

Natural healing

Parenting is hard work, but you can stay healthy and active with the help of some natural home remedies.

MOST PARENTS WILL — at some time or other — feel anxious, tired or frustrated. And what's worse, feeling this way can result in headaches, lack of sleep and other woes.

Many of these grievances however, can be addressed through natural home remedies that make use of herbs and spices, says Dr Sundardas D Annamalai, a naturopathic physician and founder of the Sundardas Naturopathic Clinic. Here he offers some drug-free solutions that can be prepared at home to treat common problems.

ALERT! ALL STRESSED OUT

Stress can trigger a tension headache or bring on a migraine. To calm frazzled nerves and relieve headaches, drink three cups of lemon balm tea a day. Lemon balm plants can be purchased at most nurseries and they grow easily in tropical climates. Pluck three or four fresh lemon balm leaves and leave them in a cup of hot water for a few minutes to enjoy the lemon-scented infusion. Remember to wash the leaves to remove any dirt and bugs, and make sure the plant has not been sprayed with any harmful chemicals.

ALERT! SICK TO YOUR STOMACH

Anxiety or stress can also cause nausea or a queasy stomach. A cup of tea made from raw ginger can help. "Without a doubt, ginger is the best stomach woe cure," says Dr Sundardas. Cut

three thin slices off a freshly-peeled piece of ginger, place these in a cup of hot water and let the ginger steep for about five minutes. Add some honey for a sweeter taste.

ALERT! CAN'T GET TO SLEEP

To prevent insomnia, dab a bit of lavender essential oil onto your temples and forehead before you hit the pillow, as the aroma helps to relax your mind and body and aids in sleep. If you have a bathtub at home, take a warm bath before you go to bed. Add a few drops of lavender oil to the bathwater.

ALERT! LOW ENERGY LEVEL

Boost energy levels and increase mental focus by drinking a cup of Siberian ginseng tea every morning. "This adaptogenic herb is excellent for battling exhaustion or fatigue," says Dr Sundardas. Although less potent than other types of ginseng, it is generally cheaper and thought to be safer for long-term consumption. Most traditional Chinese medicine stores sell Siberian ginseng in raw or powder form. Just pour a cup of hot water over five to eight thin slices of ginseng root — or one teaspoon of ginseng powder — and let the ginseng infuse for five minutes. Add honey to sweeten the taste if desired.

ALERT! COUGHING AND SNEEZING

When you don't get enough rest, your immune system weakens, putting you at higher risk of developing a sore throat or cold. Nip a cold in the bud by drinking two cups of cinnamon tea each day. Add a cinnamon stick — or one teaspoon of ground cinnamon — to a cup of hot water and allow this to steep for five minutes before drinking. Besides tasting good, cinnamon helps to open up sinuses and improves blood circulation. ♥

