

# kitchen aid

## So are you healing me or just preparing dinner?

You may think that heating up a cut onion and applying it to an aching ear sounds totally wacky. But, according to Sheila Kingsbury, ND, acting chair of the botanical medicine department, it's a folk remedy that works. "Healers have been using the strangest things for centuries to cure ills," she says. "And now that we're starting to understand the science behind some of these remedies, we're discovering that maybe they're not so strange after all." For example,

the onion ear muff works for ear infections because the onion fumes are antibacterial and the heat helps with circulation.

Want to try it yourself? Cut an organic onion in half and heat it in the oven until just comfortably hot. Lie

on your side and place the cut

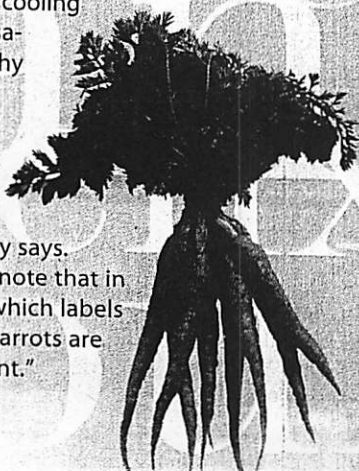
edge against the infected ear (don't push it in!). Stay this way for about 10 minutes. Do this a couple of times a day. If there's no improvement within three days, see a health care professional. Unless it's a naturopathic physician, you might not want to mention the onion.

## Radial carototomy

Another remedy from the vegetable patch is encircling the neck with a carrot poultice to treat a sore throat. "Herbalists have practiced this one for generations," says Dr. Kingsbury, "but I sure couldn't tell you how they ever came up with the idea!" To ease an aching throat, grate a large carrot onto a cheese cloth or square of muslin and roll it up like a burrito. Wrap this cloth—now slightly dampened by carrot juice—around your neck for about 15 minutes. Do this once a day with a new carrot as needed.

According to Kingsbury, the carrot collar does a particularly good job of cooling down the burning sensation in the throat. So why not a grated cucumber or, say, an eggplant? "Over the generations, they've discovered that carrots just seem to work best," Kingsbury says.

"And it's interesting to note that in Ayurvedic medicine—which labels foods as hot or cold—carrots are known as a cooling plant."

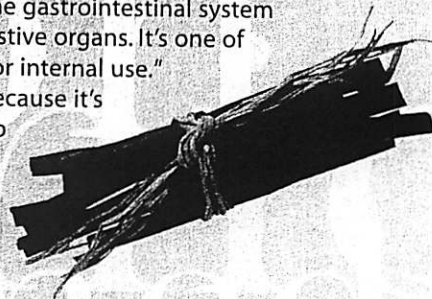


## Cinnamon buns

"Did you know that cinnamon is good for diarrhea?" asks Kingsbury, continuing in her edible folk-remedies vein. "Cinnamon tonifies the gastrointestinal system by strengthening the digestive organs. It's one of nature's best astringents for internal use."

Kingsbury explains that, because it's astringent, cinnamon is also stypitic in nature, which means it helps stop or control mucous discharge (found in diarrhea) and bleeding.

To treat diarrhea, eat one-half cup unsweetened applesauce mixed with approximately one-quarter teaspoon of ground cinnamon. More is not better; cinnamon can be highly irritating if taken in large doses. Try this remedy twice a day for two days. If the diarrhea continues after two days, seek professional help.



## Pulling the wool over one's ice

Woolen socks and ice-cold water aren't likely to be found alongside aspirin and other antipyretics in your drugstore. Yet, according to Kingsbury, the combination of these two items is key to an old but effective naturopathic treatment for reducing fever. Known as the "wet-

sock treatment," the home

remedy involves putting on a pair of cotton socks that have been soaked in icy cold water and

then wrung out. Those

cold socks are then covered with a pair of dry woolen socks. "Sleep with these on throughout the night," instructs Kingsbury, "and by morning your fever should be down."

The science behind it? "Basically," says Kingsbury, emphasizing there's more to the scientific theory than her pared-down answer, "it stimulates the body into increasing circulation, and it jump-starts the immune system."

