

Essiac Tea

Burdock Root (*Arctium lappa*) - This herb is the best known for its beneficial effect on the skin. It increases circulation to the skin and helps to detoxify (cleanse) the epidermal tissues. Many users report exceptional beauty and glow of the skin from its use. "Some of the conditions which may benefit from the root are: psoriasis, eczema, acne, boils, sties, carbuncles, ulcers of the stomach..." Similar to garlic, the root has been reported to destroy bacteria and fungus cultures. Anti-tumor properties have also been noted. Nagoya University researchers in Japan found that the root helps reduce cell mutations.

Another beneficial feature of this root is its action as a "blood purifier." This term means the formula helps eliminate toxins for the blood and lymphatic system. Its action is also reported to work on the respiratory and urinary systems. The liver, gall bladder, kidneys, and digestive system benefit from the properties of Burdock Root. It may also help with elimination of excess fluids from the body.

Burdock Root is rich in vitamins B-complex and E. Its trace minerals include potassium, phosphorous, chromium, cobalt, iron, magnesium, silicon, zinc and sodium.

Because of its diuretic action, conditions of arthritis, rheumatism, and sciatica may be improved. Many users report a rapid decrease in swollen ankles even if the condition hasn't responded well to other treatments.

Burdock Root contains inulin (not to be confused with insulin) which helps regulate sugar (glucose) in metabolism. Diabetics may be helped and Inulin has also been shown to possess exceptional restorative properties. It increases immunity by improving the efficiency of white blood cells.

Turkey Rhubarb Root (*Rheum palmatum*) - This root has been used in China for more than 2,000 years! Turkey Rhubarb has impressive detoxifying properties, especially for the liver. The root also has antibiotic, anti-microbial, and anti-tumor properties. Although the original formula called for Indian Rhubarb Root (*Rheum officianale*), that particular variety typically can't be obtained in the USA without chemical contamination. Turkey Rhubarb is a good substitute.

Sheep Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) - carotenoids, a component of Sheep Sorrel, are present at a concentration of approximately 8 - 12%. Beta carotene (a strong antioxidant member of the carotenoids) is converted to Vitamin A in the liver. Vitamin A has been shown to strengthen the immune system by aiding production of white blood cells. White blood cells are what attack many of the body's harmful intruders, including cancer.

Sheep Sorrel is rich in Vitamin A, B complex, C, D, K, and E. Its minerals include significant levels of calcium, iron, magnesium, silicon, sulphur, zinc, manganese, iodine, and copper.

Sheep Sorrel is also rich in chlorophyll, which increases oxygen content in the blood. High levels of blood oxygen can increase the body's action against many invasive conditions. Research at the Linus Pauling Institute and M.D. Anderson Cancer Hospital has shown chlorophyll enhances the body's immunity against certain carcinogens (cancer-causing substances) and has been shown to strengthen the immune system. According to these studies, it appears to be effective against chromosome damage -- which is considered to be a precursor to cancer.

Sheep Sorrel is rich in potassium oxalate. It aids digestion, and has been reported to relieve stomach hemorrhage and jaundice.

Slippery Elm Bark (*Ulmus fulva*) - This herb's main constituent is mucilage. Mucilage is a gum dissolved in the bark's juices. This material has extraordinary cleansing properties. It has been reported to reduce the pain of ulcers--the mucilage coats any area it passes through. Slippery Elm Bark has a lubricating property, which helps protect membranes linings and joints. Relief of inflamed areas is commonly reported. An antibiotic and anti-microbial effect has also been reported along with an ability to remove toxins from the body.

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Rene Caisse



The following article written by Brad Hammond was published in the November 17, 2000, Muskoka Times.

BRACEBRIDGE -- Rene Caisse, developer of the native herbal remedy she called Essiac, is back in town.

A bronze statue by Huntsville sculptor Brenda Wainman-Goulet mounted on a Muskoka granite base now commemorates the controversial nurse at the four-way corner of Manitoba and Ontario streets and Ecclestone and Entrance drives.

