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**ALOE VERA**  
**INFORMATION SERVICE**

# ALOE VERA

## **Aloe Vera and the Four A's Arthritis, Atheroma, Angina and Asthma**

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It has not been widely appreciated that Aloe vera can make a significant contribution to the treatment of these four common and serious complaints. These four illnesses make an enormous contribution to human

misery. The evidence that Aloe can help comes in part from laboratory work and in part from human clinical studies. This evidence is assembled and reviewed in this newsletter.



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# ALOE VERA AND THE FOUR A's: ARTHRITIS • ATHEROMA • ANGINA • ASTHMA

## The State of Research

There are some diseases for which the strictest scientific proof of the efficacy of *Aloe vera* is not yet available and full lists of laboratory and medical trials cannot be provided. In a good many of these cases there are really strong indications, however, from one or just a few scientific papers, that *Aloe vera* offers considerable help for the condition. In this Newsletter four very common serious complaints are singled out from among the list of such conditions for a review of the evidence, one at a time. They are, Arthritis, Atheroma (i.e. Arterial Disease), Angina and Asthma. Given rather positive results from the work that has been done, the reasons for the lack of continuing investigations must be sought in the reluctance on the part of those bodies which fund medical research to provide funds for projects which have any kind of an "Alternative" flavour about them.

## Arthritis

Arthritis has to be considered against a background of positive effects frequently reported by individuals and by numbers of alternative Practitioners who use *Aloe vera* for this purpose with substantial numbers of patients. It is also inherently likely that there will be a positive effect with arthritis because of its strong and well recognised anti-inflammatory property. Arthritis is regularly treated in orthodox medicine with anti-inflammatory drugs, either

steroids or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories. This is an approach which is generally anathema to Alternative Practitioners on account of the very suppressive qualities of these drugs and the fact that the non-steroidal anti-inflammatories are generally non-biological molecules with potentially toxic, as well as suppressive qualities. The role of the non-steroidal anti-



inflammatories in encouraging gastric ulceration is well known and Bland has pointed out that they also increase the permeability of the intestinal wall, thereby most probably exacerbating the immunological problems which lay at the basis of rheumatoid arthritis. These drugs therefore receive, and probably deserve, the criticism of holistic practitioners, for providing only relief from the condition, of a kind that offers absolutely no approach towards cure, and which carries the very highest price because the progress of the disease process is accelerated. By contrast the anti-inflammatory properties of *Aloe vera* carry no known penalties. The anti-inflammatory effects are probably only providing a relief from the condition, but there is no price to pay in terms of non-biological potentially toxic molecules, and the underlying disease is not made worse. Meanwhile, the healing and immune effects of *Aloe vera* have the potential to arrest or reverse certain important aspects of the disease process itself.

One of the most important things to appreciate about arthritis is that when the joint damage becomes severe, it cannot be wholly repaired even when the further progress of the disease has been stopped. It is therefore very key to treat this condition very early on if possible.

*Aloe vera* is on record as being effective against arthritis in the work of alternative practitioners. An example appears in "Positive Health", Issue 20, 1997, in which an article states, after recommending combined topical and internal application, "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". Most holistic practitioners who use *Aloe vera* have had several arthritis patients who exhibit very rapid and virtually full recovery with the treatment.

In the work of Davis, Shapiro & Agnew (1985) injected *Aloe* (150mg/kilo) was found to bring about a 72% inhibition of arthritic symptoms in rats. The significance of the work is limited by the fact that this was animal (not human) arthritis (as in all of these Newsletters, the author does not comment upon but dissociates himself from the ethics, or the lack of them, in these animal experiments). The