

### 3.2.2.3.6.11 Yohimbe compared

There are many misunderstandings about yohimbe.

A typical example is the book “Love Potions”, written by Cynthia Mervis Watson, MD together with Angela Hynes. That book discusses yohimbe side by side with alleged “aphrodisiacs” such as vanilla and licorice. The book is housewife literature.

Cynthia Mervis Watson, MD recommends a recipe named Filibuster Orgasmic: “One night I prepared this punch for a party but told no one what was in it. By the end of the evening, one normally reserved and long-married couple was kissing passionately in a corner. A friend called me the next day and said she’d been ‘all over’ her boyfriend on the way home; she asked what I’d put in the punch. This recipe calls for herbal tinctures that you will find at a health food store. A tip: you will get more juice out of your oranges if you dip them in hot water before squeezing them. Serves about 20: 2 bottles of white rum; 2/3 liter of dry white wine; 1 cup Triple Sec; Juice of 10 oranges; Juice of 6 lemons; 20-ounce can of pineapple chunks, drained; 1 cup of sugar; 2 vanilla beans, split; 2 nutmegs, ground; 2 ounces of Muira Puama tincture, preferably in a base of vegetable glycerin and alcohol; 1-2 ounces of damiana tincture; 2 whole oranges studded with gloves; A handful of fresh or dried rose petals.”

There are other recipes in the book. Some of them include yohimbe, others don’t. Those that include yohimbe will certainly work (if the yohimbe used contains the alkaloid yohimbine), and they will work only because there is yohimbine in it. Yohimbe bark (if it contains yohimbine) is not on one level with vanilla. It’s also not on one level with ginseng, muira puama, or damiana. Yohimbe is absolutely in a class of its own.

Muira puama and damiana are herbs, just as oregano or basil. Yohimbine, of course, is also of plant origin, but it’s a drug, just like aspirin, caffeine, cocaine, or heroin. Drugs have a LD50 value, the amount per test animal that it takes of a substance to kill half of the test animals. You can clearly overdose with drugs. But what is the LD50 value of oregano?

On the other hand, that it is so terribly effective is also the main

downside of yohimbe (the bark) or yohimbine (the pharmaceutical extract). Ideally, a drug ameliorates a condition, and apart from that, a patient isn't aware that he has taken a medication. That will never happen with yohimbe or yohimbine. You either take an effective dose, and then you will feel it on all of your body until the yohimbine will have cleared, or you don't take an effective dose, and then you don't have the sexual effect either.

For many people, yohimbe is bad. They only suffer negative side effects (nervousness, heart palpitations, anxiety, and more that points in the direction of LD50), without any sexual benefit.

While yohimbine has been around for more than a century, the Southeast Asian tongkat ali (*Eurycoma longifolia*) is new in the West. Apart from yohimbine, the *Eurycoma longifolia* glycoproteins are the only herbal aphrodisiac for which an efficacy has been documented by scientific studies that have been included with the Medline database.

The effect of tongkat ali is completely different from that of yohimbine. Tongkat ali works by stimulating testicular Leydig cells into shifting testosterone synthesis into higher gear, probably by acting as a human chorionic gonadotrophin agonist. Increased testosterone levels support libido.

Tongkat ali is not a substitute for sildenafil citrate if a man's problem is penile plumbing (erectile dysfunction). Rather, tongkat ali will facilitate mental sexual stimulation (libido). Libido stimulation will result in better and longer lasting erections, and cause erections to appear more frequently. If the penile plumbing leaks, as is often the case with older men, an erectile agent like sildenafil citrate or alprostadil gel will still be needed.

While the efficacy pathway of tongkat ali is entirely different from that of yohimbe bark, it shares the same distribution problem. Most of the yohimbe bark sold in capsules is worthless, and so is most of the tongkat ali sold in capsules.