The location was chosen because of its proximity to the spot where Caisse practiced her naturopathic art in a clinic on Dominion Street. Sufferers of various diseases seeking relief from Caisse -- whose name was reversed to create the recognizable brand name "Essiac" -- were instructed to cross the silver bridge over the falls at Bracebridge and turn left.

It is a small park at this same intersection, which Rene Caisse's statue now dominates.

Beginning in the 1920s, Caisse treated thousands of patients with her decoction based upon rumex acetosella, or sheep sorrel, a common herb.

In 1977, the Resperin Corporation purchased the rights to Caisse's formula and performed a five-year trial.

Despite this and other examinations including a 1982 government evaluation proclaiming "no clinical evidence exists to support the



Sculpture of Rene Caisse

claims that Essiac is an effective treatment for cancer," Essiac remains a popular remedy much acclaimed by naturopathic practitioners.

The statue of Rene Caisse was funded by the Essiac Canada Foundation of Ottawa and is duplicated at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in Toronto.

In conjunction with the unveiling, Essiac Canada Foundation also confirmed scholarships in Caisse's memory for any students of Bracebridge and Muskoka Lakes Secondary School planning on studying naturopathic medicine at the Toronto school. On hand for the unveiling were members of the Caisse family, including nephew Don McVittie and niece Jackie Poland, long-time supporter and friend Kay Beers and former Parry Sound-Muskoka MP Stan Darling who worked for acceptance of Essiac by federal authorities, acceptance that was opposed by the medical community.

"It's a delight to be here," said the usually avuncular Darling. "At age 89, it's a delight to be anywhere but in the grass."

Darling recalled how, after much lobbying and pressure, the minister of health finally consented to the use of Essiac as a last-resort medicine when a signed letter from a physician accompanied the request.

"The doctors were the worst," Darling said, referring to the impossibility of getting the required letter from the principal opponents of the natural decoction. "I used to tell them what I thought of them in no uncertain terms."

Darling conceded that, finally, "I had to write the damn letters myself."

Terry Maloney of the Essiac Canada Foundation joined Mayor Scott Northmore, McVittie, Poland, Beers, Darling and Wainman-Goulet in the unveiling.

Mary McPherson, who "for 35 years single-handedly carried the torch" for Essiac and her friend of Rene Caisse, was unable to attend the ceremony due to advanced age and failing health. Mrs. McPherson worked with Caisse for many years. Caisse died Dec. 26, 1978.

Newly re-elected and enthusiastic, Northmore lauded Essiac's success and popularity "across the universe."

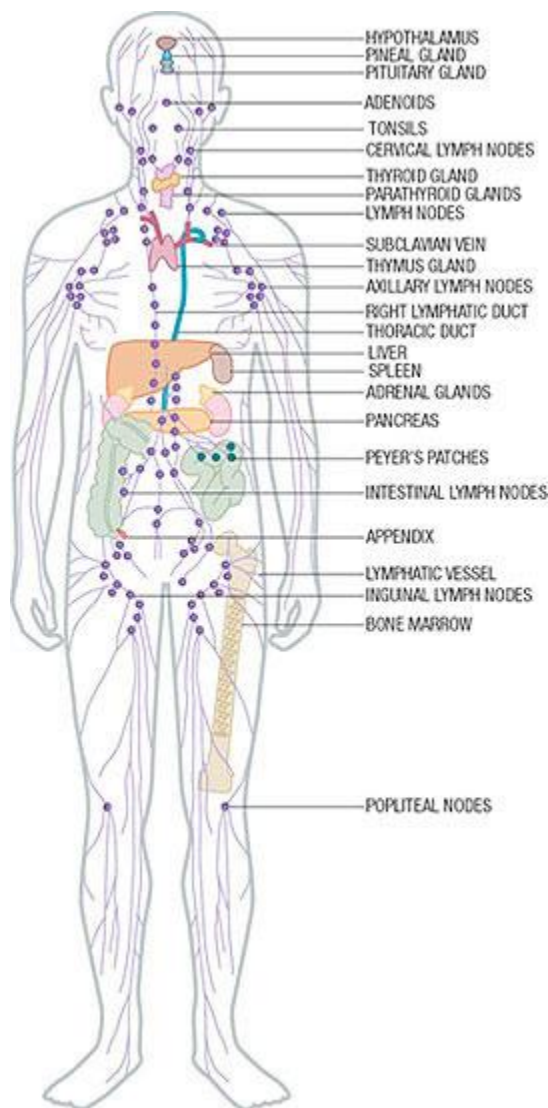
What is Essiac?

