

Aloe Vera and Digestion, Irritable Bowel and Arthritis

Information supplied by The Aloe Vera Information Centre

Aloe Vera and the Digestive System

Aloe Vera has been recognised for centuries for its remarkable health-enhancing properties. Although known specifically for external application to the skin, Aloe Juice is now widely used to help a variety of conditions of the digestive tract.

It is important at this stage to stress that, as with any medical condition, a pain in the abdomen should be referred to a medical practitioner in the first instance.

Research work carried out over many years points conclusively to a toxic colon being the cause of a very wide range of illnesses, from minor to very serious. It is widely recognised that problems of the bowel are on the increase with many millions of people suffering a range of conditions including colitis, diverticulitis, Crohn's disease and spastic colon – this latter condition more commonly known as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

IBS is considered to be the most common of these disorders and symptoms are varied, including exhaustion, lower back pain, constipation, diarrhoea and indigestion. The condition can be most distressing and can continually recur in spite of orthodox treatment.

The digestive tract is designed to ensure nutrients from food are absorbed into the blood stream whilst dispensing with the unwanted waste. Bacteria plays a major role in achieving the breakdown of food matter but, in doing so, also produces toxins. This is perfectly normal and in a healthy system the level of toxins is controlled. Nowadays our diet includes many unwanted substances including various chemicals, fats, insecticides etc. which can result in a high level of toxins, some of which can be poisonous. If these are absorbed into the blood the effect can give rise to a variety of conditions including lethargy and even food poisoning.

The bowel can gradually 'fur up' with a lining of unabsorbed food residues. These deposits become impacted and prevent essential nutrients from our diet being absorbed. This situation gives rise to nutrient deficiency which in turn can cause lethargy and exhaustion whilst the affected colon can be the cause of lower abdominal pain, diarrhoea or constipation.

Colonic irrigation is a technique which loosens and washes out these residues. Some practitioners are finding that Aloe Vera Juice, if taken daily for a period of several weeks, helps to ensure that the irrigation process is greatly facilitated. However, it is more usual to find that a regular, daily course of Aloe Vera Juice is sufficient to gently and gradually break down, loosen and assist in the natural dispersal of these residues.

Detoxification also takes place and the results are often most gratifying with reports of ability to enjoy a wider range of foods, relief from pain, reducing or dispensing with prescribed bulking agents or antispasmodic drugs and also a greater feeling of well-being and an improvement in the quality of life.

In establishing a regime of a regular daily dose of Aloe Vera Juice it may not only be found that the effects are gradual, gentle and with no irritant or harmful side effects, but also blood condition will be improved due to Aloe Vera's ability to detoxify. Also, being a natural healer, any internal ulcers or lesions will be soothed and healing will be enhanced.

Aloe Vera and Irritable Bowel Syndrome

It is claimed by a research team at a major British hospital that as many as 12 million people in Britain suffer from IBS. Estimates also reveal that up to one third of the population will experience the symptoms of IBS at some time in their lives.

The Symptoms

Many people, including some members of the medical profession, find it difficult to recognise the symptoms of IBS which manifest themselves in many ways. The following list includes the majority of the signs and symptoms of IBS. Individuals can experience one or several of these over a period of time:-

1. Swollen abdomen, irrespective of time of day.
2. Stomach pains, usually low down, often recurring.
3. Constipation accompanied invariably with griping pains in the lower abdomen.
4. Diarrhoea which can also be accompanied by pains. Alternating diarrhoea and constipation.
5. Flatulence and belching often associated with a disturbed, rumbling gut.
6. Passing mucus and hard, pellet-like stools.
7. A diminished appetite, particularly when experiencing a distended abdomen.
8. General depressed feeling and continual lethargy.
9. Heartburn.
10. Unpleasant tastes in mouth.

Possible Causes

Having considered the symptoms, the next stage is to determine the possible causes. It is extremely difficult to be specific but one of the underlying causes is considered to be stress. Stress manifests itself in many ways often not apparent to the sufferer. Stress can set up a tension within the individual, resulting in anxiety. This situation can create a spasm in the intestinal tract.

