

Healthy Americans

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Our ancestors from Europe came to America to settle and become self-sufficient. In general, they were not prospectors, traders, or conquistadores, but farmers, builders, and craftsmen. They came for freedom and to live by their own efforts and skills. At first many died from disease from harsh conditions and a lack of food and medicine. Once established they became self-sufficient for food but still reliant on Europe for medicine. Some settlers, however, were never reliant on European medicine because they were knowledgeable in herbs and sought for native medicinal plants to assure their freedom. They observed the native inhabitants and their natural lifestyles including their use of native medicinal plants.

In 1633 AD, William Wood writes about 'the Indians':

on page 74 in New England's Prospects, quote "I have been in many places, Yet did I never see one that was born...a monster, or any that sickness had deformed, or casualty made decrepit, free of such health wasting diseases as fevers, pleurisies, agues, obstructions, consumptions, convulsions, dropsies, gout, stones, tooth-aches, pox, measles or the like." (New England's Prospects pg. 74)

He goes on to describe their physical traits:

"straight bodies, strongly composed...broad shoulders...small waisted, lank bellied, well thighed."

The Dutch observed in 1624 "it is somewhat strange that among these most barbarous people, there are few or none cross-eyed, blind, crippled, lame, hunch-backed or limping men; all are well fashioned people, strong and sound of body, well fed, without blemish."

These Native Americans lived outdoors, ate fresh meat, plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds and drank pure water from springs. They were cleaner with their saunas and stream baths, than the settlers who seldom bathed. It is no wonder they were healthier than their jelly and bakery eating counterparts.

Thankfully our ancestors humbled themselves, learning from these "uncivilized inhabitants" and included many local plants like golden seal, echinacea and ginseng for their healing, and medical independence. I hope you all have an enjoyable 4th of July!

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