

FARMER SUDI TELLS JANE WREFORD HOW AMAZING PILLS CURE ILLNESS

# Pensioner saved from deadly bug by turning to plan bee

**A** PENSIONER believes natural remedies produced by a Sheppey bee farmer succeeded where doctors failed, curing him of the deadly hospital bug MRSA.

Reg Morris, 84, went into hospital two years ago with a perforated duodenal ulcer. Doctors feared he would not recover from the operation and when he caught MRSA a few days later, the outlook was very bleak.

But Mr Morris, of Rainham, began to respond to the antibiotics and made a full recovery.

He and his wife Lilian, 87, believe a bee by-product called propolis had built up Reg's immune system so he was able to fight the superbug.

Lilian, a retired nurse, said: "Reg had been taking propolis for three or four years beforehand, to ease the aches and pains he was having. It isn't a painkiller, but it builds up resistance to problems.

"Medway Maritime Hospital was

very dirty at that time and it was awful having Reg in there. I had to show the cleaners how to clean. I really and truly believe that propolis saved my husband's life."

Propolis is an antiseptic substance produced by bees to keep their hives clean and has been treated as a waste product by most keepers.

In 1973, Sheppey bee enthusiast Bill Flynn decided to see if propolis could help his daughter's painful hip problem and had the tacky brown substance refined into capsules by a

laboratory in Denmark. Following an article in the national press, Bill and his wife Iris suddenly started receiving sackloads of mail from arthritis sufferers all over the world. They decided to come out of retirement and set up a mail order business, Flynn's Bee Farms, sending propolis capsules as far afield as Japan and Zambia.

Over the years, thousands of letters have revealed that propolis appears to help relieve many conditions, from asthma to irritable bowel syndrome.



From hive to homes: Managing director Sudi Austin with a lump of raw propolis and the finished product. 3396279405Flynn/s

The late couple's granddaughter Sudi Austin, who has been in charge since Iris died last year, keeps them in photo albums. She still receives letters and replies to them all.

Propolis has not been researched by the Government and officially made into a medicine, so it is classed as a food. This means Sudi, 36, cannot make any medical claims.

She said: "I'm just a bee farmer. But even though I have all this anecdotal evidence, I can't publish the comments. I have to sustain my business through word of mouth."

Some other countries have not only researched the substance, but are using it as a medicine. Information from the International Bee Research Association shows that before 1999 researchers found propolis could actively help antibiotics to work correctly. They also found propolis could help combat certain bacteria including staphylococcus aureus, the drug-resistant strain of which is known as MRSA.

The future of propolis production could also be at risk because the native European bee, *apis mellifera*, is threatened with extinction. Sudi is angry because other countries receive funding from their governments to protect their native bees.

Sheppey MP Derek Wyatt has been invited to the farm at Brambledown on November 4, to see the breeding programme run by the Bee Breeding Group. Sudi allows the group to use her land free.

She said: "I want Mr Wyatt to ask questions in Parliament about why we are not receiving the funding. People are not aware of the environmental importance of bees, or that they can provide medicine."