

# GIFTS FROM THE HIVE

## *Propolis*

### **What is it?**

Propolis is sap collected from trees and shrubs mixed with pollen, beeswax and bee enzymes to create a sticky, glue-like substance. It's color varies from red to yellowish-brown based on the colony's needs and the bio-region. The colony uses it to seal up small cracks and holes in the hive, to weatherproof areas where a draft may occur, create a varnish around the interior walls of the hive (like a thick membrane), and provide canals for the movement and direction of water/condensation inside the hive. It is incredibly powerful medicine. It is highly antimicrobial, anti fungal antibacterial and anti-inflammatory. It's scent strengthens the bees' immune system and protects them from many diseases, mold and certain mites. Hives with a proper propolis seal carry far fewer strains of bacteria and have stronger immune systems. Propolis also helps maintain the ideal temperatures and humidity within the hive.

Bees make hive-specific propolis recipes based on the trees available in the area and the needs of the hive.

### **How is it Made?**

Bees collect propolis from tree sap and mix it with honey and enzymes. When it is warm outside, propolis is incredibly sticky, pliable and tacky. When it is cold outside the propolis becomes shiny, hard and brittle if broken.

### **Historical use:**

The use of propolis for healing has a long and documented history. It was used widely in ancient Egypt, Rome, Greece and Persia. It is said that the ancient Egyptians learned how to use it to embalm and treat infection by watching how bees use wax and propolis to cover over dead animals within the hive that are too large to carry out, such as a mouse.

Hippocrates is said to have used propolis for wounds and ulcers in 400 BCE

Pliny the Elder of Rome also wrote of the benefits of propolis in "Natural History".

It has been known to aid in a large variety of conditions including minor burns, wounds, dental cavities, warts, ulcers, candida, acne, eczema, splinters, migraines, sore throat, cancer, gynecological issues, blood sugar imbalance and more.

### **Ways to Personally Use it:**

Propolis is a highly potent scent and is a powerful agent when burned. Try burning dried propolis on a charcoal. You do not need much to influence the scent of the air. It is the most divine scent!

You can also ingest propolis through a propolis honey mixture (try YS Organic Bee Farms)

Make an oral mouth wash for teeth, gums and mouth ulcers.

In a salve (or a thick tincture) for infections/skin conditions/abscesses

Used in toothpaste for dental hygiene and strength.

Use in pill form for digestive issues.

Use as a tincture for a variety of internal complaints.

\*\*\* I personally love and trust propolis from The Pollen Man (<http://www.thepollenman.com/>)

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\* I am not a physician and simply offer folk remedies. Do your own research and consult a doctor if you are concerned about side effects/allergies.

