

## Cider Vinegar

The late Margaret Hills, SRN, trained at St Stephen's Hospital, London. She developed osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis as a young woman, but went on to finish her nurse's training, marry, have eight children and pursue a long career as an industrial nurse. She developed her own method of natural treatment for arthritis and ran a clinic in Kenilworth. The clinic, now run by her daughter Christine Horner, attracts patients from far and wide. *Treating Arthritis the Drug-Free Way*, *Treating Arthritis: More ways to a drug-free life*, *Treating Arthritis Diet Book* and *Treating Arthritis Exercise Book* are also by Margaret Hills and are all published by Sheldon Press.

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Overcoming Common Problems

# Cider Vinegar

MARGARET HILLS, SRN

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## Preface

I am writing this book in response to the requests of so many of my patients in various parts of the world who are constantly seeking to understand what apple cider vinegar is all about.

Here at the Margaret Hills Clinic great results are being achieved through the use of apple cider vinegar, honey and crude black molasses. These products form the basis of a very effective old-fashioned remedy for ridding the body of the toxic acid which is a root-cause of both osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. In a previous book, written in 1985 (*Treating Arthritis the Drug-Free Way*), I explained the cause of these diseases. If you would like to learn more about the cause and treatment of your rheumatic condition, detailed information is available in that book, which has helped thousands over the years. *Treating Arthritis: More ways to a drug-free life*, which followed, gives a lot of information on treatments.

Although most people know of the many benefits of honey and crude black molasses, I have decided to include these products and their benefits in this book. It seems to me that many of my patients are taking these remedies and getting tremendous benefits from using them without actually knowing the reason. I do hope you will find the contents of this book to be of great interest and help.

Margaret Hills

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Also, my special thanks to Margaret Issitt, who wrote the poem 'Ignore not the Apple' in praise of cider vinegar.

I would also like to express my appreciation of the help and support provided by my sons, Graham and Bill; also Caroline Peasley, Rachel Uzzell and Caron Roughton whose constant support and encouragement was most valuable.



# Introduction

I was introduced to apple cider vinegar in 1960. For the previous 16 years, I had suffered the pain of rheumatoid arthritis. This had worsened gradually until osteoarthritis was diagnosed. I was reduced to a state of continuous pain – sometimes severe, sometimes not so severe – but always there.

It all began in June 1946. I had started to train as a nurse at St Stephen's Hospital in Fulham Road, London, and I enjoyed every moment of it. The ward work was hard but interesting, and the social life was first-class – there was always somebody off duty to accompany me to the theatre or to the Hammersmith Palais – a favourite dance venue. Free tickets to various London shows were often available to the nurses. In short, we worked hard and we played hard. Life was good, and we enjoyed it.

It had been a particularly busy day on the ward, and as we went to our rooms in the nurses' home we decided we would have a bath and go to the Hammersmith Palais. We had a most enjoyable evening, returning to the hospital ready for a good night's sleep at 11 p.m.

I woke up at about 2 a.m. feeling stiff and in pain. Perhaps I was overtired – I hoped that the feeling would have passed by 7 a.m., when I should be getting up for duty. I had a very restless night. The night sister knocked on my door: 'Time to get up, nurse', she called. I could scarcely move. Every joint was stiff and painful, and I knew I had a high temperature. However, I dragged myself out of bed and on to the ward. The ward sister could see that I was not well. She took my temperature and said: 'My God, girl, you've got rheumatic fever!' She asked a porter to bring a wheelchair to take me to the nurses' sick-bay, and that was the beginning of five long months in bed, on complete rest, not allowed to wash or feed myself, or even to write a letter to my parents.

The rheumatoid virus had attacked my heart. It was very badly enlarged, and my pain, soreness and stiffness are not easily understood by anybody who has not suffered the disease. In the sick-bay I got VIP treatment. Harley Street specialists came every other day to

## 2 Introduction

examine my heart. The attention I got from them and my nursing colleagues was second to none.

Having spent five months in bed, I was over the acute stage and was allowed three months convalescence. During my months in hospital, the only treatment I had received was aspirin when the pain became too much, and my sore throat was painted with iodine. Drugs for arthritis had not yet invaded the market – and what a blessing that was.

When my convalescence came to an end, I felt quite good and returned to the hospital to finish my training. That training was to prove invaluable in the clinic I run today, and also in the books I have written on arthritis.

