

## ***“HOME HINTS AND TIMELESS TIPS“***

### **Tried and True Techniques for Everyday Troubles**

#### *JANUARY ON-YOUR- OWN HCE LESSON*

A hot water bottle, heating pad or warmed rice bag can relieve pain, promote circulation and help you feel relaxed. Why? Warmth can physically shut down the normal pain response that triggers aches and pains at a cellular level in the same way that painkillers do.

Caffeine makes pain medications 40% more efficient, so drinking a small amount of coffee, black tea or cola may help speed up headache relief, unless you are sensitive to caffeine.

If you take aspirin or ibuprofen for frequent headaches. Check the cause with your doctor (stress, low blood sugar, tension, weather, vision, allergy). These drugs can cause “rebound headaches” that start when a dose of medication begins to wear off.

Got a headache? Try using your index fingers to massage the depression just next to the outer end of your eyebrows gently for 1 minute in a clockwise direction. Or massage the middle joint of the fourth finger on your right hand, on the side next to your little finger, for 1 minute in a clockwise direction.

Your lips have just 3 layers of skin cells, compared to the 16 layers on most of your face. Avoid licking your lips in cold weather. The combination of wet and cold robs your lips of even more moisture, leaving them dry and rough. Apply all natural lip gloss to help protect your lips.

Wash wooden spoons, or knives and spatulas with wooden handles quickly. Do not allow to soak in dish water. Allow to dry naturally. Occasionally rub in a bit of olive oil. Wipe off any excess with a paper towel. This prevents the wood from splitting or shrinking.

Eliminate smells in plastic containers. After washing and drying, fill them with crumpled newspaper or coffee grounds and freeze overnight.

Ants will gobble up baking soda sprinkled on the floor, around entry door sills or window sills where they enter your home and feed it to their young. This causes their stomachs to rupture and reduces the ant population.

Toss chocolate chips, raisins or coconut in flour before adding to batter to prevent them from sinking to the bottom of cupcakes or cake.

Tired of miss-shaped cut-out cookies when transferring from board to cookie sheet? Roll dough on the back of the cookie sheet, cut shapes spaced out on the surface and remove the outline. This way you do not disturb the cookie cutout shape.

Cut-out cookies get tougher after re-rolling of the dough? Sprinkle a mixture of flour and cornstarch or all cornstarch on the counter and rolling pin to prevent cookie dough from taking on more flour and making a tougher cookie.

Harvest herbs in the morning or midday. Their essential oils travel down to the roots with the heat of the day. Wash herbs well until hot water in a colander for 20 seconds to remove dirt, insect eggs and airborne pollution. Wrap loosely in paper toweling and storing in a plastic storage bag in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Reduce eyestrain by making the room light as bright as the computer screen.

To reduce musty or damp odors in stored items, replace cardboard boxes with see-through clear plastic containers with tight-fitting lids. Mold does not grow in lighted area so reduce growth by leaving a low-wattage light on in the storeroom or closet.

Listen to your mother and sit up straight. We tend to slump while sitting or typing which causes fatigue, carpal tunnel syndrome and back pain. Every time an alarm sounds or your phone rings, use it as a reminder to straighten your spine, pull back your shoulders and lift your neck.

Wipe your nose – don't blow and your cold won't hang around as long. The force of blowing sends the gunk out your nose into a tissue but it also pushes some back into your sinuses. Blow gently and one nostril at a time.

Warm feet help your body's internal temperature get to the best level for sleep. By warming your feet, blood flow to your legs is increased allowing your trunk to cool and deep sleep to come.

A banana is a great natural source of melatonin, the sleep hormone. The other sleep hormone is tryptophan found in warm milk or walnuts.

A bag of shredded carrots or cabbage can be used in soups, sauces, or casseroles. These coleslaw ingredients add flavor, color, vitamins and minerals to any main dish.

Make a new rule: Every breakfast should include a cup of fruit (fresh, frozen, dried). It's the perfect morning food, filled with natural sugars for slow-release energy and nutrients galore. Feel guilty about spending money on a variety of fruits? What does your daily medicine prescription cost? Make another rule: Fruit for dessert at least three nights per week.

At the end of your day, write down your "Done" list for today. Then write down your entire "to-do" list for tomorrow. The first list gives you a sense of accomplishment, the second helps you fall asleep easier without running tomorrow's list over and over in your head.

Help your gratitude muscle get stronger. Take a minute every morning and evening to reflect on what you love and like and what others have done for you throughout your life.

Get help when you need it! Besides family and friends, reach out to community agencies like ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center), local churches, or call 211 for better ways to deal with short or long-term mental, physical or social needs.

Keep your nails from drying out, breaking or cracking buy rubbing a small amount of petroleum jelly or olive oil into your cuticles, nails and skin around your fingertips every evening before you go to bed.

