

Frankincense provides relief to arthritis sufferers

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An enriched extract of the 'Indian Frankincense' herb *Boswellia serrata* has been proven to reduce the symptoms of osteoarthritis. Research published today in BioMed Central's open access journal *Arthritis Research & Therapy* has shown that patients taking the herbal remedy showed significant improvement in as little as seven days.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis; it commonly affects weight-bearing joints such as the knees and hips, along with the hands, wrists, feet and spine. The symptoms include pain, stiffness and limited movement. This randomised, double-blinded, placebo-controlled trial of 70 patients will be of great interest to sufferers, especially those who don't get adequate relief from existing treatments.

The study was led by Siba Raychaudhuri, a faculty member of the University of California, Davis, in the United States. According to Raychaudhuri, "The high incidence of adverse affects associated with currently available medications has created great interest in the search for an effective and safe alternative treatment". The extract the authors used was enriched with 30% AKBA (3-O-acetyl-11-keto-beta-boswellic acid), which is thought to be the most active ingredient in the plant. Raychaudhuri said, "AKBA has anti-inflammatory properties, and we have shown that *B. serrata* enriched with AKBA can be an effective treatment for osteoarthritis of the knee". This is a proprietary product developed by Laila Nutraceuticals.

B. serrata has been used for thousands of years in the Indian system of

traditional medicine known as 'Ayurveda'. This study is the first to prove that an enriched extract of the plant can be used as a successful treatment.

The same authors have previously tested the safety of their remedy in animal experiments. They say that, "In this study, the compound was shown to have no major adverse effects in our osteoarthritis patients. It is safe for human consumption and even for long-term use".

Source: BioMed Central

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