

SHILAJIT (“destroyer of weakness”)

Parts commonly used: Exudate

Properties/energetics: Rejuvenative, aphrodisiac, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antiaging/Cold; bitter.

Systems predominantly affected: □ Genitourinary, digestive, hormonal, blood, musculoskeletal, skin.

Uses: Shilajit is an exotic rejuvenative tonic that has a botanical ancestry reaching back many thousands, possibly millions, of years. This mysterious exudate of primeval humus, harvested from cliffside cracks in the Himalayans, is a key component (though relatively unknown in the West) in Ayurvedic health practices. When a troublesome health condition does not respond adequately to other means, Asian physicians introduced Shilajit with confidence. What is even more exciting, is its rejuvenative effect, which increases the core energy responsible for sexual power and health. It contains fulvic and humic acids and benzopyrones, which are nature’s most active antioxidants and free radical scavengers. It is a powerful anti-inflammatory agent, it clarifies thought and improves memory and the ability to handle stress, it has been long used to regulate blood sugar levels and prevent diabetes, and it lowers serum cholesterol, triglycerides, and phospholipids. In addition, it gives sustained improvement in vitality, particularly sex drive and performance. It’s known as the Indian viagra, as it improves the function of the entire genitourinary system, including the prostate. Furthermore, it supplies high-quality bioavailable trace minerals, iron, and calcium, which help prevent anemia and osteoporosis, and it accelerates the recovery process resulting from illness, injury or strenuous exercise. Including Shilajit in any formula amplifies the benefits of other herbs by enhancing their bioavailability and transporting their nutrients deep into tissues.

Combinations: Balancing anabolic and catabolic activities in the body is the key to Shilajit’s notable rejuvenating qualities. For some individuals, the catabolic energy contributes to detoxifying effects that may be more or less acute depending on one’s constitutional nature and lifestyle. To help harmonize this action, add Ashwagandha to ameliorate the overall cleansing by enhancing the recovery process. (Ashwagandha is an adaptogenic herb that stabilizes the body in conditions of stress and therein supports the general strengthening activity of Shilajit.)

This combination is appropriate for long-term use, to which other constitutionally appropriate herbs can be added for specific toning and therapeutic actions.

Affects on specific body types: In Ayurvedic science, Shilajit is considered a rejuvenative substance recommended for use by all constitutional types.

Precautions: Do not take during pregnancy. In some individuals, Shilajit can instigate a mild cleansing crisis. See Combinations section above.

Preparations/dosage: Shilajit is a form of mineral pitch that exudes from cracks in cliffsides high in the Himalayan Mountains of Nepal and India. This exudate is composed of plant and other organic materials that have undergone a long-term process of humification and subsequent compression by layers of rock. This all came about millions of years ago as the lush gardens of a once-fertile valley became trapped and preserved in rock and soil by the movement of the continents that caused the valley to ultimately transform into the highest mountain range in the world. Today, monsoon rains and extreme freeze and thaw conditions crack these large rock formations, and, during hot weather, the pristine Shilajit is extruded by geothermal pressures in the mountainside. Shilajit is also known as mineral pitch or black asphaltum, and its humus base is a dense, bioactive, mineral-rich mass that consists of an exceptionally high percentage of organic matter made up of a large variety of phytochemicals, antioxidants, nutrients, enzymes, hormones, amino acids, antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals, and various exotica that haven't been identified and named as yet. The exudate is collected in its raw, crude form from cracks high up on Himalayan cliffsides (extreme wildcrafting) and later purified and prepared by washing, grinding, and cooking.

By James Green, Herbalist, copyright 2008

For more information please refer to James Green's book, [The Male Herbal, 2nd Edition](#)