



MYRRH

Latin Name: *Commiphora myrrha*, *C. molmol*

Other Names: Gum Tree, Karan, Harabol Myrrh

Family: Burseraceae

Parts Used: gum, resin

Aroma: balsamic, earthy, rich, resinous, slightly camphoraceous,

Organ/System Affiliation: circulatory system, respiratory system, nervous system

Physiological Effects: alterative, analgesic, antibacterial, anti-depressive, anti-fungal, anti-infectious, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, anti-parasitic, antiseptic, antiviral, astringent, calmative, carminative, diaphoretic, diuretic, expectorant, stimulant, stomachic, vulnerary



MYRRH IS THE aromatic resin exuded from the trunks and branches of a few tree species native to North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, parts of India, and the Middle East. Myrrh trees have long thorns on their branches and tend to grow in dry, rocky regions.

These spiny trees can reach between 9 and 15 feet in height. To harvest

Myrrh, incisions are made with a blade on the tree's surface, causing

its sap to exude from the trunk. The highly aromatic sap is dried and collected for sale on the world market.

HISTORIES AND STORIES OF MYRRH

Myrrh has a very rich, ancient history. Its name is rooted in the Arabic/Hebrew word for bitter. It has been used as incense and medicine for over 5,000 years in many ancient cultures.

Like Frankincense, Myrrh was an extremely popular sacramental incense resin used in many religious and spiritual practices. It is mentioned throughout the Bible (156 times), the Torah, and many other ancient texts, and was an ingredient in the Ketoret incense. It is even said to have been one of the original aromatic herbs that Adam harvested from the Garden of Eden (along with Frankincense).

Myrrh is most well-known for its appearance in the story of the Wise Men and young Jesus. Frankincense, Myrrh, and gold were the kingly gifts given by the Magi for practical, spiritual, and symbolic purposes. The ancient Egyptians revered Myrrh for its ability to help one connect to the divine through its smoke, and placed it in many different temple incense blends, including the popular Kyphi mixture. They also widely used it in

perfumery as well as the embalming process, and burned it to honor their dead. In the Catholic church, Myrrh combined with Frankincense is still burned in different rites and ceremonies all over the world.

The Myrrh and Frankincense trade contributed to the wealth of many Arabian traders of antiquity as the resins were once worth their weight in gold. Hundreds of tons of these resins were exported from southern Arabian regions by camel caravans every year to supply spiritual and religious demand throughout the Mediterranean, North Africa, and Middle East.

Over the centuries, the popularity and exotic aromas started drifting north to Europe, and eastward to India, China, and other parts of Asia. The effects from burning Myrrh during ceremony or prayer are grounding and centering, and it is often used to clear and calm the mind, and create inner stillness and tranquility of the spirit.

Myrrh has been widely used in Traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurveda, Western herbalism, Egyptian, Greek, and many other medical systems for a variety of illnesses and ailments for ages. It



can also be found in many ancient esoteric and mystical writings that attempt to unravel its many symbolic and spiritual virtues. Myrrh is used in ancient Alchemical traditions for many different physiological and philosophical medicine preparations aimed at healing the emotions, mind, and soul, as well as for aiding one's spiritual evolution.

Myrrh has long been associated with the Moon and the astrological sign of Cancer, and has long been considered a feminine or Yin tree. It has an affinity to the Water Element and has a regulating effect on all of the waters of the body; from the mouth, to digestion, and to women's menses. In the same way, it also has the ability to regulate the flow of stagnant or built-up emotions; particularly Yin emotions; helping people release healthy tears.

Myrrh is also known to be the counterpart to Frankincense, which is an herb of the Sun and considered to be a masculine plant. In their native Somalian lands, Myrrh trees can almost always be found growing near Frankincense trees. Dan Reigler states that Myrrh resin is traditionally collected by the women of African tribes, while Frankincense is harvested by the men. Ancient stories tell of the beautiful partnership of these two trees. They are even known to strengthen each other's medicinal and aromatic properties when paired together in an internal formula or incense.

MEDICINAL USES

Myrrh has been used in traditional medicine for thousands of years for its antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, and anti-fungal properties. In Medieval times, it was burned around the sick to fight plagues and other airborne illnesses. Its smoke has been used to



combat various skin disorders and infections, and it is also used internally for a wide range of ailments pertaining to the waters, or fluids, of the body. It is known to clear stagnation of the blood, increase menstrual flow, and is often used as a digestive aid in particular cases.

In ancient times, Myrrh became a popular ingredient in salves, ointments, and skin cremes throughout the Mediterranean. It is traditionally used for arthritic pain, sore joints, healing wounds, boils, bruises, and abrasions, and is even known to heal staph and other infections. As an incense or chest rub, it is also used to combat respiratory infections. Myrrh is also widely used in the treatment of mouth, gum, and throat infections, and nearly all complaints of the mouth. Today it can be found in many oral care products and toothpastes. It helps to combat cavities,

gingivitis, toothache, mouth and tooth infections.

In Traditional Chinese medicine, the warming and drying effects of Myrrh are used to treat coldness, stiffness, congestion, and dampness in the body. It is said to have a positive healing effect on the heart, liver, and spleen meridians. Traditional Chinese physicians and herbalists use Myrrh to treat arthritis, rheumatism, circulatory problems, uterine imbalances, and much more.

In Ayurvedic medicine, Myrrh is known for its effect on the nervous system and its regulation of blood circulation. Burned as incense, it has a strong effect on the respiratory system as an expectorant and is indicated for laryngitis, bronchitis, colds, coughs, asthma, and sore throat. Ancient Myrrh formulas have been traditionally used to alleviate loss

and sorrow, work through grief, and reduce emotional pain. Myrrh also has a strong effect on the nervous system. Burning it as incense can help instill a feeling of inner peace and calm. It is used for anxiety, overthinking, worry, and is considered a very grounding remedy.

MAGICAL AND METAPHYSICAL USES

Myrrh is a very esoteric and magical herb said to bridge heaven and Earth. It is also said to harmonize the crown and root chakras. It assists in expanding and understanding the greater

mysteries of the Universe and has the potential to open one up further to the divine.

CAUTIONS

Myrrh should be used in smaller doses during pregnancy, though it is regarded as safe during breastfeeding. Myrrh is a very potent medicine. It should be diluted in water if taken internally. Some people experience allergic reactions to Myrrh. If red rashes appear after topical application, stop use immediately.



If you enjoyed this plant monograph and would like 19 more on plants like Frankincense, Balm of Gilead, Palo Santo, Juniper, Patchouli, Agarwood, and Copal, I invite you to pick up a copy of my new ebook, *Materia Aromatica*. In this unique book is over a decade of my personal experience with plant medicine, aromatherapy, and incense, my deep study of incense traditions and medical systems around the world, work with incense masters from different cultures, and being founder of one of America's most loved incense companies, Higher Mind Incense.

This is the first professional reference of its kind written in English that speaks to the many ancient medical systems and spiritual practices that utilize tree resins and herbs around the world as incense for countless purposes. Within the 100 pages of this guidebook lies powerful insights and precious traditional knowledge for using incense for your own benefit or the benefit of others, whether you use incense in a spiritual or meditation practice, in your aromatherapy or healing practice, or you simply love enjoying incense, or even make your own.

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