Home remedies could brew trouble for unwary users

Hogs hoofs, red clay, com silk, tur-pentine, molasses, baking soda and red vinegar.

These common household ingredients make up a wide variety of

red vinegar.

These common household ingredents make up a wide variety of home remedies" which are still being used to relieve asthama, arthritis high blood pressure, stomach aches and head colds.

The still considerate harmless and head colds.

The still considerate harmless they could cause anterned harmless, they could cause anterned harmless when used in addition to traditional medications, say researchers at the University of Michigan.

Marvie L. Hackney, a program associate at the university's institute of Gerontology, has just completed a 12-month study of home remedy use among 50 elderly black persons in The sexual of the factor in the country's first comprehensive list of home remedies, their ingredients and uses for distribution to doctors, pharmacists, and others in the health care community.

"Many practitioners seem unaware

community.

"Many practitioners seem unaware that a patient may be using his own mixture of herbs, chemicals, and overthe-counter preparations in addition or in lieu of a prescription drug," Hackney said.

the-counter preparations in addition or in lieu of a prescription drug." Hackney said.
"Adverse drug reactions caused an estimated 30,000 deaths each year and are among the top ten causes of hospitalization. The elderly are inordiantely because the to this problem simply because they use more drugs, and because of the chronic diseases which often accompany old age."

The researchers interviewed 38 metale 60% and 70%, who mostly in their lied as knowledgeable in the area of home remedies. These were defined as six substances which can be purchased without a prescription; which have to be mixed, diluted, dried, and so forth, prior to use by a patient, or non-prescription substances which are used for purposes or in a mamer not indicated on the label."

Additional the substances which are used for purposes or in a mamer not indicated on the label. "A propose of the substances which are used for purposes of the southern of the substances which and the proposes of the substances of the substances of less of formal schooling, 20 completed high school, and three attended trade schools. All but nine were relired at the time of the study, although nearly half did volunteer work. Most named Social Security as their main source of income.

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Nearly all said they had learned about home remedies from their or their or

cited 'bed rest' and 28 percent saut-prayer."
"Home remely users tend to be every religious." Hackney notes. "They believe that God created every tree, leaf and living thing for man's benefit and gave them the wisdom to use them properly. Met of the common ingredients are readily available in and around the home."

Some of the favorite combinations the old people mentioned included "lemons and onions for chest colds;" alcohol and vinegar for arthritis" and "kerosene on sugar to stop a

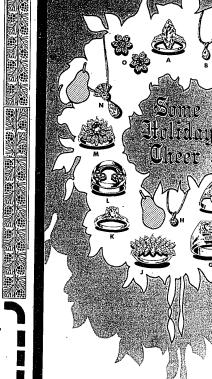
"The study was not intended to measure the prevalence of home rem-edy use in a given community," Hack-ney stresses, "nor to pass any judg-ment on the remedies' effectiveness.

"It is worth noting, however, that nearly half of the participants in this study rate their health good to excel-lent and 59 per cent say they are com-pletely satisfied with ther lives.

"The use of home remedies is not likely to fade with the passing of the older generation," Hackney poles." A great many young people are becoming interested in the medicinal properties of various herbs, leaves and other natural 'ingredients as alternatives to chemical drugs."

Hackney recommends repeating the study in other geographic areas to identify differences and universal trends in selfmedication practices and extending the survey into other ethnic grains.

groups.
"In particular, the incidence of drug-drug, druglaboratory test and drug-drug, druglaboratory test and drug-drug, drug-drug, state that the description of the determinal," she stress, "especially within elderly populations. Health care providers must be made related to a power of the dangers which need an about—not necessarily from tome some power use, but from its interactions with other substances."



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