

Media Contact:

Karen Kraus
Public Relations Specialist
(715) 717-4591
karen.kraus@hshs.org



HSHS hospitals celebrate the health benefits of honey during September's National Honey Month

Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls, Wis. – September marks the end of honey collection season in the United States. To celebrate beekeepers, and the health benefits of the natural sweetener, September was designated as National Honey Month in 1989.

Honey is the only insect-derived natural product that has nutritional, cosmetic and therapeutic values according to studies by the National Institutes of Health. It's also a pantry staple because it does not need to be refrigerated and it never spoils if it's in a sealed container.

Heather Krieger, a dietitian with HSHS Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's hospitals says honey contains some vitamins and minerals in trace quantities. "It's also a rich source of carbohydrates, providing 17 grams per tablespoon," she says. "Honey also contains antioxidants which can protect the body from inflammation when portions are consumed in moderate amounts."

The National Honey Board says the natural sweetener can reduce irritation of sore throats; suppress a cough; may aid in stopping hiccups; may help relieve eczema; and may aid in some medical-grade wound care applications as recommended by your doctor. Studies show there are other potential health benefits of honey, and raw honey, which is unpasteurized.

- May relieve seasonal allergies
- Improves sleep
- May strengthen the immune system
- May stabilize blood pressure
- Balances sugar levels

It should be noted that the Centers for Disease Control says honey *should not be given to kids under 12 months old*; no yogurt or cereals with honey, crackers with honey such as honey graham crackers, and no honey pacifiers. The organization says honey has been linked to rare cases of infant botulism, which affects the body's nerves, but after 12 months old, a child's digestive system has adjusted and honey, in moderation, can become a beneficial dietary component.

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About HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital

[HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital](#) is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, the [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](#) is the Founding Institute, and it is an affiliate of [Hospital Sisters Health System](#). Since 1889, it has been meeting patient needs in western Wisconsin with the latest medical innovations and technology, together with a Franciscan whole-person healing tradition.

About HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital

[HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital](#) is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, the [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](#) is the Founding Institute, and it is an affiliate of [Hospital Sisters Health System](#). Since 1885, it has served the people of the Chippewa Falls area with health care that is high tech and high touch. Known locally for the quality of the care it provides patients, the hospital has been recognized nationally for its outstanding patient satisfaction levels.

About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high quality, Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our physician practices and 15 local hospitals in two states - Illinois (Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, O'Fallon, Shelbyville and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan, and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](#) is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit www.hshs.org. For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit www.hospitalsisters.org.