



Home Care

Crack the Code: Understanding Your Doctor's Instructions

The terminology used by doctors is often language that is not heard in everyday life. Though some treatments are commonplace to doctors, they are often not completely understood by the general public. Some common remedies that a doctor may expect you to know are explained below:

Baking Soda Bath:

Your physician may recommend a baking soda bath to help relieve the discomfort of certain skin problems. Fill a tub with warm water and add ½ a cup of baking soda.

Bland Diet

A bland diet helps alleviate stomach problems such as ulcers, nausea or vomiting. It includes foods that are soft, lightly seasoned and low in fiber. Examples include clear liquids (water, broth, tea); low-fiber cereals, pastas, potatoes and rice; cooked and mashed vegetables without stems or seeds; bananas; mild juices (such as apple, grape or pear); and no dairy products.

Honey-lemon Cough Mixture

To prepare, mix two parts honey to one part lemon juice. This usually helps soothe a sore throat and acts as an expectorant.


Hot Packs

These may be prescribed for a number of conditions, from


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Online Medications: Buyers Beware!

The Internet has made it convenient to purchase medications, but it has also created a marketplace for unapproved medications and falsified prescriptions. Consumers need to be wary and sure to use a safe, secure and reputable website when purchasing medication online.

Not all websites that sell medications are trustworthy. Here are a few ways to confirm the validity of online pharmacies:

- Check that they are a U.S. state-licensed pharmacy.
 - Your state board of pharmacy can tell you if a website is a state-licensed pharmacy. The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) site at www.nabp.net/boards-of-pharmacy has a full listing of state boards of pharmacy.
 - Look for the Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites (VIPPS) seal or go to <https://vipps.nabp.net/>, which represents the state boards of

pharmacy in the United States (including the District of Columbia), Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, eight Canadian provinces and New Zealand.

- Clarify whether they are a legitimate pharmacy, as many are not pharmacies at all.
 - If you are purchasing a prescription medication, the website should require a prescription from your health care professional.
 - The website should give you access to talk to a person if you need assistance, as well as access to a licensed pharmacist.
 - The site should provide easy access to understandable privacy and security policies.
 - Recognize that many give a diagnosis that is incorrect because they are unable to give you an examination in person.
 - Understand that these vendors could
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Online Medications: Buyers Beware!

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potentially sell you medication that is not right for you or your condition.

- Verify that your personal information will be protected.



In addition to the risk of buying from a bad online pharmacy, you should know that some medications sold online pose problems as well. For example, they may be:

- Counterfeit or copycat
- Too potent or too weak in strength
- Expired

- Manufactured with dangerous or untested ingredients
- Not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Made using unsafe standards
- Unsafe to use with other medications you are currently taking
- Labeled, stored or shipped incorrectly

The FDA also warns against buying pet medications online. Though it recommends that owners take their pets to veterinarians for medication, there is a number of VIPPS certified online veterinary pharmacies. When considering purchasing online pet medications, the website should display the VIPPS seal in order to ensure validity. ♦

A Healthy Lifestyle: Your Ticket to Better

A healthy lifestyle can help prevent many medical problems and keep ones you already have from getting worse. Making healthy choices in your life is the key to prolonged health.

Research has proven that people who eat more fruits and vegetables have lower rates of cancer and other diseases than those who do not. Conversely, too much fat in your diet—particularly saturated fat—can raise your cholesterol level and weight, making you more susceptible to heart disease and other serious conditions. Low-fat diets significantly reduce your risk for heart disease.

Weight management is not *dieting*—it is simply maintaining a healthy weight. Good eating habits and exercise are the best ways to prevent weight gain. If you are already overweight, losing as little as 10 pounds can improve your health, increase your energy level, reduce your blood pressure and cholesterol level, and even increase your life span.

Physical activity can help reduce your level of risk for many illnesses, including heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and some cancers. Exercise also makes you feel great! And, it's easier than you think. Thirty minutes of exercise—even just walking—each day is enough to improve your overall health and well-being.

Quitting smoking is the single most important thing you can do to decrease your risk for heart disease and a variety of cancers. What's more, you'll save money AND feel better! ♦

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relieving the chills to soothing the pain of a headache. Use a towel, soaked in warm water and wrung out, to wrap a filled hot water bottle. Cover the hot pack in plastic and apply to the affected area for 20 minutes.

Sitz Bath

This helps ease the pain of hemorrhoids or abdominal cramps. It involves soaking the hips and buttocks in a warm salt water solution.

Saline Nose Drops

To relieve nasal congestion, mix a cup of warm water with ¼ teaspoon of salt. Apply 2 to 3 drops to each nostril with an eyedropper or bulb syringe.

Urge Fluids

Physicians often recommend maintaining urge fluids to avoid dehydration. This means drinking one 8-ounce glass of water every hour until bedtime.

Liquid Diet

When experiencing nausea or vomiting, doctors recommend you suck on ice chips or popsicles to prevent dehydration if you are having trouble keeping food down. Sipping on a lukewarm, flat soft drink will also help control your nausea and provide much-needed sugar and potassium. ♦

