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Frankincense (*Boswellia* species): From the selection of traditional applications to the novel phototherapy for the prevention and treatment of serious diseases

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Frankincense (Ru Xiang; *Boswellia* Species), the resinous extract from the trees of the genus *Boswellia*, has been used for centuries in cultural ceremonies, as a cosmetic agent, and as a traditional medicine to treat a variety of ailments, especially inflammatory diseases including asthma, arthritis, cerebral edema, chronic pain syndrome, chronic bowel diseases, cancer, and some other illnesses. Boswellic acids are the active compounds of frankincense and AKBA (3-O-acetyl-11-keto- β -boswellic acid) is the most important and effective acid among them. Some studies have shown that the use of frankincense can also improve the learning and enhance the memory in animals and human beings. It seems that frankincense might have a potential ability to be used as an alternative natural medicine not only for chronic and inflammatory diseases but also for brain and memory disorders. Frankincense (Ru Xiang; *Boswellia* Species) is a French word, meaning "pure incense." It is popularly known as Indian olibanum, salai guggal, loban or kundur. It has been used as incense, in fumigating preparations for religious rituals and cultural ceremonies, and as a traditional remedy for treating various diseases. The oleogum resins are secreted by trees of the *Boswellia* species which are tropical, deciduous trees and usually grow as small trees or shrubs with limited natural growing range. This has been extended by cultivation to meet the worldwide demand. The resin is obtained by making scrapes in the trunk of the various *Boswellia* species (Burseraceae), and collecting the dried resin gums from the trees later. Good quality resin is produced only for 3 years, after which the quality of the collected resin decreases significantly; therefore, the tree should be left to rest for some years after the harvesting period.

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Clinical efficacy of Unani formulations in bronchial – A multicentric clinical trial

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Unani medicine is clinically rich science with successful therapies for variety of ailments. Treatment of Bronchial Asthma has been well described in Unani medicine under the term Zeequn Nafas (Difficulty in Breathing). Breathing in fresh, healthy and appropriate quantity of air has been recognized as one among the six principles of healthy living and lungs unlike other systems is taken among vital organs of the body in Unani system of medicine. The principle of treatment of bronchial asthma in Unani medicine includes (1) dietary restrictions for reducing the formation of causative humour or Fadhlal. (2) rectification of external environment or avoiding ingestion (3) promoting Hararat and by administering Munzij and Musaffi drugs in order to expel the Fadhlal present in the body (4) purification of body by regimental, diet and drug therapies selectively or sequentially combined. Among all such measures, the Musaffiyat and Munzij and Mushil therapy are specific in the treatment of asthma because these diseases are considered to be of Balghami origin. In consonance with the aims and object of the Council and keeping in view the public requirement of Unani anti asthmatic drug, clinical trial on specific formulae UNIM-352 was undertaken at different centers of the Council with a view to establish comparatively better, cheaper, more effective drug for treatment of Bronchial asthma free from side effects. It was found that formulation is comparatively safe, cost effective, long lasting, multi-action, immunomodulator, bronchodilator, mucolytic, detoxificant, anti-histaminic, system toner, faculty elevator, nutritional supplement and palatable drug as compared to other market available Unani drugs. Most appealing point is that the ingredients are herbal, cultivated in India, prepared in India, no import is involved, best suitable for Indians and need not require any foreign technology, most suitable to Indians keeping in view the environment and temperament. Results are discussed in the paper in details.

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