

June 1982 NEWSLETTER

AN OVERVIEW OF ALOE VERA

There has been an increasing number of articles in the health literature concerning the use of Aloe Vera products for the treatment of a myriad of problems. While this probably comes as no surprise to those of you in the southwest, the use of Aloe Vera is one that is somewhat new to many of us in the rest of the country. I first became interested in the product after a client talked about the use of it in the treatment of her own arthritis. This was further piqued by an article in JAAHA.

BASIS BOTANICAL INFORMATION

Aloe Vera (Latin for "the true aloe") is a member of the Liliaceae family, and include about 150 different species. There are many varieties, often classified regionally but the one that seems to be of major importance for commercial and medical uses is Aloe Barbadensis.

HISTORY

The use of Aloe Vera in recorded history goes back to the fourth millennium BC, where it was known as "the plant of immortality." Throughout Greek and Roman literature there are references to its use. Its use in this hemisphere has come through two areas. The first was indigenous, in that the plant grew widely, and legend and folklore abound with the use of it as a medicament and cosmetic. The second was the Jesuit Priests of Spain. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries they were the best educated, and among the most knowledgeable of physicians. They used Aloe Vera wherever they found it growing, and often planted it where it was not growing indigenously.

MEDICAL USES

Some of the major biochemical compounds found in Aloe Vera are: Anthraquinones- includes barbaloin, isobarbaloin and aloe-emodin, and other compounds. The Anthraquinones are well known for their laxative qualities. Also appear to have pain-killing properties. D'Amico, Benigni and others in the early 50's found them to be valuable bactericidal agents with anti-biotic properties, as well as with virucidal potential, confirmed later by Dims and Zimmerman. Negligible toxicity evident within the anthraquinone complex as found in Aloe Vera. Barbaloin and isobarbaloin have cathartic and analgesic properties, and glycoside barbaloin is an especially effective pain reliever. Chrysorhanic Acid is known for effective treatment of chronic diseases of the skin such as psoriasis and skin fungus. Cinnamic Acid: high in carminative/digestive activity, and are believed helpful as germicides, fungicides, and detergents. Ester of Cinnamic

Acid: a hydrolyzing or preteolytic enzyme which facilitates the breakdown of necrotic tissue.

Lignins- a wood-like pulp found in Aloe Vera which exhibits remarkable ability to penetrate the human skin. Similar to DMSO in these properties.

Mono-sulfonic Acid- Actually part of the anthraquinone complex, this acid is a chemical chain relative of DuISO, and may share some of its penetrating and healing properties.

Saponins- glycosides which have cleansing and antiseptic properties. There is some evidence that saponins block the kinin enzymes in the body, including bradykinin, which are thought to be one of the primary triggers of the inflammatory reaction. This may explain the remarkable anti-inflammatory effects of Aloe Vera, as well as Yucca, a plant also rich in saponins.

Reducing Sugars, including the mucopolysaccharides mannose, hexvurenic acid and rhanrose- believed to have tissue-building properties as well as bactereriodical activity.

Proteolytic Enzymes- Catalase, Oxidate, Amylase, Cellulase and Aliinase Alpha amylase is a starch-splitting enzyme known for its anti-inflammatory properties, and is thought to play a role in the bodies response to tissue inflammation, and edema due to contusions, sprains ulcerations, and ether tissue trauma.

Most of us aver the years have heard of using Aloe Vera for acute burns. The article by Cera et al. in the Sept/ Oct. 1980 JAAHA is especially exciting, because it explains some of the mechanisms behind the effect of Aloe Vera. The abstract reads: It is generally accepted that in the canine species with a 50% or more partial or full thickness burn over the body surface area(BSA), recovery is remote and euthanasia is recommended.

We present two case histories where a therapeutic modality employing an Aloe Vera cream (Dermaide Aloe) and tablets, reversed the dermal ischemia of burns due to prostaglandins and abrogated a Pseudomanas aeruginosa infection in animals with over a 35io burn.

Both bacteriological and immunohistochemical data presented confirms the bactericidal and antiprostaglandin effect of Aloe Vera cream ;Dermaide Aloe) and substantiates its effective-v in the management and treatment of thermal injuries in the canine species.

