options-for-cleaner-produce](https://skinnyms.com/3-all-natural-diy-fruit-and-veggie-wash-and-spray-options-for-cleaner-produce) | [experiencelife.lifetime.life/article/essential-oils-what-you-need-to-know/#safety](https://experiencelife.lifetime.life/article/essential-oils-what-you-need-to-know/#safety) | Images by Freepik