

# Blacks, Native Americans use more home remedies

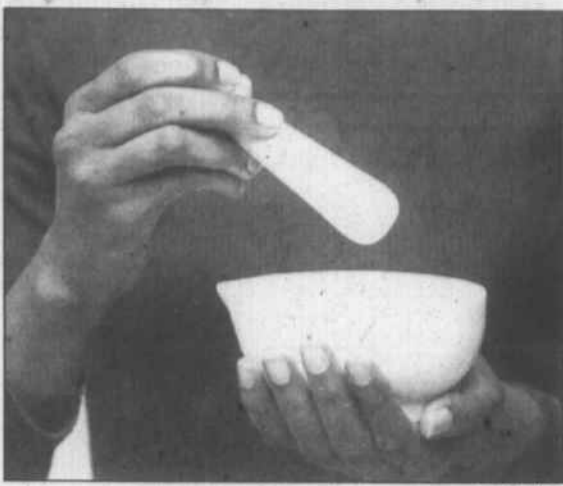
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

While use of home remedies is common among people 65 and older, blacks and Native Americans tend to make much greater use of them than whites, according to a study from Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

And the explanation seems to be cultural differences rather than access to health care, economic hardship or health status, said Joseph G. Grzywacz, Ph.D., and colleagues, writing in the January-February issue of the American Journal of Health Behavior.

"Culturally-based beliefs about health and appropriate strategies for maintaining health may provide better explanations for ethnic difference in home remedy use," said Grzywacz, assistant professor of family and community medicine.

The researchers analyzed use of two kinds of home remedies: food-based, including teas, plant extracts and baking soda; and "other," such as over-the-counter creams and ointments, petroleum products and plant-based substances such as aloe. The home remedies were used both for chronic diseases and symp-



Minorities are mixing up their own remedies to feel better.

toms of more acute illnesses.

"Ethnic differences in beliefs about the meaning of illness, appropriate approaches for health management, and individual responsibility for health may explain why black and Native American elders are more likely to use home remedies than white elders," Grzywacz said.

He noted that other studies of younger adults show that blacks view conventional medical treat-

ments "less favorably" than whites and believe home remedies are a viable form of treatment for minor ailments.

The current results stemmed from a study called ELDER (Evaluating Long-Term Diabetes Management among Elder Rural Adults), which evaluated differences in self-care strategies, including use of home remedies and other complementary and alternative therapies, in

elderly adults with diagnosed diabetes. The participants all came from Robeson and Harnett counties, two largely rural counties in North Carolina with a high proportion of ethnic minorities.

"We found that the majority of older adults use some type of home remedy for health purposes," Grzywacz and his colleagues said. Nearly half of the white seniors in ELDER use home remedies. "Home remedy use was substantially greater among elders of ethnic minority groups."

In trying to determine why, the researchers considered other possible factors such as availability of care, economic hard-

ship and health disparities. When they adjusted for socioeconomic inequalities between blacks and whites, "ethnic differences in home remedy use became larger rather than smaller."

"Home remedy use is widespread among elder adults regardless of ethnicity, suggesting that older adults find some benefit in these practices and they play an important role in elders' overall strategy for health management," Grzywacz said.

"The persistence of ethnic differences in home remedies" after controlling for health disparities and other similar factors "suggest that cultural explanations likely hold more promise

for explaining ethnic differences in home remedy use among older adults."

The research was supported by grants from the National Institute on Aging and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

Among the other members of the large School of Medicine research group were Thomas A. Arcury, Ph.D., professor of family and community medicine; and Ronny A. Bell, Ph.D., associate professor, Wei Lang, Ph.D., assistant professor, and Sara A. Quandt, Ph.D., professor, all of the department of public health sciences.

## Huff

from page A1

lades. A few of them include being the featured artist of the African-American Arts Festival given by the United Arts Council of Greensboro, Artist of the Year in 2001 for the city of Greensboro, and in 1997, she won the National Women of Achievement Award for Excellence in the Arts.

Beyond the grave, not only will her artwork live, but her generosity, as well.

Huff was described as a giving soul.

Miriam McCarter spoke greatly of Huff by explaining that "to everything there is a season." "Today is a time of harvest for a life well lived," McCarter said. "Even in silence, she speaks to us today, establishing the Earnestine Rainey Huff Scholarship Fund, to be administered by the Winston-Salem Black Chamber of Commerce. To everything there is a season."

Known as a hard worker and a person of change, if she didn't like the environment around her or the words someone had spoken, she set out to make things right or better for everyone. That was the theme of the many stories people told about her life.

