From the Hive: 
Propolis

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Uses and recipes

- Propolis is valuable both internally and externally. It has excellent antiseptic properties. It can be used either dry or as a tincture. Propolis should always be collected very carefully to avoid getting bits of wood and hive dirt mixed in with it. It should smell aromatic and pleasant and the small pieces collected should not be crushed together into a ball. Store it carefully in a clean dry container.
Propolis can be used for a wide range of problems.

- Fresh or powdered propolis can be chewed and swallowed for all types of stomach problems and sore throats. A small piece of propolis applied directly to the source of an aching tooth will relieve pain.

- Propolis can be chewed or gently warmed in hot water to become soft then applied to an affected part and covered with a clean dressing. It can be used this way for boils, ringworm, fungal infections especially on the fingers, and all sorts of wounds and sores.

- It is always most effective straight from the hive with no processing other than chewing or gentle warming to soften it. As well as its well known effects on stomach problems especially colitis and all sorts of skin and tooth problems, experiments suggest that propolis may have some effect against arthritis, respiratory problems such as asthma and bronchitis, as well as mitigating influenza and maintaining general health and well being.
Processing Propolis

• There are a number of ways that propolis can be processed. The most common for non industrial processes is to use alcohol to extract the key elements of propolis into a tincture. The propolis is soaked in alcohol for three weeks. This gives the maximum extraction of the most significant active elements of the propolis. If the propolis is for internal consumption the alcohol MUST be of suitable quality for internal consumption.

• Only the purest alcohol should be used. In general the higher the concentration of alcohol the more complete the extraction of the most significant active ingredients. To get the maximum extraction 70% or higher proof alcohol is needed. Four times the quantity of alcohol to propolis is required; i.e. for 250gms of propolis 1 liter of alcohol is required for the extraction. Some people find that applying a little heat helps with the extraction but in general it is best to avoid the use of heat as this may reduce the quality of the ingredients extracted.
The following information is from Gary’s Home Page at the University of Minnesota

• [http://www.tc.umn.edu/~reute001/htm-files/Propolis%20extract.html](http://www.tc.umn.edu/~reute001/htm-files/Propolis%20extract.html)
• **Making Propolis Extract**

This sheet will explain a method for extracting propolis for use. Propolis extract is made by dissolving propolis collected from honey bee colonies into alcohol and straining out the precipitate.

The best alcohol to use is 70% ethyl alcohol (also known as grain alcohol or Everclear). This would allow the tincture to be used internally or externally. You can use rubbing alcohol if the tincture will be used externally only.

Although rare some people are allergic to propolis so precautions should be taken. All precautions with regard to alcohol should be taken.

• **Propolis Extract Procedure**

1. Collect propolis from the bee hive. The propolis should be clean and free of wax, paint, wood etc. The propolis should be in small pieces. The smaller the better but no larger than a marble.
2. Determine the percentage propolis you want to extract. It is not recommended that concentrations higher than 30% be extracted. If you require a higher percentage, make a 30% extract and concentrate it as described below.
3. Place the proper amount of alcohol and propolis (see chart below) into a container and seal the top. Shake and store in a warm dark place. I put it in a brown bag on the counter.
4. Two or three times per day shake the container and return to warm dark place. Continue this for 2 weeks.
5. Filter the liquid through a coffee filter. The liquid is now ready for use.
Propolis Tincture Concentration Procedure

1. Make extract as above to a known percent. Find the percent you made above in column 1 in the chart below. Then in column 2 find the desired percent propolis. Follow across to column 3 to find the amount of extract to evaporate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>start extract %</th>
<th>desired %</th>
<th>% volume to reduce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>66.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have 10% extract and you want to have 40% you would have to let 75% of the alcohol evaporate. If you started with 1 cup, you would let it evaporate until you have 1/4 cup remaining.

2. Let the container set with the cover off until the correct amount is evaporated off. You can hurry it along by warming it up. Be careful because alcohol is flammable.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tincture</th>
<th>100% Alcohol</th>
<th>Propolis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grams</td>
<td>ml</td>
<td>Grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>892</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tincture</th>
<th>70% Alcohol</th>
<th>Propolis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grams</td>
<td>ml</td>
<td>Grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>834</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Charts for extraction using Metric measurements.

Charts for extraction using US measurements.
### Propolis Salve (3%)

1. Start by making a 30% extraction mixture.
2. Mix 1 part extract with 9 parts petroleum jelly by weight. Start with extract and slowly mix in the petroleum jelly. You can liquefy the jelly by heating in a double boiler but you must continue to stir until it solidifies or the propolis will settle to the bottom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>oz. petroleum jelly</th>
<th>oz propolis extract (30%)</th>
<th>teaspoons propolis extract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>0.19444</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.41667</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>0.83333</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.44444</td>
<td>10.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An additional method

Propolis Preparation
• Remove waxy layer. Pour off water.
• Place container in freezer, chip frozen granules from container and crush. Spread on paper towel to dry. Store in sealed container.

Propolis Tincture
• Measure granules and add equal measure of 96 proof vodka. Heat closed bottle in 200°F oven and shake bottle every 30 minutes. Maintain heat until dissolved.
• Strain through filter cloth, paper towel or nylon stocking. Put in dropper bottles and label.

Propolis Ointment
1 tablespoon beeswax
4 tablespoon FGMO (food grade mineral oil - a distillate of petroleum and will dissolve propolis) Can substitute almond oil and add Vitamin E.
1 tablespoon propolis granules
1 tablespoon honey
Melt the ingredients in a microwave or make a small double boiler by placing a can in boiling water. Stir until it cools.

Propolis Salve
Melt together:
1 oz beeswax
8 oz oil of choice
Let it cool until around 110 degrees
Wisk in:
2 Tbs Propolis Powder
10 drops vitamin E oil
15 - 30 drops of healing Essential Oils
Powdered Propolis can be gritty, so fiddle around to get a smooth consistency.
Suggested uses

• For toothache, boils, infections etc apply a few drops straight from the bottle.

• For stomach and other internal ailments put 1-2 mls into a cup. Fill with hot water, add a spoon of honey and drink before bedtime.

The following recipes uses small tomato paste cans as an easy measure. A double boiler can be made from a large tin can such as a milk powder can placed in small pot of boiling water over the fire until the ingredient is warmed or melted.
Propolis ointment (1)

- Two teaspoons of powdered or one teaspoon of fresh propolis. ½ can measure of Vaseline. Dissolve the propolis in the tomato paste can in boiling water (using the double boiler technique). When dissolved add the Vaseline and heat until melted. Leave to cool and set. When cool stir well to ensure the propolis is well mixed. Pack into small pots while it is still soft to store or sell.
Propolis ointment (2)
• Take one measure of 10% propolis extract and 9 measures of Vaseline or similar base material.
• Gently heat to reduce the amount of alcohol to one third giving a 30% concentration of propolis. Mix thoroughly with a small quantity of the Vaseline then incorporate the remainder of the Vaseline to get a homogenous mixture. Heating gently using a double boiler and adding 10% lanolin or glycerine will make it easier to mix. Pack into small pots while it is still liquid to store or sell.