

Traditional Medicine and Healing Practices of Nasinu Villagers in Vanua Levu, Fiji

Summary:

While living in the village of Nasinu for three weeks, I conducted interviews with seven women and one man on either their own healing abilities or their use of traditional Fijian medicine. One third of the village was said to have some type of healing ability including specialization in the throat, broken bones, red or irritated eyes, wind sickness, and boils.



Healer of wind sickness in Nasinu Village

Healing Origins:

Each of these healers were born with the ability to heal and can inherit these abilities from both their mother and their father. Most healers begin learning and practicing their method of healing in grade school or around age 9-10, while some begin even younger. Healing is done in combination with the use of traditional medicines like coconut oil and various types of plant life to aide in the healing process. Most healing procedures are done by simply massaging the area that “sick” with the hands in a soothing motion. Healing is the main source of healthcare in the village and proved to be extremely successful with a recorded success rate of 100%.



Plant used for curing an upset stomach

Plant Usage:

Traditional Fijian medicine is a combination of healing practices as well as the use of indigenous plant life to aide with ailments including infertility, boils, high blood pressure, stomach aches and the like. Plants are used by individuals in the community for healing that does not include inborn abilities represented by the traditional healers. Using local vegetation, the people of Nasinu are able to utilize their environment as a means of supplementing hospitalization.