



Pharmacopeia Module 14

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Agarwood (Aquilaria agallocha; Aquilaria sinensis)

Overview:

Agarwood, also known as oud, is a dark resin produced by trees belonging to the Aquilaria species. The resin occurs as an immune response when the tree's heartwood is infested by a mold-like fungus. Agarwood is highly revered in Asian traditional medicine such as Tibetan, Ayurveda and TCM for its numerous potent therapeutic properties, both as an herbal medicine and essential oil. For thousands of years agarwood has been one of the most popular incenses used in religious ceremonies; its use is mentioned in ancient texts and religious documents.

Agarwood is one of, if not the most, expensive raw materials in the world. It takes a minimum of fifty years for a tree to reach the optimum harvesting age, with its peak at eighty. Only seven to nine kilos of essential oil are distilled out of a mature tree. Due to the overharvesting of wild aquilaria, agarwood essential oil has become more and more valuable and adulterated. It is vital to purchase the product from a reliable, traceable source that can guarantee both the qualities of the oil and that it comes from a responsibly harvested and sustainable source.

Therapeutic Actions and Benefits:

Agarwood oil is rich in monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, esthers and other active ingredients. It has tonic, carminative, digestive, diaphoretic, psychoactive, antioxidant, analgesic and aphrodisiac properties. As any other essential oil it also has antibacterial, antiseptic, antifungal and antiviral effects. Agarwood is efficient in the female reproductive system where it has a balancing role, regulating menstruation and normalizing hormones. Its aphrodisiac properties are highly revered and scientifically validated. Agarwood essential oil is also beneficial for the skin due to its potent antioxidant and cell regenerating properties. It soothes muscles and joints and stimulates peripheral circulation. In the nervous system agarwood has a psychoactive yet sedating effect, which is useful in stressful periods.

List Of Specific Therapeutic Actions

Circulatory: enhances peripheral circulation, supports lymphatic drainage, fights edema, treats broken capillaries

Skin: supports skin cell regeneration, has strong antioxidant properties, alleviates eczema, rashes and dermatitis, mild on the skin, highly compatible with all skin types, promotes skin and hair health

Endocrine/Reproductive: has potent aphrodisiac effects, regulates menstruation, soothes menstrual pain, helps in PMS and menopause

Nervous: fights stress and anxiety, reduces nervousness, has psychoactive effects, has soothing and calming properties, supports a positive mood, aids in sleep disorders and insomnia

Energetic: has relaxing properties, soothes emotions and calms nerves, negative and unproductive thinking, supports emotional intelligence, facilitates communication, encourages meditation

Ayurveda:

Agarwood is considered calming, supportive to meditation and balancing to emotions. It is used to alleviate pain, beautify skin, aid digestion and enhance libido.

Traditional Chinese Medicine:

In TCM agarwood is used in cases of qi stagnation, encouraging energy flow. It is used in abdominal distress, kidney problems, and to relax the shen (mind).

Aromatic profile:

Scent: Sweet, woody, slightly floral, musky, animalic

Note: medium

Blends well with: *vetiver, sandalwood, bergamot, rose, jasmine, grapefruit, orange, lemon, mandarin, neroli, ylang ylang*

Safety: Non-toxic, non-irritating

How To Use Agarwood Essential Oil:

Agarwood oil can be applied (pure or diluted) topically, as a compress, in the bath, through direct inhalation, or diffuser.

One drop on a pulse point is sufficient as perfume. Wearing agarwood essential oil as perfume will support a calm state of mind. Agarwood essential oil has a unique, long-lasting scent.

Add 1 drop of agarwood essential oil in face lotion or cream to benefit from its antioxidant, anti-aging and skin regenerating properties.

Add 1-2 drops in ½ oz. carrier oil to make a massage oil with great effects in enhancing peripheral circulation and moisturizing skin. Gently massage on muscles and joints to soothe pain and promote function.

Add a couple of drops in the bathwater for a relaxing, uplifting experience.

Use 1-2 drops in the diffuser or for direct palm inhalation to uplift spirit, fight stress, calm anxiety, enhance romantic moods and support meditation

Agarwood Oil Recipes:

Romantic Perfume:

- 2 drops agarwood
- 2 drops rose
- 2 drops sandalwood

- 2 drops neroli

Apply as perfume to enhance romantic moods.

