- Habit

5 home wellness tricks I learned from my mom

Of all the qualities we inherit from our mothers, perhaps her habits at home are the best yet

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If you see me wearing something cool or developing healthy habits, chances are, I got it from my momma. But I'm not the type to gatekeep my wellness tricks, so here are five home products that have served as my household staples.



While many have been led to believe that the combination of baking soda and vinegar makes for a wondrous substitute for cleaning products, they are actually most effective separately.

Baking soda is a base, which can be useful for things like laundry. If you're using a washing machine, you can add about half a cup of baking soda straight into the drum. This allows your fresh batch of clothes the benefit of neutralizing deep-set sweat or musty smells, and even brightening your white clothes.

And if you're hand-washing, as we often do for delicates and such, adding one to two tablespoons of baking soda directly to your improvised basin (we use the bathroom sink), can help achieve a similar effect.

In our household, baking soda is most commonly found in our refrigerator, where it can help deodorize the otherwise unpleasant stink of raw meat and leftovers.

Aluminum has many delightful properties, namely its effectiveness in polishing your silver. All you need to do is put your tarnished silver—rings, necklaces, or bracelets—in a container lined with aluminum foil, shiny side up. Sprinkle your salt and baking soda evenly over and around the silver, then pour boiling water over everything and let it all soak.

The aluminum foil will attract the sulfur responsible for your silver's tarnish—a simple and easy way to bring your silver back to its original shine. Leave it in the solution for a few minutes, then rinse and dry each one.

Another use for aluminum foil is as a makeshift Scrub Daddy sponge. Sometimes, when our dish sponges are beaten to a pulp, we can't quite go to the grocery for a single product. Instead, we make do with crumpling aluminum foil into a ball, using it to scrub off grease and burnt bits. But it's important not to use it on non-stick surfaces, as its abrasive texture can potentially damage your kitchenware.

Honey can help soothe a sore throat alongside over-the-counter medicines. When the weather gets cool, I find myself prone to the flu, which is why my mom and I always have honey in our cabinet. Honey is naturally anti-microbial, which means it can aid your immune system in fighting off viruses and bacteria while also reducing inflammation in your throat.

The thickness of honey also provides a coat for the lining of your throat, acting as a protective barrier that will make it easier for you to swallow. It essentially works similarly to a cough drop. Of course, while it can make you feel better, it won't provide a cure if you have strep throat or a bacterial infection.

What I like to do is swallow a full tablespoon of honey, and allow it to work its magic. Doctors recommend it as a home remedy, too.

Aloe vera is a silent warrior in our household's bathrooms. It's always handy to keep it in stock, as it can be used for skincare and hair care. It's known to soothe minor burns and skin irritations such as sunburn. It can even fight off acne. I like to use it as a lightweight moisturizer.

While it won't provide the seal your skin needs to lock in the moisture, it can definitely provide hydration. The clear gel adds a soothing effect to your skin and, when paired with oil, it can serve as a fine substitute for outrageously expensive moisturizing products.

As someone living with eczema, I am prone to dandruff and a dry scalp. Aloe vera is a natural ingredient that can temporarily calm my itch and even condition my hair.

There is nothing worse than a bad tummy. While chia seeds may not always be available, we try our best to keep it on hand. The problem is that it's best to soak it in water or milk overnight, and we don't always remember to do that.

But when we do, chia seeds mixed with berries (or in my case, chocolate) makes for a hearty breakfast. And if you're trying to make your bowel movements more regular, chia seeds will get the job done.

There are a few considerations to make before going all-in on the chia craze. Consuming it dry may actually worsen constipation, so it's best to soak it in liquid for at least 20 minutes until a gel starts to form. Starting small is also the way to go, as your body gets used to cleansing itself from the inside.

The ultimate trick is to always listen to your body's signals. Don't ignore the signs when you see them, and don't be afraid to reach out to loved ones for advice.