FOLK MEDICINE

A Doctor's Guide to Good Health

By D. C. JARVIS, M.D.

W. H. ALLEN
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Commentary (2025):
A brief biography – Dr. D.C. Jarvis (DeForest Clinton Jarvis; 1881 -1966), was an American physician from Vermont. He is best-known for his book “Folk Medicine”:
He recommended a mixture of whole apple cider vinegar and honey that have variously been called switchel or honegar, as a health tonic.
A Dr Jarvis statement:
"I believe the doctor of the future will be a teacher as well as a physician.
His real job will be to teach people how to be healthy."

Somehow during the passing years he has learned that iodine is related to the ability to resist disease.
Read entire book – Dr JARVIS – FOLK MEDICINE <PDF-Book>

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Importance of Iodine

FOLK MEDICINE IS INTERESTED in three R's—**Resistance**, **Repair**, and **Recovery**. First the individual asks himself whether his resistance to disease is as it should be. Next, is he able to repair tissue injury due to accident should it occur? Finally, if sickness should come, is his body able to bring about recovery ?

Somehow during the passing years he has learned that iodine is related to the ability to resist disease.

Iodine is necessary for the thyroid gland's proper performance of its work. The human thyroid gland is located in the front of the lower part of the neck. All blood in the body passes through the thyroid gland every seventeen minutes. Because the cells making up this gland have an affinity for iodine, during this seventeen-minute passage the gland's secretion of iodine kills weak germs that may have gained entry into the blood through an injury to the skin, the lining of nose or throat, or through absorption of food from the digestive tract. Strong, virulent germs are rendered weaker during their passage through the thyroid gland. With each seventeen minutes that rolls around they are made still weaker until finally they are killed if the gland has its normal supply of iodine. If it does not, it cannot kill harmful germs circulating in the blood as Nature intended it should.

It is well established that the iodine content of the thyroid gland is dependent upon the iodine available in the food and water intake of the individual. If the iodine intake is low the gland is deprived of an element it needs to do its work.

We learn in folk medicine, however, that this gland performs other functions besides killing harmful germs in the blood. The first is the rebuilding of energy with which to do the day's work. There is a definite relationship between the amount of energy you have and your iodine intake. The first question in the presence of a condition of depleted energy is, Is the soil of the state in which one lives iodine-poor? Second, is the deficiency being made up by supplementary means? When energy and endurance run low in relation to doing the day's work, then the taking of iodine needs to be considered.

A second function of iodine is to calm the body and relieve nervous tension. When nervous tension runs high there is irritability and difficulty in sleeping well at night, and the body is continually on a combat basis, organized for fight and flight. All these points stress a body need for iodine to lessen nervous tension, relax the body and enable it to organize for peace and quiet, by the building and storing of body reserves against time of need. I have learned through folk medicine that it is possible to repeatedly change an irritable, impatient, and restless child under ten years of age into a calm, patient individual within two hours' time by giving one drop of solution of iodine by mouth in a vegetable or fruit juice or in a glass of water made acid in reaction by adding a teaspoonful of apple-cider vinegar. I have repeatedly prescribed this in order to make it possible for a mother of a race-horse-type little boy or girl to be able to live comfortably with the child. I have never seen it fail to calm down a nervous child.

A third function of iodine in the human body relates to clear thinking. The mind simply works better when the body is supplied the iodine it needs.

Then there is the matter of the storing of unwanted fat. Iodine is one of the best oxidizing catalysts we have. A catalyst is the match which touches off in the body the fire that burns

up the food we take in each day. If this food is not properly burned off, it may be stored as unwanted fat.

Now while the thyroid gland helpfully stores iodine from the blood passing through it every seventeen minutes, the gland may also be made to lose that stored iodine if, for example, we take in drinking water to which chlorine is added, or use too much sodium chloride, whose common name is table salt.

