

Remedies We'd Rather Forget

**These remedies are shared for fun
and are not recommended for use.**

Medical Mastermind

GROWING UP as a teenager in the 1940s was an experience. We were so naive when it came to home remedies.

We had an 80-year-old neighbor whom I recognized as a medical wizard. She'd cure all of us from our most unsightly problems, including the ringworms and acne on my face.

This woman would go to her persimmon tree, pick the greenest berry, cut it in half and rub it on my ringworm. It burned like crazy, and the ringworm would scab over in a day or two. But a week later, the scab and ringworm were gone.

For my acne, she'd put lead BBs in a jar of water and let them dissolve overnight. The next morning, I would drink the leaded water. It tasted awful, but it did seem to help. It's a wonder I didn't get lead poisoning!

—Charlie Tarrant, Houston, Texas

She Had to Liver It Down

WHILE I was growing up, in Carrollton, Georgia, in the 1930s, my mother decided that I was far too thin. Her concern and the agreement of other overweight ladies sent her scurrying to a physician.

The doctor, making no test but a visual one, decided I had pernicious anemia. The truth was I simply had very blond hair and fine, light skin bequeathed by a red-haired mother.

The remedy was for me to eat liver three times a day! Although I hated the taste and probably didn't need one bite of it, I was forced

to eat fried liver in the amount desired by my mother.

I've far exceeded the years assigned me by the doctor and am blessed with good health, possibly in spite of the fried liver. To this day, I do not like meat of any kind, even though my mother and her 11 siblings produced pressed meat, blood pudding and chitlings, all of which they considered to be delicacies.

—Jean Pruett, Camden, South Carolina

Not to Be Used Internally

I HAVE many fond memories of living with my mother's parents when I was too young to go to school...as well as a not-so-fond memory.

Whenever I'd get a cold or sore throat, they'd make me swallow a spoonful of Vicks VapoRub. My Uncle Wes, who was probably still a teenager, said he'd swallow a spoonful if I would. Well, he did and I did...ugh!

Thinking back, I'll bet Uncle Wes only pretended to swallow that stuff. I don't remember if it made me well, but at least it didn't kill me.

—Jeannette Toms, Owenton, Kentucky