Remedies We'd Rather Forget

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

Mix Turned Them "Yeller"

FIVE WORDS uttered by Mother would always strike fear into my brother and me: "Time for the 'yellow medicine.' "

The vile mixture was probably a folk remedy carried over from pioneer days. It was called a flesh builder and was supposed to pep up your constitution, clear constipation and improve overall health.

To prepare yellow medicine, a dozen eggs, complete with shells, were mixed with a dozen cut lemons in an open crock. After the eggs dissolved in the lemon juice, there was added a pint of whiskey, a pint of cod liver oil and a pound of honey. The problem was that the eggshells never completely dissolved, leaving lumps of what we considered to be effluent material scraped from some wretched place.

The last ingredient was 40 drops of bitter almond, which was often hard to get, seeing that it was a potentially poisonous substance! The mixture then festered for days.

After a forced swallow of yellow medicine, the taste lingering for hours, we were each given a creosote tablet and a glass of water. If there were any beneficial attributes to this liquid, we would have preferred to bypass them and continue to be sick, puny and constipated. —Ray Z., Dayton, Ohio

Kerosene Candy NOT a Treat

MY MOM'S REMEDY for a sore throat in the early '40s was something she called kerosene hardtack candy.

A mixture of water, sugar and kerosene was cooked in an iron

skillet to form hard candy. When cooled, it was broken into pieces and used like a cough drop dissolved in the mouth. Horrible, yes, but it cured the sore throat. —Vel T., Du Bois, Pennsylvania