

Yohimbe (*Pausinystalia yohimba*)

Common Name: Yohimbe.

Location: Yohimbe is an evergreen tree native to Cameroon, Congo, and Gabon in central Africa.

Description: Growing to a height of one hundred sixty feet and spanning as much as fifty feet across, it has reddish-brown bark, elliptical leaves, and clusters of small, yellow flowers.

Properties: The bark is the part of yohimbe used in herbal medicine.

Uses: Yohimbe is the original source of the chemical yohimbine, which is used in drugs to treat erectile

dysfunction and are sold under a number of different brand names, including Aphrodyne, Yocon, Yohimex, Yoman, and others. Yohimbine is also found in the South American herb quebracho. Yohimbe is a remedy for erectile dysfunction as well as an aphrodisiac for use by people of both sexes. In traditional African medicine, yohimbe is used both as an aphrodisiac and as a treatment for many skin conditions. Benefits of yohimbe for specific health conditions include the following: impotence and diminished sex drive.

Doses: Yohimbe is best used as a tincture. The physician may recommend a prescription form of the active chemicals in this herb, such as Yohimbex (yohimbine hydrochloride).

Warnings: Avoid “yohimbe” tablets—these often do not contain actual yohimbe. At least one study suggests that yohimbe is more likely to be effective if you are fasting or eating a low-fat diet. Anxiety, dizziness, heart palpitations, and changes in blood pressure are rare side effects, but they can result from even a single dose of either yohimbe or yohimbine. Men receiving medical treatment for anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, migraine, or seizure disorders should consult with their physicians before taking this herb. Because the chemical yohimbine is a possible monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor, you should avoid the following substances when using this herb: foods that contain tyramine (chocolate, most French cheeses, liver, organ meats, red wine), nasal decongestants, and weight-loss aids containing phenylpropanolamine. Also avoid high doses of yohimbe, which can result in priapism, a disorder characterized by painful erections that requires surgery. Yohimbine interacts with an exceptionally large number of over-the-counter health remedies and prescription drugs. It is especially important not to use yohimbe or yohimbine with sildenafil (Viagra), since this herb has the potential to magnify sildenafil’s effects on the heart. Yohimbe, like Viagra, should be avoided by men who use or carry nitroglycerin tablets for angina or chest pain. Relatively small doses of yohimbine (less than 10 milligrams) can induce mania in people who have bipolar depression. A slightly higher dose (15 to 20 milligrams) can provoke severe high blood pressure in people taking an MAO inhibitor for depression. People with a history of psychosis also should avoid yohimbe, as it has been known to trigger new episodes of psychotic reaction. Studies have shown that the alkaloid yohimbine in yohimbe can have a positive effect in people who are taking fluvoxamine (Luvox), an antidepressant. People who do not respond to fluvoxamine alone may try it in combination with yohimbine, which may greatly increase its effectiveness. Yohimbine may cause side effects, so it should be taken with fluvoxamine under medical supervision. The FDA has ruled yohimbine unsafe and ineffective for over-the-counter use, but both yohimbe and yohimbine can be found in health-food stores. Some states, such as Georgia, have banned their sale in nonprescription form. Regardless of where you live, you should take yohimbe only under medical supervision. Dosages that provide more than 40 milligrams a day of yohimbine can cause a severe drop in blood pressure, abdominal pain, fatigue, hallucinations, and paralysis. Forty milligrams is not very far above the typical recommended dose. If you are taking antidepressants, blood-pressure drugs, or central nervous system stimulants, do not use yohimbine.

If people wanted to obtain a legal hyperalert sexually aroused state, they might find some yohimbe (*Corynanthe yohimbe*, *Pausinystalia yohimbe*) and brew it up by simmering a quart of water with 1 gm of ascorbic acid to 5 gm yohimbe until there's only 50% of the original water volume left. Add a lot of sugar afterward. Mixes synergistically with sassafras and Pau d'arco if you're adventurous and would like to cure your ills and get a hard-on at the same time. However, most people who have tried yohimbe have been disappointed. They didn't know you need to brew it 20 to 30 minutes at approx. 200x with an organic acid to release the alkaloid components.

The active alkaloid, yohimbine bitartrate, is the component of the only allopathic medicines known to cause erection in impotent males and approaches the concept of an aphrodisiac. Yohimbine bitartrate particularly affects nerves and changes blood flow regulators in the genital area. The medical texts never mention that it does the same thing to women, showing a typical disregard for female erection.

In the best case scenario this decoction will cause many users to get a melting spinal sensation and extreme epidermal sensitivity with high interpersonal perception and melding. It can be extremely sexually arousing...or at least all the signs and signals are there...

And the worst case scenario for yohimbe? - well, you have to remember ethnographic reports documenting cases of some African tribes drinking it in copious quantities in pre-raid rituals to suppress fear and jack up physical aggressiveness. After getting to the point where they were bouncing up and down so much they looked like a mosh pit full of spears, they'd run 10 miles over to the next village and kill off most of the neighboring tribe, stopping only to rape the dogs, cattle, women, children, surviving males, dead bodies, water jugs and tree holes before running back home. I'm not sure this is something we need downtown on Friday night.

Yohimbe Caution: it will keep both partners up all night. In the male of the species this becomes really inconvenient and irritating as after a few hours an erection becomes more of a liability than an asset - especially as this aspect continues long past the point - as long as 8 hours - where you'd like to go to sleep and there's this turgid log attached to you that won't go away and is just beginning to ache.

Note on the Caution: A warm bath can help with the log-on problem, as can gentle massage. However this should be avoided for at least four hours after ingestion because of the effect of raised body temperature on metabolism of the alkaloid - i.e., heat could intensify the stimulant effects.

Females are not exempt from this - it has the same effect on them, although it is easier to sleep on.

A possible downside of this erectile effect in high doses is the danger of blood vessel damage and gangrene in the penis resulting from the localized

poor circulation condition known as penile erection.

Warning-it shouldn't be taken with MAO

inhibitors or by persons with high blood pressure, diabetes, glaucoma, or a history of mental disturbance, especially including bipolar disorder.

The "approved" alkaloid is yohimbine hydrochloride. Herbal Yohimbe extracts are sold by a number of health food companies including I believe Michaels and Herb Pharm. Yohimbe bark and powder may be available from "...of the Jungle" in Sebastopol CA. Please remember, if you're considering making extracts - Yohimbe is strongly synergized by alcohol. It is also easily extracted in alcohol/water - but the alcohol should be evaporated off after extraction unless you're looking for a real wow-wow effect. There could be high blood pressure complications from ingesting strong concentrations of Yohimbe. Dayton Laboratories sells the prescription preparation Dayto Himbin in tablet and liquid form. The tablets contain about 5.5 mg hydrochloride. The liquid contains phenylalanine as well and should be used with caution. Total daily doses run on average between 20-30 mg of the hydrochloride.

The medical action is to increase penile blood inflow and decrease penile blood outflow. The action is cited as having an erectile function without increase in libido. I have not taken the hydrochloride so don't speak from direct experience.