Meditation blend:

- 2 drops agarwood
- 2 drops palo santo
- 2 drops bergamot

Diffuse the blend neat or dilute in ½ oz. carrier oil and apply in pulse points

Cedarwood (Cedrus)

Overview:

Cedar is a perennial, evergreen, medium to large coniferous tree belonging to the Pinacea family and native to the Mediterranean region and other areas around the world that have similar climate. Cedars are sturdy, resilient trees that live up to 1000-2000 years. Besides being used as construction material and firewood, cedarwood has been utilized as a botanical medicine in various cultures all over the world, since ancient times. In ancient Greece it was used as a food preservative, and in ancient Egypt it was used in the mummification process. Various parts of the cedar were used to prepare cures for various ailments. As a medicinal plant it was considered to be purifying, cleansing, protective and grounding.

Cedarwood essential oil is obtained through wood pulp distillation. The oil has a yellow to amber color and a slightly viscous texture. The essential oil produced out of cedar's woody pulp has a high content in active ingredients that have scientifically proven therapeutic properties. As any conifer, cedarwood has an affinity to the respiratory function and to the musculoskeletal system. Cedarwood is also effective in addressing alopecia, preventing hair loss and promoting a healthy hair.

Therapeutic Actions and Benefits:

Cedarwood is rich in monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, esters, alcohols vitamins and minerals. It has anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, anti-rheumatic, antiseptic, decongestant, expectorant, febrifuge, and stimulant properties. Cedarwood is considered purifying and cleansing, and detoxifying, with affinity to the respiratory system, skin, muscles and joints. It is also effective in the lymphatic and circulatory systems. Cedarwood fights respiratory infections, decongests the sinuses and clears the airways boosting oxygen intake. It is a proven treatment for alopecia and hair loss. Used in aromatherapy, cedarwood oil has a calming, relaxing effect that supports the normal functioning of the nervous system.

List Of Specific Therapeutic Actions

Respiratory: helps in colds and flus, decongest airways, unclogs sinuses, helps in the treatment of respiratory infections

Circulatory: has stimulating properties, stimulates peripheral circulation, promotes cerebral circulation, fights edema

Musculoskeletal: alleviates muscular aches and pains, relieves stiff joints, aids in arthritis and rheumatism, helps in carpal tunnel syndrome and plantar fasciitis

Skin: helps in treating alopecia, balances sebaceous glands activity, aids in seborrhea, promotes a healthy complexion

Nervous: helps in exhaustion, calms nerves, has relaxant properties, relieves stress

Energetic: has cleansing and purifying properties, detoxifies the mind from negative and unproductive thoughts, induces calm mood, clears confusion, encourages focus, boosts mental energy, grounding.

Ayurveda:

In Ayurveda, cedarwood is considered warming, and used to address conditions associated with kapha excess. It is therapeutic for all the tissues, especially muscle, bone, lymph and blood and balances the fluid excess.

Traditional Chinese Medicine:

In TCM, cedarwood is considered tonic and warm, with use in healing the breathing function and congestions associated with muscle and joints, lymph system and nervous system. It is considered a kidney yang tonic and a benefic support for the spleen and pancreas.

Aromatic profile:

Scent: Earthy, woody, slightly camphorous, warm and dry, radiant, balsamic with a sweet, woody dryout

Note: base

Blends well with: jasmine, juniper, lavender, rosemary, cypress, neroli, bergamot, lemon, mandarin, orange

Safety: Non-toxic, might be irritating in pure form

Important Scientific Data

Cedarwood essential oil is rich in active ingredients such as flavonoids as pinene, alcohols and cedrol and other active categories that are responsible for its therapeutic properties.

Several active ingredients in cedarwood essential oil have antibacterial and antifungal properties. In vitro studies showed antibacterial properties even against resilient and recurring pathogens such as C. Albicanis or E. Coli.

Cedarwood essential oil is also an efficient insecticide and insect repellent. Several studies validated cedarwood oil as a biological alternative to the commercial insecticides.

Clinical studies showed that cedarwood essential oil is effective in treating alopecia and hair loss: 44% out of the cedarwood group showed visible effects compared to 15% in the placebo group.

