

Frankincense oil -- a wise man's remedy for bladder cancer

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Originating from Africa, India, and the Middle East, frankincense oil has been found to have many medicinal benefits. Now, an enriched extract of the Somalian Frankincense herb *Boswellia carteri* has been shown to kill off bladder cancer cells. Research presented in the open access journal, *BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, demonstrates that this herb has the potential for an alternative therapy for bladder cancer.

Bladder cancer is twice as common in males as it is in females. In the US, [bladder cancer](#) is the fourth most common type of cancer in men, whilst in the UK it is the seventh most common cause of death amongst males.

HK Lin and his team, from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and Oklahoma City VA Medical Center, set out to evaluate [frankincense oil](#) for its anti-tumour activity in bladder [cancer cells](#). The authors investigated the effects of the oil in two different types of cells in culture: human bladder cancer cells and normal bladder cells. The team found that frankincense oil is able to discriminate between normal and cancerous bladder cells in culture, and specifically kill cancer cells.

Gene expression analyses were performed to determine how frankincense oil affects bladder cancer cell survival. The team found that the oil suppresses cancer cell growth by arresting cell cycle progression and induces bladder cancer cell death by activating multiple cell death pathways.

Dr Lin said, "Frankincense oil may represent an inexpensive alternative therapy for patients currently suffering from bladder cancer."

More information: Frankincense oil derived from [Boswellia carteri](#) induces tumor cell specific cytotoxicity, Mark Barton Frank, Qing Yang, Jeanette Osban, Joseph T Azzarello, Marcia R Saban, Ricardo Saban, Richard A Ashley, Jan C Welter, Kar-Ming Fung and Hsueh-Kung Lin, *BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine* (in press), www.biomedcentral.com/bmccomplementaltermmed/

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