What is exciting to me is that the mechanism that they nave elucidated here may help to explain why Aloe Vera has been so effective in other problems. R. Norway in an article. in V'S/SAC, Jan. 1975 reported (see table)

I have used Aloe Vera in several cases of chronic low-grade pyoderma, that had 'been on long term antibiotic therapy with poor results. Results have been excellent. I feel that we may be again looking at both the antibacterial, and antiprostaglandin effects of Aloe Vera. Aloe Vera may also be involved in breaking through the immune "shell" that forms around chronic sites of inflammation, and prevents the normal body defense mechanisms from cleaning up the area. Antibiotics, :with their inherent antimetabolic effect, may in fact therefore see detriment in some chronic situations, rather than a help.

Some of the other conditions in which Aloe Vera has been reported to be effective in are arthritis, bursitis,

colitis, ulcers, prostatitis, dermatitis, asthma, allergies, migraines, and for appetite suppression for weight control. Bob Anderson has reported using it very successfully (orally) for the treatment of diarrhea. All in all, Aloe Vera seems to have a definite future in the field of holistic practice, and it will be interesting to see what further research will bring in the way of mechanisms of action.

There have been some reported allergic reactions to Aloe Vera. While they are extremely rare, they are possible.

SUCCUS CINERIA MARITIMA

I received a letter from J.D. Schaffer telling me that he has used SCM several times over quite a few years. He concurs with the month to six week time frame for evaluation of effectiveness, and also says there is frequently some mild conjunctivitis for about the first week. This is transitory, and might possibly be looked at as a "healing crisis" or as an indication of improvement of circulation to the eye. He suggests that since Succus is Latin for "juice of" and the Cineria Maritima is a desert plant from Mexico and New Mexico, that Aloe Vera in liquid form is similar and apparently equally effective.

Ihor John Basko sent a reprint of an article on PA-WEITI-HUANG-WAN (REHNIANNIA 8 FORMULA). This is an herbal tea of eight different herbs. The author of the article, Dr. Ken Fujihira had 568 cases in his study, and visual power in 310 improved (54.6%), 152 remained unchanged (26.8), and 106 decreased (18.16%). The tea is apparently useful for many aging problems, and works by improving circulation to the area.

I am enclosing a reprint from the May 1982 PUBLIC SCRUTINY. I would suggest that you all send it to your Senator.

Richard Pitcairn sent a copy of a notice that THE SOCIETY FOR EMPIRICAL MEDICINE is presenting a ninety hour course in classical homeopathy, in Arizona. Information can be gotten from Harris L. Coalter Ph.D., 4221 45th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 200169 (202) 362-3185. On June 30, 1981 Arizona officially established the first Board of Homeopathic Medical Examiners in the history of the United States.

My last thought for the letter is a quote from Hippocrates "Leave your drugs in the chemist's pot if you can't eat the rationed with food."

I have been asked by The National Health Federation to speak at there Chicago meeting on August 28 and 29 at the O'Hare-Kennedy Holiday Inn on Veterinary Holistic Medicine. Because of my tight meeting schedule I can not accept. WOULD THERE BE SOMEONE in the area who could accept please contact, Hal Card, NHF convention manager at 213-359-8334.

Understand, that this would be at your expense. I would also appreciate knowing if someone can accept. Thank you.

TABLE 1 - - Results of Aloe Vera Therapy

Condition Treated	#of Animals	Dog	Cat	Other	E	G	P	N
Ringworm	14	4	10		4	10		
Atopy	12	10	2		6	6		
abscess	12	1	11			12		
Otitis Externa	11	8	3			9		2
Hot Spots	11	9	2			10	1	
Misc. Fungal Infections	9	7	1	1 (Rodent)	2	7		
Laceration	4			4 (Horses)		4		
Lip Fold Dermatitis	1	1					1	
Inflamed Cyst	1	1				1		
Staphyloma	1	1				1		

*E Excellent (better than other drugs on the market)

G Good (equal to the best of other drugs on the market)

P Poor (not as good as other drugs on the market)

N No response

**Fluorescent under ultraviolet light

***Exuberant granulation tissue removes surgically in 2 horses then Aloe Vera applied. Only Aloe Vera Gel used on the two remaining horses.