

### What "Sinew" is?

Wax coated thread is often used to building Qajaq frames. People calls it "Sinew". Actually, we are using



"Artificial Sinew", which is beeswax or wax coated nylon thread.

What the real (natural) Sinew is?

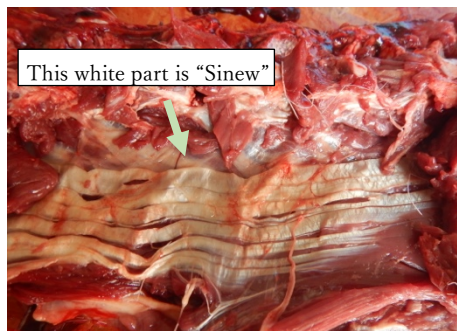
It made from the animal sinew or tendon around muscle.

Natural sinew is a strong and useful for sewing thread. For example, if used in the seams of waterproof sealskin boots (They call them "kamik"), sinew will expand when it gets wet and to fill the seam holes to prevent water go through (We will feature about "waterproof stitch" later, don't miss it).

About 20 years ago in Alaska, old mother said to her son, "When you catch a beluga, I want sinew, so you got a keep it" When her son caught beluga, he cut out the long sinew around the beluga's spine and he delivered to his mother. But now she already in heaven, I don't know how she take care that sinew at that time.

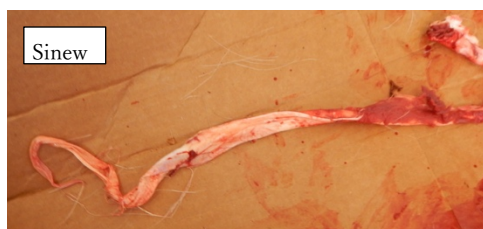
Time has passed, a few years ago. I had to cut a caribou alone. That was a small caribou, already took guts out, it might be easy job, so I was thinking to take the sinew out while I was work on it.

Took the skin off and took the front and back legs off. The back leg has a thick, milky white Achilles tendon. I didn't know it was good material for sinew at that time, but now I know this is also a very good material for sinew. If I get a chance to cut caribou next time, I'll keep around Achilles tendon for sinew.



The rib cage was removed, I could see the long tendons along the spine. This is the "sinew".

Cut this sinew out and scrape off the flesh. And stick this wet sinew on a piece of cardboard for let it dry for



a few days. The source of the sinew is done. After got

dry, tear the sinew, make it into fibers. Twisted a few fibers together with your fingers to make a fine thread.



If you find pictures of Barrow Alaska that they are sewing umiaq (whaling boat covered with bearded seal skin), you could see the braid sinew for sewing umiaq skin.

Of course, you can also get sinew



from cow, deer or other animals, so if you are interested and have a chance, you should try it!

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