



Ken Orth  
and  
Karl Thomas

# Magic Powder, My Thumb!

*He was* working with a Swiss Army pocket knife, brand new and razor sharp. He was attempting to scrape a sticker off of some glass, which in retrospect, may not have been the best of ideas.

When the blade slipped and sliced his thumb, he simply stopped and looked at them... the thumb, the knife... as if they belonged to someone else. As if, somehow, they had betrayed him.

“Darnit... what a dummy,” he said to himself.

He stood there, then, on a sunny downtown street, half in and half out of reality, and watched as the blood slowly formed in what seemed to be an incredibly straight line across the offending digit. It welled up in brilliant technicolor red under the noon day sun.

Scarlet, he supposed, staring at it... this was really what the color “scarlet” was.

It finally broke out of the line across his thumb and started running down to his wrist. It was as if it was in slow motion, slowly streaming, like a trickle of water in the gutter.

When it finally dripped off his wrist and onto the hot, white pavement, it dawned upon his stagnated mental processes that this was, in fact, his very own thumb and his very own blood.

Pain!

Wake up. Spring into action.

The first thing he did was press the forefinger from the same hand as the injured thumb (fortunately, it was his left hand) up against the thumb to momentarily stop the flow of blood.

Now what?

He had his car there, but there were no bandages or first aid kit. Heck, there weren't even any napkins or tissues as he scrounged around the car to see what he did have.

Then his eyes lit upon the powder. The Magic powder. Or, so he had been told it was. He'd been skeptical at the time, when they'd related its magical qualities to him, but not so skeptical that he hadn't taken some of it. And there it was, in a jar, on the passenger seat where he had haphazardly tossed it.

Among many other properties that the powder supposedly had, it was alleged to be anti-bacterial. And he distinctly remembered a comment about its ability to staunch the flow of blood.

Doing as he vaguely recalled being told, he made the powder into a paste, mostly using his own blood, but also using a little saliva, for that was all he had. He plastered the paste onto the wound. He wrapped the whole thing tightly with a strip of brown paper torn from a small paper bag, and cinched it up tight with some scotch tape.

Fully expecting the paper to be saturated with blood and dripping within moments, he jumped into the car and headed for home.

Strangely though, the blood didn't materialize. And the thumb didn't hurt.

Thanking heaven for small favors, he decided to take advantage of this small reprieve... he ended up finishing a few of the errands he'd been running and finally rolled back into his driveway a few hours later.

When he pulled off the makeshift

bandage, he was surprised by both the lack of pain and the lack of blood that he found. Washing it all off, he was again taken aback when the wound didn't reopen under the cold water, as he had anticipated it would. As history said that it would.

It **stayed** closed too, and it looked incredibly benign... more like a mere paper cut, although he knew better than that.

Perhaps, he thought, as he gazed at the puzzling evidence before his eyes, perhaps that powder **IS** magical.

*I had* met up with Karl Thomas, our designated Duke City Fit health guru, for our regular quarterly discussion of homeopathy and herbal remedies. As is my wont, I asked him what bizarre topic he'd come up with to discuss this time.

Clay.

Clay?

Clay!

“*Oh God,*” I thought, “*Here we go again.*”

Last time it was bad breath. This must be some kind of punishment... the universe is getting back at me because I never finished that darn “colonic cleanse” thing.

Clay?

Yeah, but hear me out before you go getting all bent out of shape.

You know, clay has a very long history of being used medicinally. It was found in jars buried with the Aztec mucky-mucks to aid them in the afterlife. It was carried by soldiers in the civil war.

And it was most likely used by your grandmother and probably your mother...

Remember “kaopectate”? That thick stuff you took when you had diarrhea. Well guess what was in that?

Clay.

And if you go to a big, fancy spa and get a big, fancy facial, what do you suppose they’re going to plaster all over your big ugly mug?

Clay.

Look, clay has so many beneficial uses, both internally and externally, that it is hard to list them all. Believe it or not, clay, which comes these days in a powder, may be as close to being a magic powder as we’re likely to find. But it is not magic, really. What it can do and why it does it is based on cold, hard science.

For a background, let’s remember back to all the things we’ve talked about over the years. Many of our body’s woes have their origins, or are at least related to, an environment that is too acidic.

*(Including our breath, I thought.)*

Such environments are great breeding grounds for bacteria. Bad bacteria. And therein lies the problem.

At the other end of the acidic spectrum is the acid antithesis... the alkaline. And that, my dear editor friend, is what clay is all about. It is alkaline. It is HIGHLY alkaline. It is packed with minerals. The clays we use today are mined from ancient dried up sea beds, where the minerals were deposited for centuries uncounted. They have more minerals than you can shake a stick at. The alkaline properties and the minerals can be useful both inside your body and out, for a myriad of purposes.

