

Raices en Medicina

Guillermo Saldana

University of Houston–Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine



A farm egg, aromatic herbs, and a sacred candle cleanse were my treatment that day—a practice in traditional Mexican medicine. Earlier, I was supposed to take my uncle some bean tacos for "strength" and a soda for "hydration" on my grandfather's donkey. On the way, the donkey was startled by a tarantula, and I fell to the ground. I had no injuries beyond a strained neck and nausea. Upon my return, my grandmother made me lie down on the patio, placed multiple candles around me, and rubbed my body with the egg and some herbs. I was to be cured of *susto* (fear). The egg was to absorb all the negative emotions, and the herbs were to rub evil spirits away, curing my nausea. My grandma also told me my neck pain was from *aire* (air) entering my tissues, and she prescribed me a warm shower and Mexican pomade. Within a couple of days, I felt better, but I was left with questions. How did "air" find its way inside my neck? How did this egg cure my nausea? This sparked my curiosity about the ability to heal.

Over a decade later I am grateful for my *gente*, my heritage, and the donkey who lit the fire inside of me to pursue medicine. There is no me without them, and no them without me; there is only us. *Vamos con todo menos con miedo.*