

Folk Medicine Assignment

Luanne Glynn

Informant Marvel is seventyfive years old. She was born in April, 1909, in Logan County. Marvel now lives in Todd County. She has spent all but a year of her life in Kentucky on or near her home place. Marvel worked in a factory once when as a young married woman she lived briefly in Detroit. Most of her life Marvel has been a housewife taking care of her husband and raising four sons to adulthood. She had one daughter who died at the age of five. Marvel went through the ninth grade before marriage. Marvel is now a widow. Her husband was a coal miner for many years and he was a victim of black lung disease. He was an invalid and for many years she nursed him in their home. Marvel is a Caucasian. When questioned about ethnic background Marvel insists all her family was always American. She has always practiced the Baptist religion and no longer attends church but watches several services on television each Sunday before wrestling comes on. She is a big wrestling fan. Marvel enjoys talking and has proven to be an interesting informant.

Folk Medical beliefs

- 1) For a stopped up throat, for choking and crouping - take sorghum molasses and soda, stir and take a teaspoon of it. (see FB797 Sulphur and molasses is a spring tonic.)
- 2) Wool cloth with Vick's salve, heat and put on chest to break up mucous. (see FB1130 A mixture of one teaspoonful of melted lard, one of turpentine and two of kerosene, applied to both chest and back, will cure a cold.)
- 3) Aspirin is good for fever.
- 4) Rock candy with whiskey is good for cough, cuts phlegm. (see FB1076 For chills, use rock candy, cherry bark, and whiskey.)
- 5) Sassafras root, boil for tea. (see FB788 Sassafras tea is excellent for sickness.)
- 6) Feed a cold, starve a fever. (see FB1101 There is a common saying, "Feed a cold and starve a fever. See also FB1410 "Feed a cold and starve a fever.)
- 7) Horehound and hot water makes a good syrup for kids. (see FB1063 A tea made of horehound will cure chills. see also FB1108 Horehound syrup is a cure for a cold. see also FB1208 Horehound syrup is a cure for coughs.)
- 8) A teaspoonful of sugar with a few drops of kerosene is good for croup, cuts phlegm. (see FB1121 Take a teaspoonful of sugar wet with kerosene, and it will cure a bad cold.)
- 9) Mustard plaster on chest or back and chest is good for croup, cuts phlegm. (see FB1132 Put mustard plaster on the feet, if the cold is in the head.)
- 10) Vinegar and sugar mixed is good, let it ooze down the throat else it'll strangle you if you get too much. (see 1219 A remedy of whiskey, vinegar, brown sugar, and butter is good for cough.)
- 11) Sometimes it helps to put your feet in a tub of hot water before you go to bed if you have a cold.
- 12) Been saving a little white mule for a cold, mix it with a little hot water and egg, clears the throat.
- 13) Warm urinedropped in the ear is good for earaches.

14) S.J.'s (Marvel's husband) mother fixed John once, it wasn't a cold. He had a stone bruise under his foot and she went out to the horse lot and followed the cow, got a shovel of warm doodoo and set his foot in it and poulticed it till it dried and it worked. (John was Marvel's oldest son)
(see FB1738 Cow manure is used to prevent infection.)

15) An ice pack is good if fever is high it will really work.
(see FB1459 Keep ice packs around a person to cure a fever.)

16) At Owensboro they had a hospital and they raised maggots and if someone came in with a bad sore that wouldn't heal they put maggots on with something clear over it. I had two sisters that got their diplomas to be nurses over there and they said it was a sure cure, that really happened, but it's surprising.

17) For a carbunkle (sore) if it wouldn't come to a head you could bind pork to it and it will draw it, open it up and let it run.

18) I've given my kid's squeezed onion, onion syrup, they'll soon go to sleep if they ain't hurting too bad.
(see FB1113 Hot onion syrup (with no water in it), taken just before retiring, is fine for colds.)

19) I've heard of people put copper bands around their wrist for arthritis, claimed it works.
(see FB1859 People wear copper wire around their necks for neuralgia.)