There is a well-known law of halogen displacement. The halogen group is made up as follows :

Halogen	*Relative Atomic Weight*
Fluorine	19.
Chlorine	35.5
Bromine	80.
Iodine	127.

The clinical activity of any one of these four halogens is in inverse proportion to its atomic weight. This means that any one of the four can displace the element with a higher atomic weight, but cannot displace an element with a lower atomic weight. For example, fluorine can displace chlorine, bromine and iodine because fluorine has a lower atomic weight than the other three. Similarly, chlorine can displace bromine and iodine because they both have a higher atomic weight. Likewise, bromine can displace iodine from the body because iodine has a higher atomic weight. But a reverse order is not possible. A knowledge of this well-known chemical law brings us to a consideration of the addition of chlorine to our drinking water as a purifying agent. We secure a drinking water that is harmful to the body not because of its harmful germ content but because the chlorine content now causes the body to lose the much-needed iodine.

Because we may live in an iodine-poor area; because drinking water may be treated with chlorine; because we may be

sick too often, lack energy and endurance, develop nervous tension, lack the ability of clear thinking, and accumulate unwanted fat, how shall we go about bringing up the iodine content of the body to the point needed ?

There are three ways :

1. Eating foods which analysis has shown are particularly rich in iodine. Among these are : all food out of the ocean, radishes, asparagus, carrots, tomatoes, spinach, rhubarb, potatoes, peas, strawberries, mushrooms, lettuce, bananas, cabbage, egg yolk, and onions.
2. Painting a small area of the body with tincture of iodine.
3. Taking preparations known to be rich in iodine. One of these is cod-liver oil. Another is solution of iodine, which can be purchased at the chemist. Still another is the kelp tablets hitherto discussed.

The iodine solution is an inexpensive preparation to take. In 1880 a French physician named Lugol originated a solution which contains 5 per cent of elemental iodine in a 10 per cent solution of potassium iodide. It has been used steadily ever since it was originated. Every pharmacist knows how to make Lugol's solution. If he doesn't have the time to make it, he orders it from his wholesale drug supplier. Every drugstore carries it in stock.

When used to maintain the iodine content of the body the dose is small and is taken only on certain days of the week. When the mineral content of the body is analysed, only a trace of iodine is found. Ten drops of iodine represent more iodine than is found in the entire body. For this reason, the dose of Lugol's solution of iodine is one or two drops, depending on your body weight. If you weigh 150 pounds or less, for example, your dose to maintain the normal iodine content of the body is one drop, taken at one meal on Tuesday and Friday of each week. If you weigh more than 150 pounds, the dose

should be two drops instead of one. It is useful to remember that the human body works on the minimum of anything it needs. If there should be a rise in sickness in the area where you live, it would be well to take the Lugol's solution three times a week instead of two, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for the purpose of storing up reserve.

How is the drop of the solution to be taken, on the directed days? In general, medical men prescribe iodine to be taken on an empty stomach, preferably twenty minutes before food is taken.

During the passing years folk medicine has worked out a different plan and it is one I like to follow. It has been referred to in another connection elsewhere in this book. To repeat, adding one teaspoonful of apple-cider vinegar to a glass of water to make the water acid in reaction, holding the medicine dropper horizontal in order to get a maximum drop, one drop of the Lugol's solution is added to the mixture. The contents are stirred with a spoon and sipped through the course of the meal, as one would drink a cup of coffee or tea.

In relation to supplemental use of iodine, my studies of certain dairy herds has revealed interesting evidences of the relationship between host and micro-organisms, viruses, insects, and other parasites.

With one herd three drops of Lugol's solution of iodine was added to the daily four ounces of apple-cider vinegar. Thereafter it was only necessary to call the veterinary once in a period of eight months, to see a sick cow. In contrast to this, another herd, to which Lugol's solution was not given, had plenty of sickness. In an eight-month period it was necessary to use penicillin in order to save seriously sick cows.

