

## Neem – The gift of nature

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This plant, known as “the village pharmacy” in India, has been used for at least 4000 years for its medicinal qualities. Neem which belongs to family Meliaceae, has a botanical name *Azadirachta indica*. This is a very fast growing; ever green tree which reaches the height of 15 to 20 meters. Neem is known for its medicinal properties and is used as a main ingredient in many home remedies. Neem has been used to treat a wide range of ailments, including wounds, burns, sprains, bruises, earache, headache, fever, sore throat, food poisoning, shingles, colds, flu, hepatitis, mononucleosis, fungal infections, yeast infections, sexually transmitted diseases, acne, skin diseases, heart diseases, blood disorders, kidney problems, digestive problems, ulcers, periodontal diseases, nerve disorders, malaria, fatigue, and a host of others. It is anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-septic, and strengthens the body’s overall immune response. It is heartening to see that a traditional Indian plant medicine has now led to several therapeutically and industrially useful preparations and compounds, which generates enough encouragement among the scientists in exploring more information about this medicinal plant. As the global scenario is now changing towards the use of nontoxic plant products having traditional medicinal use, development of modern drugs from neem should be emphasized for the control of various diseases. In fact, time has come to make good use of centuries-old knowledge on neem through modern approaches of drug development. Neem and its products for their better economic and therapeutic utilization.

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### INTRODUCTION

Medicinal properties of neem have been known to Indians since time immemorial. The earliest Sanskrit medical writings refer to the benefits of neem’s fruits, seeds, oil, leaves, roots and bark. Each of these has been used in the Indian Ayurvedic and Unani systems of medicine. Neem is one of the most powerful blood purifiers. It cleanses and enhances circulation. It is believed that neem is a vitaliser, restoring balance to the system. Antibodies to strengthen the immune system and boosting the resistance of the body to cope with illnesses. Neem is almost a prerequisite for a healthy life. A wash made of neem leaves boiled in water is used to swab the body after a

bout of chicken pox. The oil from its seeds is applied to the scabs to prevent itching and infection. A paste of fresh neem leaves is used to rid hair of lice and control dandruff. Tender leaves of the plant are chewed to rid stomach of worms. Traditionally, a few neem leaves were eaten on an empty stomach every day for a couple of weeks before the beginning of the hot season as a preventive measure against summer maladies. Nimbolis (the fruit) were eaten when they were pulpy and ripe to ease digestion. Neem is accepted as an effective coolant. It is, therefore, considered a boon in a country like India, where temperatures soar to alarming heights and a large number of heat-related ailments affect people.

#### Neem products:

A wide variety of neem products including neem oil products can be produced from different regions of India. Neem products are free from pesticides and other preservatives and are offered at industry leading prices and in wholesale.

#### Neem oil:

Neem products like neem oil that is extracted from seeds

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