

Neem - True Botanical Panacea

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Published 2008

For thousands of years humans have sought to fortify their health and cure various ills with herbal remedies. The search for a true panacea, or cure-all, has been undertaken by virtually every civilization. While hundreds of substances have been tried and tested, few have withstood modern scientific scrutiny. Perhaps no other botanical better meets the true definition of a panacea than neem, a tropical evergreen primarily native to India, and an Ayurveda herbal product. The word Ayurveda comes from the Sanskrit words *ayus* (life) and *veda* (science). **Literally translated, Ayurveda is the science of Life.** The mythology of neem underlies the long history of Ayurveda's use of neem against numerous diseases and conditions. Where the modern system of medicine emphasizes fighting pathogens inside the body, the ancient Indian system of Ayurvedic medicine prescribed particular healing herbs that also helped the body develop a strong resistance to disease-causing agents. Neem is considered a major element in preventing and healing diseases among Ayurvedic practitioners.

Every part of this fascinating tree has been used, from ancient to modern times, to treat hundreds of different maladies. While it is still revered in India for its superior healing properties, recent investigation has dramatically increased worldwide interest in neem, and many products are now manufactured using this miraculous herb. More than any other Indian herb, neem proved useful in helping the body resist diseases and restore the proper balance to the body's systems. The large number of conditions and treatments using neem are the result of eons of work by Indian herbalists and healers. They have been supported by modern scientific studies that continue to provide evidence of the effectiveness of neem in **preventing and treating** illness and disease.

Neem was so much a part of Indian life that most people were not even conscious of how many ways it impacted their lives. Long revered for its many healing properties, neem came close to providing a **cradle-to-grave** health care programme, and was a part of almost every aspect of life in many parts of the Indian subcontinent, up to and including the modern era. But it has really only been since the dramatic interest in neem by people of United States and Europe that they have come to realize the value and significance of neem. Although neem is one of the most ancient and most widely used herbs on earth, intense scientific investigations of its properties are only now being undertaken. These studies are quickly verifying the efficacy of its traditional uses as well as finding even more uses for neem. This illustrates again that traditional wisdom can guide the efforts of modern science in discovering remedies for human ailments.

The Wonders of Neem

A key advantage to using neem, as opposed to some medical treatment and other herbs, is its compliance with the first tenet of the Hippocratic Oath taken by all physicians: **"First, cause no harm"**. Over thousands of years, neem has been used by many millions of people, and no hazards have been documented for normal dosages. Neem offers its users the ability to take action against diseases safely. Indian mythology has several stories that relate how neem became a sacred tree blessed with the ability to heal all diseases. The most common story tells of the time Indra, the king of the Celestials, was returning from Heaven with a golden pot filled with Ambrosia he had taken from the Demons. **Some of the precious Ambrosia spilled from the pot and landed on the neem tree, thereby making the neem trees blessed with miraculous healing properties for all eternity.**

While legendary herbs such as ginseng are far better known, comprehensive research has proven that neem has a far wider array of uses than many other herbs. The first recorded use of neem is attributed to ancient Indian culture. They added the plant to dozens of health and beauty aids some 5,000 years ago. The centuries-old healing system known as Ayurvedic medicine has utilized these timeless neem formulations

as mainstays of the Ayurvedic pharmacy. Medicinal attributes of neem were extolled in the oldest Sanskrit writings. Neem has been continuously referred to as the 'village pharmacy' due to its incredible array of healing properties. Its usefulness as a natural **non-toxic** insecticide, among other fascinating properties, further increases its phenomenal applications.

Some Westerners are familiar with neem as a culinary spice, while others have purchased neem-based toothpaste sold in health food stores. Now other products containing neem, such as creams, lotions, tinctures, extracts, shampoo, soaps, oil and capsules, are becoming more common. While Western medical doctors have considered neem to be nothing more than a 'native folklore', many are now giving neem serious consideration as a potent and safe ingredient for use in diverse health treatments. The lack of negative side-effects certainly enhances its appeal to doctors, particularly Naturopathic doctors and other practitioners of natural medicine as well as consumers alike. On-going scientific research is validating what Ayurvedic practitioners have known for millennia; that neem is a dynamic and useful plant that can solve dozens of health problems, while enhancing overall wellbeing.