Cedarwood oils has been used in oncology wards during chemotherapy sessions.

How To Use Cedarwood Essential Oil:

Cedarwood oil can be applied topically (always properly diluted) massaged or as a compress, in the bath water, through direct inhalation, or diffuser.

For massage of the muscles and joints and lymphatic drainage cedarwood essential oil must be diluted in a base oil. 1-2% cedarwood oil in a carrier oil can be used for local massage to enhance peripheral circulation and to relieve muscular and joint pain. Cedarwood oil can be also used, 2-3 drops in ½ oz. carrier, to gently massage on the chest during respiratory infections.

To benefit from cedarwood's effects on the hair and skin add 1-2 drops in the hair and skin lotions for daily use. Add several drops to ½ oz. jojoba oil, massaging in to hair and scalp to relieve dry, itching scalp and nourish hair.

Add 1-2 drops of cedarwood essential oil in the bathwater to decongest sinuses and open lungs.

Cedarwood can also be used for inhalations either in a diffuser or a few drops on the palms to clear the sinuses, support the breathing function and induce relaxation.

Cedarwood Oil Recipes:

Soothing massage blend:

- 2 drops cedarwood
- 4 drops helichrysum
- 2 drops alpine fir
- 4 drops German chamomile
- 2 drops rosemary

Dilute the blend in 1oz. carrier oil (jojoba) and massage locally as many times as necessary

Hair and scalp formula:

- 4 drops cedar
- 8 drops rosemary verbenone oil
- 2 drops lemongrass
- 2 drops peppermint
- 4 drops lavender

Dilute the blend in 1oz. argan oil. Massage a few drops into scalp a few times a week to treat dandruff and stimulate hair growth.

Cistus, Rock Rose (Cistus ladaniferus)

Overview:

Cistus is an herbaceous, flowering shrub belonging to the Cistaceae family and native to the Mediterranean region and other areas with similar soil and temperatures. Cistus is also referred to as rock rose, most likely due to its preference for rocky soils in warm, continental regions. Cistus ladaniferus, one of the cistus species, sets itself apart by producing a brownish resin, known as labdanum. Labdanum resin was highly revered as a therapeutic since ancient times. It was used to address various ailments, especially respiratory and musculoskeletal, but also for menstrual pain. Currently, labdanum is extensively used in perfumery and cosmetic industry.

Cistus essential oil is steam distilled out of twigs and stems. It is orange to light brown in color, a viscous consistency and a pleasant honey-like herbaceous scent. Cistus essential oil is excellent in aromatherapy blends, where it adds complexity without being heavy. It is a deeply relaxing, soothing and spiritual oil, ideal for meditation and introspection. It also has an affinity for the respiratory system where it opens the sinuses and decongest the airways. It is also a great fixative, which makes it ideal for perfumery blends.

Therapeutic Actions and Benefits:

Cistus essential oil is rich in active ingredients that contribute to its therapeutic properties. Scientific research shows that cistus has antibacterial, antidepressant, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, expectorant, immune enhancer, nervine, and sedative properties. In the respiratory system, cistus essential oil decongests the airways allowing better oxygen flow and thus supporting the breathing and helping the body to recover in respiratory infections. The active ingredients of cistus are also beneficial for muscles, joints and skin, where they soothe and relax. On the nervous system, the essential oil has relaxing, calming and soothing effects, fighting stress and depression and supporting spiritual moods.

List of specific therapeutic actions

Respiratory / ENT: helps in respiratory infections, aids in airway decongestion

Skin: has antioxidant and anti-aging properties, effective in wrinkle treatment, brightens skin, promotes skin, nail and hair health

Musculoskeletal: relieves muscular and joint pains, aids in rheumatism, relieves neuralgias, soothes sore muscles, aids in carpal tunnel and restless leg syndrome

Nervous: fights stress and anxiety, reduces nervousness, has soothing and calming properties, supports a positive, aids in sleep disorders and insomnia, helps in migraines and headaches

Energetic: has relaxing properties, soothes emotions and calms nerves, induces euphoria, supports meditation and introspection, fights negative and unproductive

thoughts, boosts self-confidence, elevates spirits, encourage connection with the inner self

Aromatic profile:

Scent: strongly herbaceous, radiant with sweet, honey-like undertones

Note: base

Blends well with: bergamot, clary sage, rose geranium, frankincense, lemon, mandarin, ylang ylang, patchouli, neroli

Safety: Non-toxic, non-irritating

Ayurveda:

Cistus is ideal for conditions associated with excess vata such as anxiety and fear. It is highly revered as a meditation oil that encourages meditation.

