

Asthma and Bronchitis

Jan de Vries



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Jan de Vries

From the
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MAINSTREAM
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Epub ISBN: 9781780570839

Version 1.0

www.mainstreampublishing.com

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First published in 1991 by
MAINSTREAM PUBLISHING COMPANY (EDINBURGH) LTD
7 Albany Street
Edinburgh EH1 3UG

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

De Vries, Jan

Asthma and Bronchitis

1. Man. Bronchi. Asthma. Naturopathy

I. Title

616.238065

ISBN 1-85158-383-1

1-85158-394-7 pbk

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Foreword

WHAT CAN BE worse than a respiratory problem, being short of breath and always wheezing? I know, I have experienced it and, let's face it, if you don't breathe, you don't live! I was therefore pleased when Jan de Vries asked me to write the foreword to his latest book, on the subject of asthma and bronchitis, as I felt that this was the opportunity I had been waiting for to express my appreciation publicly for the help and guidance he has given me in my efforts to overcome a respiratory problem. He threw me a lifeline and, thank goodness, I had the sense to grab it with both hands.

Several years ago, following hospital tests, I was diagnosed as having bronchial asthma and was advised by conventional medical practitioners to use two different inhalers. Although I would have preferred to get to the bottom of the problem, at that time I was thankful for the help and relief provided by these inhalers, but I still couldn't help wondering what had brought on the asthma in the first place. Was it an allergy to certain items in my diet, a leftover from a cold, or perhaps something in the atmosphere? I felt there had to be a reason for it as I had always been blessed with good health. Anyway, I was obtaining a certain amount of relief from the inhalers but at the same time I was not happy about my constant use of them. Eventually I noticed the diminishing effect they were having and I began to have difficulty getting out to work in the mornings. One instance in particular stands out in my memory when I had to use my inhaler several times in order to make it.

This was when Jan de Vries took over. With patience and care he began to treat me with herbal and homoeopathic

remedies, a little manipulation to help ease the breathing, and some advice on my diet. The latter is most important to respiratory sufferers, as I have proved to myself at times such as holidays and special celebrations like Christmas, when I have been tempted to stray from the “straight and narrow”. The reader will no doubt find plenty of advice in this book which, if followed conscientiously, must surely give the desired results. I can only say that Jan de Vries was responsible for pointing me in the right direction, which eventually led me to completely conquer the asthma problem with which I had been plagued for years.

Now I am happy to say my quality of life has greatly improved. I go swimming several times a week, and I am back on the dance floor enjoying myself. I think I missed dancing more than anything during those years of misery, as I had been an ardent competitive dancer for many years and consequently became professional, but with the shortage of breath I was experiencing I eventually found it difficult to continue. Also, I can now go for long walks, even in the windy weather which is prevalent in the coastal town where I live. All this I can do again without any problem, thanks to Jan de Vries.

He is a most sincere and caring person and truly quite a remarkable practitioner. He has written many books now and I have read them all, but for me this book must surely be the greatest. Of course, it could be said that I am prejudiced!

I have therefore great pleasure in recommending this book to all who suffer breathing problems, as you must surely reap the benefit.

*Isobel Fullarton
May 1991*

Common Colds

I OFTEN HEAR FROM patients the expression “It started with a common cold”. It is very likely that the common cold in question has been ignored and so has caused sometimes insurmountable problems. A common cold is often underestimated, yet it should never be neglected. People come to me complaining that they have had a cold for six weeks or longer, and a recurrent inflammatory condition or a wheeze is clear evidence that this cold has not cleared up and is ready to explode into something more difficult to treat.

Now, what really is a cold? *Merck's Manual* gives us a very clear definition: “an acute catarrhal infection of the respiratory tract usually with major involvement of its upper portions, and frequently involving the entire tract, referred to as an upper respiratory infection or *coryza* — the term used for acute nasal congestion.”

There are many causes of a common cold and it is all too often the case that it is the result of a virus. The nose, mouth and throat may become infected and inflamed, causing swelling, and sometimes such a viral infection leads to a secondary infection resulting in nasal discomfort, ranging from a watery to a thick yellow-greenish mucous discharge. In such cases common symptoms are a runny nose, sore throat, sneezing, watery eyes and headaches. When a person's immunity is low and the natural reserves are below par, for whichever reason, an ordinary common cold can result in a general debility such as a chronic infection, allergic disorders, vasomotor instability, injury to the mucous membranes and other such chronic conditions.

In many cases, however, the effects tend to be acute and can cause considerable discomfort, albeit for a relatively short period only. Sometimes the cold is accompanied by a fever, but with some sensible care the overall condition can soon be brought under control. On the whole the patient will be feeling much better within four to seven days.

However, in this book I intend to concentrate on the various conditions that could result from a common cold. I am well aware, having treated thousands of patients, that the after-effects often ascribed to a cold need not occur if sufficient care is taken in the first place. If common sense would only prevail I would be required to see fewer patients whose eventual chronic conditions can be traced back to a neglected common cold. Here we have the reason that I want to spend some time looking into the methods that can be employed to protect oneself when a cold strikes.

