

Natural Path: Old Man's Beard

By Dr. Carol McIntyre

Last week our daughter Charlotte was ill with an upper respiratory infection. She had terrible congestion, cough and fatigue. I did everything I know to bring her back to health including cuddling, many hugs, chicken noodle soup, essential oils, homeopathy and wet socks. She was feeling better after just 2 days. Amazing!

Me? I woke up Thursday morning without my voice. The fatigue was so debilitating that I couldn't walk across the room without becoming exhausted. Apparently I was *not* resistant to the slobbering snot that my beloved Charlotte had been projecting on me for days. I lay around and did my basics,

thinking that I would be able to "kick it" in a day or two. Not the case.

After feeling partially defeated and very silly (as I am a doctor with many tools at my disposal for healing), I began to dig around in my pantry to find the herb that I have always used as my "go to" for treating URIs. I found it, along with a couple of wonderful companions and made a tea. The rest is history. Healed and back to the work of healing~ I am well once again.

So, what is this magic herb? It is actually a lichen. Usnea is a lichen that grows prolifically here in Oregon. The first time I learned about the healing properties of Usnea was in an herbal studies class in medical school. My teacher spoke of it and how readily

available it was in the area. I was astounded because in NY State, where I am from, it is an endangered species!

At first, I was appalled that people were wild harvesting this herb as medicine. Then I learned that Usnea or "Old man's beard" grows prolifically in the NW because it needs old growth trees to live with and clean air. Unfortunately in NY, even western NY/Finger Lakes area where I am from, we no longer have the habitat to support the abundant growth of this wonderful resource.

Still wondering what this herb is? Look around as you drive down the road. You can see the green "grass like" plant hanging from the trees. This is Usnea. "Old man's beard" as it is so appropriately called. It hangs in long

strands from the trees decorating like garland. This is medicine... a wonderful medicine that will clear up any URI! It has never failed me.

As mentioned before, a community wellness calendar will be available soon. I look forward to doing some herb walks and showing you how to identify medicinal herbs. Also, we can have classes on harvesting and processing herbs, making teas and so on. There are so many resources here at our fingertips- let's explore them together. I am sure many of you have knowledge to share and I am excited to learn.

Hope you've been enjoying your summer! Stay cool and hydrated. Thanks for joining me. ~Be Well.

New Day Massage to Expand Services *continued from front page*

ber," explains Lewis. "I'm still on the Governor's Rural Health Coordinating Council. I was a consultant with the Vernonia Health Board helping them develop their partnerships with the Public Health Foundation and Pacific University to provide health care in Vernonia. All of these other things really demonstrate my commitment to rural health care, not just in Vernonia, but in Oregon."

Lewis is a Licensed Massage Therapist (LMT). She has also taken extensive course work to become a nationally Certified Lymphedema Therapist

(CLT), treating patients with congenital or hereditary issues. "These are people with conditions where their body doesn't allow their lymph to move appropriately resulting in edemic appendages, most typically legs," explains Lewis. "I also treat people with Secondary Lymphodema, a condition which results from surgery, chemotherapy, radiation and is quite often experienced by women who have had a mastectomy or men who have gone through prostate cancer treatment."

Lewis is also a Nutritional Therapist (NT) as well, and is certified to assist people who are struggling with dietary issues, particularly around Diabetes, Attention Deficit Disorder, weight issues, Krones Syndrome or other issues.

In addition, Lewis says she has taken course work and become certified in Medical Cupping, an oriental medicine therapy which uses vacuum techniques to separate muscle tissue to increase circulation and support the body healing itself. Lewis says this therapy can be

beneficial for people who have suffered traumatic injuries to muscles or joints or who have had surgeries which restrict movement. Lewis says she has also had additional training focusing on treating whiplash and low back injuries resulting from automobile accidents or on the job injuries.

Lewis says there are some restrictions in Oregon about the patients she can treat as a massage therapist in regards to insurance coverage. Lewis does take most insurance for covered benefits under an individual's insurance plan.

Lewis has also added a sauna to her services, which is available for clients to add to their massage therapy for a nominal fee.

Lewis says much of her work is used in conjunction with other therapies including at-home therapies they can do themselves after a visit to her office. "My philosophy is that I don't want to give people fish, I want to teach them to fish," says Lewis. "I try to remind their body what it is like to be in good health. Hopefully they get to the point where they can support themselves. The most successful patient is one that wants to participate in their own healing process. My success is measured by the fact that you are not coming to me anymore."

New Day Medical Therapies, Consulting and Solutions is located at 847 Madison Avenue. Heather Lewis can be reached at 503-429-4677.

Health Center Receives Grant

Meredith Guardino (right) from the Oregon Office of Rural Health was in Vernonia on Monday, August 18th to hand deliver a \$10,000 check for a grant to support community outreach programs for the Vernonia Health Center. Construction of the new health center is on schedule with the new facility set to open in September. Also pictured (L to R) are Vernonia Health board members Bob Wagner, Erika Paleck, Rachel Langmaid and Marie Krahn.



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Vernonia's 16th Annual Community Wide Garage Sale

The annual Community Wide Garage Sale will be held on Saturday August 23, 2014 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The map showing sale locations will be available Friday, August 22nd and the day of the sale at Vernonia Realty, 953 Bridge Street.

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