I have observed that lice will leave the hide of a cow that receives apple-cider vinegar and iodine; also that flies will not bite the cows when they are on pasture, though flies will and

do bite young cattle not receiving the apple-cider vinegar and iodine.

In a herd troubled with abortions—evidence of the work of the *Brucella abortus* micro-organism which grows on an alkaline medium and causes contagious abortion in cattle called Bang's disease, or *brucellosis—abortions* promptly stopped when each feeding ration received a supplemental three drops of Lugol's solution of iodine to each two ounces of the apple-cider vinegar.

While studying selected herds, I became interested in the problem of cattle grubs. These are the larvae, or maggots, of the heel fly. The adult fly does not bite or sting, but it produces great fear and is a serious annoyance to the cattle. Eggs are deposited in a row attached to a single hair of a cow's heel during the first sunny days of spring. The eggs incubate and hatch in three or four days and the newly-hatched maggots penetrate the hide of the cow, causing itching and a flow of serum that mats the hair. The young grubs then work their way upward between the muscles and may be found in a few months in the body cavities. They continue to burrow along the surface of the paunch, intestines, and other internal organs. At certain times many of them are found in the wall of the oesophagus, leading from the mouth to the stomach. During the autumn and winter the grubs will finally come to the top of the back and lie just under the hide. Each grub cuts a hole through the hide to the surface to get the air which it now needs, and to permit it to escape when ripe. The period spent beneath the hide usually runs from thirty to ninety days. These grubs emerge from the hide during February and March, dropping to the ground to hatch into heel flies. In eighteen to eighty days after escaping from the back of the cow, the adult fly hatches and is ready to mate within a half-hour.

My object was to rout these cattle grubs by means of the apple-cider vinegar and iodine combination; this would

demonstrate, to me at least, what the combination would do in the way of making the body, as a host, unsuitable soil for the development and continuing existence of micro-organisms, viruses, insects, and other parasites.

During one year's time only ten grubs were discovered on the backs of a herd of forty-five registered Jersey cows. Usually these grubs are a little larger round than a pencil, but these ten grubs had such hard going in the cows' bodies against the vinegar and iodine that they were no larger around than toothpicks. I observed further with reference to a ration supplement high in iodine value that when it was used, the bacterial count of the milk went down; when iodine was discontinued, the count went up but could be driven down again immediately with resumption of the iodine.

From Dr. William Weston of South Carolina and his experience with race-horses wintered there, I gained interesting and valuable insight into the value of iodine in the body, and its relation to endurance.

About one hundred race-horses are wintered where he lives. Two years previous to a visit I paid him, the man in charge of the horses came to him saying that a horse was under his care which had everything it takes to win the Kentucky Derby. If they could just learn precisely how to feed this horse to maintain its speed capability, he believed the horse would have an outstanding racing season. Would Dr. Weston help him by planning the feeding of the horse ?

Dr. Weston was greatly interested and consented to do so. As a first step he asked for samples of any and afoods given the horse. The samples were analysed at the South Carolina Food Research Laboratory. As a result of the analysis, Dr. Weston advised increasing the iodine content of the ration, by incorporating into it foods specifically rich in iodine. This was done. In the ensuing season the horse won every race in which it was entered.

As a result of the experience, two wealthy race-horse owners invited Dr. Weston to come to their horse farms to discuss the feeding of their stock. Again iodine-rich foods were added to the usual rations, with the same result; every horse fed on iodine-rich diet won every race in which it was entered. This seems to be a complete demonstration of the relation of iodine to energy and endurance.

Subsequently, Dr. Weston sent me a copy of a letter addressed to him as chairman of the South Carolina Food Research Commission. It well illustrates the need of observing the obligation to Nature which must be observed by a daily intake of iodine. The letter ran as follows :

Dear Dr. Weston :

Now that we have reached the half-way mark of this racing season, I should like to tell you some of our observations of the results of wintering our horses in South Carolina, and feeding them your home grown feeds.

