

Q. Can Gin-Soaked Raisins Really Help Arthritis?

From [Carol & Richard Eustice](#),

Your Guide to [Arthritis](#).

It may sound silly the first time you hear it. Eating gin-soaked raisins for arthritis is often touted by its faithful as a natural "cure" or an effective folk remedy for arthritis pain. But, can gin-soaked raisins really help arthritis?

A. Gin-Soaked Raisins for Arthritis: What is it?

The consumption of homemade gin-soaked raisins has become a popular folk remedy for arthritis, destined to take its place among other unproven arthritis folk remedies such as [copper bracelets](#), [bee stings](#), [certo fruit pectin](#) and [magnets](#). When most hear of this practice, their response tends to be something like "are you serious?". Some are serious and swear that the gin and raisins remedy helps relieve their arthritis pain.

Gin-Soaked Raisins for Arthritis: What is the Recipe?

Although there are several versions and variations of the gin-soaked raisin remedy, the general recipe seems to go something like this:

- take a box of golden raisins. (note: they must be the golden variety, sometimes called white raisins, not ordinary black raisins).
- place the raisins in a shallow container.
- cover the raisins with gin.
- let the raisins soak in the gin for a few weeks until the gin evaporates.
- you then eat nine of these drunken raisins a day to help your arthritis. (note: nine a day is the number you see most often, but you'll find many variations of the number).

Gin-Soaked Raisins for Arthritis: What is the Background?

Where and when did this remedy start? Since this is a folk remedy, it's hard to say just when and where it got its start. Purportedly the remedy got its first real boost in the 1990's when radio icon Paul Harvey mentioned the remedy during one of his popular broadcasts.

Gin-Soaked Raisins for Arthritis: Does it really work?

To date, there have been **no** placebo-controlled double-blind studies to prove the efficacy of the remedy. However, many "theories" do exist as to why this remedy might have some value.

- **Some think it's the sulfur or sulphides used in the process of making the "white" or golden raisins.** However, according to the Raisin Administrative Committee, "In much of the world, including the USA, the golden raisin is also referred to as a "bleached raisin." This is an incorrect term, as the dark raisin is not bleached. Rather, the enzymatic browning that normally

occurs in a fresh grape is slowed down by treatment of sulfur dioxide gas. The raisin is preserved in a glimmering golden color. In the USA we call this a "golden" raisin."

- **Some think it's the raisins.** As stated in the [Green Pharmacy Herbal Handbook on Mother Nature.com](#), "If you benefit from gin-steeped raisins, the raisins probably do you more good than the gin. Grapes and raisins contain many pain relieving, anti-arthritic and anti-inflammatory chemicals."
- **Some think it's the placebo effect.** It is known that when people believe strongly in a treatment their endorphins and natural pain mediators are enhanced. Also, arthritis characteristically has periods of flares and remissions. You may attribute feeling better to the gin and raisins when it's truly due to a remission.

Gin-Soaked Raisins for Arthritis: The Bottom Line

Never begin any new treatment without first consulting your doctor. If you are considering this remedy, you should discuss it with your doctor. There could be negative interactions with your current treatment. As a guideline, when home remedies are considered, they should be "in addition to" rather than "instead of" current medical treatment.
