

The History of Essiac

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The story of Essiac began in 1922. A head nurse at the Sisters of Providence Hospital in Haileybury, Ontario, Canada, discovered the remedy. Her name was Rene Caisse. What follows was her struggle to get her discovery into the hands of those she felt could benefit from this special tea.

In 1922, Rene Caisse came to have an elderly woman as her patient. The exam revealed that the woman had a scarred breast; Rene had inquired about it. The elderly woman had discovered a mass on her breast 20 years earlier. She was camping at the time and told an old Ojibwa Indian medicine man about the mass. He said he could heal her, but the woman and her husband were skeptical, believing Indian medicine had no medicinal value. They went to a doctor in Toronto and were told the mass was cancerous. The treatment for cancer at that time was breast removal, and a very painful form of chemotherapy. The woman remembered that the Indian's eyes held certainty and kindness. The couple went back to him. He gave her a pleasant tasting tea, and

instructed her to drink the tea two times each day until her body was back in harmony. She was also instructed how to make the tea herself.

When Rene came to meet the woman, her breast was not cancerous; it was only scarred. Rene asked for the recipe, writing it down. At the time, the medical community would not believe in the treatment; Rene had wanted the recipe in the event she would ever develop cancer.

Two years later, Rene's aunt developed terminal stomach and liver cancer. Rene went to her aunt's physician, Dr. Fischer, with the recipe. Realizing his patient was at the end stage, the doctor allowed Rene to give her aunt the tea. After two months of daily treatment, her aunt's condition began to improve. Her aunt went on to live another 20 years. The physician and Rene were impressed. They decided to try the herbal tea on other patients with terminal cancer. These patients also showed dramatic improvement. The word of the new tea's healing abilities spread.

For two years, Dr. Fischer and Rene studied the herbal tea. Believing that any treatment was more effective if injected, Rene and Dr. Fischer worked with laboratory rats to test the hypothesis. Upon discovery that several of the components were unable to be injected safely, they decided that the best results would be obtained if part of the remedy was given orally, and the other part was injected. It was also at

that time that the remedy was given its name: ESSIAC, named so by spelling its discoverer's name backwards.

Dr. Fischer began telling other physicians about Rene's successes with Essiac. Physicians began to send their end-stage cancer patients to her, and saw miraculous results. In time, Rene quit her job as a nurse to open her own clinic. Soon, more than 30 people per day came to the clinic.

She charged no fee for service, but was able to live on donations from satisfied patients. The Minister of Health and College of Physicians allowed Rene to treat people with Essiac as long as she charged no fee, and obtained from the person a written diagnosis of cancer from their doctor. News of Rene's success spread. In 1932, a Canadian paper published an article about Rene's success. Her recognition brought more people to Rene's door. In 1933, the Deputy Minister of Hospitals for Ontario and the town council of Bracebridge aided Rene in opening her own cancer clinic.

Several years later, her supporters petitioned for Essiac to become supported by the Department of Health and Welfare. The Minister of Health was Dr. J. A. Faulkner. He conferred with a very prestigious physician at the time, Sir Frederick Banting, MD. Dr. Banting made an offer to Rene to come to the Banting Institute and research her tea on

laboratory animals. Once the institute would deem Essiac safe, it would be legitimized as a cancer treatment.

Rene declined the offer, feeling that people would die if she weren't available to help them.

The United States heard about Rene's success. Northwestern University asked her to treat 30 volunteer patients with various stages of cancer so five physicians could see the results of Essiac. The physicians were astounded, and made Rene an offer to head a cancer clinic in Chicago. She refused, because she would not neglect her patients in Canada.

In 1938, a greater movement was made by Rene's followers to legitimize Rene's cancer remedy, to allow her to treat people before the end-stage of cancer. A new Minister of Health was now in office. He proposed a bill to find the truth to Essiac. If the Minister's bill was voted in, Rene would be fined if she used Essiac, plus she would have to give up the tea's formula.

The Minister's bill was debated. Although Rene had much support, the Minister's bill was easily voted in. Rene was forced to close her clinic. The public was outraged, writing numerous letters to the Minister of Health and the Premiere. Incredible pressure from the public caused the

Premiere and the Minister to allow Rene to re-open her clinic and not conform to the new law.

In late 1938, six physicians with high qualification dealing with cancer came to investigate Essiac. These six physicians formed a new Royal Cancer Commission. They performed numerous studies on their own, interviewed many patients. In the end, a year later, they concluded that Essiac had no value, and that Rene had to turn over the formula or face prosecution under the Minister's law.

Despite the ruling of the Cancer Commission, Rene kept her clinic open, but her patient had a difficult time obtaining from their physicians a written diagnosis of cancer. In 1942, Rene closed her clinic. However, she did not disclose her formula. She moved away. On occasion, she treated people, but not to the scale she had before.

In February, 1959, a man named Roland Davidson, who had been cured by Essiac, traveled to New York in an effort to find a publisher who would publish Rene's story about Essiac. Roland brought with him 30 years of letters, documents, testimonials, and newspaper articles. Roland took the materials to a highly skeptical Daigh, who discovered there could be a story in the material. He took it to his editor, Douglas Kennedy, who became impressed. Daigh and his friend Paul Murphy of the Science Research Institute of New York, went to Bracebridge to talk with Rene and

several doctors. Upon realizing Essiac was worth investigating, Daigh asked Rene if she would study Essiac at Bruschi Medical Center under the direction of Dr. Charles Bruschi, one of the most respected doctors in the United States at the time. She could use humans for testing, and she could keep rights to the formula. And, if testing was successful, Essiac would be made available to the public.

