

# Healing Without Medicines

For most sicknesses no medicines are needed. Our bodies have their own defenses, or ways to resist and fight disease. In most cases, these natural defenses are far more important to our health than are medicines.

**People will get well from many sicknesses—including the common cold and flu—by themselves, without need for medicines.**

To help the body fight off or overcome a sickness, often all that is needed is to:

keep clean



get plenty of rest



eat well and drink a lot of liquid



Even in a case of more serious illness, when a medicine may be needed, **it is the body that must overcome the disease;** the medicine only helps. Cleanliness, rest, nutritious food, and lots of water are still very important.

Much of the art of health care does not—and should not—depend on use of medications. Even if you live in an area where there are no modern medicines, there is a great deal you can do to prevent and treat most common sicknesses—if you learn how.

**Many sicknesses can be prevented or treated without medicines.**

If more people had access to enough clean water, this alone might do more to prevent and cure illnesses than all the medicines they now use. . . and misuse.

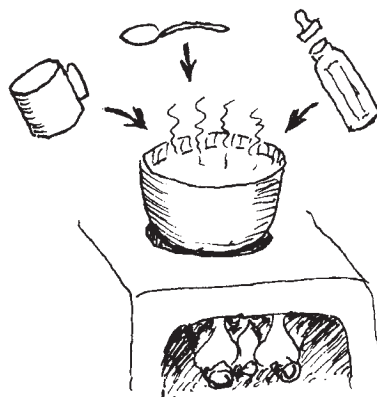
## PREVENTING AND TREATING ILLNESS WITH WATER

Most of us could live without medicines. But no one can live without water. In fact, over half (57%) of the human body is water. If everyone living in farms and villages made the best use of water, the amount of sickness and death—especially of children—could be reduced.

For example, correct use of water is basic both in the prevention and treatment of diarrhea. In many areas diarrhea is the most common cause of sickness and death in small children. **Contaminated** (unclean) water is often part of the cause.

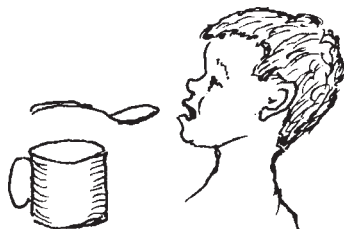
An important part of the prevention of diarrhea and many other illnesses is to make sure that drinking water is safe. Protect wells and springs from dirt and animals by putting fences or walls around them. Use cement or rock to provide good drainage around the well or spring, so that rain or spilled water runs away from it.

Where water may be contaminated, an important part of the prevention of diarrhea is to boil or filter the water used for drinking or for preparing foods. This is especially important for babies. Babies' bottles and eating utensils should also be boiled. If regular boiling of bottles is not possible, it is safer to use a cup and water spoon. Washing hands with soap and water after a bowel movement (shitting) and before eating or handling foods is also important.



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A common cause of death in children with diarrhea is severe **dehydration**, or loss of too much water from the body (see p. 151). By giving a child with diarrhea plenty of water (best with sugar or cereal and salt), dehydration can often be prevented or corrected (see Rehydration Drink, p. 152).

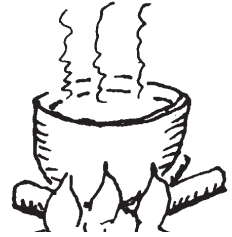
**Giving lots of liquids to a child with diarrhea is more important than any medicine.** In fact, if enough liquid is given, no medicine is usually needed in the treatment of diarrhea.

On the next 2 pages are a number of other situations in which **it is often more important to use water correctly than to use medicines.**

## Times When the Right Use of Water May Do More Good than Medicines

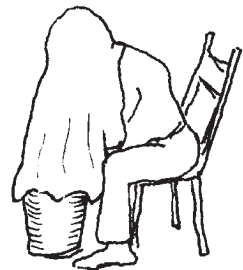
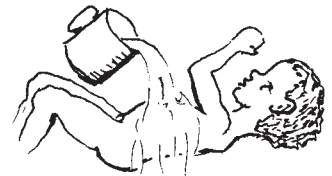
### PREVENTION










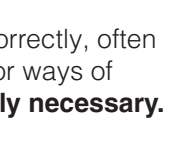

<b>to help prevent</b>	<b>use water</b>	<b>see page</b>
1. diarrhea, worms, gut infections	boil or filter drinking water, wash hands, etc.	135
2. skin infections	bathe often	133
3. wounds becoming infected; tetanus	wash wounds well with soap and clean water	84, 89



### TREATMENT

<b>to treat</b>	<b>use water</b>	<b>see page</b>
1. diarrhea, dehydration	drink plenty of liquids	152
2. illnesses with fever	drink plenty of liquids	75, 76
3. high fever	remove clothing and soak body with water	76
4. minor urinary infections (common in women)	drink plenty of water	235
5. cough, asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia	drink a lot of water and breathe hot water vapors (to loosen mucus)	168



to treat	use water	see page	
6. sores, impetigo, ringworm of skin or scalp, cradle cap, pimples	scrub with soap and clean water	201, 202, 205, 211, 215	 
7. infected wounds, abscesses, boils	hot soaks or compresses	88, 202	 
8. stiff, sore muscles and joints	hot compresses	102, 173, 174	
9. strains and sprains	the first day: soak joint in cold water; then use hot soaks	102	
10. itching, burning, or weeping irritations of the skin	cold compresses	193, 194	
11. minor burns	hold in cold water at once	96	
12. sore throat or tonsillitis	gargle with warm salt water	309	
13. acid, lye, dirt, or irritating substance in eye	flood eye with cool water at once, and continue for 15 to 30 minutes	219	
14. stuffed up nose	sniff salt water	164	
15. constipation, hard stools	drink lots of water (also, enemas are safer than laxatives, but do not overuse)	15, 126	
16. cold sores or fever blisters	hold ice on blister for several minutes at first sign	232	

In each of the above cases (except pneumonia) when water is used correctly, often medicines are not needed. In this book you will find many suggestions for ways of healing without need for medicine. **Use medicines only when absolutely necessary.**