It is important to tell the foregoing story because, without suffering the pain of arthritis at that time and for sixteen years afterwards, I would never have been introduced to the apple cider vinegar, honey and crude black molasses, which I have found to be such excellent natural remedies for the many and varied conditions which my patients present me with day after day. I give thanks for the day my next-door neighbour handed me a book written by Dr Jarvis, *Arthritis and Cider Vinegar*. I put his advice into practice and that, coupled with the excellent training I'd had as a nurse, was instrumental in ridding my body of the arthritic pain I had suffered for sixteen years.

In the early 1980s, I opened a clinic – The Margaret Hills Clinic – for arthritics. Treatment is based on the cider vinegar, honey and molasses regime. The results are extremely satisfying: many patients have got rid of their arthritis and other associated symptoms.

A lot of people today are worried about taking drugs. The shocking truth is that the drugs are harming far too many of us. The side effects can sometimes be horrendous because many of the drugs used are highly toxic. The informed public know this, and are now turning to natural treatments in a big way. Nothing can be more natural than the three products which are the subject of this book – apple cider vinegar, honey and crude black molasses.

## Ignore not the Apple

The poets know, and so do we,  
 That simple truths will always be  
 Those that matter to us most;  
 And so the apple can surely boast  
 To be at the top of the healing tree.

So reach up high, my friend,  
 And pluck the fruit I recommend.  
 It will be pressed, fermented; nothing added  
 But yeast and time: they'll do their best.  
 Our native fruit; it gives nectar,  
 And is known from East to West;  
 And when the vats are fully emptied,  
 And bottles, filled, and juice is sold,  
 The orchards of acetic acid  
 Transformed into liquid of precious gold,  
 It is wise to listen, these words to heed:  
 'Good health is yours'. From a seed  
 Has grown a tree. Its abundant harvest  
 Must be to us the very best.

Cider – cyder – there's no difference.  
 Ignore not the apple, its juice is pure.  
 As cider vinegar it makes good sense.  
 Your efforts will bear fruit, I'm sure.

My friend, take heart if you're in pain,  
 And simply aim for peace again.  
 Try to smile; not be too low,  
 And to the health shop quickly go.  
 Then with your juice please persevere –  
 And always know – good health is near!

(Margaret Issitt, September 1996)

# 1

## Getting a proper diagnosis

Common problems – such as a headache, back trouble or aches and pains – affect most of us at some point. Usually we know they will clear up by themselves, and we don't want to make a fuss. Sometimes, though, apparently minor symptoms could be the early warning-signs of a more serious disease. It is important not to ignore them because, in many cases, an early diagnosis can make all the difference to successful treatment. However, it is not always easy to tell when a trivial complaint could become more serious. People vary – what is harmless in one case could be serious in another. The main point is to keep an eye open for any change in what is normal for you. Having said that, use your common sense. If in doubt, call the surgery and ask the doctor if your symptoms warrant an immediate appointment.

The following are some of the most common problems that should not be ignored.

### **1 Unexplained weight loss**

The time of the month (for women), the season, and the amount you eat or exercise, can affect your weight. However, drastic weight-loss can be serious. If your clothes feel loose or people comment on your weight loss and you have not been dieting, find out why.

Weight loss – together with thirst, frequent urination, undue tiredness and genital itching – can be a sign of diabetes. It can also indicate an over-active thyroid gland. This problem affects one in ten women, and symptoms include (as well as weight loss) sweating, inability to relax, weakness, exhaustion, bulging eyes, recurrent diarrhoea, constipation, abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting of blood. Blood in the faeces may mean a digestive tract problem, such as Crohn's Disease or a peptic ulcer. If your weight loss occurs with a loss of appetite and abdominal pain or any change in your bowel habits, then get a proper diagnosis from your doctor.



## 2 Indigestion

Wind, flatulence, belching, bloating, heartburn, nausea or abdominal pain often occur after eating – in other words, indigestion. This is likely if you have been under stress, eating rich, spicy or fatty foods, or are rushing around after meals. A peptic ulcer can also cause indigestion. In this case you can gain temporary relief by eating something or taking an antacid – but the discomfort will come back. However, indigestion which comes out of the blue, especially if you're over 45, can be a sign of stomach cancer, which is important to catch early. If you regularly have to take antacid drugs, or if your abdominal pain lasts for more than eight hours and you experience loss of appetite or prolonged vomiting, or if there is blood in the vomit or you have dark stools which indicate blood being present, it is very important to make an appointment and get a diagnosis.

