

## **Womb medicine**

### **The forgotten art of yoni steaming for women's health**

#### **The ingredients of a yoni steam**



#### **What goes in a yoni steam ?**

#### **Mother nature's gifts: water, steam, herbs**

#### **..... Positive intentions and paying heed to the mind/body connection**

#### **Water**

Water is sacred, life giving and cleansing. We know it is one of the most essential nutrients required by all living things, the most abundant molecule in the body (which is made up of 70% water) just as the earth is made up of the same and that we can only survive for three days without it. The therapeutic qualities of water have been used to heal and relax the body, and provide pain relief since time memorial. People have soaked in holy rivers, underground caves, natural hot springs and bathhouses since time immemorial. Holy water is a crucial element in healing ceremonies throughout the world to cleanse, purify and bless those who partake. Sanctified water is an integral part of Maya healing as it was and is recognized that blessing the water cleanses and purifies the body energetically and physically. The Maya understanding of disease is not limited to the physical. Like most traditional healing systems they believe that disease stems from the soul creating imbalances in the physical-emotional bodies that affects the *ch'u'lel*, the Maya word for chi or inner vital energy. Spiritual bathing is a potent form of emotional healing like yoni steaming, using only the components of flowers, water, sunshine and prayer.

And where water is there is Ixchel, goddess of women, the moon and medicine. She has been called the heart of water and is connected to bodies of water, lakes, rivers, streams. In her crone phase she is depicted with a clay vessel of water. It is said that when she is in a

good mood, she pours blessings upon the earth, but when vexed she sends forth storms, floods and hurricanes. There are water goddesses associated with fertility and creation stories in every ancient culture, connected with the sea, rivers, sacred springs and water holes.

*”as our bodies are mostly water, we are inexorably bound to the element and molecular changes that occur in it as a response to words, prayer, pollution,*

*Deeds, gratitude and love” dr. Masaru Emoto*

Through Emoto’s work we know that thoughts and emotions affect the molecular structure of water. Water listens. It is receptive to prayer and connects us to all that is. And this means that your thoughts can have a profound implication on your health. Programming the water you use for your yoni steam with loving thoughts and prayers raises the vibrations and will add a whole new dimension to your experience.

### **Steam**

Steam is powerful energy. It has always bubbled up out of hot spots in the earth. Steam generates electricity and can drive a boat across the ocean or a train over a mountain. A bit of science i just read is that when you heat water on the stove, the water molecules start bubbling around, becoming more and more energised until the volume of the steam now becomes greater than the original volume of liquid. We have already seen how powerful water is. Now we can see how extraordinary steam is! I love this.

People have been using steam in the form of steam baths to promote healing for thousands of years. We know that steam opens up the pores of the body and releases toxins from the body. Steam therapy is used for skin conditions, arthritis, and is considered good for your heart and arteries. It makes sense that warm, nurturing steam is perfect for yoni steams and reproductive health.

## Herbs

mother nature's bestows many gifts and one of her most beautiful offerings comes in the guise of flowers and herbs. Nobody would doubt that flowers have healing powers and that even gazing at their beauty brings joy. But now we know that particular flowers possess phytochemicals that have anti inflammatory, anti bacterial and cardiovascular properties that benefit the body. Eg. The sunny golden/orange calendula, a common ingredient in yoni steams contains glycosides that are anti inflammatory, anti viral and anti carcinogenic.

*"it is said there is a herb to cure every ailment."*



When you grow the herbs in your own garden you work in companionship with nature and her nature spirits. They are delighted that you are accessing the healing gifts of mother earth and you will be guided to the plants that have the healing properties your body needs. By tuning into their unique medicine you can drink herbs as teas, take them as tinctures and you can steam with them too. Remember to choose and gather the flowers and herbs for your yoni steam with gratitude and appreciation.

These three elements combined with positive intentions create a powerful healing force that is available for you to soothe and address pain, congestion and imbalance in the reproductive system both on a physical and energetic level. When we address our health concerns by acknowledging that our bodies are fields of vibrating energy, we find therapeutic paths previously unknown to us and our possibilities for healing increase hundred fold. I believe this is the new frontier of medicine for future generations.

Yoni steaming with herbs offers an opportunity to deepen your spiritual practice, cleanse away the old and make space for the new.

*“as heaven’s masterpieces, flowers are divine vessels of healing” Doreen Virtue*

**Crystals: there are several gemstones and crystals** that will enhance the healing effects of your yoni steam even more. These can be added to your herbs once they have been simmered in the pot or rice cooker and you are ready to begin your steam. Popular feminine healing stones include rose quartz, aventurine, moonstone and carnelian.

### **Womb Healing Medicine: forgotten women’s wisdom**

I see a startled, or intrigued expression on many women’s faces the first time i mention yoni (vaginal) steaming. I have found that that look of incredulity is quickly followed by curiosity, a desire to know more and then “how can I get one of those?” I fully understand because it wasn’t too long ago that I had that same expression and feelings. Before i came across the Arvigo techniques of Maya Abdominal Therapy® I hadn’t heard of vaginal steaming either. For that matter I hadn’t heard of womb massage either.

