

Health Benefits of Propolis

What is Propolis? It is a natural antibiotic that is fast gaining in popularity in the application of home remedies! Some trees and conifers produce sticky resins as part of their immune system to defend themselves against disease. Honey bees collect these substances that ooze from the buds of these plants. After chewing them and mixing them with their saliva and other substances, Propolis is formed. This nutrient-rich substance is of vital importance for the survival of the honey bees in the beehive. It is created to sterilize the hive and to protect it against outside intruders and infection. Not only does it protect them against diseases, it also helps fight against climatic changes, such as wind and cold. It is also used to seal cracks in the hive, and for this reason is also known as 'bee glue'. Propolis contains approximately 50-70% resins, 30% wax, 10% etheric oils and 5% pollen. It is especially rich in amino acids, important for immune system function. It has a high vitamin content (Vitamin A (carotene), Vitamin B1, B2, B3, biotin) and is extremely rich in bioflavonoids (Vitamin P) which are believed to have numerous immune building properties and health benefits. Bioflavonoids are the natural pigments in fruits and vegetables and are found in abundance in oranges. This bee glue contains almost 500 times more bioflavonoids than is found in oranges! It also contains an array of albumin, calcium, magnesium, potassium and phosphorus. Like Royal Jelly and Bee Pollen, it contains a number of unidentified compounds which work together synergistically to create a balanced, nutritive substance. Propolis can be purchased completely raw and unprocessed, but in its natural state is a sticky substance and is very difficult to handle. Some beekeepers will package the raw propolis and freeze it in small portions. It can then be added to a coffee grinder in its frozen state and ground for easy consumption. Most producers utilize a process where the active ingredients are 'leached' into water or alcohol, then either packaged in liquid form or dried and capsulated. Because of its antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects, this precious substance has been used as a healing agent for many centuries. It has the ability to provide protection against infectious invaders, promote healing and regeneration of tissue, and provides a superior source of energy and stamina. It has been used as ointments for healing cuts and wounds and shown to have outstanding value for a wide variety of illnesses. It is also used as a natural alternative to penicillin and other antibiotics. It is said to be particularly safe and effective and inhibits the resistance-building effect that is a negative factor with prescription antibiotics. Do you know that now even toothpastes contain natural ingredients related to honey bees. Propolis has become a healthy alternative to synthetic brands of toothpastes as it is especially useful in mouth and gum disorders. Our mouth is one of the most sensitive spots of our body. This is the place where the synesthesia of senses starts and the food we visualize develops its full smell and taste. The mouth is the starting point of the food digestion. A healthy mouth cavity is certainly one of the elements contributing to the appetite and good mood in general. If the mouth develops sore spots, thrush or gum disease, it causes the whole system to disrupt, resulting in pain and tormenting feeling. Published clinical research demonstrates that propolis fights bacteria, prevents tooth decay, enhances oral hygiene, heals bleeding gums, and prevents gums receding. Manufacturers of Propolis toothpastes and mouth sprays claim that their products leave teeth clean, gums feeling healthy, taste great without artificial ingredients, and produce no negative side effects. The salesperson at a honey shop which I often frequent explained that propolis toothpaste are very suitable for young children's use as even if it's accidentally swallowed, it's extremely safe. Such products are easily applied, and have increasingly become part of the everyday dental hygiene of people who are especially interested in natural remedies. My latest discovery while shopping for honey products : propolis extract now even comes in the form of sprays and candies. The spray claims that it is effective against flu, cuts, burns, gum and mouth infections, throat discomforts and intestinal discomfort, while the candy is sold as a good therapeutic substitute to the traditional throat lozenges and an aid to curing flu, colds, throat discomfort, cough and bad breath. Note of Caution: Propolis is generally non-toxic, though allergic reactions such as skin rashes, swelling, redness, eczema or fever have been reported. As the effects of propolis during pregnancy and breast-feeding have not been sufficiently evaluated, women should not use it during these times unless directed to do so by a physician.

About the Author

Lori Lipinski, a certified Nutritional Consultant, offers tips for enhancing digestion and getting the most out of what you eat.

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