



## DIETARY SUPPLEMENT FACT SHEET

<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/Wellness.aspx>

### Yohimbine (*Pausinystalia yohimbe*)

**Also known as:** Yohimbe, *Quebrachine*

**Historical Perspective:** Yohimbine is the major alkaloid found in the bark of the *Corynanthe yohimbe* tree indigenous to West Africa. Yohimbine is a monoamine oxidase inhibitor that stimulates an increase in norepinephrine release. The bark is used primarily as an aphrodisiac in Africa.

**Common Uses:** Used in tablet, capsule, and tincture form for increased serum testosterone levels, muscle growth and strength, weight loss, fatigue and sexual function. (Yohimbe has been studied as a way to reduce fatigue in AIDS patients and as a libido enhancer.)

**Potential Side Effects:** Yohimbine ingestion (4mg to 20 mg) has been associated with side effects including nervousness, insomnia, anxiety, urinary frequency, dizziness, tremors, headache, tachycardia, hypotension, hypertension, nausea and vomiting, bronchospasm and lupuslike syndrome.

**Food-Drug-Supplement Interactions:** Drugs such as phenothiazines enhance yohimbine toxicity. Nasal decongestants or diet products containing phenylpropanolamine should be avoided to prevent a hypertensive crisis.

**Contraindications:** Yohimbine is contraindicated in individuals with high or low blood pressure, bipolar disorder, existing liver and kidney disease, or patients who are pregnant or breast feeding or on tricyclic antidepressants.

**Research Data on Safety and Efficacy:** There are no long-term studies of yohimbine safety. Many studies have been conducted on yohimbine and sexual function but there is insufficient proof of efficacy

**Bottom-Line:** There is insufficient evidence to support yohimbine as an aphrodisiac or weight loss aid.

#### References:

1. Yohimbine: Accidental Discovery As Fatigue Treatment. *Aids Treatment News*, John S. James, 18 September 1992.
2. *The Health Professional's Guide to Popular Dietary Supplements*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Allison Sarubin Fragakis, MS, RD, The American Dietetic Association. 2003.