

Herbarium sheet

Shilajit (Black bitumen)

Common name: Vegetable Asphalt, Mineral Pitch, **English:** Vegetable Asphalt, Mineral Pitch, **Marathi:** Silajita, **Sanskrit:** Shilajita, **Gujarati:** Silajita, **Hindi:** Silajita

Part used: Exudate. -Shilajit is sticky tar-like resinous substance that is neither completely plant nor of animal origin. In nature, Shilajit is a type of mineral pitch that is made up of humus and decomposed plant remains, exuded from the rocks present in the Himalayas at an altitude of 1000 to 5000 metres above sea level. Shilajit is a thick, sticky tar-like brown substance.

Active Chemical constituents: Shilajit usually comprises of 60-80% organic matter, 20-40% mineral matter and 5% of trace elements. Shilajit mainly contains (60 – 80%) of humus substances like humins, humic acids and fulvic acid. Additionally, it also contains triterpenes, sterols, ichthyol, ellagic acid, resin, aromatic carboxylic acid, 3, 4-benzocoumarins, amino acids, phenolic lipids, minerals like silica, iron, antimony, lithium, manganese, calcium, copper, molybdenum, phosphorus, sodium, zinc, selenium and small amounts of dibenzo- α -pyrones (metabolites derived from plants, fungi, animal faeces or mycobionts).

Organoleptic characters:

Colour-Brown

Odour- not specific

Taste- Pungent, bitter, salty, astringent

Pharmacological applications: sexual weakness, Spermatogenic and Ovogenic Effects, Antidiabetic Immunomodulatory, lower serum cholesterol, liver cholesterol,

Granthokta Ayurvedic application: Rasayani (rejuvenates the whole body) Prameha (manages diabetes), Balya (improves muscle strength) Garbhaprada (treats infertility)



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