



Egyptian Herbal Monograph

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Volume 3

Herbal Formulations Used in Egypt

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Pumpkin oil, Saw palmetto, Nigella oil, Zinc

زيت قرع العسل / بلميط منشاري / زيت حبة البركة / زنك

1. Names & Synonyms

Pumpkin (1)

Cucurbita pepo L.

Family: Cucurbitaceae.

Syns: *Cucurbita aurantia* Willd., *C. courgero* Ser., *C. esculenta* Gray, *C. fastuosa* Salisb., *C. melopepo* L., *C. ovifera* L., *C. subverrucosus* Willd., *C. verrucosus* L., *Pepo melopepo* Moench., *P. verrucosus* Moench., *P. vulgaris* Moench.

Arabic: kar-e-asal عسل قرع

English: Pumpkin.

Saw palmetto (2,3).

Serenoa repens (W.Bartram) Small.

Family: Arecaceae.

Syns: *Corypha repens* W.Bartram, *Corypha obliqua* W.Bartram, *Diglossophyllum serrulatum* (Michx.) H. Wendl. ex Salomon, *Sabal serrulata* (Michx.) Schult.f., *Chamaerops serrulata* Michx., *Brahea serrulata* (Michx.) H. Wendl. .

Arabic: Balmit minshary بلميط منشاري

English: Serenoa , Saw palmetto and Saw palmetto berry (4- 6).



Nigella (2,7)

Nigella sativa L.

Family: Ranunculaceae.

Syns: *Nigella cretica* Mill., *Nigella indica* Roxb. ex Flem., *Nigella truncata* Viv.

Arabic: al-haba-el-souda الحبة السوداء, habat-al-baraka حبة البركة

English : Nigella, black seed, black cumin, black caraway.

2. Parts used for medicinal purpose

Pumpkin oil: Seeds (1,8).

Saw Palmetto: Dried ripe fruit (9).

Nigella oil: Seeds (10,11).

3. Major chemical constituents

Pumpkin

- **Fixed oil:** composed mainly of linoleic, oleic, palmitic and stearic acids (12).
- **Phytosterols:** β -Sitosterol, $\Delta^{5,24}$ - stigmastadienol, Δ^7 -stigmastenol, Δ^7 - avenasterol (13).
- **Phytoestrogens:** including lignans (as secoisolarisiresinol), isoflavones (as genistin, daidzin and formononetin) and quercetin (14).
- **Phenolic acids:** Protocatechuic, caffeic, syringic, vanillic, *p*-coumaric and ferulic acids (14).
- **Protein:** composed mainly of the amino acids: arginine, glutamic and aspartic acids (15).
- **Others:** Vitamin E (Tocopherols), micro-elements such as phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, zinc and iron (15) as well as β -carotene (16).

Saw palmetto (17)



- **Fatty acids and their glycerides:** Monoacylglycerides (1-monolaurin, 1-monomyristicin). Oleic acid (unsaturated) and capric acid, caproic acid, caprylic acid, lauric acid, myristic acid, palmitic acid and stearic acid (saturated).
- **Steroids:** β -Sitosterol, campesterol and stigmasterol.
- **Carbohydrates:** Invert sugar, mannitol, high molecular weight polysaccharides with galactose, arabinose and uronic acid identified as main sugar components.
- **Other constituents:** Flavonoids (e.g. rutin, isoquercitrin, kaempferol), pigment (carotene), resin, tannin and volatile oil.

Nigella (18-20):

- **Fixed oil:** Unsaturated fatty acids (linoleic, oleic, eicosadienoic and dihomo-gamma-linolenic acid (DGLA)) and saturated fatty acids (palmitic and stearic acids).
- **Essential oil:** Thymoquinone, thymohydroquinone, dithymoquinone (nigellone), *p*-cymene, carvacrol, 4-terpineol, *t*-anethole, sesquiterpene longifolene, α -pinene and thymol.
- **Alkaloids:** Isoquinoline alkaloids (e.g. nigellicimine and nigellicimine-N-oxide) and pyrazole alkaloids (e.g.: nigellidine and nigellicine).
- **Others:** Sterols (β -sitosterol, stigmasterol), protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals.

4. Medicinal Uses (Indications)

To relief lower urinary tract symptoms related to benign prostatic hyperplasia or related to an overactive bladder, after serious conditions have been excluded by a physician.

5. Herbal preparations correlated to medicinal use

Combination of pumpkin oil, saw palmetto extract, nigella oil and zinc.

Herbal preparations are in pharmaceutical dosage forms. The pharmaceutical form should be described by the pharmacopoeia full standard term.

6. Posology and method of administration correlated to medicinal use



Adults and elderly

- 150 mg of pumpkin oil, 240 mg of saw palmetto extract, 75 mg of nigella oil and 8.61mg zinc daily.

There is no relevant indication for women, children and adolescents under 18 years of age.

Duration of use:

Long-term use is possible. If the symptoms persist during the use of the medicinal product, a doctor or a pharmacist should be consulted.

Method of administration: Oral use.

7. Contraindications.

- Hypersensitivity to the active substance(s) or to other plants of the same families (20,21).
- The use in children and adolescents under 18 years of age is contraindicated because of its effects on androgen and oestrogen metabolism and the lower urinary tract symptoms in these populations requires medical supervision (6, 22, 23).

8. Special warnings and precautions for use

- If complaints worsen or if symptoms such as fever, spasms or blood in the urine, painful urination, or urinary retention occur during the use of the medicinal product, a doctor or a pharmacist should be consulted. (6, 21,22).
- To be used under medical supervision.

9. Interactions with other medicinal products and other forms of interaction

A few cases of suspected interactions with warfarin have been reported. Increased INR-values have been described (21).

10. Fertility, pregnancy and lactation

- The use during pregnancy and lactation is not relevant and avoided (6, 9).



- No fertility data available.

11. Effects on ability to drive and use machines

- No studies on the effect on the ability to drive and use machines have been performed.

12. Undesirable effects (21)

- Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain (especially when taken on an empty stomach), allergic or hypersensitivity reactions may occur such as skin rash, headache, increase of transaminases or gamma-glutamyl transferases and reversible gynecomastia.
- Zinc supplementation can cause a copper deficiency. A physician or a pharmacist should be consulted (6).
- If adverse reactions occur, a doctor or a pharmacist should be consulted.

13. Overdose

- Taking very high doses is likely unsafe and might cause stomach pain, vomiting, and many other problems (6).

14. Relevant biological activities

Not required as per Egyptian guidelines for registration of herbal medicines.

15. Additional information

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16. Date of compilation/last revision

20/04/2026



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