

# The Use of Aloe Vera in Dentistry

by Richard Sudworth

The dental uses of Aloe Vera are multiple. It is extremely helpful in the treatment of gum disease; it reduces the bleeding of the gums; it is powerfully antiseptic in gum pockets and its antifungal properties help greatly in the problem of denture stomatitis.

Aloe Vera has been used medicinally for a few thousand years. It was sufficiently in demand that Hannibal was known to have gone to war over it in order to obtain control over its growing area (N. Africa). It is still very much in use today for a wide range of ailments. Orthodoxly it is used in burns units to great effect and is increasingly being used in the treatment of dermatological lesions. Several studies on burns have been conducted in comparison trials between Aloe products and non-Aloe. The Aloe seems to promote more rapid healing and pain relief.



Before

**Pregnancy Gingivitis before and after Aloe paste**



After

There are many species of Aloe but the main medicinal one is Aloe Vera Barbadosensis. It is a member of the lily family and grows in hot places. The problem with Aloe has always been that of maintaining its therapeutic function because it is unstable and oxidises rapidly like any cut leaf or fruit. If it grows near you, this is not a problem. It has been due to the relatively recent successful stabilisation process that has so

greatly increased the use of Aloe to a worldwide population.

Aloe acts in many ways. It is particularly known for its penetrating capacity to reach deeper layers of the dermis when applied topically. It has strong antiseptic properties being bactericidal, fungicidal and virucidal. It promotes cell growth. It is neurologically calming and also acts as a detoxifying agent. I think it will be a long time before it is thoroughly understood just how extensively Aloe does work. At present, there is a research programme being conducted into its uses which is part NHS funded. If we consider the constituents of Aloe, it will be easier to understand its range of action.

The dental uses of Aloe Vera are multiple. It is extremely helpful in the treatment of gum disease – gingivitis and periodontitis. It reduces swelling of the soft tissues and consequently this reduces the bleeding of the gums. It is powerfully antiseptic in gum pockets where normal cleaning is difficult. Its antifungal properties help greatly in the problem of denture stomatitis, ie. red and sore mucous membranes which are permanently covered by a denture – this is a form of thrush. Cracked and split corners of the mouth are also subject to fungal infection and this can be cured by Aloe. Its antiviral properties help in the treatment of cold sores (Herpes Simplex) and shingles (Herpes Zoster). It is a powerful healing promoter and when inserted into extraction sockets is very beneficial. It can be used in any surgical wound. It has a use in root canal treatment as a sedative dressing, healing promoter and file lubricant. In an article of this length and nature, it is not possible to go into greater detail.

The various forms of Aloe used in dentistry are: – the toothpaste; the gelly for healing promotion, which can also be used for burns, stings, insect bites and many skin lesions; the Aloe & Propolis hand cream which helps to counteract frequent hand washing and the wearing of latex gloves; the Aloe activator spray which is excellent for throat infections, painful erupting wisdom teeth and joint pains; lastly, the Aloe juice which is taken as a drink. This is used in conjunction with any topical treatment for skin lesions, joint lesions and, in itself, as an amelioration in irritable bowel syndrome. The juice is also a strong detoxifying agent and if used in conjunction with the planned removal of mercury amalgams acts as a scavenging agent for mercury, a neuro-sedative and immune enhancer. As a routine general tonic it generally makes people feel better who are otherwise not well enough but not frankly ill. Because of the many properties and functions of Aloe, it is a powerful nutritional supplement and anti-oxidant. It protects and promotes healing.

It is important to choose an Aloe product which is concentrated, pure, stabilised and preferably grown organically. Some products carry a label bearing an accreditation "Seal of Approval of the International Aloe Science Council". This seal guarantees those desirable necessities outlined above.