



ROYAL JELLY

Also Known As:

Bee Saliva, Bee Spit, Honey Bee Milk.

Scientific Name:

Apis mellifera (Honey Bee).
Family: Apidae.

People Use This For:

Orally, royal jelly is used for asthma, allergic rhinitis, liver disease, pancreatitis, insomnia, premenstrual syndrome (PMS), stomach ulcers, kidney disease, bone fractures, skin disorders, and hyperlipidemia. It is also used as a general health tonic, for rejuvenation, and potentiating the immune system.

Topically, royal jelly is used as a skin tonic and hair growth stimulant.

Safety:

POSSIBLY SAFE ...when used orally and appropriately, short-term. Taking 2 tablets twice daily of a specific combination product containing royal jelly 6 mg, bee pollen extract 36 mg, and bee pollen plus pistil extract 120 mg (Femal, Natumin Pharma) per tablet for up to 2 months seems to be safe (12008). It's not known if other royal jelly doses and formulations are safe.

PREGNANCY AND LACTATION: Insufficient reliable information available; avoid using.

Effectiveness:

INSUFFICIENT RELIABLE EVIDENCE to RATE

Hyperlipidemia. There is preliminary evidence that royal jelly might lower cholesterol levels in people with hyperlipidemia (3515).

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS). Preliminary evidence suggests that a specific combination product (Femal, Natumin Pharma) seems to decrease some symptoms of PMS including irritability, weight increases, and edema when given over a period of 2 menstrual cycles. This product contains royal jelly 6 mg, bee pollen extract 36 mg, and bee pollen plus pistil extract 120 mg per tablet. It is given as 2 tablets twice daily (12008).

More evidence is needed to rate royal jelly for these uses.

Mechanism of Action:

Royal jelly is a milky secretion produced by glands in the heads of nurse honey bees (*Apis mellifera*). The composition of royal jelly varies with geographical areas and climatic conditions. It typically contains about 60% to 70% water, 12% to 15% crude proteins, 10% to 16% sugar, 3% to 6% lipids, and 2% to 3% low molecular weight compounds such as vitamins, salts, and free amino acids (7313). Royal jelly is used for the development and nurturing of queen bees (6). There is very little scientific information available about its effects in humans. In animal models, royal jelly seems to have some antitumor activity (6) and antiatherogenic activity (3515).

Adverse Reactions:

Orally, royal jelly appears to cause few side effects in nonallergic people (7314). There is one report of dizziness in a patient who took a combination product containing royal jelly, bee pollen extract, and a bee pollen plus pistil extract (12008).

In people with a history of atopy or asthma, royal jelly appears to cause a high rate of allergic symptoms including pruritus, urticaria, eczema, eyelid and facial edema, conjunctivitis, rhinorrhea, dyspnea, and asthma (7314, 7315, 7316, 10623). In severe cases, royal jelly can cause status asthmaticus, anaphylaxis, and death (792, 7315, 7316, 10623, 10624). Allergic symptoms are associated with IgE-mediated hypersensitivity reactions (3513, 10623). Tell people with a history of allergy or asthma not to use royal jelly.

There is also one case report of hemorrhagic colitis with abdominal pain, bloody diarrhea with concomitant hemorrhagic and edematous mucosa of the sigmoid colon after ingestion of royal jelly. Symptoms resolved within 2 weeks following discontinuation of royal jelly and conservative treatment (3516).

Topically, skin irritation, exacerbation of dermatitis, or contact dermatitis may occur (791).

Interactions with Herbs & Supplements:

None known.

Interactions with Drugs:

WARFARIN (Coumadin)

Interaction Rating = **Moderate** Be cautious with this combination
Severity = High • Occurrence = Possible • Level of Evidence = D

Royal jelly might increase the effects of warfarin and increase the risk of bleeding. In one case, an 87-year-old man, who was previously stabilized on warfarin, developed hematuria and was found to have an highly elevated INR of 7.29 after taking a royal jelly supplement for a week (14303). How royal jelly might increase the effects of warfarin is not known.

Interactions with Foods:

None known.

Interactions with Lab Tests:

INTERNATIONAL NORMALIZED RATIO (INR), PROTHROMBIN TIME (PT): Royal jelly might increase INR and PT in patients anticoagulated with warfarin. In one case, an 87-year-old man, who was previously stabilized on warfarin, developed hematuria and was found to have an highly elevated INR of 7.29 after taking a royal jelly supplement for a week (14303).

Interactions with Diseases or Conditions:

ASTHMA: In patients with asthma or atopy, royal jelly causes a high rate of allergic symptoms including pruritus, urticaria, eczema, eyelid and facial edema, conjunctivitis, rhinorrhea, dyspnea, and asthma (7314, 7315, 7316, 10623). In severe cases, royal jelly can cause status asthmaticus, anaphylaxis, and death (792, 7315, 7316, 10623, 10624). Allergic symptoms have been associated with IgE-mediated hypersensitivity reactions (3513, 10623). Advise people with asthma or allergies not to use royal jelly.

ATOPY: In patients with asthma or atopy, royal jelly causes a high rate of allergic symptoms including pruritus, urticaria, eczema, eyelid and facial edema, conjunctivitis, rhinorrhea, dyspnea, and asthma (7314, 7315, 7316, 10623). In severe cases, royal jelly can cause status asthmaticus, anaphylaxis, and death (792, 7315, 7316, 10623, 10624). Allergic symptoms have been associated with IgE-mediated hypersensitivity reactions (3513, 10623). Advise people with asthma or allergies not to use royal jelly.

DERMATITIS: Royal jelly might exacerbate dermatitis; avoid using (791).

Dosage/Administration:

ORAL: For hyperlipidemia, 50-100 mg per day has been used (3515). For premenstrual syndrome (PMS), two tablets twice daily of a specific combination containing royal

jelly 6 mg, bee pollen extract 36 mg, and bee pollen plus pistil extract 120 mg (Femal, Natumin Pharma) per tablet for 2 menstrual cycles has been used (12008).

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