

## **Valerian**

### **Valeriana officinalis - Valerianaceae**

Native to the British Isles, valerian is also found in different parts of the world with each variety producing slight differences in the oil. It is a handsome plant, found in shady damp places, growing 1 metre tall with finely cut leaves and pale pink or white flowers in July and August.

#### **Place of Origin**

China, Croatia, Russia,  
Europe, USA

#### **Part of plant used**

dried rhizomes

#### **Method of Extraction**

Steam Distillation

#### **Characteristics**

Colour: Brown  
Perfume notes: Base

#### **Yield**

**BF**  
**TR**

1-2  
D

Aroma

#### **Chemical Composition**

|                |   |                                  |           |                  |                  |
|----------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------|------------------|------------------|
| Esters         | <b>isobornyl acetate</b><br><b>bornyl acetate</b> | %<br><b>15-31</b><br><b>1-17</b> | Aldehydes | <b>valeranal</b> | %<br><b>3-16</b> |
| Monoterpenes   | camphene<br>pinenes                               | 8-14<br>8-12                     | Acids     | valerinic acid   |                  |
| Sesquiterpenes | <b>caryophyllene</b>                              | <b>30-38</b>                     |           |                  |                  |

#### **Properties:**

**Antispasmodic, calming, central nervous system depressant, sedative**, diuretic, bactericidal, carminative, hypotensive

#### **Precautions:**

Non-toxic, non-irritant

Can cause sensitisation in some individuals - caution with hypersensitive skin

Avoid in cases of depression due to the powerful sedative action

## ***Valeriana officinalis* - Valerianaceae**

### **Indications**

#### **Circulatory system**

Palpitations

#### **Musculo Skeletal System**

#### **Digestive System**

#### **Nervous System**

Nervous tension, anxiety, agitation, insomnia, restlessness, anger, irritation, hyperactivity

#### **Genito Urinary/Gynaecological**

#### **Respiratory System**

#### **Immune system**

#### **Skin/Hair**

Aid to meditation

### **Clinical Research**

The pharmacological properties of valerian oil were studied and the sedative components identified as being valerinic acid and the valeranal at low doses together with valeranone.

A Chinese clinical trial in 1994 used valerian oil to treat 82 coronary heart disease patients with angina pectoris - valerian was shown to decrease attack frequency and shorten the duration of angina when compared to a control group treated with another herbal substance - *Salvia multiorrhiza*. No toxic affects were found from valerian use.

### **Psychological uses**

Valerian root is widely used in herbal medicine as a powerful sedative and the oil can play a similar role. The main difficulty when using valerian is the unpleasant smell - this can make creating a blend that will be pleasing to the olfactory sense challenging. However, if this difficulty can be overcome, the vaporised oil is good for Nervous system headaches, emotional agitation and overactive thinking.

### **Summary**

Strong sedative