

The naturopathic advisor



Natural Lifestyle has teamed up with experts at CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine) to answer some of your burning health questions. This issue, you asked:



Q What natural things can I do when my child gets earache?

Ear infection, or otitis media, is a common complaint in childhood. Most cases of earache will clear up on their own after three days. It is difficult as a parent not to be actively 'doing something' to help

when your child is unhappy and unwell, and chronic ear infection, or 'glue ear', is an alarmingly common issue, frequently resulting in surgery (with arguably poor success rates). Here are some tips as to why your little one might be getting earache in the first place, and what you can do to help.

- Keep kids away from smoke – wood burning stoves, cigarette smoke, open fires and exhaust fumes.
- Use ear plugs when swimming.
- Investigate food allergies – around 90 per cent of children with recurrent ear infections have allergies; cow's milk, wheat, egg white and peanuts being the main offenders. See your naturopath or

ask your GP for a RAST test to determine problem foods.

- Use antibiotics only as necessary and be sure to take a probiotic during and after treatment. Unnecessary antibiotics exacerbate illness by disordering the healthy flora of the gut, the respiratory tract, and indeed everywhere in the body.
- Breastfeed as long as practical, breastfeeding is protective.
- Earache often follows respiratory illness, so keep the immune system tip top by offering plenty of vitamin C-rich foods, such as bell peppers and kiwi fruit, consider a good quality cod liver oil supplement in the winter months for vitamin A, vitamin D and omegas.
- Choose toothpastes sweetened with xylitol, which is an alternative sweetener that has antibacterial

action against the most common bacterial cause of otitis media.

- Careful local application of heat using a warm compress or a hairdryer can promote soothing drainage of fluid.
- Try naturopathic ear drops – your herbalist or naturopath can make up a tincture of calendula, St John's wort, mullein, garlic, lavender and vitamin E in olive oil, used three times per day.
- Do see a doctor if you are concerned and your child has a high temperature, symptoms other than earache, worrying discharge or ear pain for more than three days.



YOUR EXPERT

Naturopath, Gemma Hurditch, for CNM. For information on CNM training in a range of natural health therapies, visit www.naturopathy-uk.com

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The experts from CNM's Natural Chef Kitchen warm up with these healthy dishes.



Pumpkin spice granola

Serves 4

With its warming blend of aromatic spices, this delicious pumpkin granola fills the house with the most amazing scent whilst baking! It's a perfect combination of crunchy and sweet.

Ingredients:

- 2tbsp soft coconut oil
- 135g gluten free oats
- 190g roughly chopped pecans
- 1 heaped tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 heaped tsp ground ginger
- 65g roughly chopped walnuts
- 75g pumpkin seeds
- 80g chia seeds
- 75g baked and mashed/purèed sweet potato
- ¼ tsp ground mace
- 80g maple syrup
- ½ tsp ground cloves
- Pinch sea salt

To serve:

- Ice cold pecan or almond milk

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 160°C for conventional or 140°C for fan assisted oven, and line a shallow oven tray with baking paper.
- Add the oats, nuts and seeds to a large mixing bowl and mix well to combine.
- Add the ginger, cinnamon, mace, salt and

cloves to the bowl. Toss the mixture to distribute the seasonings evenly.

- Add the coconut oil, sweet potato purée and maple syrup to a small pan over a gentle heat. Stir together until the oil has melted and the mixture is fully combined.
- Pour the wet mixture over the dry ingredients, stirring well to ensure the mixture is evenly coated in the liquid.
- Tip the mixture out onto the lined oven tray and spread it evenly.
- Transfer to the oven to bake for 30-35 minutes, turning frequently and breaking up any large clumps. The granola should be golden brown and fragrant, but be careful not to burn or the mixture will taste bitter.
- Allow to cool completely before serving with ice cold pecan or almond milk.

Tip:
The recipe calls for pre-cooked sweet potato, but you can use pumpkin purée as a substitute.



Root vegetable gratin

Serves 4

This simple root vegetable gratin makes a satisfying main course with a side salad or a medley of leeks and broccoli.

Ingredients:

- 3 small parsnips, peeled and finely sliced
- 2 medium beetroot, peeled and finely sliced
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and finely sliced
- 3tbsp coconut oil

For the topping:

- 1 cup cashews, soaked in water overnight
- 1 cup water
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- 2tsp chopped fresh rosemary
- 2tsp fresh thyme leaves
- Pinch ground nutmeg

- Generous pinch sea salt
- Generous crack black pepper

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 200°C conventional or 180°C for fan assisted.
- Layer the beetroot slices across the bottom of an oven proof dish (approximately 20x30cm) so that they overlap slightly. Place one tablespoon of coconut oil on top of the beetroot layer.
- Layer the parsnip slices over the top of the beetroot layer. Add a tablespoon of coconut oil to the top of the parsnips.
- Layer the sweet potato slices

over the top of the parsnip layer and add the final tablespoon of coconut oil.

- To make the cashew topping, add the cashews, garlic cloves and water to a blender and blend to a smooth consistency. Season generously with salt and pepper and add the nutmeg and fresh herbs. Blend again until you have a perfectly smooth sauce.
- Pour the cashew sauce over the layered vegetables and place in the centre of the oven to bake for 45 minutes until golden and crisp on top.

CNM recommends the use of organic ingredients.