



The History of Silver

Taken from Dr. Gordon Pedersen's book, "A Fighting Chance", pg. 11-12.

Throughout history, silver has been used across the world as both a medicine and a preservative. In fact, hundreds of years before scientists and doctors understood microbes and how they cause illness, colloidal metals – particularly silver – were known for their health benefits.

Ancient Greeks used silver vessels for water purification. American pioneers trekking westward used silver to keep their water safe and to prevent dysentery, colds, and flu. They also put silver dollars in their milk containers and wooden water casks to slow bacterial growth. Settlers in the Australian outback suspended silverware in their water tanks to prevent spoilage. Topical silver antiseptic solutions were used during World War II. Even the superstition of throwing silver coins into a well is based on the legend of the metal's healing properties.

The use of silver for purification purposes continues today. Silver water purification filters are used in Switzerland and by international airlines, and silver catheters are used in hospitals. More recently, NASA has used silver in their space shuttle water purification systems. Silver is also used in residential homes. Electrical ionization units designed for swimming pools help sanitize the water without the harsh effects of chlorine.

Medicinal silver compounds were first developed in the late 1800s, and widespread use was common prior to 1930. By 1940, approximately 48 different silver compounds were on the market for treating a variety of ailments. These were available in oral, injectable, and topical forms and carried such names as Albargin, Novargan, Proganol and Silvol.

Since 1973, silver has been shown to have topical activity against 22 bacteria species (643 isolates), including gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria. The potential of silver in treating pathogenic infection is so great that the New York City board of physicians gave its stamp of approval for its use as a homeopathic medicine.

From silverware to silver foil, from silver eye drops to colloids and ionics, our scientific

understanding of silver in all its forms has advanced considerably. But the foundation remains the same – silver has the ability to interfere with microbial growth and proliferation without harming the human body.

Interest in silver has grown in recent years due to the emergence of anti-biotic resistant superbugs and the growing ineffectiveness of many antibiotics. More than 95 percent of staph bacteria are now resistant to penicillin, the mother of all antibiotics. In the 1960s, methicillin replaced penicillin as the standard staph treatment. Today more than 60 percent of staph bacteria are resistant to methicillin (called MRSA strains). A recent report from the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) stated public health authorities estimate MRSA strains are causing more deaths in the United States than AIDS. Silver preparations, however, do not have this same problem with bacteria resistance; even MRSA strains and avian flu respond to therapeutic silver preparations.

