

JIM C – HEALTH TERMS

MONDAY - 08/10/2009

HOW DID THE TERM “*PENICILLIN* ORIGINATE?

Definition: An antibiotic belonging to a group originally derived from mold of the genus *Penicillium*, now produced synthetically. It kills bacteria by interfering with the ability to synthesize cell wall.

Online Etymology: 1929, coined by Scottish scientist and Nobel laureate Alexander Fleming (1881-1955), who first recognized its antibiotic properties, from Modern Latin *Penicillium notatum* (1867), the name of the mould from which it was first obtained, from Latin *penicillus* "paintbrush" - the shape of the mould cells.

- 1939 - Dr. Howard Florey and three colleagues at Oxford University demonstrated penicillin's ability to kill bacteria.
- 1942 - The first patient was treated for streptococcal septicemia with U.S.-made penicillin produced by Merck & Co.
- Early 1940s - Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin determined the structural layouts of atoms and molecular shape of penicillin
- WWII – Research in 1943 allowed the United States to produce 2.3 million doses in time for the invasion of Normandy in 1944.
- May 25, 1948 - Andrew J Moyer was granted a patent for a method of the mass production of penicillin.

C W: Penicillin ($C_{16}H_{18}N_2O_4S$) = The first miracle drug

M of Z: Don't Stop - Take all of your antibiotic prescription