

How can a banana remove a splinter?

By Jean Sheff
For The Patent Trader

No, it's not a trick question. And yes, it does work! Curious? So were the dozens of parents and caregivers who attended master herbalist Andrea Candee's recent talk and book signing at Borders in White Plains, N.Y.

"Gentle Healing for Baby and Child," (Simon & Schuster/Pocket Books, May 2001) Ms. Candee's simple and straightforward new book, is a parent's guide to child-friendly herbs and other natural remedies for common ailments and injuries.

Safe and effective

Eastchester resident Cheryl Williams attended the talk with her 20 month-old grandson. "I've heard Andrea speak before," she said. "These remedies really work, and without side effects."

Candee, M.H., M.S.C., a resident of South Salem and mother of two grown sons, lectures at the New York Botanical Garden and throughout the country on how to use nature's pharmacy of healing plants. Originally an early childhood education teacher focused on speech pathology for children, Candee has spent the past 25 years studying and practicing herbology. "I've always been interested in natural wellness," she said. "I've used many of these remedies on my own sons."

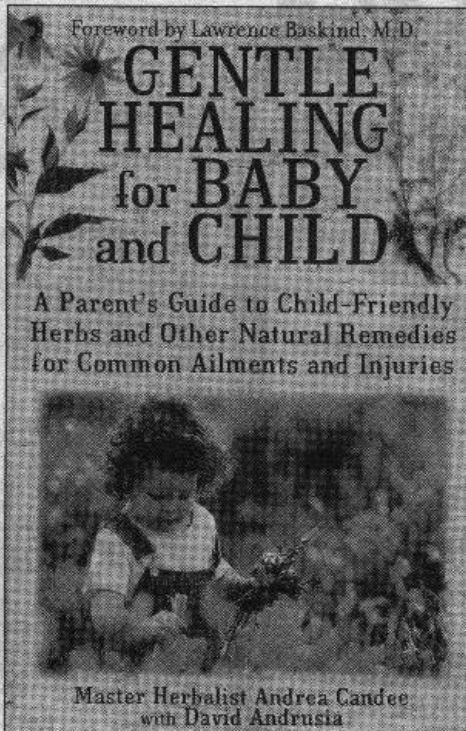
Candee regularly consults with physicians and healthcare practitioners, designing protocols of botanical medicine, as well as maintaining a private practice that offers individualized health consultations and workshops.

Lawrence Baskind, M.D., a pediatrician with Riverside Pediatrics in Croton-on-Hudson, New York, believes Candee's remedies are safe and effective. "The herbs and remedies that Andrea suggests are gentle with a wide margin of safety," he said. "There are 100 years of clinical experience behind them. Our conventional medicines are based on herbal prescriptions."

The overuse of antibiotics is just one of the reasons why Baskind finds alternative remedies especially attractive. "With the pediatric population we prefer not to use medications that are overly dramatic in effect," he said. "Not only because of side effects but the potency of many drugs are unpredictable."

"Ten years ago I began offering workshops for parents, and no one would come," said Candee. Since her adult programs regularly sold out, she wondered why.

"Parents told me they were willing to try herbal remedies on themselves but afraid to try it on their children." Enter "Gentle Healing for Baby and Child," providing a safe, easy, gentle approach for children. Parents can also use these remedies



on themselves. "What's safe for children is safe for adults, but not always in reverse," said Candee.

Dosage

"Herbs do not work by folklore; they have a natural chemical factor," said Candee. "To be effective you must use them correctly." That means using the proper remedy in the correct dose for the required frequency.

Candee has specific guidelines for dosing children with herbs which she determines by the child's weight. When calculating a child's dose according to weight she reduces the quantity of the dose, not the frequency.

Just as when they take traditional medicine, children might need some encouragement to buy into the plan. Having administered herbs to many children, Candee shares her best tips and strategies.

Remedies

Whether your children are suffering from teething pains, asthma, insect bites, travel sickness, pink eye, ear infections, the flu or anything in between, you'll find safe practical solutions in this guide.

You'll discover which herbs reduce fever, why peppermint tea relieves both headaches and stomachaches and how rosemary hair juice can prevent lice. Now that summer's here, learn how to repel ticks and make a natural mosquito repellent.

Products

Many of the products used in these remedies can be found in your own kitchen. Herbal teas, extracts and homeopathic remedies can be found in specialty shops like Healthy Choice Apothecary in Chappaqua or Liggett-Rexall Health Center in Ardsley.

Philip Altman, owner of these two progressive, integrative pharmacies said, "We believe in preventative illness, positive health and integrated medicine." As compounding pharmacies they can also custom blend products to fit the person. His diverse and experienced staff can direct you to alternative and traditional healing products.

The banana trick

Still wondering about the banana and the splinter? First, cut a piece of a ripened banana peel to cover the affected area. Then, apply the pulp side of the banana peel against the skin holding it in place with a piece of surgical tape. Leave it on overnight. In the morning the foreign matter will have been drawn to the surface, ready to remove or sometimes already out. Deeply embedded splinters may require one or two more nights of treatment, each requiring a fresh section of peel.

In some cases, there is no substitute for traditional medical care. Yet many childhood complaints can be remedied with an effective, alternative approach. "In the end we always want to do what's best for the patient," said Baskind. "And alternative remedies can help children feel better faster."