

Aloe Vera – The Miraculous Healer

An M.D.'s Clinical Perspective

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The beneficial healing effects of Aloe vera have been documented in ancient literature for thousands of years including the Old Testament of the Bible. I learned of the healing effects of Aloe vera from my grandmother long before I became a board certified internist and cardiologist. My grandmother kept an Aloe vera plant in her house year round, and when anyone would get a burn or other skin injury, she would cut off an Aloe vera leaf and open it up and lay it on the injured area of the skin, which prompted rapid healing. [In medical practice, I have used Aloe vera preparations topically to rapidly increase the healing of burns, lacerations, surgical wounds, and various skin lesions](#), including psoriasis, pre-cancerous skin lesions, early cancerous skin lesions, lupus erythematosus and discoid lupus, and a variety of rashes and contact dermatitis. Most infectious dermatitis, including bacterial and fungal sources appear to heal more rapidly with Aloe vera application than with most other treatments topically available. It wasn't until about 1988 that I learned that Aloe vera could be consumed orally and also had very impressive healing powers internally.

Before discussing the internal applications of Aloe vera, I think that it is important to say that I have found that not all Aloe vera products are created equally. Of the various Aloe vera products that I have tested in clinical practice, both topically and orally, [whole leaf Aloe veras appear to be superior to the rest](#), sometimes by a factor of severalfold. Unlike many of the Aloe vera products, a whole leaf cold-processed Aloe vera product has the aloin removed from the preparations that are used internally. This type of Aloe is also stabilized for long shelf life and long effectiveness after opening. It has the highest, or one of the highest, concentrations of biologically active glycoproteins, which appear to be very important in the healing process. When inadequate amounts of aloin are removed from other Aloe products, consumption of those Aloe products orally often-times will result in diarrhea, but I have not found that to be a problem with cold-processed whole leaf Aloe vera products consumed orally.

I first used the oral Aloe vera products in 1988 for the treatment of esophagitis, gastritis and peptic ulcer. Since then I've started using whole leaf Aloe instead of the liquid or tablet antacids for treatment of those dyspepsia symptoms. I have found that [patients that consume one-eighth to one-quarter cup of Aloe twice daily are usually able to reduce the length of intake of prescription medications for ulcer disease by several weeks](#). I have not seen any significant side effects from use of oral Aloe, and have seen many side effects from the prescription medications. Aloe is also quite good at healing lesions of the mouth including cold sores and infected gums or post-surgical gum wounds, as well as sore throats from viral or bacterial causes. When diluted to about one-third to one-half strength with distilled water, whole leaf Aloe designed for oral consumption can also be used very effectively for nasal congestion and sinus congestion when dropped in the nose with an eye dropper. This is preferable to many of the prescription and over the counter spray nasal decongestants, which in some cases have

been shown to cause nasal cancer. Aloe vera nasally has never been shown to cause any kind of cancer. In using the Aloe orally for mouth lesions and sore throats and dyspepsia, I discovered that patients who also had Irritable Bowel Syndrome had a significant reduction in their symptoms. I started using the whole leaf Aloe gel for the treatment of ulcerative colitis and Crohn's Disease with very beneficial effects. As would be expected, the Aloe vera treatment for dyspepsia and colitis is more effective when used in conjunction with an appropriate diet for those conditions.

When using whole leaf Aloe orally for these various conditions, I also noticed that patients who had sleep disturbance demonstrated an improved quality of sleep while on the Aloe, and that when the Aloe was discontinued for the other condition, that oftentimes the sleep disturbance recurred. This observation has also been made in a controlled study on alcoholic patients in Washington. [Patients who use the Aloe on a regular basis also appear to have fewer episodes of viral infection and allergic symptoms from both food and inhalant allergies than they had prior to starting the Aloe products.](#) The patients who have cutaneous manifestations of connective tissue diseases do appear to improve more rapidly if they receive both topical applications of the Aloe products as well as oral administration of the Aloe. This is true especially of lupus. It is also true of arthritis conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and osteo-arthritis. I have found that oral and topical use of Aloe liniment allows a reduction in the amount of prescription medication used to control these severe forms of arthritis.

For women with recurrent or severe vaginitis, several of the Aloe products are beneficial in eradicating and controlling the vaginitis symptoms, including the Aloe gel or liquid as a douche or the Aloe jelly inserted like an over the counter vaginal cream would be inserted. In my opinion, it is preferable to use an acidophilus powder mixed into a douche and inserted into the vagina about ten to twelve hours after administration of the Aloe products, because the Aloe products do reduce the natural flora of the vagina in addition to the pathogenic organisms present.

I do not have any ownership in or receive any monies from any company that makes Aloe vera products, but use them because of their effectiveness in patient care and because of their apparent absence of significant adverse reactions. As I have said, [I do use prescription medications where indicated in conjunction with the Aloe vera products for treatment of conditions that warrant such, but in many cases, the various conditions can be treated without using prescription medications at all if the appropriate Aloe product is used in an appropriate fashion.](#)

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