After six years of experiment with several hundred horses, we are more convinced than ever that your foods, abundant in iodine and balanced in mineral content, are the saving factor in many of our horses. Allow me to give you an example. This summer an epidemic of influenza and coughing broke out among two-year-olds at the New York tracks. It spread like wildfire through the stables, and all the old cures and preventives were useless against it.

We have checked carefully and find that none of the horses that were wintered in South Carolina, were affected. Naturally we spoke of this often, and by so doing attracted the attention of many people in South Carolina, and the merits of your theories and findings.

We have found that our horses are almost immune to skin diseases, distemper, and other contagious diseases after they have been wintered in South Carolina and brought to the tracks where these ailments are taking their toll. You have observed how quickly we can cure these various ailments in young horses. We believe that the blood is so cleansed by the action of iodine from

your feeds and water, that all common infections are removed, and the system so toned up that it is in shape to fight and ward off anything except direct infection through an open wound. A few years ago a good trainer was one who could bring his horses to the races well fed and bulging with muscle. But the make-up of these muscles, and the contents of the blood-stream feeding them, is the determining factor in having a really fit and ready horse.

In appreciation of the good you have done our horses, and the things we have learned from your efforts, we trust that you will find time this coming season to again spend considerable time at the fair grounds, and conduct further experiments on our stock.

In order to learn whether instinct played a part in leading dairy cows to food rich in iodine, the owner of a mixed herd of fifty-four cows which I had previously studied built a special feeding station for me at the end of the lane leading from the barnyard. The station was divided into four compartments, roofed over to protect them from rain.

In one compartment was placed a feeding supplement, nationally advertised, which contained iodine and other minerals in inorganic form. The second compartment was supplied with bone meal, the third compartment with a feeding supplement made of ocean kelp, in which all the minerals are in organic form. The fourth compartment contained salt.

We stood near by to observe what happened when the cows passed this feeding station for the first time.

Each cow sniffed at each compartment. They passed by without touching the feeding supplement made of inorganic minerals. A few took some of the bone meal, and a few some of the salt. But what they really converged on was the kelp, which as has been said contains more iodine than anything else that grows. As fast as we could fill up the compartment, they would clean it out. This settled the point for us : cows like

iodine and in organic, which is to say natural, form. Subsequently I offered kelp to two registered Jersey bulls in the barn. They took it quickly and teased for more.

One of my friends raises hunting dogs as a hobby. The dogs are Brittany spaniels. When they have been trained to hunt, he sells them.

Being impressed by the favourable effects of apple-cider vinegar on his own health and body endurance, he asked me if it would be all right to try giving the vinegar to his dogs. He thought they tired too easily when hunting. We decided on the following method. When the dogs were not hunting, one tablespoonful of apple-cider vinegar would be added to the ration of each dog once a day. When they were hunting, there would be a tablespoonful added twice a day. After following this method for three years at these kennels, the following conclusions were reached :

If a hunting dog has (1) one tablespoonful of apple-cider vinegar added to his ration once a day during the off-hunting season; (2) one tablespoonful added to his ration twice a day when used for hunting; (3) one tablespoonful added to his drinking water while hunting, whenever he is given a drink; (4) one tablespoonful of undiluted vinegar when the dog is thirsty and no drinking water is available, the following results were noted :

1. A dog receiving the apple-cider vinegar will not tire easily. The average dog that has not received it is good for three to four hours of hunting a day. A dog receiving it will hunt eight to ten hours steady during the day. Apple-cider vinegar clearly increases the hunting dog's endurance.
2. A dog receiving the apple-cider vinegar will be able to point and retrieve every bird for as many as four hunters hunting at the same time.

1. A dog receiving vinegar will not show shortness of breath at any time while hunting.

2. A dog receiving the vinegar will maintain a good appetite and eat every meal while being used for hunting.

3. A dog receiving the vinegar will not lose weight while hunting.

Having now traced the use of iodine to increase the speed and endurance of race-horses and the endurance of hunting dogs, let us adapt what we have learned to the health side of the daily life of a business executive.

