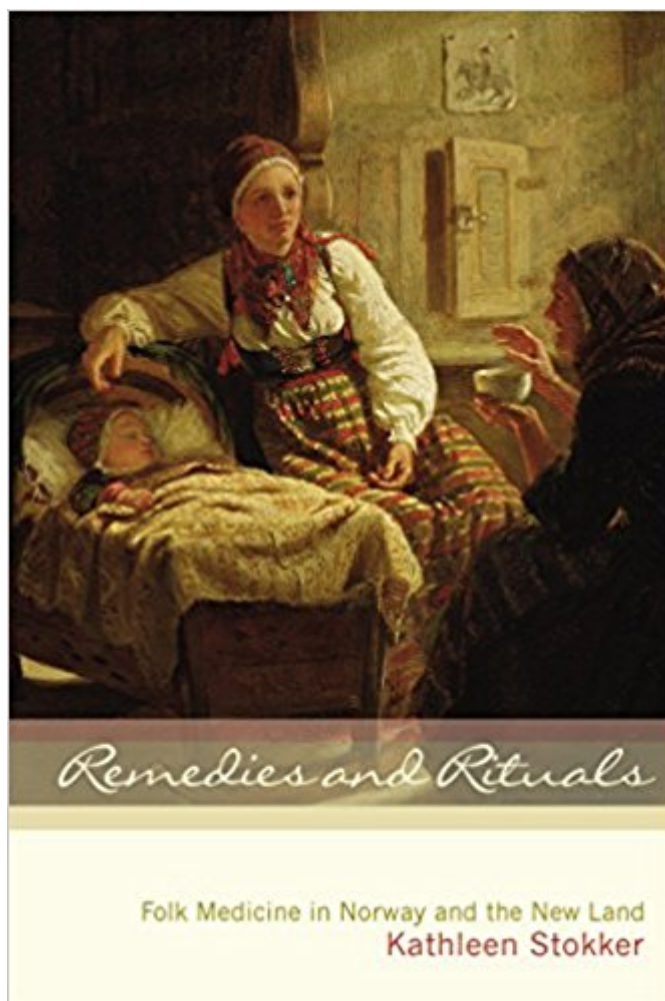


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# Remedies And Rituals: Folk Medicine In Norway And The New Land



## Synopsis

To cure a fever that begins with chills, write the following on a piece of bread and give it to the patient for eight days, one piece each day, and on the ninth day, burn the last piece: Colameris x, Colameri x, Colamer x, Colame x, Colam x, Cola x, Col x, Co x, and C x. To prevent the huldrefolk from stealing your healthy child and leaving a child with rickets in its place, make three dolls from the child's clothing to put into the cradle. The huldrefolk will take one of them instead of your child. These and many more fascinating folk-healing rituals were secretly administered by healers, "witches," and religious caregivers who tended the medical and spiritual needs of rural Norwegians for hundreds of years. In *Remedies and Rituals*, Kathleen Stokker culls from hundreds of original documents and first-hand accounts to detail the ingredients, customs, and histories behind natural remedies, potions, whispered spells, and the infamous "black books" used for centuries by Norway's folk healers. Stokker also illuminates the surprising personalities of those who risked imprisonment and persecution to help fellow Norwegians throughout the nineteenth century, as well as the often reluctant healers in the U.S. who continued to treat immigrants living in rural communities beyond the reach of doctors. Dodging harsh criminal laws championed by formally trained doctors, these rebel practitioners drew on ancient written and oral sources to treat everything from burns, broken bones, and whooping cough to difficult labors and emotional stress.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Until I found this book, I hadn't known of anything in English on this particular topic. As a matter of fact, I am also writing a book on Norwegian healing traditions, and am working from many of the

sources that Kathleen Stokker used. Been working on it for some 15 years now, and focusing primarily on techniques and herbalism. If you are interested in folk and magic medicine in Scandinavia (or northern Europe in general), this book is definitely a "must buy"! It is well written, very well researched, and has an excellent bibliography and index. Stokker presents a vivid picture of the Old Country's traditions being transplanted to the USA. She also points out the wide variations in the medical worldviews of the "kondisjonerte" (the elite) versus the "almuen" (peasantry). The former tended toward "laerd medisn" (academic/schooled medicine) versus "trolldomsmedisin" (magic medicine). It is interesting that echoes of the latter may still be found; when I was a grad student at the University of Oslo in the mid-'60s, I went into a small convenience store near Akershus Castle, and asked for a kilo of good lard and a skein of grey yarn which was spun from the wool of a black sheep and a white sheep carded together (used for "maaling", "measuring"). The old woman behind the counter got very excited and asked if I was going to set up practice; their Wise Woman had died and they had nobody. I wonder how much of the traditional folk and magic medicine survives now, some 50 years later, in this age of Twitter and the Internet. It's books like Stokker's "Recipes and Rituals" which help to preserve the lore of our ancestors. I am very much looking forward to more from her!

I like the way the author dealt with communities both in Norway and in the United States. I asked my mother what, if any, remedies she remembered from her childhood, and Cod Liver Oil was the first thing that came to her mind. That fit right in with the relevant section of the book.

A very informative read of the teachings and use of traditional herbal remedies at a time when doctors were mostly unheard of and families relied on a relative midwife for their experience and knowledge which had been passed down over the generations. This is a great book for unlocking the secrets of great health, IMHO.

I read this book for background information on medical practices in 17th century Norway. Although it mostly relates practices from the 19th and early 20th century, many were ancient so I believe I got what I needed.

Book was basically like brand new without having to buy it at brand new prices. The price was right too.

A great read, Wonderful description of Flk remedies way back in Nordic times. Thank you, well written, Phil

I am a Norwegian so am reading out of curiosity so far so good

This book is a fascinating, well written book not only about Norwegian folk medicine but also about Norwegian culture. If you've ever wondered what made your Norwegian ancestors tick, this is the book to read. This is one of the best books about Norwegians I have ever read. A thoroughly enjoyable read.

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