

## **Folk Wisdom and Apple Cider Vinegar**

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As healthcare costs rise along with concerns of the side effects and overuse of medications, many people are looking to alternatives. Traditional folk remedies have wisdom that we can learn from and apply. These are remedies that may not have been scientifically tested, but have been passed down from generation to generation because they work. A remedy may be as close as the kitchen cupboard.

Such is the case with apple cider vinegar. Its health benefits were noted by a Vermont country doctor, D.C. Jarvis, in his 1958 book *Folk Medicine*. The story told is that after finishing med school and opening up his practice in Vermont, Dr. Jarvis was stymied as to why people weren't visiting him in his office. When he took to walking the streets to reach out to people to ask them why, their reply was that they most often didn't need to. If they were sick, they had home remedies that they first applied. They only needed to visit a doctor if those didn't work. One of their commonly used remedies was to drink apple cider vinegar.

Dr. Jarvis was impressed. He began to study apple cider vinegar to understand the reason behind its working. He found answers not only in relating scientific principles as he knew them, but also by studying the natural inclination of children as well as grazing animals, learning from the best teacher of all – Mother Nature.

What Dr. Jarvis pieced together was that when people are on the road to being sick, there is a shift in the body's acid/alkaline balance that precedes the illness. It can be observed in the change in the pH of the urine. Normally on the acidic side, urine will shift to a more alkaline state just prior to the onset of illness. He observed this shift from acid to alkaline urine in people during symptoms of asthma and hay fever as well as two days before a drop in weather temperature! He noted, too, that physical fatigue and prolonged mental exertion caused the acid to alkaline shift.

Drinking the apple cider vinegar restored the proper pH to the body through its naturally occurring acidic content. Dr. Jarvis noted that with the shift in the urine back to acidity, the disease either did not manifest at all, or if it did, it developed only into a mild version of the illness and had a rapid recovery.

What Dr. Jarvis noted in his added observation of nature was how children (of that more innocent and non-commercialized sugar time) loved sour drinks and that grazing animals preferred acid vegetation.

From his work with folk remedies came the following recommendation: 2 teaspoons of raw apple cider vinegar and two teaspoons of raw honey mixed into

an 8 oz glass of water. The recommendation is to drink this daily as a preventative and more often throughout the day if sick.

The apple cider vinegar not only normalizes the body's acid/alkaline balance, but it is also rich in enzymes and mineral content, particularly potassium. Potassium serves to regulate growth, hydrate the cells, balance sodium and enable the proper performance of the nervous system. The pectin in apple cider vinegar promotes elimination and healthy bowels; the phosphorus prevents the formation of putrefactive bacteria. Not to be feared is the cloud of stringy material in raw vinegar, often called the "mother". It is strands of enzymes and protein molecules. All of these are good things to have working for you on a daily basis.

The apple cider vinegar remedy is reported to help with arthritis, gout, acne, colds, sinus infections, sore throats, and laryngitis as well as in the prevention of bladder and kidney infections and stones. Drinking apple cider and honey in warm water before bed can help in cases of insomnia. Apple cider vinegar by itself, diluted in water can be gargled to soothe an irritated throat or taken with a meal to aid in digestion and take care of acid reflux.

It turns out that Hippocrates knew what he was doing back in 400 B.C. when he recommended vinegar for its healing properties.

Not any vinegar will work, however. The healing benefits are only available in raw, unpasteurised apple cider vinegar. The act of pasteurizing, filtering, refining and distillation of vinegar destroys the aliveness and goodness otherwise available. Bragg's Organic Raw Apple Cider Vinegar is a trusted brand and easily found in the grocery store.

Dr. Jarvis's wisdom is still available to us today. The latest reprinting of his work is titled *Folk Medicine: A New England Almanac of Natural Health Care from a Noted Vermont Country Doctor* by D.C. Jarvis, M.D. You might want to put it on your Christmas wish list.

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