

15 Uses for Witch Hazel

1. The big one: Spot and blemish control

Witch hazel can reduce the inflammation on a pimple. Some people claim daily use helps with acne, and witch hazel can be found in many over-the-counter treatments. Application with a Witch Stick is the most convenient, but you can dab it on with a cotton ball. Ask your pharmacist **before you do this, though.**

2. Soothe and heal diaper rash

If your baby's rash isn't healing quick enough, apply witch hazel solution ([Dickinson's is good](#)) with a cotton ball and you should see immediate improvement to your baby's bottom.

3. Shrink bags under the eyes

Some people say that the application of hemorrhoid cream to those little baggies under your eyes can take them away. It's not an old wives' tale. One of the magic ingredients in a product like Preparation H is witch hazel, which helps tighten up the skin and reduce the bagginess. And that leads nicely to...

4. Soothe and reduce external hemorrhoids

Not only does witch hazel tighten skin, it's also a good anti-itch remedy. By combining witch hazel with aloe, glycerine or petroleum jelly and rub it on external hemorrhoids, you will reduce itching significantly and dry up most bleeding.

5. Varicose vein relief

Soak wash cloths in witch hazel and lay on legs, which are propped straight out, to reduce pain and swelling from varicose veins. The witch hazel helps to tighten the veins, relieving the discomfort temporarily.

6. Soothe poison ivy and poison oak

Just like acne and blemishes, the witch hazel reduces itching and relieves swelling. Something definitely worth packing on your next camping trip.

7. Treat chicken pox blisters

A combination of aloe, honey, lavender and other essential oils create a spray that will vastly reduce the discomfort of chicken pox blisters. And it's all-natural.

Here's what to do: Mix together 1 tablespoon honey, 40 drops lavender essential oil, 15 drops lemon essential oil, 15 drops bergamot essential oil, 5 drops peppermint essential oil, 1 teaspoon carrot seed oil and 1/2 cup aloe vera gel. Once completely mixed, add 1/2 cup distilled witch hazel and mix again. Pour mixture into spray bottle and use on affected areas (avoiding eyes). A more potent and less unsightly way to treat the chicken pox than traditional calamine lotion.

8. Heal your bruises faster

Been in a fight recently? Well, maybe not. But if you bang your leg or arm and are left with a nasty bruise, a thrice-daily dab of witch hazel can help speed up the healing time of the bruise.

9. Soothe razor burn (and in some instances, prevent it)

The anti-inflammatory properties of witch hazel stop itchy bumps from forming up around your irritated hair follicles. Apply before or after shaving; it should certainly have an impact on your itchy red skin (and that includes ladies, too).

10. Treat and soothe a nasty sunburn

Healing damaged skin is one of witch hazel's specialties. But as sunburn is also a type of skin inflammation, witch hazel is ideal for treating this too (despite swelling not being obvious). Treating sunburn with witch hazel will lessen healing time and prevent the infamous skin peeling and flaking.

11. Treat dry skin

By applying witch hazel immediately after showering, you are locking in the moisture that has just soaked into your skin.

12. Use to heal and soothe various cuts and bruises

Many chemists and pharmacists refer to witch hazel as nature's answer to Neosporin. Applying a dab of it will cleanse the cut, protect against infection, and encourage quicker healing of minor skin breaks.

13. Take the bite out of bug bites

With its anti-itch and anti-inflammatory properties, witch hazel is ideal for treating bug bites. Just dab a little on the affected area.

14. Refresh tired eyes

NOT by squirting witch hazel in them, but by soaking a clean rag in witch hazel and cold water and placing the cold compress over your closed eyes. After 10 minutes, your eyes should be refreshed, and any redness should be gone. If you've been doing a lot of crying, this can get you back to normal quickly.

15. Make your own deodorant

Witch hazel is often used in deodorants due to its natural skin-healing and skin-care properties. Here is a home-made recipe you may want to try.

Ingredients: 1 tsp high proof vodka 10 drops geranium 10 drops cypress 8 drops bergamot 5 drops neroli 4 drops lavender 3 drops black pepper 4 tbsp (40 ml) witch hazel 2 tbsp (25 ml) cornflower water 2 tbsp (25 ml) orange flower water Measure the vodka into a 4 oz (100 ml) glass bottle with a spray attachment. Carefully add the essential oils, one by one. Shake vigorously to dissolve the essential oils. Pour the witch hazel into the bottle, using a funnel if necessary, followed by the two flower waters. Shake well.

Label the bottle and the deodorant is now ready to use. Before you use the deodorant each time, give the bottle a good shake to ensure the essential oils are fully dispersed.

Note

As with many herbal remedies, certain people, like women who are pregnant or breast feeding, should talk to their physician before using witch hazel. When using witch hazel, let your doctor know if you experience leg swelling, breathing problems, chest tightness or pain, hives, new rashes or irritations, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting or constipation. Most people who use witch hazel will not experience these adverse side effects, but some will, so notify a health official if any problems are noticed.

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