She was once a member of the Winston-Salem Appearance and Beautification Committee. Many people remembered her joy in gardening. Randon



Earnestine Rainey Huff's funeral was well-attended.

Pender, a member of the Winston-Salem Black Chamber of Commerce, recalled a visit to Huff's house in the springtime. Pender noticed the growing garden and remarked to Huff how she had 50 tulip bulbs she needed to plant. Laughing, Pender recalled how Huff responded, "Fifty bulbs. Fifty bulbs. Honey, I planted 400." Pender exclaimed, re-creating Huff's excitement toward the situation.

Leaving behind a great legacy, Huff departed this Earth on Dec. 26, after battling thymoma, a rare form of cancer found in the thymus gland, located behind the breast bone.

"She has left us a legacy," Mendez said, "a legacy that the children can pick up, a legacy that will inspire generations

that are born, a legacy that will encourage us to get in the struggle, not stand on the sidelines, but get involved and make a difference."

Huff, one of 13 siblings, was a native of College Park, Ga. She resided in North Carolina for more than 30 years, moving to Winston-Salem in the late '70s. Her marriage to James in 1972 yielded two children: Quentin and Jasmine.

Huff attended Atlanta College of Art, Georgia State University, and Shaw University in Raleigh.

Her artwork is scheduled for display in the Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University on Jan. 14. It will be a part of an exhibit titled Blurring Racial Barriers.

## Immunizations

from page A8

• Tetanus diphtheria - One dose every 10 years after receiving the primary series of three doses.

• Influenza (flu) - One dose during the fall of each year for all healthy adults 50 years of age and older. The vaccine may be administered at an earlier age for individuals with certain medical conditions and occupations.

• Pneumococcal - One dose at the age of 65. If given before the age of 65, another vaccination must be given in five years. The vaccine may be administered at an earlier age for individuals with certain medical conditions.

• Hepatitis A - a series of two shots given 6-12 months apart. The vaccine may be required for individuals with certain medical conditions and occupations.

• Hepatitis B - Childhood vaccination for this disease had

decreased the need for this vaccination as an adult. However, adults requiring catch-up immunizations and those with certain medical conditions and occupations are encouraged to get this vaccination.

• Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) - Adults born before 1957 are considered to be immune from measles and mumps. However, rubella immunity should be verified through serum titers or vaccination, especially in women considering pregnancy. Two doses of MMR are recommended for adults with recent contact with the diseases as well as for those vaccinated between 1963 and 1967.

• Varicella - Two doses given four weeks apart are recommended for adults with unreliable clinical history of varicella.

• Meningococcal vaccine - Recommended for adults with certain medical, occupational, or lifestyle risk factors. Talk with your doctor to determine

the need for this vaccine.

Only your doctor can determine which vaccines are appropriate for you and when you should receive them. Therefore, it is important that you visit your doctor regularly to ensure that your immunizations are up to date.

Remember, knowledge is power, but it is what you do with it that makes all the difference!

*Contribution by Ramon Velez, M.D., professor of medicine, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Primary Care and Preventive Medicine Service Line Coordinator, VISN 6; and Aisha Bobcombe, B.A.*

For more information about the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health, visit our Web site at [HYPERLINK "http://www.wfubmc.edu/minorityhealth"](http://www.wfubmc.edu/minorityhealth). Or, for health information call (336) 713-7578.

on the low-fat diet's effect on heart disease and cancer will be released this year, she said.

But researchers realized their data could answer charges made by popular diet promoters who drew a link between obesity and recommendations of low-fat eating plans by health organizations and the government. Low-fat diets promote foods like grains and pasta, which are mostly forbidden by low-carb diets.

"The Zone" diet author Dr. Barry Sears, after reading the new study, said he stands by his belief that the recommended low-fat, high-carb diet caused Americans to gain weight.

He noted that women on

the low-fat diet in the study lost only a fraction of a pound per year, on average, and they added 1.6 centimeters - about a half-inch - to their waist circumferences. The other group added 1.9 centimeters.

"I was struck by what the study didn't say," Sears said.

Dansinger, who co-authored an editorial that accompanies the study, said his research has shown that diets like Atkins and The Zone work, but are hard to stay on.

"People who succeed at maintaining a dramatic weight loss have changed their mindset and priorities and have made exercise and healthy eating among the top priorities in their lives," he said.

## BestHealth

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center

### January 2006 Events

Events are held at BestHealth in Hanes Mall or area YMCAs. Registration required unless otherwise noted.