The bark, seeds, leaves, fruit, extracts and oil of the neem tree contain pharmacological constituents which offer some impressive therapeutic qualities, including the following:

- **Anti-viral:** capable of destroying viruses;
- **Anti-fungal:** able to destroy fungi;
- **Anti-microbial:** able to inhibit or destroy the growth of disease-causing organisms;
- **Anti-bacterial:** able to destroy or inhibit the growth of bacteria;
- **Anti-pyretic:** able to lower body temperature or prevent or alleviate fever;
- **Anti-inflammatory:** able to reduce inflammation;
- **Anti-tumour:** able to reduce the risk of tumour growth;
- **Analgesic:** able to relieve pain;
- **Alterative:** able to cure or restore health;
- **Anti-helmintic:** capable of expelling or destroying parasitic worms;
- **Anti-emetic:** able to prevent or stop nausea or vomiting;
- **Immune system** booster and stimulator.

Therefore, we can see that neem boosts the immune system on all levels while helping the body fight infections. It stimulates the production of T-cells to mount a head-on attack against infections. Unlike synthetic antibiotics, neem does not destroy beneficial bacteria and other micro-organisms needed to maintain optimum health. Some medical experts believe that the overuse of chemical antibiotics is contributing to the breakdown of the human immune function. Neem offers a non-toxic alternative to powerful and sometimes damaging prescription medicines.

Numerous active compounds have been isolated from the neem plant. Some of the most studied include nimbin, azadirachtin, nimbiol, quercetin and nimbidin. Neem leaves contain fibre, carbohydrates and at least ten amino acid proteins. They also contain calcium and other nourishing minerals. Analysis also reveals the presence of carotenoids, nutritive compounds being hailed for their ability to ward off many types of cancer. Neem oil is especially high in important fatty acids, and contains all of these vital nutrients in significant quantities. Researchers believe the high fatty acid content of the oil may be why neem is so effective for treating many skin ailments. Neem has very powerful skin rejuvenating qualities and absorbs quickly into the skin. The uses of neem to cure human ailments, boost immunity and fortify human health are almost endless. Neem is one of the most powerful known blood purifiers and detoxifiers. Hundreds of specific health maladies respond favourably to the proper application of neem. This does not include the countless uses of neem as a natural insect repellent or as a component in beauty aids.

Some of the More Common Current Uses for Neem Products

Skin Conditions:

Neem has a powerful effect on **chronic** skin conditions that often fail to respond to classical treatments. Acne, psoriasis, eczema, itching, rosacea, shingles, ringworm, Athlete's foot, herpes, fungal infections, cold sores, dandruff, dry skin, hemorrhoids, rash, skin ulcers, rheumatism, sprains, pain, warts and wrinkles, are among the conditions that clear up consistently when a high quality **organic toxin-free** neem product is utilized. Synthetic chemicals used to treat these conditions can produce negative side-effects such as rashes, allergic reactions and redness of the skin. Studies are currently underway to try and understand the skin rejuvenating properties of neem. It relieves the itching and pain of psoriasis while reducing the scale and redness of the patchy lesions.

Hair and Nails:

When high quality, wild-crafted neem extract, and in some cases cold pressed neem oil from the kernels of the olive shaped fruit is added to health and beauty preparations, it provides many benefits. Problem scalp conditions, including dandruff and psoriasis, scaling and even hair loss, respond to treatment with neem shampoo, creams, tinctures and capsules. Listless, damaged and overly oily hair appears to 'come alive' when treated regularly with this most amazing plant. Nails, which have turned yellow or brittle due to the presence of yeast or fungi, often return to their normal condition when neem is applied.

