

## **Aloe Vera**

### A Long, Illustrious History - Dating From Biblical Times

**A**loe Vera looks like a cactus but it isn't – the plant is a member of the lily family which includes garlic and onion. Inside the leaf is a jelly-like substance. Early users of Aloe Vera discovered that when the jelly was applied to a wound, it would heal faster – a remarkable feat in a time, long before anti-biotic ointments, when the infection of a minor wound was often fatal.

Descriptions and instructions for twelve different recipes for the internal and external uses of Aloe Vera can be found in an Egyptian relic, the Eberpapyrus, dating to around 1,500 BC. By 400 BC, the properties of Aloe Vera was well accepted from China to India. Today, Aloe Vera is cultivated throughout the world. Terms including; the potted physician and nature's medicine chest, attempted to describe the significant historical uses of Aloe Vera.

The properties of Aloe Vera, due to its long history of use, were mostly folkloric. Early attempts to scientifically validate its uses produced mixed results; different assessments of the anecdotal evidence and a wide chasm between the proponents of Aloe Vera and the detractors. The highly charged debate, between the two camps, contributed to public confusion, diminishing interest in the supplemental value of Aloe Vera products. Thankfully, improved, more modern scientific methods are beginning to restore the reputation of Aloe Vera.

Advocates for Aloe Vera evolved into three distinct camps: jelly only, extracted isolates and whole leaf.

1. The jelly only camp are purists, relying on the historical uses of the clear "fillet" contained on the inside of the leaf.
2. The extracted isolates group search for "magic bullets", one or more of the identified beneficial substances, contained in the plant, that might result in process and/or pharmaceutical patents.
3. During the past few years, scientists have discovered yet another remarkable array of substances concentrated in the skin of the leaf. Today, the whole leaf approach is adding new dimensions to the properties of this remarkable plant.

Dr. Robert H. Davis, Ph.D. presented a ground breaking research report to the International Aloe Vera Science Council, The Conductor – Orchestra Concept of Aloe Vera. which underscores the nature of the whole leaf approach, the benefits, and possibilities it affords.

Today, there is an impressive accumulation of research supporting Dr. Davis' position which was highlighted by an enlightening seminar presented by Dr. Ivan Danoff M.D., Ph.D., entitled The Therapeutic Component in Aloe Vera.

**A NOTE OF CAUTION:** Aloe Vera is not a panacea! Reasonable people recognize that the juice from a orange is a beneficial addition to their diet - because the juice contains vitamin C; as is apple juice – because it contains pectin; as is grape juice – because it offers anti oxidants; or the juice from any number of other fruits and vegetables.

The decision to drink the juice from an Aloe Vera plant, considering the volumes of research surrounding the plant, may be as simple as deciding to drink orange juice!

Decide for yourself.