Traditional Chinese Medicine:

In TCM cistus encourages and regulates the Qi energy flow through the body. It is used to support the respiration and to relax shen.

Important scientific data:

Cistus essential oil is rich in alpha pinene (up to 50%), camphene (6%), bornyl acetate (3%) and other active ingredients

The volatile ingredients in cistus essential oil are efficient antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral agents, effective even against resilient bacteria and fungi. Furthermore, both alpha-pinene and camphene have antioxidant properties by scavenging free radicals. This makes cistus essential oil ideal for topical applications.

Alpha-pinene has potent antimutagen properties with great potential in anti-cancer therapy. Alpha pinene also has anti-tumor and anti-mutagenic effects. In other in vitro studies alpha-pinene showed anti-inflammatory effects in vitro, by inhibiting pre-inflammatory cytokines.

How To Use Cistus Essential Oil:

Cistus oil can be used directly on the skin (always in dilution, maximum 1%), in a diffuser, in bath water, and added in to various lotions and ointments.

A couple drops in the bathwater will enhance breathing and induce a relaxed, calm mood and encourage spiritual moods.

For massage of the muscle and joints, and lymphatic drainage cistus essential oil must be diluted in a carrier. Use 1% in a carrier oil to make a massage oil that will soothe muscles and joints and enhance peripheral circulation. The oil can also be massaged in on the chest during colds and flu. To soothe menstrual pain, gently massage on the lower abdomen and pelvic area.

Add 1-2 drops cistus essential oil into the skin lotion or cream to add anti-aging effects. Cistus essential oil can also be used as a scenting agent for various cosmetic products.

Diffuse, use steam inhalation or direct inhalation (in a carrier) to support the respiratory function. Diffuse before and during meditation practice to support relaxation and concentration.

Cistus Oil Recipes:

Meditation blend:

- 4 drops cistus
- 3 drops sandalwood
- 7 drops frankincense

Use the blend plain in the diffuser or dilute in 1 oz., carrier oil (jojoba) for topical application

Skin care blend:

- 4 drops cistus
- 4 drops helichrysum
- 3 drops frankincense
- 3 drops chamomile

Dilute in 1 oz. rosehip essential oil and 1 oz. rose infused marula oil and apply to the skin.

Palo Santo (Bursera graveolens)

Overview:

Palo santo, meaning “sacred wood” in Spanish, is a wild perennial tree indigenous to the equatorial regions, especially in South American countries. Aged palo santo wood is very rich in terpenes – active substances with potent medical and therapeutically properties.

Using the Equator line as reference it can be said that there are two types of palo santo – northern and southern. The northern palo santo is larger with a whitish bark. However, it is the southern variety that holds the higher limonene content. Palo santo has been used for thousands of years by the indigenous population in their rituals and cultural procession as well as medicine for various ailments. Various forms of preparation were used to treat both internal and topical infections and inflammations, and also to strengthen the mind and uplift the spirits. Modern science has validated the numerous beneficial effects of palo santo such as anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-tumor and anti-depressant.

Palo santo essential oil is considered an aromatic treasure with a great capacity to uplift spirit and promote healing. The oil is rich in terpenes, especially limonene, a very potent active ingredient that has been the subject of numerous scientific studies in medicine.

Therapeutic Actions and Benefits:

Palo Santo is rich in limonene, an active terpene proven to have antioxidant, anti-tumor and cytotoxic properties both in vitro and in vivo, as several scientific research shows. Palo santo essential oil is used as antidepressant, relaxing, sedative, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, anti-spasmodic, decongestant, and expectorant. The oil has good skin compatibility and is recommended especially for the oily, acne-prone skin. Palo santo is one of the most effective essential oils for the nervous system helping with stress, anxiety, restlessness, nervousness, anger, insomnia, migraines, nerve pains and headaches. Palo santo has a soothing, calming, effect on the respiratory tract where it helps decongestion and helps expectoration, allowing the airways and lungs to be filled with oxygen.