*Source: Reader's Digest*

## **“99¢ Solutions”**

### **Smart and Cost-Saving Uses for Every Day Items**

#### *FEBRUARY ON-YOUR-OWN HCE LESSON*

Food sticks and your cast iron pan has rust spots. Dampen a sponge and sprinkle baking soda on it. Scrub cast iron pan, rinse and dry. Add a teaspoon of oil to the pan and wipe inside and out with a paper towel. Move pan into a warm oven or on low heat on the stovetop for 10 minutes. Allow to cool. Wipe any excess oil from pan surfaces and it will be as good as new.

Need to clean metals? Clean copper and brass by mixing 2 Tablespoons flour with 2 T. white vinegar and 2 T. table salt. Rub the paste thickly on copper or brass with a damp cloth. Let dry. Use a soft cloth to buff the dry remains off the metal.

Need to clean the tarnish off your silver? Smear a bit of ketchup on tarnished silver, including the detailed pattern. Allow to sit for a few minutes, then buff clean. Wash in warm soapy water and buff dry.

Prevent your bag of brown sugar from getting as hard as a rock but adding a few large marshmallows before sealing.

Take off sticky price tag adhesive by rubbing with a dab of peanut butter. Allow to sit a few minutes, then wipe clean.

Whip cream, egg whites or scrambled eggs higher by adding a pinch of salt to the bowl before starting.

Keep flowers fresher longer by adding ½ cup clear soda (like Sprite or 7-Up) to the water and the flowers will live for days longer than in plain water.

Put 3 Tablespoons medicated baby powder and five or six flower bulbs in a plastic bag. Seal and shake. Dusting the bulbs before planting helps keep rot and pests away. Great for the garden or container planting.

Undo a knot in jewelry or shoelaces by covering the knot with a light dusting of baby powder. Then pry the knot apart with a straight pin. Wipe off the excess powder and you are ready to go.

Need to start a campfire? Rub petroleum jelly over a bunch of cotton balls. Make sure they are completely covered. Store them in a ziplock bag marked “firestarters”. When it’s time to light a fire pull a few strands of fiber out of the cotton balls. Place the ball into your pile of tinder and wood and light the cotton ball. Instant fire starter.

Dental floss cuts like a knife to cut butter, rolled cookie dough, soft cheese, cakes. Hold it taut and move it side to side to make a clean cut.

Do you keep losing buttons on your coat or jacket? Next time, sew them on with dental floss for a very strong attachment that will wear better.

Fill your iron without the mess of a measuring cup or glass. Fill a clean mustard or ketchup squeeze bottle with the water for a dripfree fill.

Wash away picnic ants with a mixture of equal parts water and white vinegar, with a dash of dishsoap in a spray bottle. Spray the patio or picnic table with the mix, wait a few minutes and return to your picnic – without the ants.

If soil escapes from the bottom of the pot through the drainhole, repot and place a used dryer sheet or coffee filter in the bottom of the pot to keep soil in the pot.

Tired of hand sewing and the thread knots up? Rub a fabric softener dryer sheet along your thread the next time you sew. It prevents knots and snarls.

Keep your cookbook clean by slipping the opened cookbook into a plastic bag. It protects the book and you can easily wipe off any splatters.

Dampen a paper towel and rub it gently across a fresh ear of husked corn. The paper towel will quickly pick up the silk.

Be prepared for winter ice. Keep two gallon size milk bottles full of sand, salt or kitty litter in your car during winter. If you get caught on ice you can pour the sand or litter in front and back of the spinning tires to free your vehicle.

Does the floor mat under the driver's feet creep under the brake pedal? Put a piece of sticky-sided Velcro on the right and left side of the floor mat to catch the carpet below. The floor mat will stay in place but you can rip it up when it's time to clean or replace.

Ever struggle to find the beginning of the plastic wrap roll? Wrap adhesive tape around your finger with the sticky side out. Tap your finger around the roll of plastic wrap until you find the edge. Then take another piece of tape to lift the edge off the roll.

Hard to keep your screwdriver in line when starting? Rub chalk on the tip of the screwdriver blade before inserting into the screw. Just like chalking a pool cue, it saves slipping.

Need a bigger ziploc bag? Just combine two! When you need a bigger ziploc bag but you only have the smaller ones...Flip one of the ziploc bags inside out! Then you can combine two bags and interlock their locking strips.

To whiten cloths without using bleach, Pour 1 cup of white vinegar into the wash with the detergent. It will whiten, helping to wash away detergent or soap residue and soften fabric.

Shop the outside walls of the grocery store – that's where all the fresh foods are. Once you've shopped for those fresh items, go into the aisles for staples you know you need. With fresh local fruits and vegetables less likely in the winter, try frozen or canned fruit and vegetable alternatives on your grocery list.

*Source: Reader's Digest*