Teeth and Gums:

It is estimated that over 90% of the US adult population has some type of gum disease. Infection, tooth decay, bleeding and sore gums have been treated very successfully through the daily application of neem mouth rinse, or neem leaf extract added to water, or the use of neem toothpaste. German and American researchers have proven that neem extract prevent tooth decay and periodontal disease. Some people report a total reversal of gum degeneration and gum bleeding after using neem for only a few weeks or months. In India most people are use the twigs from the branches of the neem tree for healthy looking gums and teeth.

Fungi, Parasites and Viruses:

Neem has been successfully proven under stringent laboratory conditions to destroy harmful fungi, parasites and viruses. Even though its exact action on these 'body predators' is not yet known, it does an excellent job of destroying them. Unlike its chemical counterparts, neem does not kill beneficial intestinal flora nor produce negative side-effects. Athlete's foot, thrush, candida infestations and herpes viruses are easily cleared up and prevented when neem is used. It has been proven successful in treating stomach ulcers. Its antihistamine and antibacterial compounds appear to reduce inflammation and destroy the bacteria now believed responsible for the common ailments.

Major Health Problems

Professionally administered neem solutions are being studied for their beneficial effects on Aids, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and other medical conditions.

Aids: The immune modulating polysaccharide compounds found in neem are being researched as a way to stop this most debilitating illness. The polysaccharides may be responsible for increasing antibody production, while other elements in neem appear to stimulate immune function by enhancing cellular mediated response. This dual action helps the body ward off the numerous infections so commonplace with Aids. Neem leaf extracts, tincture and capsules are typically utilized when treating this condition. The National Institute of Health reports encouraging results from *in-vitro* tests for neem as an antiviral agent against the Aids virus.

Cancer: Neem has been tested on many types of cancers, including skin cancers, using neem-based creams against lymphocytic cancer and neem tincture or capsules internally. The polysaccharides and limonoids have reduced cancerous tumours in a number of scientific studies.

Diabetes: Neem has been found to reduce insulin requirements for diabetics by up to 50% for nonketonic, insulin fast and insulin-sensitive diabetes without altering blood glucose levels. This success has resulted in the Indian government approving the sale of neem capsules and tablets through pharmacies and clinics. These preparations are essentially pure, powdered neem leaves.

Heart Disease: Neem has been scientifically tested for its ability to reduce blood pressure, blood clots, delay the coagulation of blood, heart irregularities (palpitation), and reduce elevated heart rates and high cholesterol levels. The antihistamine effects of nimbidin found in the neem leaves cause blood vessels to dilate and may be why neem helps reduce elevated blood pressure. A recent study showed that neem lowered high cholesterol levels when either neem leaf extract or capsules were taken for a month.

Chronic Fatigue: This is suspected of being caused by both viral and fungal infections. Neem attacks both, and reportedly helps fight this incredibly debilitating syndrome.

Minor Skin Abrasions: Injuries such as sprains and bruises are easily treated with neem cream or leaf extract applied topically. The anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial attributes of neem are delightfully soothing.

Natural, Non-Toxic Insect Repellent: Neem repels all types of annoying pests without being toxic to pets or humans. Studies have shown that one neem compound is a more effective insect repellent than the widely used synthetic chemical known as DEET (N, N,-diethyl-m toluamide), a suspected carcinogen with long periods of use.

Insecticide: Neem extract has been approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency for use on food crops. It is non-toxic to birds, animals, beneficial to insects or man and protects crops from over 200 of the most costly pests.

Sunburns: Prevents sunburns from UV rays.

Herpes: Recent tests in Germany show that neem extracts (cream) are toxic to herpes virus and can aid in the rapid healing of cold sores.

Allergies: Neem has anti-histamine properties that help inhibit allergic reactions when applied externally or consumed as a decoction.

Ulcers: Neem extract gives significant protection from discomfort, and speeds the healing of gastric and duodenal lesions.

Malaria: An active ingredient in neem leaves, called irocin A, is toxic to resistant strains of malaria. *In-vitro* studies show 100% mortality of malaria gametes in 72 hours with a 1:20,000 ratio.

