



Your Health

From Bark to Daffodils: The Next Level©

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Vocabulary & pronunciation study by Catherine Balter Kendall ©

Words are explained alongside the text

Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold*

Welcome back to Your Health, provided by themedicalfrontier.com : Medical news, simplified.

Today's **medications** are filled with **extremely** hard to pronounce names like Rituximab or Methylprednisolone. But how did we **manage to get to** this stage where we **develop** highly advanced medications on a large scale? In the past, you would eat some **chalk** or **rub** Aloe Vera on your skin – how did we get to where we are today?

Of course, medicine began by using nature and the materials we had **available** around us. Over the years we have found ways to increase the effect of these materials by **increasing** their **potency**. Potency in biological terms is a **measurement** used to explain how **effective** a drug can be in the body. A nice way of **explaining** what drug **potency** is, is by using two different drugs as an example. A very potent drug only needs a very small **concentration** in the body to cause the effect. A **poorly** potent drug has to have very high concentrations to **get** the effect you need in the body. Many drug development **companies** have big **issues** with potency as you can only put **so much** into a pill if the drug isn't very potent. Of course you can always have the problem of the drug being too potent, which can cause toxic levels in the blood, and the pharmaceutical company has **to work out** how to put such a small amount into the pill (which can be hard when you're making a pill **formulation**).

So what are some **examples** of drugs that began **naturally** and have since been **developed** into **highly** potent, effective drugs?

One of the most common drugs you have **more than likely**

bark (n.) the exterior part (skin) of a tree trunk

daffodil (n.) a yellow spring flower

to be filled with (exp.) to be full of

to manage to do sth (vb.) to succeed in doing sth.

to get to (phrasal vb.) to arrive at

chalk (n.) soft white rock, pieces used for writing on blackboard

to rub (vb.) to spread over, put on

available (adj.) on hand, easily obtained

potency (n.) strength

poorly (adv.) weakly, not strongly

to get (vb.) to obtain

issue (n.) problem, difficulty

so much (exp.) a limited quantity

to work out (phrasal vb.) to calculate

highly (adv.) very

more than likely (exp.) very probably

heard of is Aspirin. It's very good at **relieving headaches**, reducing fever or **bringing down inflammation**. It may shock you **to find out** that Aspirin originally **started out** as **willow** leaves and tree bark. Today we know how to **synthesize** it artificially and it is one of the most **widely** used drugs in the world.

As we discussed last week, Penicillin is an extremely **important** antibiotic used to kill **harmful** bacteria. Alexander Fleming accidentally **discovered** this when it appeared as a fungus. Since then, we have been able to use what we have learned from Penicillin to create other antibiotics that can kill bacteria like it in the lab.

Finally, who would have thought that the daffodils growing in your garden could be used to treat mental **disorders** like Alzheimer's disease? Or that the highly **addictive** medicines used for pain, like Morphine, came from the poppy flower seed? Did you know that **garlic** is just as good at cleaning your teeth as toothpaste is but we don't use it due to the smell?

Medicine and nature go hand in hand and one could not live without the other.

This week's advice: Try to appreciate the beauty in both nature and medicine.

Thanks again for listening to Your Health on EnglishWaves, provided by The Medical Frontier: Medical news, simplified.

to hear of (phrasal vb.) to be familiar with

to relieve (vb.) to take away pain

headache (n.) pain in the head

to bring down (phrasal vb.) to reduce

to find out (phrasal vb.) to discover

to start out (phrasal vb.) to begin as sth.

willow (n.) a tree with long narrow branches and leaves, which grows near water

widely (adv.) extensively

harmful (adj.) dangerous, damaging

garlic (n.) small white bulb of the onion family used in cooking

The following 3 syllable words have their stress on the middle syllable:

measurement, potency, companies, nat(u)rally, synthesize, finally,

The following 3 syllable words have their stress on the middle syllable:

extremely, develop, increasing, effective, explaining, examples, developed, important, discovered, disorders, addictive

And don't forget that words ending in "tion" always have their main stress on the penultimate syllable: **pronunciation, medications, concentration, formulation, inflammation**