

Honey & Lemon

For a cough: was Granny onto something?

Makes: 1 mug

You'll need

½ fresh lemon

1-2 teaspoons honey

1 mug freshly boiled water

To make it

1. Squeeze the lemon juice into a mug.
2. Pour over the freshly boiled water and allow it to cool to a comfortable drinking temperature.
3. Stir in the honey until dissolved. Sip while warm.

The old tale

When someone had a cough or scratchy throat, out came the lemon, honey and hot water. This simple kitchen preparation has been passed down through generations.

What the evidence says

The NHS suggests warm lemon and honey as something to try for a cough, while noting that evidence is limited. A Cochrane review of six small trials in children aged 12 months to 18 years found that honey probably eased some acute cough symptoms compared with no treatment or placebo. This does not establish honey and lemon as a cure for the infection causing a cough.

Hive observations

Add the honey after the water has cooled slightly so its individual aroma and flavour are easier to appreciate.

A sensible precaution

Never give honey to babies under 12 months. Allow hot drinks to cool before serving. See a GP for a cough lasting more than three weeks. Seek urgent help for breathing difficulty or coughing up blood.

Source: NHS: Cough
Source: Cochrane: Honey for acute cough