

Beekeepers have known the great secret of bees for a long time: propolis. The mysterious, sticky stuff that bee colonies have used to protect themselves against all kinds of diseases for millions of years.

Bees live in large colonies of up to 50,000 bees in a small space, close to each other. Without protection against invading germs, a colony could quickly die.

propolis

The word 'propolis' comes from Greek. It is a combination of the words 'pro' and 'polis'. Pro means 'for the benefit of' or 'for the protection of'. Polis means 'fortress' or 'city'. So a substance to protect the home and its inhabitants.

The honey bee discovered the protective function of resin and processed it into propolis. The Greeks discovered the medicinal properties of propolis and processed it into their own medicines.

In recent years, propolis has become increasingly known as a natural remedy for various diseases and physical discomforts. More and more people are using propolis as an aid.

What exactly is propolis and where does it come from? How is it made and how can you use it? You can read the answers to these and other questions below.

What is propolis?

Fresh propolis is a sticky, tan or reddish brown, resinous substance made by the honey bees. Propolis has the characteristic smell of poplar or birch, honey and wax.

How do bees make propolis?

The bees make propolis from the resinous substance found on the buds, leaves or bark of various tree species. This vegetable resin is collected by the bees and this is a slow and time consuming job. Resin is a tough substance, especially when it's not that hot yet. The bees release small pieces of resin with their jaws and front legs and knead it between their front legs into a small ball. This resin ball is put into the 'pollen basket' of the hind leg by the middle leg of the bee. When the bee has collected some resin balls, she flies back to the hive, where other bees take the resin balls from her to further work it in the hive. In the hive, the sticky resin package is mixed with pollen and beeswax to create propolis.

What is in propolis?

Propolis consists of various resins, waxes, essential oils, pollen, vitamins and minerals.

What does propolis do in the hive?

Propolis is used by the bees to seal holes and cracks in the hive. The brood comb, the so-called 'baby rooms', are also polished with a layer of propolis before the queen puts the eggs in it.

The resin in the propolis is a natural protective agent that also protects the trees against external infections.

What does propolis do?

Many studies have shown that propolis can be a valuable aid in disease control, wound healing, pain management and much more.

Below you can read the most well-known uses of propolis:

The list will not be complete, but it does make it clear that propolis is not only a versatile natural antibiotic, but can also provide relief for many diseases and complaints, both internally and externally.

- due to its antibacterial and antiviral effect, propolis helps to increase your resistance against infections
- laryngitis, mouth sores, fever blister, problems with gums and teeth.
- skin problems: eczema, swimmer's eczema, diaper rash, acne, various types of wounds, psoriasis, warts, boils.
- Nose: colds, sinus infections and hay fever
- Lungs: asthma, pneumonia and TB
- Ears: ear canal inflammation
- Digestive organs: stomach ulcer, diarrhea, Crohn's disease, hemorrhoids, colon inflammation
- Muscles and joints: muscle pain, tennis elbow, rheumatism, gout
- Nervous diseases: multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's and also in muscular dystrophy favorable results have been achieved with the use of propolis.
- Circulatory system: arterial calcification and thrombosis

In addition, propolis can enhance the action of antibiotics and restore vitality after illness.

Propolis is seen as a supplement to every medicine cabinet. Propolis is officially not a drug. A pharmaceutical drug must meet all kinds of requirements and must have a fixed composition. Propolis is a natural product, an aid and has no fixed composition.

How do you use propolis tincture?

1-3 years	1 drop
3-6 years	2 drops
6-12 years	3 drops
> 12 years	4 drops
> 18 years	5 drops

Babies younger than 12 months should not be given bee products, so no propolis either.

It is best to drip the drops under the tongue, on a piece of bread or on a little honey.

Allergy

- Side effects and complaints are little known and do not occur often.
- About 1 in 1,000 people have an allergy for propolis. It is advisable to apply a drop of propolis on the hollow of the elbow before the first use. If the spot becomes red or feels burning, the use of propolis is not recommended. Because the composition of the resins can differ from tree species to tree species, the composition of the propolis also differs from country to country and even from region to region. This can also affect an allergic reaction.

Save

Pure propolis has an unlimited shelf life. The propolis tincture has a shelf life of 1 year.

Extra information

- The propolis on Crete is very pure. There is no monoculture on the island and it is also not necessary to use pesticides in beekeeping.
 - Propolis can enhance the effect of blood thinners. People who use these drugs are advised to have their blood checked by the thrombosis service when using propolis.
 - Propolis can affect blood sugar levels in diabetics. Additional checks are recommended.
- When in doubt, always consult a doctor or specialist!