

## FRANKINCENSE -----DRAFT

- Date:** March 5, 2004
- Class:** Plant
- Proper Name:** *Boswellia sacra* Flueck. (Burseraceae) (USDA 2004)
- Common Name:** Frankincense, bible frankincense, incense, olibanum (McGuffin et al. 2000)
- Source:** Gum resin from the bark (Leung and Foster 1996)
- Route of Administration:** Oral or topical (Lu 1999).
- Dosage Form:** Those suited to the allowable route(s) of administration.
- Use or Purpose:** Statement to the effect of:
- Oral:
- ▶ Traditionally used as an astringent (Williamson 2002; Li 1973).
  - ▶ Traditionally used as a diuretic (Williamson 2002; Leung and Foster 1996; Li 1973).
  - ▶ Traditionally used to relieve nervous problems (Williamson 2002; Leung and Foster 1996).
  - ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to promote circulation of qi (Long 1998; Bensky and Gamble 1986).
  - ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to relieve urinary disorders (Williamson 2002; Bown 1995).
  - ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to dispel wind-dampness (Long 1998; Bensky and Gamble 1986).
- Topical:
- ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to promote healing of carbuncles (Bensky and Gamble 1986; Li 1973).
  - ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to promote tissue regeneration (Long 1998; Bensky and Gamble 1986).

- ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to promote healing of injuries (Bown 1995; Bensky and Gamble 1986).
- ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to relieve gum, mouth and throat complaints (Bown 1995; Bensky and Gamble 1986).
- ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to relieve pain (Long 1998; Bensky and Gamble 1986).
- ▶ Traditionally applied to treat ringworm (Williamson 2002; Kapoor 2001).
- ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to promote healing of sores (Bensky and Gamble 1986; Li 1973).
- ▶ Traditionally used in TCM to reduce swelling (Long 1998; Bensky and Gamble 1986).

**Dose:**

Oral and topical:

- ▶ Gum resin: 3-8 g/day (Lu 1999; Bensky and Gamble 1986)

*Note:* Traditional literature suggests frying the resin prior to consumption (Lu 1999; Bensky and Gamble 1986)

**Duration of use:** For prolonged use, consult a health care provider.

**Risk information:** Statement to the effect of:

Cautions/Warnings: No reports known.

Contraindications: Do not use if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

**Non-medicinal ingredients:** Must be chosen from the List of Acceptable Non-medicinal ingredients and must meet the limitations outlined in the list.

**Specifications:** Must comply with the minimum specifications outlined in the Compendium.

**References**

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Bown D. Encyclopedia of Herbs and Their Uses. New York (NY): Dorling Kindersley Limited; 1995.

Gruenwald J, Brendler T, Jaenicke C. PDR for Herbal Medicines. Montvale (NJ): Medical Economics Company Inc.; 1998.

Kapoor LD. Handbook of Ayurvedic Medicinal Plants. New York (NY): CRC Press; 2001.

Leung AY, Foster S. Encyclopedia of Common Natural Ingredients used in Food, Drugs and Cosmetics- 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Toronto (ON): John Wiley and Sons Inc.; 1996.

Li SC. Chinese Medicinal Herbs. San Francisco (CA): Georgetown Press; 1973.

Long Z. The Chinese Materia Medica. Xue Yuan (China): Academy Press; 1998.

Lu H. A Comprehensive Textbook of Chinese Herbology. Vancouver (BC): Academy of Oriental Heritage; 1999.

McGuffin M, Kartesz JT, Leung AY, Tucker AO. The American Herbal Products Association's Herbs of Commerce, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Silver Spring (MD): American Herbal Products Association; 2000.

USDA, ARS, National Genetic Resources Program. Germoplasm Resources Information Network - (GRIN). *Boswellia sacra* [Internet] - [cited 2004 Mar 1]. Available from: [http://www.ars-grin.gov/cgi-bin/npgs/html/tax\\_search.pl](http://www.ars-grin.gov/cgi-bin/npgs/html/tax_search.pl).

Williamson EM, editor. Major Herbs of Ayurveda. London (UK): Elsevier Science Limited; 2002.