List of specific therapeutic actions

Respiratory: helps in respiratory infections, soothes cough, aids in airway decongestion, alleviates asthma and allergies

Skin: helps in acne treatment, balances sebum production, helpful in oily skin, promotes skin cells regeneration, has antioxidant and anti-aging effects

Musculoskeletal: anti-inflammatory, relieves muscular and joint pains, aids in rheumatism, relieves neuralgias, soothes sore muscles

Nervous: soothes the mind, fights stress and anxiety, reduces nervousness, has calming and sedative properties, supports a positive, aids in sleep disorders and insomnia

Energetic (aromatherapy): uplifts spirits, supports the flow of life force, has relaxing properties, soothes emotions and calms nerves, supports meditation, enhances creativity, helps in concentration.

Ayurveda:

Palo santo oil is considered helpful in Vata and Kapha doshas. It is also useful in conditions associated with Pitta dosha excess especially in muscle and joint pains. Palo santo helps the mind to become focused and peaceful; it is considered to purify many types of negativity and has a sattvic character.

Traditional Chinese Medicine:

In TCM palo santo is considered a supporter of Qi energy that actively promotes its flow. It is also used as relaxing and soothing oil for the mind.

Aromatic profile:

Scent: citrusy, fresh, with resinous woody notes

Note: top to middle

Blends well with: cedarwood, frankincense, sandalwood, myrrh and other wood and resins essential oils as well as lavender, mandarin, lemon, grapefruit, ginger and other citrus notes

Safety: Non-toxic, non-irritating

How To Use Palo Santo Essential Oil:

Palo Santo essential oil can be used in dilution on the skin, in the diffuser, and in aromatic baths.

Use a couple of drops in the palm of your hands for direct inhalation or diffused for uplifting the spirit and clarifying the mind.

Palo santo oil can also be used topically as a compress, to reduce aches and pains. The essential oil can also be blended with a carrier or massage oil and used topically whenever needed.

Palo Santo Oil Recipes:

Purification Bath:

- 2 drops palo santo
- 2 drops grapefruit
- 2 drops cypress
- 2 drops palmarosa

Add the blend to a cup of sea salt. Use the salt in the bathwater for a relaxing, soothing, uplifting experience

Meditation blend:

- 4 drops palo santo
- 2 drops jasmine
- 2 drops sandalwood
- 1 drop cedarwood

Use in a diffuser or add the blend to ½ oz. marula oil and use it topically for anointing.

Sandalwood (*Santalum album*)

Overview:

Sandalwood is a perennial evergreen tree that belongs to the Santalaceae family and is native to several Asian regions. Sandalwood is considered a semi-parasitic tree because its roots absorb minerals and nutrients from the roots of other plants. Sandalwood use, in herbal preparations or as an oil has been documented for thousands of years. Sandalwood was used both for its unique scent and for its therapeutic properties.

Asian cultures have been using sandalwood since ancient times for religious purposes and to treat numerous ailments. For thousands of years sandalwood has been used as a perfume. Modern science has validated the revered medical and therapeutic properties of sandalwood, confirming its effectiveness.

There are several species of sandalwood trees; the source of oil comes primarily from Indian sandalwood (*Santalum alba*), Hawaiian sandalwood (*Santalum paniculatum*), Vanuatu sandalwood (*Santalum austrocaledonica*) and Australian sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*). True Indian sandalwood is now extremely rare, and is usually substituted with one of the other species.

Sandalwood essential oil is obtained from the inner wood of the tree, meaning that the procurement of the raw material is destructive. Procuring the sandalwood oil from an ethical, responsibly harvested source guarantees that the product will have the right quality and also protects the endangered sandalwood forests.

Therapeutic Actions and Benefits:

Sandalwood is rich in monoterpenes (santalene) and sesquiterpenes (α - and β -santalene) as well as active alcohols (α -santalol and β -santalol). The therapeutic efficiency of these chemical constituents has been scientifically proven. Sandalwood has antibacterial, antidepressant, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antispasmodic, antiviral, aphrodisiac, balsamic, carminative, diuretic, diaphoretic, emollient, expectorant, sedative, nervine and tonic properties.

