

61. KNEE PROBLEMS — THE WD-409 SOLUTION

As Executive Director of arguably the world's only organization devoted to "self-health" education - The G-Jo Institute -- self-testing unusual remedies is one of the things I sometimes do. Our criteria? The methods must be a.) safe; b.) simple; and c.) easily available. "Low-cost" is also good, and "free" is great; but "well-known" and "commonly-accepted" are unimportant.

For years I've heard rumors that WD-409 -- the petroleum-based lubricant -- was good for a lot more than unsqueaking door hinges and preventing rust. Stories of arthritis relief are the rumors I'd heard most; and since my knee had been acting up with hereditary, arthritis-like aching for a while, it seemed an ideal opportunity to do my job. So last week I sprayed WD-409 on my knee. Twice.

Welcome to the world of self-health. It's a sometimes wacky, often lonely and always interesting voyage of (self-)discovery. Twenty years ago, most of the methods our organization teaches (primarily acupuncture, homeopathy, herbs and nutrition) were nearly unknown in the West. And by the year 2000 or 2010, we'll all be playing important roles in our own health and healing using many of those same techniques.

But today, the state of alternative healing is in flux. Too large for the information to be kept "underground" any longer; too small for the FDA to pay much attention. Yet.

Take The G-Jo Institute, for example: we're headquartered on a small, organic farm/nursery just southwest of Hendersonville and Asheville, North Carolina (formerly of Davie, just west of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.) We've been active since 1965, teaching self-health methods since 1974. The farmhouse is a veritable "electronic cottage" -- seven or eight computers work intermittently ... modems blink on and off ... faxes come and go at all hours of the day and night. A busy beehive of input/output (yes, yes, I'm all too aware of the dangers of EMF pollution, but we try to minimize it as much as humanly possible).

Thousands of books and a score of filing cabinets vie for wallspace with TVs, VCRs, beds and other accoutrements of modern life. Storage space is at a premium, while the stuff of alternative healing fills any available nook or cranny. Through our portals have passed many of the famous and near-famous names of alternative health over these past two or three decades -- usually for our world-class vegetarian lunches.

Our staff, as you might imagine, are multi-purpose: Samantha, our "Nursery Woman," does much of the cooking ... and is our resident herbalist. Barbara Gail triples as home-school teacher, business manager and Bach Flower Remedy expert. Laurie sandwiches teaching Tai Chi and researching homeopathic remedies between mothering and interfacing with supermarkets. Barry, our Medical Director, now lives in Maryland; but with faxes and phones not more than a few steps away, there's no break in communication. Other staff members have their strong suits; mine is acupuncture.

Many of the self-health methods and remedies our institute explores are "anecdotal" (meaning "not scientifically-proven"). We hear about them word-of-mouth, in the popular press, from books and newsletters on healing; and (especially) from ancient literature from other parts of the world. Usually the Orient. If the methods fit our parameters, they enter our database.

Admittedly, some are flops, others are too bizarre or complicated to share easily. But some, like acupuncture, are worth all the effort. For my knee problem, for example, I normally would use acupuncture. But the WD-409 does seem to help. The pain in my knee is still mostly absent and I

don't notice any side-effects. My conclusion: possibly helpful and probably safe if used just occasionally. I'll keep you informed.