Rene worked with Dr. Bruschi and Dr. Charles McClure, Director of Research. After three months of testing, the doctors were very impressed. Through extensive experimentation, they discovered that by adding more herbs, Essiac became more effective, and also discovered that with these new herbs, the entire formula could be given orally.

Both Rene and Dr. Bruschi became co-owners of the Essiac formula. After the AMA (American Medical Association) began to oppose their work, Rene moved back to Bracebridge in Canada.

In 1977, with Rene age 89, a Canadian magazine ran an extensive history about Rene and Essiac, outlining Rene's lifelong struggle to legalize Essiac as a cancer treatment. Rene was swamped with letters, interviews, and crowds. A man named David Fingard, Vice President of Resperin, a pharmaceutical company, proposed to Dr. Bruschi and Rene that if Resperin was given the formula, the company would open five cancer clinics in Canada, and give Essiac free to terminal cancer patients,

once Essiac was legalized. On October 26, 1977, the contract was signed.

Many delays occurred during the testing. Rene became angry, feeling she would've helped more people without Resperin.

On December 26, 1978, Rene died from complication arising after hip surgery. Hundreds of mourners attended her funeral. To many, she had saved their lives; they were eternally grateful. But, Rene's dream to get Essiac available to everyone had not become a reality before her death.

In 1989, the Department of Health and Welfare canceled Resperin's experimentation on Essiac because of Resperin's lack of ability to test Essiac properly, thus causing inaccurate results. Patients who had been receiving Essiac were furious. The Department of Health and Welfare allowed these patients to obtain Essiac through the Emergency Drug Release Act, if their physicians would recommend Essiac. The Act allowed non-approved medications to be dispensed to terminally ill patients.

The Department of Health and Welfare set out to determine if Essiac had merit. After testing, a statement was made to the public stating that testing on Essiac was canceled because of the 87 cancer

patients tested, 78 showed no benefit. Reports of the experiment and findings were vague. However, it was not shown to be harmful, so it was allowed to be available through the Emergency Drug Release Act.

With Resperin's loss of the testing of Essiac, they closed their doors. But, Dr. Bruschi in the United States continued to use Essiac in the treatment of his patients, with impressive results. In 1984, he even used Essiac to cure his own bowel cancer.

In 1984, Dr. Bruschi received a call from a Canadian radio talk show host, Elaine. She had started a new program called "Stayin' Alive" in which she interviewed people about traditional and non-traditional forms of medicine. She researched Rene and Essiac. Convincing Dr. Bruschi to be interviewed on her show, Elaine asked him if Essiac cured cancer. Dr. Bruschi said yes. The audience's response was phenomenal.

Over the next two years, Dr. Bruschi and Elaine held seven more interviews. Each time, people would get more information. Elaine received hundreds of letters requesting information on how to get Essiac. People even began to camp out on her doorstep in an effort to obtain information.

Elaine said those years were the saddest, the most angering. She wondered how modern medicine could deny cancer patients a potential cure. Elaine realized she had to do something. She conferred with Dr.

Brusch about trying an alternative to get Essiac to the people. Instead of trying to get it legalized as a medical treatment for cancer, she proposed to make Essiac available through health food stores, as an herbal tea that purified the body. Essiac's name would need to be changed, because it was widely associated with a cancer treatment. Dr. Brusch asked Elaine to become his partner.

The new partners searched until the middle of 1992 to find a manufacturing company to accomplish distribution on the scale Elaine and Dr. Brusch envisioned. The company would also need commitment and understanding about the harmony and essence of Essiac. Flora Manufacturing and Distribution, Ltd. was chosen.

The history of Flora inspired Dr. Brusch and Elaine: in 1913, Dr. Otto Griether became gravely ill. He was told he would need a leg amputation, but may not survive the procedure due to his illness. He was paralyzed from the waist down. On the day before his surgery was scheduled, a nurse told him that he was merely toxic, and that an herbal enema would help him. Figuring he had nothing to lose, he agreed. Immediately he began to feel better. His surgery was postponed. Within six months of enema treatments, he regained the use of his legs and returned to his old lifestyle. Soon after, Dr. Griether became very ill again. After another regimen of enemas, he became healthy, gave up his

traditional practice, and devoted his life to studying and pursuing natural medicine.

In 1919, he formed a company called Salus Haus (Health House) to sell quality natural herbal remedies. Included in his shop was a natural detoxifying tea. His business flourished. His three sons each directed three companies that manufacture and distribute natural remedies. One of the companies is Flora, headed by Thomas Griether.

Thomas Griether studied Essiac and found the same surprising results. The name agreed upon became Flor-Essence. Soon, Elaine was able to tell her callers to go to their local health food store and ask for it. The new name was Flor-Essence.

The initial dream of Rene Caisse had finally become a reality.

A summarization from: The Essiac Report: Canada's Remarkable Unknown Cancer Remedy (1993), by Richard Thomas.

Disclaimer: The information provided by Dr. Ronda is for educational purposes only. It is important that you not make health decisions or stop any medication without first consulting your personal physician or health care provider.



Dr. Ronda Behnke is a distinguished practitioner of **Classical Homeopathy and Natural Healing methods**. Amongst her clients, she is known for her exceptional insight and non-judgmental presence. You can contact Dr. Ronda via the website www.HomeopathicCentersofAmerica.org or by calling 920-558-9806. "When it's time to heal, call me...I will listen to you." For a FREE guide to help you along your healing path, visit the HCA website as noted above.

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