

Transcript for Maggot Medicine

A maggot is the soft-bodied, worm-like larva of a fly that lays its eggs in living or decaying tissues, like this deceased crocodile, for instance.

You may not think of maggots as being especially, well, friendly. You've probably never heard of anyone having a, a pet maggot, for instance. That's because maggots are just a transitional life stage for flies. They were eggs, now they're maggots, soon they'll be in the pupa stage and then adult flies.

So why would the word 'friendly' even be used in a story about maggots? Maggot medicine!

Western hospitals like this one in Wichita, Kansas, are turning back to a wound-cleaning remedy that's as old as the Civil War.

If there's a wound that won't heal, sterilised, starving maggots are placed inside it to eat the infected tissue. That's the beauty of using maggots: they only eat the rotting tissue. They leave behind everything healthy that surrounds it.

After two days, the maggots are removed. Their work is more clean and complete than a surgeon with a scalpel.

Maggots: some people see them as slimy, disgusting, repellent. And some day they just might save your life.