**Should the Amazon Tribes use the natural medicines they find in the Rainforest?**

For thousands of years, shamans (the medicine experts in the Amazon tribes) have passed on information about the healing properties of the rainforest’s plants from one generation to the next. All of the world’s cultures use plants and other growing things as medicines, for example: aspirin, to cure headaches, came from willow bark, codeine in cough syrup was found first in the opium poppy and penicillin was first extracted from bread mould. As forest peoples come into increasing contact with the outside world, however, they are being exposed to modern medicines. This has caused them to question their own medicines in the rainforest. In this text I shall discuss whether they should use the medicines they find in the rainforest or not.

Firstly, some people argue that the synthetic, man-made compounds found in modern medicines are based on what has been found in plants. Therefore, the plants are a suitable treatment for different diseases and illnesses. More importantly, the shaman has thousands of years of experience of plants, whereas modern medicine can be developed over months. This wealth of experience can be benefited from by the people, which is a good thing for them if they become unwell.

On the other hand, it is important to note that modern medicines are kept completely sterile, whereas the forest medicines are out in the open. This means that people could touch them with dirty hands, or animals could brush against them or even urinate on them. Evidence suggests that this leads to further disease, which will not help the patient.

To sum up, modern medicines come from plants, so why not use the plants. However, plants are not necessarily clean, which could make someone more ill. After examining the different points of view, I have concluded that it would be better for the Amazon people to use the modern medicines that we have developed.