## 3 Sore throat or hoarse voice

Most attacks of sore throat and hoarseness clear up of their own accord. However, if these conditions persist for more than a couple of weeks, investigation by a doctor is necessary. As a rule, the condition is due to smoking or drinking, or an infection due to bronchitis or rhinitis – but the cause could be more sinister, like cancer of the throat. It is very important to get it investigated.

## 4 Fever

Fever is a sign that the body is fighting infection. Most people's body-temperature is normally 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit (37 degrees centigrade) but elderly people may suffer infections while their temperature stays normal. This is a sign that the body's ability to fight infection has lessened. If the patient has severe shivers, shakes and has chattering teeth (a condition known as a rigor), call a doctor immediately. These can be symptoms of pneumonia, kidney infection or malaria.

Fever, when accompanied by breathlessness, wheezing or blood phlegm, could mean a chest infection. A severe headache, nausea, vomiting, or an aversion to bright lights, stiff neck, breathlessness or abdominal pain – all could be signs of meningitis. Call the doctor without delay. Prompt treatment could mean the difference between life and death.

## **6 Getting a proper diagnosis**

### **5 Breathing difficulties**

Anything that affects the flow of air into or out of our lungs can cause breathlessness and sometimes pain. Unfit and overweight people become breathless more frequently. Smoking can be a prime cause of breathlessness, and asthma-sufferers, along with those who have allergies to house-dust or animals, can become very breathless. Anaemia, too, can cause breathlessness, as can stress and anxiety. If your breathlessness is accompanied by a cough, high temperature, pain in the chest and weight loss, it is imperative that you have your doctor's opinion on the cause.

### **6 Change in bowel habits**

Sudden constipation or diarrhoea may be harmless, but could be the result of a digestive disorder such as an irritable bowel. The symptoms of this condition come and go, and there may be many years of respite between bouts. However, in some cases it can persist for months or years, even with treatment. The condition is also known as spastic colon or mucous colitis; it is thought that stress may play a significant role in many cases.

Any change in bowel habits other than diarrhoea could be harmless, and could be due to stress, anxiety, food poisoning or infection. Constipation could be a sign that something else is going wrong. If you notice bright red blood on the toilet paper, you probably have haemorrhoids and, though uncomfortable, these are not serious and can be treated. Blood mixed in with the stools can be a sign of bleeding somewhere along the digestive tract, and needs attention.

On the other hand, a dark bowel-movement may mean that you are taking an iron supplement, or perhaps you have drunk red wine or eaten beetroot. The danger-signs here are a change in your bowel habits that persists for two weeks or more, especially if accompanied by abdominal pain, bleeding or dark faeces. Contact your doctor.

### **7 Children's ailments**

There are no hard-and-fast rules as to when to take your child to the doctor. In babies, breathing difficulties, persistent coughing, vomiting and diarrhoea should all be taken seriously. Children need constant care and watching. A mother can usually tell if her child

is off-colour. If it persists, see your doctor. High temperature accompanied by pain, and crying, are good reasons for calling in the doctor.

## **8 Chest-pain**

Chest-pains can be due to all sorts of conditions – not always heart problems as most people think. When the pain is in the front of the chest-wall and worsens on movement, or if you press on it, this can be due to inflammation. The doctor may prescribe an anti-inflammatory drug. Angina causes a crushing pain which usually comes on during exertion and disappears with rest.

Indigestion may be the cause of your chest-pain – that usually comes on after a meal – or you could have been exercising and pulled a muscle. A severe, crushing pain in the centre of the chest could be a heart attack. Chest-pain with breathlessness, if you have had an operation or illness that has kept you in bed, could be an embolism – call your doctor.

## **9 Vaginal bleeding**

Bleeding could be from the uterus, cervix or vagina itself. Causes could include infection, growths like polyps or fibroids, or if you are pregnant, could indicate a miscarriage or placenta problems. Another cause is the contraceptive pill which can cause spotting between periods. You may do better by changing to a different type of pill. Discuss this with your doctor.

Bleeding between your periods or after sex could be a problem. If this occurs, or if there is a blood-stained vaginal discharge after the menopause, see your doctor.

## **10 Persistent fatigue**

Tiredness is usually easy enough to trace back to sleepless nights, overwork, illness, pregnancy or looking after small children. In such cases it is not worth bothering the doctor – though you should make an effort to get more rest.

Persistent fatigue lasting for more than a month may need medical treatment. One common cause is an underactive thyroid, which often develops after the birth of a baby. If your fatigue is accompanied by feelings of cold, hair-loss or thinning of hair, weight-gain or dry skin, it is worth having your thyroid gland checked.