In TCM sandalwood has been used as a decoction for its soothing, calming, effect on the respiratory tract where it helps decongestion and helps expectoration and also on the digestive system where it supports a normal, healthy digestive function. In herbal medicine, it also helps fight urinary infections and prevents water retention, due to its diuretic and diaphoretic properties. In aromatherapy, sandalwood is a potent oil for the nervous system helping with stress, anxiety, anger, rage, restlessness, nervousness, insomnia, migraines and headaches.

List of specific therapeutic actions

Respiratory: relieves sore throat, treats dry mouth and throat, helps in respiratory infections, aids in airway decongestion

Circulatory: enhances peripheral circulation, helps in varicose veins treatment

Skin: promotes wound healing, helps in skin infection and inflammations, soothes insect bites and stings, repels insects, treats cold sores, helps in acne treatment, regulates sebum production, highly compatible with dry, scaly, chapped skin, helps in varicose vein

Immunity: has antibacterial, antifungal and antiseptic properties

Digestive: has carminative properties, treats gas and bloating, helps in dyspepsia, promotes a healthy digestive function

Nervous: fights stress and anxiety, reduces nervousness, has soothing and calming properties, balances emotions, aids in sleep disorders and insomnia

Energetic: has relaxing properties, soothes emotions and calms nerves, supports meditation, promotes inner awareness, gives peace of mind, balances emotions, clears negative and unproductive thoughts, enhances creativity

Ayurveda:

Sandalwood is considered bitter, sweet, and astringent, with cooling properties. It is light and unctuous, ideal for vata anxiety and pitta inflammation. It cools pitta excess, meaning that it is useful in inflammatory conditions and other health problems associated with excess fire (fever, viral and bacterial infections).

Traditional Chinese Medicine:

In TCM sandalwood is considered a tonic for the Lung Qi and a soother for the Liver Qi. It is also used as a calming and nourishing herb for the shen (mind and spirit). Sandalwood oil is used to address ailments associated with fire such as colds, flus, urinary infections, fever and others.

Aromatic profile:

Scent: Soft, woody, smooth, rich, earthy, nutty, sweet

Note: base

Blends well with: rose, neroli, muhuhu, frankincense, cedarwood, patchouli, orris root, vetiver, jasmine, ylang-ylang

Safety: Non-toxic, non-irritating

How To Use Sandalwood Essential Oil:

Sandalwood can be applied (pure or diluted) topically, as a compress, in the bath, through direct inhalation, or diffuser.

Use a drop of oil directly on the wrist and other pulse areas such as the neck or center of the chest as perfume.

For skin benefits add 1-2 drops of the oil to ½ oz. skin lotion, cream or ointment.

For massage of the abdomen, chest, muscle and joints, and lymphatic drainage

sandalwood essential oil can be diluted in base oil. A 5% dilution of sandalwood oil in carrier oil can be used for local massage to enhance peripheral circulation and to clear airways, promote digestion, relieve muscular and joint pain. It can also be massaged in a pure form (just 1-2 drops) onto the temples and the back of the neck for relaxation.

To relax and soothe the nervous system add 2 - 4 drops in the bath water.

Diffuse sandalwood to calm and relax, to promote restful sleep, and to calm environment and to create a euphoric atmosphere proper for meditation.

Sandalwood is excellent for children. Use 1-2 drops on the bed linens to calm, soothe and promote a deep sleep

Sandalwood Oil Recipes:

Meditation Blend:

- 6 drops sandalwood oil
- 8 drops frankincense oil
- 3 drops myrrh oil
- 3 drops cedarwood oil

Use the blend in a diffuser or dilute in 1oz jojoba oil for topical application.

Aphrodisiac Blend:

- 8 drops sandalwood
- 2 drops Jasmine

Can be worn undiluted as perfume, used for anointing, or added to a small amount of carrier oil for massage

Mood Uplifting Blend

- 1 drop rose
- 3 drops sandalwood

Can be worn undiluted as perfume, used for anointing, or added to a small amount of carrier oil for massage