

# Sore throat? Try these 5 home remedies for relief

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Sore throats are commonplace during cold and flu season, but luckily

there are lots of home remedies that can help ease your misery, doctors say.

These remedies "aren't quick fixes for an illness," but they can help ease discomfort, said [Dr. Heidi Hutchison](#), a family practice physician at Penn State Health Medical Group—East Pennsboro. .

Folks with a sore throat should still get checked out by a doctor, to make sure they aren't sick with [strep throat](#) or some other illness for which there are prescription meds, Hutchison said.

But for a simple sore throat, these tried-and-true remedies can soothe just as well as cough drops or other store-bought cold treatments, Hutchison said.

## **Honey**

Honey is a natural anti-inflammatory, and is used in countries like Croatia as a medicine rather than a sweetener, Hutchison noted.

Most of the time, inflammation is what's causing your throat to hurt. Your body is trying to rid itself of an infection in the back of your throat, which causes your throat to swell and feel scratchy.

Honey is also safe for most people from age 1 and up, Hutchison added.

## **Tea**

Certain kinds of herbal tea like chamomile also have anti-inflammatory properties, Hutchison said. Sweetening it with [honey](#) can provide a one-two punch to a sore throat.

The warmth of hot tea also can be soothing to a sore throat, she added.

## Cold treats

Some folks find cold works better than warm when it comes to soothing a sore throat. Popsicles or [ice cream](#) might help in that case, Hutchison said.

## Salt water

Gargling with [salt water](#) is a time-honored tradition when it comes to [sore throats](#).

Hutchison recommends a recipe from the National Institutes of Health that combine a cup of warm water, a 1/8 teaspoon of salt, and a 1/4 teaspoon of baking soda. Stir it together, gargle, and spit it out three to four times a day.

"Studies support that it can help," Hutchison said.

## Peppermint

Peppermint also has anti-inflammatory properties, and can help cool down a [sore throat](#), Hutchison said.

But talk with your doctor first—the herb can cause increases in blood pressure for some people, she said.

## Other methods

Garlic is believed to have antibiotic properties that might help with infections, Hutchison said. Hot peppers containing capsaicin might also

help by numbing your throat, so some swear by a little hot sauce.

**More information:** The Cleveland Clinic has more on [sore throat remedies](#).

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