

ἀκοστός

For ἀκος n. 'cure', ἀκεστός 'curable' GEW 1.56 remarks „Eine überzeugende Etymologie von ἀ. fehlt.“ I have claimed (*Evidence for Laryngeals*, ed. W. Winter, 1965, 224—5) that Old Irish (*h*)icc and Welsh *iach*, from apparent **i*:kk- and **i*ɔkk-, can be explained as two variant syllabifications of **iHkk*. With the gemination of the consonantism and such an unusual sequenae it is difficult to suggest uniquely just how this occurred. Of course, **iɛkk*- = *ieH_ɛkk*- is also possible for (*h*)icc.

The negative (ἀ)νήκεστος 'incurable', however, sheds considerable light on our problem. We must have here νη- < η_H-, and this certifies for us the initial **H*=ə. The Greek form appears to have lost trace of the original **i*. When we recall that initial yod might here give rough beathinig, and that *H* seems also to have given rough breathing in combinaton with sonants under some circumstances, it seems plausible that the loss of **i*- here may represent a kind of dissimilation in prehistoric Greek. If that is so, we gain valaable evidence for the fate of initial yod and laryngeal in Greek, and no argument from psilosis is necessary.¹ The stem would then have been **iHkes*- < *(i)əkes-.

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¹ Chantraine *DELG* 49-50 has an excellent account of the internal history of the word, but his conclusion brings us no further than Frisk; the compounds in ἀφ- and ἐφ- require no additional explanation under the present argument.