



# MEANING OF O-DAY'MIN

Strawberry is O-day'min in the Anishinaabe language. Before Edmonton became a large city, it was a gathering place for many Indigenous nations, and June was the harvesting month to prepare for the ceremonies where it would be time to let go of any pain, hurt, grief and self-righteousness. This became a time to forgive the unforgivable as a way of moving forward to the next year. The berries are offered in ceremony to begin our healing journey.

This name symbolizes the heart of Edmonton, Amiskwaciwâskahikan. The stem of the heart would represent the North Saskatchewan River and the vessels are all of the waterways, while the veins make up the blood, which are the people. The roots (the veins) explain the different cultures that make up the city population. Part of Canada's Truth & Reconciliation is validating our Indigenous cultural knowledge, but also respecting the contributions from other cultures that make up our society.

The O-day/min/strawberry is a medicine and helps us understand the deep connection within ourselves. When we speak of ourselves, we speak of our mind, our body, our spirit, and our emotions.

Creating accountable and sustainable environments where cultures can thrive together to preserve their roots and continue to grow resembles a teaching of the O-day'min and its origin. The O-day'min represents the functions of how our communities grow together. Just like the heart is a main muscle and requires the veins and the valves and all other parts in order to work properly, the O-day'min strawberry is created in the same way.

The O-day'min reminds us women that, during our berry fast, or when we take care of others, it teaches us about creation, community and love.

This year was time for us to reflect on our beliefs and Mother Earth, which is a part of the environment. We can notice the changes which help us to understand how Earth is healing itself. The O-day'min reminds us to love and it's an active experience, one that involves commitment, compassion and caring.

Some of the health benefits of the strawberry: the O-day'min medicine is used to treat digestive disorders, skin problems and to strengthen the uterus during and after pregnancy. The fruit and leaves are an excellent source of vitamin C.

Written by Elder Theresa Strawberry and Elder's Helper Arlene Twin

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Elder Theresa Strawberry was instrumental in renaming City of Edmonton Ward O-day'min.

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## Other O-day'min name explanation links:

City of Edmonton description and video - [O-day'min Ward: The Strawberry or Heart-berry Oh-DAY-min](#)

CBC video - [What's my ward - Elder Theresa Strawberry and daughter, Bernadine Coleman](#)

City of Edmonton - [edmonton.ca/indigenous-ward-naming](http://edmonton.ca/indigenous-ward-naming)

City of Edmonton O-day'min [Video](#)

