

Traditional Home and Herbal Remedies

Jan de Vries



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About the Author

Jan de Vries's interest in herbs and natural remedies was first aroused when, as a child during the Second World War, he was shown the secrets of the herb garden by an old monk in occupied Holland. After training as a pharmacist as an adult, he felt increasingly drawn to this ancient knowledge and learned all he could from Alfred Vogel, the renowned Swiss herbalist; from a group of gypsies who took him up into the mountains; and much later, during his travels in China and the Far East.

Today, more and more people are beginning to rediscover the healing powers of roots and plants, with the help of Jan de Vries and other pioneers in alternative medicine. Indeed, some of the most frequently prescribed and powerful drugs are based on plant extracts.

Jan de Vries has researched as far back as the twelfth century and has recorded the folk wisdom of many of the old people he has met on his travels, learning from them the popular remedies which had been passed on to them by their forefathers.

In *Traditional Home and Herbal Remedies*, the third book in his 'By Appointment Only' series, Jan de Vries shares with his readers some of these remedies. Everyone who holds his philosophy that nature has a way to help every illness will find this book an invaluable source of information and encouragement.

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TRADITIONAL HOME AND HERBAL REMEDIES

Jan de Vries

Introduction by Alfred Vogel

By Appointment Only series



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Introduction

IT WAS A fortunate occasion when I met Jan de Vries in January 1959 in The Netherlands. With pleasure and conviction I spoke of my 40 years' experience in the field of herbal medicine and my views on diet and nourishment. I soon realised that I had an extremely interested listener who fully appreciated my acquired knowledge of the whole sphere of medical science.

Jan de Vries was not only interested to learn everything about my experiences of when, where and how to collect herbs and which methods were to be followed, he also insisted on taking part in the actual process of extracting beneficial ingredients. As he was a trained and qualified pharmacist, he was already familiar with the world of plants and herbs and had considerable knowledge in this field. He accepted an invitation to join our firm which gave us the chance to establish a working relationship which has lasted for years. He was one of my best pupils, if not the very best, and he had the opportunity to further develop his given talents in the field of natural medicine.

I was very happy to share with him my enthusiasm for nature and the world of plants, as originated by the sovereign power of the Creator. He was also prepared to accept my principle that herbal medicine should always have priority in the treatment of illnesses.

As a result of our experiences we both agreed that through knowledge and advice on natural methods and herbal remedies it was possible to improve one's health and keep illnesses at bay. Nature itself is capable of healing.

Drawing on many years of experience I was able to convince Jan de Vries completely that herbal medicine in

combination with a natural diet could create positive responses in the body in order to ward off ailments. By creating the right conditions for the body and supplying it with the correct nourishment, one is able to activate one's own regeneration system. In this way it is possible to overcome as well as cure ailments. We realise more and more, and my experience over many years in practice has contributed to this, that we don't just have an important role to play in the curing of illnesses, but also in the prevention of medical disturbances. This requires us to put emphasis on preventive medicine. Prevention is better than cure.

This principle plays a major role in our programme. In an effort to clarify this to patients and other interested parties, I myself have written several books, such as *The Nature Doctor*.

Jan de Vries was immediately prepared to share with his friends and later with his patients my experiences and he recommended these books for their information. He is, I am pleased to repeat, my most successful 'pupil'. His success from which many patients have benefited is, however, not only a result of his talents, it is also thanks to the Creator who has supplied so many plants with healing powers.

I am very pleased that Jan de Vries is making the effort of sharing his knowledge and experiences with us on paper. His books are written in simple language, readily understood by both patients and laymen alike. In them he deals with natural ways and methods using herbal remedies to overcome ailments and illnesses.

It is important that not just the obvious symptoms are cured as conventional medicine would teach us. We must look for the cause of the illness in order to continue the treatment and find a cure for the source. Very little benefit is obtained by clearing up an ache or easing a sensitivity if we are not able to eliminate the cause. In order to do this we should study the whole person and attempt to recognise which factors have contributed to this condition. There could

be very many reasons – for example, a breathing difficulty or a movement disorder, shortage of oxygen, rest or sleep. There can be so many causes of a biological imbalance.

Jan de Vries has acquired and developed a vast knowledge in this area. With perseverance he builds up an overall picture of total health, not forgetting the physical and mental conditions of the patient.

I am convinced that in this book he will show many sufferers the right way to recovery in plain and simple language. It is an excellent complement to my books, as we have both sincerely attempted to serve our fellow men and share with them our knowledge acquired from our understanding and experience of the bounty of nature.

Alfred Vogel
Teufen, 1986

Herbal Medicine

DURING A visit in 1984 with a group of well-known professors, doctors, homoeopaths, herbalists and other alternative practitioners, to the Karolinka Institute in Stockholm - an institute, incidentally, that has the oldest medical library in the world - I was most impressed when Dr Voll and I were shown a special book. It was one of the oldest volumes in medical history, containing a collection of views which we see gaining ground again today. In that old book we discovered great amounts of valuable advice which is still applicable today. It all goes back to God's promise at the creation: 'That there be herbs for healing.'

Browsing through this medical library and looking into the medical history prior to the establishment of homoeopathy, we saw remedies in books which are being used to great effect today. Looking at it, we can be grateful that in this day and age so much of ancient medical knowledge has been rediscovered. After all, if perhaps a fraction of all the money which is spent in medical research today had been spent to research God's natural healing gifts to mankind, I am sure that we would have gained a lot of knowledge. Weren't even the healing properties of Digitalis or foxglove found by accident? And haven't they been a blessing to millions of people?

I was greatly surprised when Alfred Vogel and I took a group of medical students into the Jura Hills and showed them weeds, herbs and roots which were growing there and of which the students had no knowledge. My dear old friend, Alfred Vogel, who gave his lifetime to the study of herbs and plants used medicinally and was a blessing to so many

people, told this group about some of the purposes of these horticultural gifts over which we often tread without realisation of their healing powers.

I remember very well as a child that a very old herbalist lived in our town. Many people went to him and even though his knowledge of the healing properties was limited, he was in great demand. I also used to sit at my grandmother's feet and listen to her wonderful stories about the gifts with which Mother Nature had supplied us. Her knowledge had been passed down from her mother and some of these old treatments we can see back in use today.

It is a really wonderful thing to think that in our lifetime some of these marvellous remedies are again getting the attention they deserve.

I have been practising in Scotland for over 15 years. If we look back over the history of medicine, even as far back as the thirteenth century, many of the beautiful abbeys in Jedburgh, Kelso, Melrose, Dryburgh, Newbattle, Holyrood, Kilwinning and even Culzean Castle had herb gardens. Everywhere we find here the learning of what was given by nature to alleviate human suffering. Each monastery or priory had translations of ancient medical books in which herbs used by the monks were described. Medicinal plants include the rose, bean, savoury, cumin, fennel, lily, sage and mint, etc. There are a huge variety of wonderful plants, herbs and roots which were used then and are in use once again today. If I think, however, of the treasures of horticulture which have not yet been researched and the knowledge we might still gather, then that research will be more than worthwhile.

I fully realised this during a visit to South Africa when in the Cape Province I was shown some herbal plants which had never been researched before, till an old professor, anxious to learn more about them, conducted some experiments with the plants. One of these plants today is being used for cancer treatment.