While I have been working on this book the weather has suddenly changed from being pleasantly mild to considerably chilly. In these circumstances the chance of infection caused by viruses is greatly increased. Unfortunately, many people forget to adapt their clothing to suit such weather by changing to woollen or cotton garments. Natural materials are always preferable to artificial fibres. People should particularly beware of draughts during a sudden change in temperature. In fact, draughts are often more damaging to the health than a sudden drop in the temperature itself. Always remember, however, that should the temperature change suddenly, there is no need to stay inside; by all means go out and enjoy the fresh air, but take care that you are suitably dressed for the elements. And again, beware of draughts.

It is also important to obtain sufficient rest, sleep and relaxation. When the body has become chilled, or when you have been out in the rain or snow, take a hot bath to get the circulation going again and so raise the body temperature. In this context I can advise a hot foot bath, especially if

circumstances are such that it is not possible to totally immerse yourself in a hot bath.

Another very important factor when you are suffering from a cold is to try at all times to keep the nasal passages clear so that you can continue to breathe through the nose. Steam inhalation with the addition of some chamomile and Poho oil has a soothing effect on an inflamed respiratory tract and will aid the breathing.

As for dietary management, try and keep your diet very light. One rarely feels like eating heavy meals when feeling congested because of a cold. Make sure you drink plenty of fluids, especially fruit juices that are rich in vitamin C. Eat plenty of fresh vegetables and at such times I would also advise taking a vitamin C supplement.

Contrary to popular belief, it is unwise to clear the mucous membranes too often and too thoroughly. If you simply tilt your head backwards you will find it easier to breathe through the nose; this method is also less irritating. Should the cold linger, thereby obstructing the nasal passages, try the age-old remedy of slicing an onion in half and placing both halves on a saucer by the bedside. This will bring speedy relief. Alternatively, some onion slices packed in a poultice around the throat will quickly ease the problem. You may prefer to use a nose douche prepared with a salt water solution, or to rub the chest with Poho ointment; both are excellent methods of overcoming a cold.

The first thing I would recommend in cases of a common cold is usually Dr Vogel's marvellous remedy Echinaforce. I could fill volumes on the remedial properties of Echinaforce and this remedy must be the one I have prescribed for more ailments than any other during nearly thirty years in medical practice. In cases of flu, cold, bronchitis, and many other types of infection, Echinaforce provides a tremendous boost to the immune system. At the University of Munich a lengthy study on Echinaforce has confirmed that it possesses properties that enhance the body's natural

reserves. It seems that the polysaccharides it contains have a marked positive influence on immunity. It was also found that when viruses or micro-organisms try to spread through the body, Echinaforce has an hyaluronidase-slowing effect.

Let us remember that the white blood cells play a very important role in our immunity. Bacteria in the blood will be immediately attacked by the white blood cells and it may be astonishing to learn that a person with a body weight of 11-12 stones carries approximately 126,000,000 white blood cells in the bloodstream. These white blood cells act as defenders and with the right stimulating influence, i.e. a well-functioning immune system, they will rally into action and attack invaders. It also seems that the echinacea plant stimulates the production of natural interferon in the body. An added bonus is that Echinaforce has no side-effects whatsoever.

Over the years Professor H. Wagner, Head of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology at the University of Munich, has spent an enormous amount of time and energy researching the properties of echinacea. Although his research is still ongoing, he firmly believes that this wonderful remedy is of the greatest help in cases of infections — bacterial, viral and fungal.

My suggestion that Echinaforce should be taken immediately in cases of a common cold is based on my many years of experience. Moreover, the effects of this remedy can be enhanced when it is used in conjunction with the homoeopathic remedy *Kalium muriaticum* D6; this is especially true when the patient suffers from a blocked nose, a coated tongue, diminished hearing, an ear infection and a heavy mucus discharge. On the other hand if you are susceptible to infections, chronic sneezing, chapped lips, a dry mouth, or depressions, it would be advisable to use *Natrium muriaticum* D6.

When a cold refuses to disappear, people who are prone to such complaints would be advised to watch out for

tiredness, high blood pressure, low temperature and depressive moods. Where children are concerned, it is especially important to check for swollen tonsils, breathing through the mouth, a chronic runny nose, excessive perspiration, a pale complexion and allergic reactions. Where these are noted dietary management should be given serious consideration. Wholefood products, including brown rice, plenty of fresh vegetables and fruit, a daily salad and the limited use of sugar and salt is important. Remember to eat slowly and be sure to include some cress, onions and garlic in the diet. People who are susceptible to the above symptoms would be wise to take a calcium supplement such as Urticalcin, which is an excellent combination of calcium silicum and one of the most popular calcium preparations as it is quickly absorbed by the body. Also remember to take plenty of exercise in the fresh air and ensure ample rest at night.

When the lining of the mucous membrane is inflamed and irritated because of the extra mucus, action is needed to ease the resulting coughing. The inflamed mucous membranes must be soothed in an effort to stop their excess mucus production and to create an opportunity for the healing process to take effect. There are plenty of safe home remedies for this purpose, and especially in the case of a dry cough a cough mixture such as Drosinula syrup will be helpful. The flower on the cover of this book is one of the ingredients of this valuable remedy, which has proved especially effective in combating stubborn and deep coughs.

For children I often recommend Santasapina syrup, which is also an excellent remedy in cases of a dry cough. It is, of course, important when the coughing persists and no remedy appears to help that the advice of a doctor or qualified practitioner is sought. Irish moss and Iceland moss are also helpful, especially for diabetics who cannot take many standard cough mixtures.