Let’s start with the external uses.

The clay we’re talking about comes as a powder and is pretty darn cheap. Being a powder makes it ideal to take with you wherever you go. It doesn’t age, evaporate, or go stale. It isn’t affected by heat or cold. It is not a liquid, so you don’t have to worry about carrying it onto a plane. Toss some in a baggy and take it with you wherever... camping, hiking, traveling. Toss some in the glove box.

To use it externally, you simply have to mix it with a little water to make a paste. For some applications, mixing it with some organic apple cider vinegar is advantageous. Sometimes, in a pinch, saliva will do.

First off, the facials that we mentioned are legend for the restorative powers they have for your skin. It’s the minerals

that your skin absorbs. This can be particularly effective for people afflicted with acne.

Similarly, it can be used for rashes and eczema. Treating a rash with steroid cream, as is commonly done now, simply sublimates the rash, pushing it under to spring up elsewhere. Using a clay paste pulls it out, feeds it minerals, and sterilizes it. Let the clay dry and wash it off.

For eczema, there’s nothing like it. Apply the paste, wrap it up, and leave it on overnight. There will be noticeable improvement within 48 hours and it’ll probably be totally gone within 7 to 14 days.

For insect bites and stings, it is the bomb. It relieves the itch and draws out the poison. In this regard, using saliva may actually be a plus, as insect poisons are basically made of proteins, and the saliva contains enzymes. Enzymes break down proteins. Voila.

Keep in mind, too, that clay, being highly alkaline, is also highly anti-bacterial in all of these external uses.

This is of particular value not only in dealing with bites and stings, but also with cuts, scrapes, and burns. Additionally, it can help coagulate the blood and slow down bleeding.

Basically, if it has to do with your skin, clay can help.

As for taking clay internally, it is not as strange (or as strange tasting) as it sounds. It actually doesn’t taste bad... kinda salty. It can be dissolved in a cup of juice, although it won’t stay in solution long before it drops to the bottom, so you’ll want to chug it down post haste.

Alternatively, some people mix it with water and roll it into little balls, then pop the balls like capsules.

The major uses for taking clay internally have to do with digestive and intestinal malfunctions.

A major, and perhaps **the** major reason for carrying some with you when you travel, is for food poisoning. It can be effective, especially, even after acute symptoms have begun to appear. Two or three teaspoons in water or juice, if you can get it down, can do wonders.

Similarly, food infections, like dysentery (Montezuma’s revenge) from bad fruit or water can be taken care of with clay. This is of particular value to people who travel overseas or to Mexico.

(Karl tells of some friends of his who traveled to do missionary work in Guatemala. The wife came down with

severe dysentery. She had it for weeks and couldn’t shake it, no matter the medicines she took. She lost weight and was unable to function. Karl and his wife went to visit them as a sort of spontaneous vacation/mission-of-mercy. They took along some clay powder. To make a long story short, within two days the dysentery had subsided and within a week she was back up and working in the mission.)

Clay is also useful for heartburn and acid reflux. Additionally, believe it or not, it can even relieve constipation. Likewise, it can soothe irritable bowel syndrome. It is, in practice, the “great bowel balancer”. (Is that slogan taken?)

So there you have it. A sampling of the many and varied uses of the lowly powder dredged up from the bottom of an ancient sea. Its portability and ease of use makes it unbeatable as a “carry it with you” multi-purpose health aid. Hikers, athletes, travelers... all should have some with them. It is so inexpensive and so universally effective, that it should be a staple.

**Now,** I’ve worked with Karl long enough to put a great deal of trust into what he tells me. But this story seemed just a little bit too far out there. Clay? I wondered if I could actually make a story out of this.

I skeptically took a jar of the powder with me as I left, tossing it on the passenger seat next to me, knowing that I would have “*some ‘splainin*” to do when my wife finally saw it.

On the way home, I decided to check out some of the Duke City Fit newspaper racks along the way, to see how the supplies of papers were doing. While cruising through the downtown area, I noticed, to my chagrin, that one of our outdoor racks had a sticker of some kind plastered right smack dab in the middle of its glass door.

That did not make me happy.

I stopped alongside it and assessed the vandalized rack. Perhaps, I thought, I could get that sticker off there with a scraper of some kind.

Ah hah... I know just the thing... I pulled out my brand new Swiss Army knife and started right in on the sticker removal process...

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**Get the clay powder at:**

ABQ Health Pantry  
118 San Pasquale SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87104 505-243-0370