I have long been interested in women’s health, being a woman, mother, yoga teacher and midwife. Since I own hundreds of textbooks and books on women’s health, it puzzled me that I had never heard of such practices. The medicine women, healers and shamans of many cultures have always used their knowledge of herbs to help women heal their bodies. There was no other way. Women’s lore was handed down from mother to daughter, from medicine woman to apprentice. At some point in history were these teachings concealed from view? History tells us that the Spaniards burnt the books of traditional Mayan medicine techniques. Is this one of the reasons why this powerful medicine has not been available to women. Women’s traditional medicine and knowledge have not been taken seriously and are discounted as “old wives tales” even though we know that some of those old wives were wise women and that their tales offer proven merits for modern day

problems. Now these old ways are being revealed to the western world for greater holistic healing, just when we need them the most. We can also surmise that grass root medicine such as yoni steaming does not make money for big corporations. There is not much money to be made from flowers, herbs and crockpots. Whatever the reasons for its submergence, now is the time when women are embracing this practice again with open arms and open hearts.

Yoni steaming received prominent attention in the media two years ago when Gwyneth Paltrow espoused the benefits of ‘the v steam’ on her lifestyle blog. She claimed it was an energetic release and that it helped balance female hormones. This caused an outcry among medical doctors who countered that there was no scientific evidence supporting its merits.

It is true that the benefit of vaginal steaming does not have the back up of scientific or medical research. But by the same token there is no scientific research to say it doesn’t work. Anecdotal evidence is growing like wild flowers and I know that this medicine will eventually gain mainstream recognition as women discover its healing benefits and health doctors observe its potent effects.

**Herstory of yoni steaming:** despite it’s relatively new emergence in the west, it appears that women have known about using heat, steam and herbs for vaginal health since antiquity. Vaginal steam bathing is an ancient healing practice that has been used for thousands of years to promote healing, balance and wellbeing to the reproductive organs.

The Mayan people called them *bajos*, a Spanish word that translates as a vagina steam bath. Dr. Rosita Arvigo, the founder of the Arvigo techniques of Maya abdominal therapy® spent decades studying the technique with Mayan women who use this natural remedy for any aspect of uterine pathology. Vaginal steaming is as popular in Mayan culture as drinking herbal tea is in western culture. When a woman complained of any menstrual

issue, she would be asked have you done your steam bath? Like we would say have you drunk enough water?

Traditional Korean healers also used this method and called it “*chai-yok*”. They understood that v steaming increased blood circulation and relaxed the pelvic floor muscles. In Chinese medicine it is used to relieve stagnation in the body and in far eastern medicine to increase blood circulation and to relax the pelvic floor muscles.

In ancient Greece, it was called ‘vaginal fumigation’. Women heated a jar full of herbs and other carefully chosen ingredients and placed them into a hole dug in the ground. The top of the jar was firmly sealed, except for a protruding reed that was inserted into the woman’s vagina as she squatted over the hole. In this manner, the fumes from the jar were delivered internally.

In africa, the old women would dig holes in the dirt, place bark and native herbs in the hole and set fire to them to create smoke for the women to crouch over. These practices were done with great ceremony before marriage, after childbirth and also for medicinal uses.

In Indonesia, ‘vaginal fogging’ is an old Javanese custom whereby women were pampered in a secret location in a ceremony to beautify themselves prior to getting married. In a special ritual, a concoction of fragrant herbs including betel leaf was dissolved in hot water to emit a beautiful fragrant aroma. This mixture was used to steam and enhance a woman’s yoni before the marriage night.

It also appears that vaginal steaming was evident in other parts of Asia, Europe and Africa. In ancient Egypt, women used the fragrant resins of frankincense, and myrrh to cleanse their wombs, by sitting on a low stool and allowing the scented resins to rise from below.

In Surinam, women utilized steam between menstrual cycles, after childbirth, abortions and miscarriages. These are the very same conditions that women experience in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And yoni steaming is once again providing healing medicine and relief.

Here in Australia, little is revealed about traditional aboriginal women's business but it seems that smoking and steaming were used as supportive rituals for childbirth. Women would squat over hot coals in a hole that was lined with acacia leaves and sandalwood chips, while water was splashed over the coals to produce steam. After the birth a woman would be helped to stand over a fire made at the base of an iron wood tree, while water was thrown onto the fire to encourage smoke to enter her uterus. Women also squatted over a trough of burning acacia to dry the vaginal lochia. Other types of eucalyptus were used for smoking to prevent pain and bleeding after birth.

Reference: traditional aboriginal birthing practices, past and present, Helen Callaghan, (2001)

I acknowledge and honour the wisdom and knowledge of indigenous people around the world. This version of ancient yoni steam practice around the world is not referenced and may come across as hearsay. Hopefully this will change as our knowledge bank grows.



modalities. This approach honours the body's innate wisdom to heal itself and as such, empowers participants with knowledge and tools that they can integrate into their daily life. Self-care training is an introductory workshop of the arvigo® program; upon completion of this training, participants will be able to practice the abdominal massage on themselves only. This workshop is the prerequisite for the Arvigo® institute's professional training, which educates licensed practitioners on how to perform this technique on others. For details about self care teachers and courses in your country look up [www.arvigotherapy.com](http://www.arvigotherapy.com)



### **Disclaimer**

In this e book I make many claims that I can't back up via scientific sources and plausible research citations. The information contained in these pages is for educational purposes only and is not intended to provide medical advice. The material is not intended to treat, diagnose, or cure any ailment or meant to replace the need for qualified health care professionals. Do your own research and find a health provider in your area so you can ask any questions you have regarding a medical condition.

To read the complete e-book, please subscribe to our Newsletter at [www.heartandsoulofwellness.com.au](http://www.heartandsoulofwellness.com.au) or email [salimcintyre@hotmail.com](mailto:salimcintyre@hotmail.com) or phone Sali on 0417 439 394.