

# Witch Hazel: 25 Uses For Common Ailments

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**Witch hazel tree**

Witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) is a [flowering shrub/tree](#) which is common in North America and Japan. The witch hazel plant extract is derived from the leaves and bark of the shrub, and offers many benefits and uses especially for those seeking safe and natural treatments.

## 25 Uses For Witch Hazel

### 1. Treating Bruises & Blemishes

Witch hazel offers the benefit of being able to remove blemishes and bruises as well as inflammatory skin conditions. Apply to the skin straight from the bottle using a cotton ball or cosmetic pad.

Witch hazel also helps remove discoloration from bruises and makes the healing process speedier. It can be applied up to three times daily.

## **2. Witch Hazel as a Natural Astringent**

A popular use of witch hazel is as a natural astringent. This is because it contains a high concentration of tannins. This means the witch hazel can be used as an astringent to rid the skin of excess oil and clear the pores. There are a lot of contaminants in the air which enter the skin's pores. The witch hazel, when applied, reduces those contaminants and makes their effects on the skin less severe. Regular use may also prevent blemishes from returning and lessen the likelihood of blackheads forming.

## **3. Use to Stop Bleeding**

Another of witch hazel's benefits and uses is that it can be applied to [stop bleeding for minor cuts](#) and scrapes. The reason why witch hazel does stop bleeding is because it serves to tighten the skin and this in turn promotes faster healing. So apply it to those small cuts and scrapes to help the bleeding to stop. Witch hazel bought in a store often contains isopropyl alcohol which helps cleanse the wound, offering an added benefit.

## **4. Ease an Itchy Scalp**

An itchy scalp can be very irritating and annoying. A natural way to ease the condition is to use witch hazel. Just mix one part witch hazel with two parts water and then pour a little of the solution on the scalp. Massage into the scalp then rinse.

## **5. Helps Shrink Swollen Veins**

Use witch hazel to shrink swollen veins by soaking a soft terry cloth in the liquid and laying it over the area affected by varicose veins. This temporarily removes pain and swelling. The affected areas should be propped up as high as possible during treatment as this will reduce blood pressure in the swollen veins.

## **6. Use Witch Hazel for Hemorrhoid Relief**

Hemorrhoids to say the least are very uncomfortable as they itch, swell and bleed. One of the uses of witch hazel is to provide relief for the condition. Witch hazel is often an ingredient used in commercial hemorrhoid products, but a simpler and cheaper option is to mix it with Aloe Vera Gel and apply it to the affected area. This will provide fast relief.



Witch hazel bottle from 1913

## 7. Use Witch Hazel for the Treatment of Acne

Witch hazel offers many advantages compared with commercial acne treatments. The commercial products tend to be harsh whereas witch hazel is gentle and non-drying and is ideal for toning and cleansing skin which is acne-prone or actually infected with acne. Witch hazel is perfect for treating the condition because it is a natural astringent thanks to its high tannin content. It also has antioxidant properties. Witch hazel should be applied to acne-affected areas twice a day straight from the bottle using a cotton pad.

Also see: [How To Get Rid Of Blackheads Fast: 15 Home Remedies](#)

## 8. Use After Shaving or Hair Removal

Witch hazel is perfect for men and women to use after shaving any part of the body. Firstly witch

hazel is able to stop minor bleeds such as nicks and cuts, something which can happen when shaving with a wet razor. Secondly the plant extract also has anti-inflammatory properties which can prevent or reduce the effects of razor burn. Thirdly for those who remove hair through hot wax treatment witch hazel is also useful as it can be used as an anti-inflammatory following waxing and help stop bleeding from hair follicles that have been damaged by the process.

## **9. Help Soothe Diaper Rash**

Diaper rash can cause distress to a baby but this can be dealt with thanks to witch hazel's soothing properties. It is especially useful if the diaper rash is healing slowly. Apply a witch hazel solution to the affected area and there will be an immediate improvement.

## **10. Treat puffy areas around the eyes**

Puffy and discolored areas around the eyes are not very attractive but one of the benefits of witch hazel is that it is able to deal with the condition in a natural way and avoid the need to use chemical laden products. This is because witch hazel is a natural astringent able to tighten the skin, treat the discoloring and reduce the puffiness around and under the eyes. While treating puffiness is one of the most important benefits of using witch hazel it is highly important that none of it gets in the eyes, so be careful.

## **11. Soothe Chicken Pox Blisters**

Another use of witch hazel is to soothe chicken pox blisters. It is very simple to prepare and involves taking a cup of witch hazel and another one of water. The two are then mixed and should be applied liberally to the affected areas on the body and then allowed to dry. This chicken pox blister treatment using witch hazel can be used as often as needed as it uses natural ingredients with no chemicals.

## **12. Treat Those Damaged Gums**

A natural way to treat damaged gums is to use a witch hazel mouth rinse. It is important that witch hazel containing isopropyl alcohol is not used for the treatment. To gain maximum benefit, use only the natural product. Witch hazel reduces pain and swelling caused by irritated or infected gums and also helps stop minor bleeding in the mouth. A teaspoonful of witch hazel with a drop of clove and myrrh oil can also reduce pain caused by emerging wisdom teeth and also ease the pain suffered by infants who are teething.