On rising in the morning he will drink a glass of water while dressing into which one or two teaspoonfuls of apple-cider vinegar has been mixed. What may he expect to accomplish by doing this?

The knowledge that acids thin body fluids has been brought over from the days when blood-letting was a common form of treatment. We have found in the barn that the milk of a normal cow is weakly acid. When the reaction of the milk changes to alkaline, the milk becomes soup-thick. This thickness will disappear and the milk will return to its normal watery character, however, if and when the cow is given four ounces of apple-cider vinegar and four ounces of water by mouth from a bottle, night and morning.

There are other ways of observing this principle in action but this is sufficient here. The point is, no busy executive wants his blood to be on the thick side, like soup; he understands that it should be thin, in order to circulate easily throughout the body, making easy work for his heart as it pumps blood with each beat.

At breakfast this man omits wheat foods, wheat cereals, white sugar, and citrus fruits and fruit juices because in the majority of people these foods change the normal acid reaction of the urine to alkaline. The alkalinity is a signal that the blood

is thicker than it should be, that it is not easily circulated and requires more heart effort to pump it. Therefore this man replaces these unwise foods with rye and corn foods and cereals. Instead of white sugar he uses honey. If he chooses, he may take apple, grape, or cranberry juice.

At lunch-time he takes two teaspoonfuls of apple-cider vinegar and two teaspoonfuls of honey in a glass of water. In this way he obtains acid taken up from the soil by fruit, berries, edible leaves, and roots, and the energy from the sun which exists in honey. This is a prime pick-up. He may take it before, during, or after lunch.

When a person is organizing his body for a day of dynamic action, the organization shifts the urine reaction from the normal, or acid, to the alkaline. It is not advisable, therefore, to eat foods at the morning meal which will, so to speak, duplicate the shift. For this reason the wheat foods, white sugar, and citrus fruits and their juices are omitted, so that at the end of the day he will return home with less mental and physical fatigue.

At the evening meal he will also take the two teaspoonfuls of honey and two teaspoonfuls of apple-cider vinegar in a glass of water. He may like to take it before the meal, as a cocktail, or during the meal.

It is beneficial also to start the meal with a leafy green salad, to get the benefit of the acid from the soil and the energy from the sun stored up in the leaves.

If the day has been one of overwork and anxiety, turn to fish or other seafood, for that will supply the iodine and potassium that will calm down the nervous system.

Try to have such muscle meats as beef, lamb, or pork only twice a week, and then on days when you have a light schedule, because muscle meat organizes your body on a combat basis, which you do not want from food. Try to bear in mind that the internal organs of an animal, such as the liver, represent the

animal storehouse against the time of need. It will be well for you to have liver or liverwurst once a week. Gradually, by following the foregoing plan, you can make changes in your daily food selection so that the intake will counterbalance your heavy expenditure of strength and energy.

Supposing you do follow the suggestions outlined above and yet find that some weeks the pressures of your private and your business life are causing you to lose the ability to bounce back. Then you should add a drop of Lugol's solution of iodine to your glass of apple or grape juice at breakfast, or you may take it in the mixture of apple-cider vinegar and water. The point is that the potassium in the solution blocks off the body mechanism that organizes for aggressive action, releasing its hold on the body when opportunity for rest and relaxation arises. The iodine swings into action the body mechanism which organizes the body for peace and quiet and the building up and storing of body reserves. When working under pressure, include the Lugol's solution dose each day until the period of pressure passes. If it should happen that your body becomes saturated with iodine, you will find that there is an increase of moisture in the nose. If this occurs, omit the iodine until the nose is normal.

As you study yourself you will soon learn to tell when you need iodine. When a night's sleep does not bring you to the beginning of the new day with the energy you are accustomed to have, you will begin to think of iodine. If you learn how to use it, it will restore the capacity to bounce back and sustain your well-being.