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# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

Thursday July 17, 1941.

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| : <u>Question Box</u> :     | Answers: from chemists, entomologists, |
| : What flavor in milk? :    | and extension workers of the           |
| : How treat chigger bites?: | U.S. Department of Agriculture         |
| : Where get hiking hints? : |  |

--ooOoo--

Children figure in each of our questions today, but in quite different ways. One mother wants to know how she can get her children to drink more milk,-- that's a perpetually recurring question, but we have a new answer. Another mother complains that her children are bothered by chiggers. And there's a letter from a woman who runs a camp for other people's children. Our answers are from chemists, entomologists and extension workers in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

To the first question- "How can I get my children to drink more milk?" some of the chemists in the department answer, "Flavor it with berry juices- raspberry, youngberry, loganberry, strawberry if you still have any, or cherry juice. Later on, there will be blackberry juice and grape juice."

These chemists recently tried an experiment. They gave 55 school children a number of different milk drinks without any comments. Some were combinations of fruit juice flavors and milk. Some were plain milk, some colored milk, and some sweetened and colored milk. The children could try a different mixture every morning. They were told they could have as much as they wanted and to leave what they did not want in the containers.

Nobody asked for their opinions. The investigators simply measured what was left, and the results showed plainly that when choosing freely, most children prefer milk with an added light fruit-juice flavor and the slight tint that goes with it. Of all the fruit-juice drinks, those with berry juice flavor were "tops".



If you like percentages, the children left only 10 percent of the milk flavored with berry-juice, compared with about 22 percent leavings of straight milk, colored milk, and sweetened colored milk.

Our next letter asks about chiggers. "We have chiggers in the grass and nearby woods practically all summer. Is there any way of protecting the children from them? And what is the best thing to do for chigger bites?"

The entomologists of the Department say that it is difficult completely to protect yourself and your children from chigger attack. During the worst of the chigger season they suggest the daily dusting of the bodies of the children with fine sulfur. Sulfur dusted on the clothing and legs of adults will also give much protection. This should be done especially when it is found necessary to spend some time in brush or weed-covered areas. Picnic parties can get some protection by sitting on quilts or papers, rather than on the ground.

But when the children have been exposed to chiggers, give them a hot bath as soon as possible afterward. Lather them all over with a medicated soap and scrub with a coarse wash cloth or flesh brush to dislodge any chiggers that may be on them. Let the lather dry on their bodies for 10 or 15 minutes before you wash it off. Sometimes it helps to rub kerosene lightly on the skin before giving the hot bath. Of course, change all clothing.

To stop the bites from itching, try ammonia water, strong salt water, or a paste of bicarbonate of soda mixed with water. Touching each bite with colodian (new-skin) also relieves itching. Try to avoid scratching. If bites become infected, touch them with a mild antiseptic, such as mercurochrome or a solution of iodine.

Speaking of chiggers and out-door life brings us to a question from a woman who has a small summer camp for girls between 10 and 14. This woman writes: "Does the U.S. Department of Agriculture have any bulletins about hiking and camping for children?"

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There are no bulletins written for children on this subject, but the Forest Service has plenty of information for adult campers and people who use the National Forests. Write to the Forest Service at Washington, D.C. or to your Regional Forester. Also many 4-H clubs organize hikes in the summer, and their leaders are given a number of useful hints gathered by the extension service of the Department. These are not for general distribution, but I can quote you some of these suggestions for young hikers:

Learn to walk easily. Keep the toes pointed straight ahead. Pick your footing carefully. Walk steadily and fast enough to tax your strength a little. Carry yourself well- walk tall!

Dress comfortably and for the weather. Wear two pairs of socks, even in summer. Wear cotton next to the feet and then heavy wool to prevent blisters. Oxfords are better hiking shoes than high-topped boots that bind the leg muscles. But they should fit well, have roomy toes, broad low heels and heavy soles.

On long hikes everyone should rest occasionally. The hike is intended not only for the exercise, but so that hikers may learn to be observant, to see, to hear, to smell, and to feel, what the woods and natural surroundings are like.

The 4-H clubs have worked out a number of different kinds of hikes. Maybe your summer campers would enjoy a change once in a while from just a plain walk or tramp. How about a breakfast hike, arriving in time to see the sun rise before cooking a campfire breakfast? This could also be a bird hike. Or a track and trail hike, where part of the group leaves first and marks a trail for the others to follow. Or a pioneer hike, on which hikers must hunt for food and make any equipment they need. A stepping-stone hike and a star-gazing hike are other ideas.

Some other day I'd like to give you some good out-door recipes used by 4-H boys and girls.

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