Essiac, given its name by Rene Caisse ("caisse" spelt backwards), consists of four main herbs that grow in the wilderness of Ontario, Canada. The original formula is believed to have its roots in native Canadian Ojibway medicine.

The four main herbs that make up Essiac are Burdock Root, Slippery Elm Inner Bark, Sheep Sorrel and Indian Rhubarb Root.

The four herbs may help normalize body systems by cleansing the blood, purging toxic build up, promoting cell repair and aiding in effective assimilation and elimination. When combined it is believed that their separate beneficial effects are enhanced.

Given modern interest in naturopathic medicine and progress in scientific understanding of the human immune system, Essiac remains at the forefront of alternative formulas.





Swimming in our bodies is a sea of antigens. These antigens include dangerous environmental invaders such as viruses, antibiotic resistant bacteria, abnormal cells, parasites, chemical pollutants and other synthetic poisons threatening our bodies. We are able to survive periodic assaults on our health and life from these antigens because of our immune system. The key to maintaining optimal health begins with a better understanding of the human body's biological processes.

The human immune system is a synergistic interaction between cells, molecules and fluids in the body. When the body is in good health, all biological systems are working effectively together. When the body is threatened, the immune system is activated to help restore health. There are two systems that the body utilizes to identify foreign invaders. The first system is the non-specific defense system and the second is the specific defense system.

. The non-specific defense system relies on the body's natural ability to recognize and destroy foreign invaders. Its first line of defense consists of skin and mucous membranes. They serve as physical barriers by preventing foreign matter from invading the body. When pathogens enter the body through broken tissues a chemical is released which "turns on" the inflammatory response. To combat the threatening invader the body increases the production of white blood cells that can result in a temperature increase. This explains why fever often accompanies an infection.

If a pathogen passes through the body's non-specific defense, the immune system responds with a series of specific defenses that attack the foreign invader. These defenses are known as the immune response consisting of antibodies and special immune cells. T-Cells and B- Cells are critical to the immune system,. T-Cells (T-Lymphocytes) mature in the Thymus Gland and the B-Cells (B-Lymphocytes) mature in the bone marrow. The T-cells provide the first response to a threatening foreign invader. One type of T cell is the T4 helper cell. These induce the B cells to "turn on" and respond to the presence of a threatening foreign invader. The B-cells respond by producing antibodies and by stimulating one type of T cell, which is the natural killer cell (NK). It destroys the invading cells by means of direct contact or by producing a cytotoxin or cell poison. As a control the T8-suppressor cells "switch off" the immune response once the invaders are destroyed and the infection is cleared up. If the pathogen reappears the body has the ability to immediately produce antibodies to deal with the foreign invader.

The Specific defense system circulates in part in the blood and Lymphatic system. The Lymphatic system consists mainly of lymph, lymphatic vessels and structures or organs containing lymphatic tissues. Lymph is a thick colorless fluid. Some of its functions are to carry fat and nutrients and to distribute germ fighting white blood cells. Lymphatic vessels transport the lymph to the different parts of the body. Along the larger lymphatic vessels there are small kidney shaped structures that are the lymph nodes. Lymph nodes filter the blood in order to help prevent bacteria and other pathogens from traveling through the lymphatic system. The lymph nodes are areas of high immunological activity along with the bone marrow, thymus, spleen, liver, tonsils, adenoids, appendix, and Peyer's patches in the intestines.

The human immune system has the ability to recognize and protect against a huge variety of bacteria, viruses and other pathogens that challenge the body daily. All parts of the immune system work together to help protect the human body . There is a growing concern, however, that our bodies are being "overloaded" with progressively dangerous chemicals and pollutants in the environment that we can not rid ourselves of naturally.

To Order, Contact:

Mary Esther Miranda Gilbert, MSc HN, BSc NSP
520 820-9376 hchoicesthj@gmail.com
www.HolisticChoices.com