

## Damiana/Turnera

**Introduction:** Damiana is an excellent strengthening remedy for the nervous system. It has an ancient reputation as an aphrodisiac. Whilst this may or may not be true, it has a definite tonic action on the central nervous and the hormonal system. As a useful anti-depressant, Damiana is considered to be a specific in cases of anxiety and depression where there is a sexual factor. It may be used to strengthen the male sexual system.



**Scientific name:** *Turnera diffusa* Var. *aphrodisiaca*

**Synonyms:** *Turnera aphrodisiaca*; *Turnera microphylla*.

**Sources:** The main source of Damiana is vegetable source. It is a shrub native to southern Texas in the United States, Central America, Mexico, South America, and the Caribbean. It belongs to the family Passifloraceae (Turneraceae). Damiana contains damianin; tetraphyllin B; gonzalitosin I; arbutin; tricosan-2-one; acacetin; p-cymene;  $\beta$ -sitosterol; 1,8-cineole; apigenin;  $\alpha$ -pinene;  $\beta$ -carotene;  $\beta$ -pinene; tannins; thymol; and hexacosanol. In total, 22 flavonoids, maltol glucoside, phenolics, seven cyanogenic glycosides, monoterpenoids, sesquiterpenoids, triterpenoids, the polyterpene ficaprenol-11, fatty acids, and caffeine have been found in the genus *Turnera*. Damiana's anxiolytic properties might be due to apigenin. Viable plant and seed material sold as *T. diffusa* from both private and commercial sources largely turns out to be misidentified *Turnera ulmifolia* (a.k.a. "False Damiana"), a closely related species. This widespread issue has been noted by the scientific community, and has created much confusion among both amateur and professional horticulturists alike. While *T. ulmifolia* is similar in appearance, its chemical constituents and ethnobotanical uses are distinctly different. Mature stems of *T. diffusa* are woody, with small, grayed green leaves 13 to 16 mm long, 4.5 to 5.5 mm wide, obtuse at the apex, and strongly aromatic when crushed. *T. ulmifolia* is differentiated by herbaceous stems, larger blue-green leaves that are strongly dentate with a pointed apex, and only weakly aromatic. *Turnera diffusa* is a small shrub; leaves smooth and pale green on upper side, underneath glabrous, with a few hairs on the ribs, ovate-oblongate, shortly petiolate with two small glands at base. It blossoms in early to late summer and is followed by fruits that taste similar to figs. Flowers yellow rising singly from axils of the leaves; capsule one celled, splitting into three pieces. The shrub is said to have a strong spice-like odor somewhat like chamomile, due to the essential oils present in the plant; aromatic; taste characteristic, bitter and resinous.

**Macroscopically** leaves are pale-green or yellowish green in colour about 10 to 25 mm long and 5 to 10 mm wide, broadly lanceolate and shortly petiolate. Margin is serrate with three to six comparatively large teeth on each side. The surface is smooth, veins pinnate and prominent on lower surface. Odour and taste aromatic.

**Microscopically** leaves: the upper epidermis is formed of cells with almost straight walls and without stomata and the lower epidermis with somewhat wavy walls and abundant stomata (oval). An isobilateral mesophyll is present. The trichomes are simple, filiform, unicellular, upto

900  $\mu$  long often undulating and bent near the base with unligified, strongly thickened walls and a warty surface. There are numerous, small clusters and occasional prisms of calcium oxalate. Stem: reddish-brown, cork cells are thin walled and parenchyma in the pith is lignified. Stone cells few and occasional starch grains, upto 12  $\mu$  in diameter.

**Parts Used:** Whole plant.

**Composition:**

***Mother Tincture***  $\theta$ . Drug Strength 1/10

**Active ingredient:**

Damiana in coarse powder = 100 g

**Excipients:**

Purified Water = 350 ml

Strong Alcohol = 685 ml

To make one thousand milliliters of the Mother Tincture.

***Dilutions:*** 2x to contain one part Mother Tincture, three parts Purified Water and six parts Strong Alcohol; 3x and higher with Dispensing Alcohol.

**History and authority:** A Dict. of Pract. Mat. Med., Clarke, Vol. III, 1469.

**Spheres of Action:** It mainly acts on both male and female genitourinary system.

**Clinical:** Amenorrhoea. Dysmenorrhoea. Fatigue. Impotence. Leucorrhoea. Migraine. Prostate, affections of. Spermatorrhoea. Sterility. Urine, incontinence of.

**Guiding Symptoms:**

1. It shows its power over the genitourinary system.
2. In Mexico, it is used to "invigorate the system."
3. Indian hunters discovered that a decoction of it was a great invigorator after wearisome journeys; and they also found in it a cure for inability to exercise the reproductive functions in both sexes.
4. Among the causes of the defect in the cured cases are injury to spine from a fall; sexual excess; syphilis or gonorrhoea, in the men; and amenorrhoea, dysmenorrhoea, and leucorrhoea in the women.
5. Dr. Douglass reported that dribbling of urine day and night of older people for four years. Damiana (Turnera) 2x, in water, four times a day, cured in two months.
6. Another use of Turnera is recorded in severe migraine, "One or two doses given within an hour causes the headache to cease and induces sleep, from which the patient awakens free from headache and with good appetite."
7. This is perhaps analogous to the power of Damiana (Turnera) to dispel fatigue.

**Particular:**

**Male:** Sexual neurasthenia; impotency. Sexual debility from nervous prostration. Incontinence of old people. Chronic prostatic discharge. Renal and cystic catarrh.

**Female:** Frigidity of females. Aids the establishment of normal menstrual flow in young girls

**Relationship:**

**Compare:** Impotence, injuries, over-exertion, fatigue, Bellis, Arn; Prostatic affections, Sabal., Solid.; Migraine, Epipheg.

**Dose:**

**Mother Tincture:** Tincture and fluid extract-ten-to forty-drop doses or as directed by the Homoeopathic physician.

**Dilution:** 3x to higher or as directed by the Homoeopathic physician.

**Side effects:** No significant side effect has been observed in proper doses.

**Contraindication:** There is no known contraindication.

**Use in Pregnancy and breast-feeding:** The safety of this medicine in pregnancy and breast-feeding has not been studied; therefore it should be used with caution during these periods. If necessary consult with Homoeopathic Physician.

**Storage:** Keep out of reach of children. Keep away from sunlight. Store in a cool and dry place.

**Presentation:** 30 ml, 100 ml & 450 ml in bottle.

**References:**

1. HOMOEOPATHIC MATERIA MEDICA by Dr. William BOERICKE, M.D.
2. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>
3. A DICTIONARY OF PRACTICAL MATERIA MEDICA by Dr. John Henry CLARKE, M.D.
4. Encyclopedia of Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia by Dr. P.N. Varma & Dr. Indu Vaid.