To register, call Health On-Call at 336-716-2255 or visit [www.besthealth.com](http://www.besthealth.com).

To become a BestHealth member, call 336-765-8804 or visit our web site.

**Incident Weather Policy:** When Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools close due to weather, BestHealth events are canceled.

### 16 MON - Teen Speak Out

6 p.m. Free group session for ages 13-17 to discuss the successes and challenges of anxiety, depression, ADD and ADHD. Sponsored by the Mental Health Assoc. Info: 768-3880.

### 17 TUE - Parkinson's Disease Support Group

11 a.m. Join other patients and their families to increase learning and strengthen the network of resources across Forsyth Co.

### 17 TUE - Belly Dancing

6 to 8 p.m. Instructor Paula Stump provides information on toning and firming muscles as well as diagrams of steps. Dress comfortably to participate.

### 18 WED - Tai Chi for a Healthy Heart

2 p.m. Alan Graham and Sandy Seeber of Three Treasures Tai Chi introduce techniques to strengthen your body and give your heart a healthy boost.

### 18 WED - Folic Acid for Moms-to-Be

6 p.m. Dr. Heather Mertz of WFUBMC Obstetrics & Gynecology presents facts on preventing birth defects, the importance of folic acid, and how a woman can prepare her body for pregnancy and childbirth.

### 19 THU - Yoga Demo

11 a.m. Valerie Kiser, RYT and certified yoga teacher, demonstrates yoga anyone can do to improve balance, flexibility, strength, and stress management. Dress comfortably to participate.

### 19 THU - Clinical Research & You

6 p.m. Cheryl Byers of WFUBMC explains the importance of research studies, the supervision and standards of care involved, and the risks and benefits to subjects and scientists alike.

### 21 SAT - Burn Survivor Support Group

2 p.m. For anyone affected by a burn trauma: survivors, spouses, children, caregivers. Cosponsored by WFUBMC Trauma Services.

### 23 MON - Caregiver Support Group

1 p.m. Cosponsored with the Hospice & Palliative Care Center. Meets monthly.

### 23 MON - Coping with the Death of a Spouse

2:30 p.m. Cosponsored with the Hospice & Palliative Care Center. Meets monthly.

### 24 TUE - Travel Preview with Allways Tours

11 a.m. Enjoy a preview of travel plans with Allways Tours and register early for an upcoming trip.

### 24 TUE - Savory Stews

6 p.m. Chef Penny LaBrecque creates tasty stews using original combinations of healthy foods. Recipes and samples provided. For BestHealth members only.

### 25 WED - Motivation Mike Wells Style

11 a.m. Local attorney and motivational speaker Mike Wells presents "What Will Rogers Might Tell Us Today!"

### 25 WED - Staying Healthy After Chronic Illness

5:30 p.m. Learn to maintain your energy and protect your health in this experiential workshop with reverend Rosalyn Bruyere, a world famous energy healer. Sponsored by the N.C. Triad Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

### 26 THU - Share Organs, Share Life

2 p.m. Hear from Beth Hinesley of Carolina Donor Services about how lives are improved and saved every day thanks to the process of organ and tissue donation.

### 26 THU - Wrinkles Away

6 p.m. WFUBMC otolaryngologist Dr. Neal Goldman discusses non-surgical facial treatments to enhance appearance.

### 26 THU - Natural Remedies for Children

7:30 p.m. Dr. Danielle Rose, guest pediatrician and student of naturopathic medicine, explains how she incorporates natural therapies such as diet, exercise, deep breathing, and herbs into her practice.

### YMCA Locations



### 16 MON - The Weight Dilemma

11:30 a.m. Dr. Barbara Nicklas of WFUBMC Geriatric Medicine focuses on reasons for and significance of weight changes with aging and misconceptions about weight loss. Held at Davie County Family YMCA, Mocksville.

### 17 TUE - Lettuce Is Not Enough!

6:30 p.m. Get weight loss and wellness tips for improving physical and emotional health from local author Jackie Stanley. Held at Central Family YMCA.

### 24 TUE - Raising Emotionally Healthy Children

6:30 p.m. Terri Merritt, LCSW, discusses childhood development, positive discipline, communication and mental health issues. Held at Stokes Family YMCA, King.

To register for events, receive general health care information, or to schedule a physician appointment, call Health On-Call at 716-2255 or 800-446-2255.

Unless otherwise stated, BestHealth programs are for adults; no children under age 12, please.



Wake Forest University Baptist  
MEDICAL CENTER