

Shoots are used in folk remedies for tumors in India, the seed for cancerous sores in China.<sup>4</sup> Reported to be abortifacient, aphrodisiac, CNS-stimulant, laxative, nervine, POISON, stimulant, stomachic, tonic, and vasoconstrictor, nux-vomica is a folk remedy for ague, alcoholism, amblyopia, anemia, arthritis, asthma, cancer, cholera, chorea, colic, cynanche, diphtheria, dyspepsia, dysentery, epilepsy, fever, itch, jaundice, laryngitis, laryngeal paralysis, lumbago, malaria, myocarditis, neuralgia, neurasthenia, ophthalmia, paralysis, polio, rheumatism, snakebite, sores, sore throat, swellings, tumors, typhoid, and ulcers.<sup>16,32,33</sup> Also, used in homeopathy. The seed is prescribed as bitter stomachic, nerve tonic, and spinal stimulant for abdominal enlargements, ague, fever, laryngitis, laryngo-paralysis, and other throat ailments. Seed powder blown into the throat for cynache. Introduced to the vagina for abortion in China. Kills parasites, heals feverish stomach, draws small wounds together.<sup>41</sup>

Per 100 g, the fruits of related "edible" species are reported to contain *circa* 72 calories, 70 to 80 g H<sub>2</sub>O, 1.6 g protein, 0.6 g fat, 17.1 g total carbohydrate, 0.6 g fiber, 1.0 g ash, 28 mg Ca, 42 mg P, 0.7 mg Fe, 0.11 mg thiamine, 0.17 mg riboflavin, 1.9 mg niacin, and 18 mg ascorbic acid (data mostly from *Strychnos spinosa*).<sup>21</sup> Nux-vomica is said to contain *circa* 1.2% strychnine, 1.6% brucine (the sulphate of which was selling for about \$170/kg, December 31, 1982), struxine, vomicine, alpha- and beta-colubrine, loganin, and chlorogenic acid.<sup>17</sup> *Hager's Handbook* adds stigmaterol, cylcoartenol, beta-amyrin, choline, a mucilage which hydrolyzes to 5:2:1:1 galactose, mannose, xylose, arabinose. Seed contains 4 to 5% oil with 0.9% C<sub>8</sub>C<sub>10</sub>C<sub>14</sub>, 12.6% C<sub>6</sub>, 6.6% C<sub>18</sub>, 7% C<sub>20</sub>, 1.7% C<sub>22</sub>, 62% oleic-, and 9% linoleic-acids.<sup>33</sup> Leaves contain 1.6% brucine + strychnine, 0.025% strychnicine.<sup>1</sup>

**Toxicity** — Even *Herbal Highs* handles this one carefully, "the margin between useful and dangerous (usually lethal) doses is very narrow."<sup>51</sup> Fatal to man at doses of 30 to 90 mg.<sup>1,11</sup> Toxic doses cause characteristic tetanus, spasmodic respiration, violent changes in blood pressure. Death occurs from asphyxia and the paralysis which follows the stimulations.<sup>41</sup>

**To the physician** — Treatment should be aimed to prevent convulsions (rectal sodium bromide, oral chloroform or barbituates, chloroform inhalation) and to support respiration (endotracheal intubation followed by curariiform drugs in small doses). Gastric lavage to remove any residual poison. A 1:1000 potassium permanganate solution is an effective antidote.<sup>1</sup>