At this stage it is important to understand how the food we eat is moved through the intestine. A totally automatic regular muscular contraction of the walls of the colon (peristalsis), forces the material to move through. If an external influence (i.e. stress) causes the natural rhythm of peristalsis to be interrupted, this can result in painful, irregular contractions in the intestine which can continue for a very long time.

Other possible causes are thought to include a change of diet, food poisoning or gastro-enteritis and the well known situation of insufficient fibre in the diet. However, there is also conflicting professional advice that too much fibre can also be linked to IBS.

Treatment

Medical practitioners who recognise IBS may suggest a variety of treatments including stress management and relaxation, diet changes and prescribe antispasmodics of which there are several available over the counter.

But it is important to be mindful of mis-diagnosis. Bloating after meals and a continual feeling of lethargy, particularly if suffering from fungal infections like thrush, can indicate that candida albicans is more likely to be a problem.

Aloe Vera Juice – The Natural Choice

Notwithstanding this bewildering variety of differing approaches to the treatment of IBS, there is a big emphasis on natural and homoeopathic remedies. Aloe Vera Juice has many benefits to the human body. An analysis of the Aloe Vera plant shows it is made up from a large variety of amino acids, enzymes, vitamins and minerals and it comes closer than any other known plant to the duplication of life's essential substances in the biochemistry of the human body.

Aloe Vera has natural healing and detoxifying powers and works gently within the intestinal tract to help break down impacted food residues and thoroughly cleanse the bowel. It can help ease constipation and prevent continuing diarrhoea, setting a regularity to the bowel. All this helps to reduce discomfort and bloating. Naturally, as these symptoms are eased, so the stress associated with the discomfort is also reduced.

Of course, the individual must have a due regard for the diet but if this can be normalised, the regular consumption of a dose of Aloe Vera Juice can often improve and maintain the feeling of well-being and the quality of life.

The many unsolicited testimonials and letters of grateful thanks received show that Aloe Juice can be of help when all else has failed. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that professional medical advice should always be sought at the earliest possible stage for abdominal problems and pains.

Aloe Vera and Arthritis

Aloe Vera is a stimulant to the immune system, a powerful anti-inflammatory, an analgesic and is able to speed up cell growth. Aloe Vera contains a large number of mucopolysaccharides (basic sugars) which are found in every cell in the body. Aloe also contains large numbers of nutrients including vitamins E, C, B1, 2, 3, and 6 as well as iron, manganese, calcium and zinc. Seven essential amino acids and fatty acids are also found in Aloe Vera.

Rheumatoid arthritis is a painful, debilitating condition. It manifests itself as stiff, swollen joints with varying degrees of associated pain caused partly due to nerve damage and partly by the pressure of the swollen area.

The swollen area is normally red in colour and described as inflamed. The redness is caused by the blood supply to the 'damaged' area being increased.

Conventional treatment includes use of anti-inflammatory drugs and steroids, typically cortisone injections or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. These certainly can ease the painful effects but unfortunately do not repair damaged tissues. There can also be undesirable side effects, particularly thinning of the skin and osteoporosis. Although many NSAIDs are available, each one has the potential to cause stomach ulcers.

Repairing damaged tissue by regenerating cells is a function at which Aloe Vera has been shown to be most successful. It not only relieves the painful symptoms but also helps to disperse damaged tissue – a type of detoxification process. Aloe Vera may be taken both internally as a juice or as a gel applied to the painful joint. Here Aloe Vera's deep penetration may show benefit. The degree of success with this treatment varies considerably from person to person. With some, relief and improved joint flexibility is virtually immediate – an apparent 'magical' cure, whereas in others, the process can take much longer and the degree of recovery may not be so great. In any event, an important fact must be remembered: Aloe Vera has no known adverse side effects. It is an extract from the leaf of the Aloe Vera plant, known throughout the world where it grows naturally as the 'First Aid Plant', the 'Burn Plant', the 'Miracle Plant' and the 'Medicine Plant'.