

Wheatgrass and IBS/Crohn's disease - by Dr. Chris Reynolds M.B.,B.S
April, 2004 - Crohn's Disease & ?The Return of Wheatgrass Healing

Crohn's Disease

I continue to receive numerous emails from all round the world requesting assistance with various medical conditions. I am always happy to help if I can, and even happier when I ask for and receive a supportive testimonial. I now have a substantial collection - hundreds of them, for which I am very grateful. These anecdotes are important from my point of view because they indicate that wheatgrass works on its own account - not by a placebo effect. Also, they reaffirm my own position on wheatgrass healing and I learn about healing effects in conditions I have not yet tried wheatgrass for. For instance a naturopath from Western Australia, my home State, called to let me know that she had been treating seven patients with Crohn's disease, a long-term, chronic disorder of the intestine whose underlying cause is unknown, with wheatgrass. (There have been suggestions that it is autoimmune in origin.) She was treating a common complication of the disease - perianal fissures and fistulas - and they had all healed. That's quite a feat considering there are no pharmaceutical products that measure up to the task.

The Return of Wheatgrass Healing

It seems the idea of wheatgrass healing may be catching on again after seventy years waiting in the wings. It is not generally known that wheatgrass was often scientifically trialled and reported, and was used clinically by many physicians and surgeons in the 1930's and 40's - and very successfully. Fresh wheatgrass compresses and the juice itself were applied to post-operative wounds, fractures and severe burns with great success. In the American Journal of Surgery (1940), Benjamin Gruskin, M.D. recommends chlorophyll for its antiseptic benefits. The article suggests the following clinical uses for chlorophyll: to clear up foul smelling odors, neutralize strep infections, heal wounds, hasten skin grafting, cure chronic sinusitis, overcome chronic inner-ear inflammation and infection, reduce varicose veins and heal leg ulcers, eliminate impetigo and other scabby eruptions, heal rectal sores, successfully treat inflammation of the uterine cervix, get rid of parasitic vaginal infections, reduce typhoid fever, and cure advanced pyorrhea in many cases.

Unfortunately the rapid growth of pharmaceuticals, and the introduction of synthetic vitamin pills after the Second World War replaced holistic, healing wheatgrass, which is packed with natural vitamins and other biological actives. The non-patentable grass was quietly swept under the therapeutic carpet.

Wheatgrass healing goes back thousands of years and the knowledge surrounding it has survived the passage of time. Seventy years ago wheatgrass healing again made its mark as it continues to do so in the contemporary literature. To quote Steve Meyerowitz from "Wheatgrass - Nature's Finest Medicine", first published in 1983.

"Wheatgrass is great to have around the house for cuts, bruises, rashes, burns and bangs. Make a bandage from gauze dipped in wheatgrass juice. Even better, re-dip the pulp and put a little under the bandage. If it is a large wound, wrap it in soaked gauze or pulp and protect it with a towel to prevent dripping. The American Journal of Surgery reported that in experiments with over 1,000 surgically wounded animals, chlorophyll increased the rate of healing by 25% over the non-chlorophyll control group. Until you use it, it is hard to appreciate just how rapidly it reduces swellings, takes the sting out of burns and heals wounds, frequently without leaving scars....."

From my broad experience of using wheatgrass clinically, I can vouch for the efficacy of wheatgrass in all of the abovementioned conditions. The only thing I don't agree with is that it is the chlorophyll that does the job. I'm almost certain it's the Grass Juice Factor.

So if wheatgrass is such an amazing healing agent whose effects have been observed by numerous health practitioners, why has it been forgotten? Why do so many of my colleagues laugh openly whenever I mention that wheatgrass helps so many of my patients? They imply it can't possibly work - yet they haven't even tried it! The main reason is they have become straitjacketed by the "profit before patients" pharmaceutical industry.

An industry that is quietly replacing tried and tested, low cost medications with highly expensive alternatives whose therapeutic effects may only be marginally better than the drugs they replaced. Yet the adverse effects remain. I mean, why would I want to put a potentially allergenic antibiotic cream on a burn or prescribe a costly, potentially dangerous antiviral medication for shingles when wheatgrass does a quicker, cheaper and more effective job? And the product can be bought over the counter!

I rest my case.

Dr. Chris Reynolds

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