

Recipe reminders for stinkweed

By Frances M. Miller
Traditional Healer, NSHC

In a recent edition of *Kaniqsirugut News* (Feb/Mar.



2002) you may have read of cancer-fighting experimental pills derived from the stinkweed plant that might be offered to the public if all goes well

with tests on animals.

People of the Western world are finally recognizing what the Natives in Alaska have known for generations: Stinkweed is one of the best natural medicines you can use to keep healthy.

There are two ways I know of to prepare stinkweed—I will give both of the most common recipes used in this area.

Dried leaves. Pick the leaves when they have turned dark brown or black in the fall of the year. Use a stainless steel or enamel pot and put a good handful of the leaves in the pot. Depending on the amount of leaves, use at least a quart of water and bring to a boil. Boil for 20 minutes and remove from heat. Allow to cool at room temperature. Strain the contents with a clean cloth or strainer and put into clean glass jars and store in a cool place like your refrigerator. Don't make too much at a time; you can always boil more of the dried plant leaves as you need it.

Green leaves. Green stinkweed leaves are very potent when the plants are five to eight inches tall. When the plant is that tall, pick the plant. You may use the stems and

leaves of the plant. Place a small amount of the plant in a stainless steel or enamel pot. Remember that the green plant will be much more potent than the dried plant so you will want to put in less of the green leaves and stems. In a separate pot, bring water to a full boil. Pour the boiled water into the pot with the leaves and cover. Cool at room temperature and pour into clean glass jars and store in a cool place.

These two methods can be used with either dried or green stinkweed leaves and stems. Just remember that the green plant will be more potent when you are ready to use or drink the juice.

When drinking the juice from the dried leaves, drink two to three swallows first thing every morning and the same amount just before bedtime.

When drinking the juice from the green stinkweed, just drink one swallow every morning and the same amount at bedtime. Remember that the green stinkweed will be very potent and you do not want to drink too much of the juice at one time.

With these two recipes you can also gargle the juice for sore throats, pour over wounds or put into a nasal spray bottle and use for a stuffy nose. The juice is excellent for the nasal passages.



Stinkweed grows in sandy places in the mountains and lowlands in the Bering Strait region. It can be gathered in the spring, summer or fall and can be used either green or dried.



Egg-cellent toss!

The egg toss added to the fun at the annual Norton Sound Health Corporation employee picnic July 12 on the hospital grounds.

The story of Eskimo ice cream

By Lee Ann Hoogendorn-Alowa,
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The word "*akutaq*" (phonetic: agoodik) means "the blended one, the mixture." *Akutaq* is also known as "Eskimo ice cream." This is a classic Native delicacy, popular throughout Alaska. The recipe differs greatly depending on the part of the region in which it is made.

The following recipe is from a group of ICWA workers who met in April during the fourth annual ICWA/CINA conference in Nome.

Linda Kakoona, Brevig Mission tribal family coordinator, and Geri Hoogendorn, Diomed tribal family coordinator, demonstrated how to make *akutaq*.

During their demonstration, the ICWA workers had a roundtable discussion on how *akutaq* is made in communities throughout the Bering Strait region.

The ingredients before Western contact often included:

- One or more kinds of berries: salmonberries (*akpiq*), blackberries (*aqlluk*), or blueberries.
- Animal oil (seal, walrus, or whale).
- Dried fat (reindeer, caribou, or moose).
- Fish (trout, salmon, etc.).
- Fish liver.
- Dried salmon eggs.
- Greens.

There was no sugar. In Solomon, some people made it with squirrel liver fat, seal oil and blueberries.

Oil is made from the blubber (fat) next to the skin of a seal, walrus, or whale. The blubber is flushed off the skin, cut into strips and stored in seal pokes, wooden barrels, or other large containers. It is left to render and eventually turns into oil.

The preparation of the reindeer, caribou, or moose fat is to hang dry and freeze. When ready to use the fat, it is grated into small pieces; animal oil is added slowly while beating with the hand. After some seal oil has been used, a little water is added while whipping. More oil and water are added until the mixture turns white and fluffy. At this point, berries and any of the above ingredients are added.

Women traditionally made Eskimo ice cream after the first catch of a polar bear or seal. The woman (grandmother or mother of the hunter) would prepare the *akutaq* and share it with community members during a special occasion such as a potluck.

Ingredients today consist of some of the above, Crisco, sugar, dried fruit (such as apricots or peaches), frozen raspberries or raisins.

How *akutaq* is made has changed throughout Alaska. However, people have lived in this harsh environment for thousands of years, and *akutaq* has remained a much desired, tasty dessert.

Akutaq

What you'll need:

- 1 lb. dried (grated or shredded) reindeer fat
- 1 c. seal oil
- 1 pint salmonberries
- 3 c. blackberries
- 1 c. sugar

What to do:

- Add water to reindeer fat and seal oil till frothy.
- Add berries and sugar.
- Enjoy!

Recipe from Geri Hoogendorn, tribal family coordinator



Future health professionals get job site preview

Bill Norton, outpatient clinic manager at Norton Sound Regional Hospital, speaks to visiting Nome Elementary School kindergarten students May 16. The children got a full tour of the hospital.

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