## **13. Helping to Dry Up Swimmer's Ear**

Among the many witch hazel benefits is the ability to treat "[swimmer's ear](#)." Swimmer's ear - otitis externa to give the condition its medical name – affects the ear canal and is caused by a microbial

infection. The ear becomes clogged up with pus, wax and other debris. This can be treated by putting a few drops of witch hazel into the affected ear using an eye dropper. The witch hazel allows the ear to drain and then it can be cleaned with a cotton swab.

#### **14. Help Neutralize the Effects of Contact Dermatitis**

Certain plant compounds can irritate the skin and cause severe itching. Witch hazel is excellent for curing the areas of the skin affected by the likes of sap oil from poison ivy and poison oak which can cause contact dermatitis. It helps dry the affected skin and prevent it itching.

#### **15. Curing a Sore Throat**

One of the uses of witch hazel is to help cure a sore throat. This is why it can be very handy to have a witch hazel bush growing close by. Soak the leaves with some of the twigs in a cup filled with very hot water. A few cloves can be added for flavor. They should be soaked for at least 15 minutes. The solids should then be strained off leaving a cup of witch hazel tea. The tea is then gargled and the witch hazel's properties will soothe the throat and reduce swelling.

#### **16. Cleansing and soothing a wound**

Witch hazel can be used as a natural way to cleanse wounds and scrapes, big and small. It is able to cleanse the skin of germs and bacteria and also soothe any inflammation. The skin cleansing properties of witch hazel are well known to tattoo artists, many of whom use it clean new tattoos.

#### **17. Refreshing Skin**

During the summer people become hot and sweaty and the skin becomes oily. One of the benefits offered by witch hazel is that it can refresh the skin. Just soak a cotton pad with witch hazel to wipe away the oil and other impurities and the skin is refreshed.

#### **18. Sealing in moisture**

Witch oil is great to use after a shower because it seals in moisture and prevents dry skin. This makes witch oil a superior astringent to commercial products as they tend to be drying which is detrimental to people who suffer dry skin conditions.

#### **19. Healing Cold Sores**

If someone has a cold sore they will not want it becoming a blister. Witch hazel provides a safe and natural way to prevent this happening. As soon as the cold sore begins to appear witch hazel should be applied. If a blister has already appeared it will heal even quicker if the plant extract is

used.

## **20. A Deep Cleanser for the Scalp**

Witch hazel provides a solution for people who suffer psoriasis, eczema, or dandruff. Massage into the scalp before using a shampoo and conditioner. Witch hazel is also an ideal way to wash hair between washes with shampoo and conditioner.



**Witch hazel is especially good for soothing bug bites**

## **21. Ease Bug bites and Stings**

Witch hazel benefits include the ability to ease bug bites and stings. Witch Hazel's anti-itch and anti-inflammatory properties help provide relief for those unfortunate to have suffered a stings or bites from bees, wasps, fleas, flies and other insects during those hotter months Apply it, using a cotton pad, to the bite or sting to bring relief.

## **22. Avoid Skin Peeling after Sunburn**

The skin will peel following severe sunburn, but witch hazel will prevent this and help the affected area to heal. This is all down to the plant extract's exceptional anti-inflammatory properties. Not

only will the skin be prevented from peeling, which is both unpleasant and unsightly, witch hazel along with Aloe will help cool the burn and ease discomfort.

### **23. Use as an Aftershave**

As most men will know aftershave can be very expensive. However, there is a cheaper and natural alternative. It is witch hazel. This natural product has all the essential ingredients for an aftershave. It helps tighten the skin and serves as a moisturizer. Witch hazel also has anti-inflammatory properties which means it can deal with shaving hazards such as razor burns as well as stem bleeding from little razor nicks. Some users prefer the scent of standard aftershaves and they continue to use them following a shave after first splashing on the witch hazel.

### **24. Refreshing Tired Eyes**

Many people suffer tired eyes, especially at the end of a long day, and it can be extremely uncomfortable. One way to deal with this is by using witch hazel. This is very easy to do and the whole process can take less than 15 minutes. Just mix some witch hazel in a bowl of cold water. Take a clean cloth or flannel and soak in the water. Then place the cloth over the closed eyes for around 10 minutes. This should leave your eyes refreshed and remove any redness. The witch hazel cold compress can also help someone who has been crying to look and feel much better.

### **25. Use as a Deodorant**

Many commercially produced deodorants contain witch hazel. However, people do not have to spend their cash on purchasing these products; if they have some witch hazel they can make their own homemade deodorant. All that is needed is 4 tablespoonfuls of the witch hazel. What other ingredients are used will depend on personal taste. One suggestion is a tablespoonful of vodka along with 2 tablespoonfuls of cornflower water and orange flower water. Also add 10 drops of both cypress and geranium, 8 drops of bergamot, 5 of neroli, 4 of lavender and 3 drops of black pepper.

The essential oils should be added one by one into a bottle and then shaken vigorously until dissolved. Then pour in the witch hazel and flower waters and shake well. The result will be a bottle of home produced witch hazel deodorant.

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