Hepatitis: Tests show neem adversely affects the virus that causes hepatitis B.

External Parasites: Neem quickly kills external parasites, and a neem decoction and neem shampoo is safer and just as effective as standard treatments for head lice and scabies.

Birth Control (Men): In India and United States, trials show neem extract reduced fertility in male monkeys without inhibiting libido or sperm production, making it potentially the first male birth control pill.

Birth Control (Women): Used as a vaginal lubricant or injected into the fallopian tube, neem oil was up to

100% effective in preventing pregnancy.

My Story

My own experience with neem has been nothing short of miraculous. Growing up in Northern Germany 'country style', I quickly developed a love for the bounties of Mother Nature, especially berries, herbs, flowers and vegetables. One of my favourite herbs was the 'stinking rose' garlic, which I considered a wonder herb. And also the pure elderberry juice with honey and lemon, heated up for fever, enhancing the healing power of the body by boosting the immune system. At the young age of 17, I moved away from my family home in a small village to start apprenticeship in sales, marketing and promotions in a big city situated in a heavy industrial area with huge steel mills, mining corporations, etc. Due to the stress of a completely different diet and lifestyle, in an environment of widespread pollution and high level of noise, I soon developed severe psoriasis on my scalp and elbows, at times flaring up to a point when I even had difficulties combing my hair, due to the very thick build-up on my scalp. I received on-going treatments from allopathic doctors in Germany and Canada who did not have a clue as to what the cause of the problem was, and all these treatments cost me a lot of money and were totally unsuccessful.

After **some 40 years** I finally gave up, and was told by the doctors that I had to live with it for the rest of my life! Then, early in 1994, I had the good fortune of tuning into the *CBC* television series '*The Nature of Things*' with Dr David Suzuki, which featured a programme describing the miraculous healing power of the Neem Tree from India. This was the impetus to my healing, as I began with the help of a professional chemist to develop a neem tree cream without harsh chemicals, using neem tree extract from the leaves of the tree. The extract came from a supplier in France, since at that time nobody in North America had any knowledge about the neem tree and, therefore, was unable to supply such an extract! For almost nine weeks my wife massaged the cream onto my scalp, and finally by the tenth week my scalp was totally clear of the skin conditions from which I had suffered for so long! In the meantime I also added cold pressed neem oil, which has different healing properties than the extract from the leaves, to the cream, which further enhanced the efficacy and healing power of the cream. Even the psoriasis on my elbows disappeared within three weeks, and now I only have to use one drop of the neem oil per elbow each week to prevent the recurrence of the psoriasis.

I accepted these results as a miracle, which triggered my passion for Ayurvedic neem-based herbal products, and led to my introducing them, as the first company, in early 1994, to the Canadian market. Our company also added to the herbal neem range developing additional products such as shampoo, soap, tincture and toothpaste. Millions of people worldwide are suffering from acne, eczema, dandruff, psoriasis, rosacea, shingles and other skin diseases where neem could be the answer. It is my passion to share information on the miraculous healing power of the neem tree with everybody, a tree that can solve global problems. To this day I remain free of psoriasis on my scalp and elbows by just using the neem shampoo and oil regularly. This simple treatment is not a cure, but it alleviates the problem to a great extent, as each person is in charge of their own body and health...the natural way. **For every disease we know, Mother Earth provides a herb to grow!**

Of all the plants that have provided proof to us of their healing power throughout the ages, few have offered as much value and versatility as the genuine, unique neem tree from India. This miraculous healing herb is truly ancient and yet effective for a modern world.

Words of Wisdom

'All medicine is in the earth.'

Paracelsus (Austrian Doctor and Philosopher 1493-1541)

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Further Information

Klaus Ferlow has published his book about the Neem tree from India entitled [*Neem: Nature's Healing Gift to Humanity*](#), which is also available to purchase on [Amazon](#). Copyright ©2016. Visit his website for comprehensive information about the Neem Tree www.neemresearch.ca. Watch Klaus on YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTCsaPEtCPg

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