

Chumash Treatments for Stress and Anxiety

James Adams, Pauline Fontaine and Cecilia Garcia

Stress is a constant problem in our society with many people turning to alcohol and other self medications for relief. Anxiety attacks are a problem for many people and can seriously hinder the ability of some people to lead productive lives. Typically, diazepam and similar drugs are prescribed to help with anxiety attacks and can be very helpful. However, these drugs are addictive with serious withdrawal syndromes. In the Chumash village, people had to be productive, since each person was vital to the survival of the village. People with anxiety attacks are treated with sagebrush tea in the evening. California sagebrush, *Artemisia californica*, needles are collected and used fresh. About a teaspoon of needles are placed in a cup and a half of water with a stick of cinnamon. The water is brought to a simmer and removed from the heat. Over weight people should use half a teaspoon of sagebrush needles, since sagebrush can produce a strong reaction in them. At the same time, seven yerba santa leaves, *Eriodictyon crassifolium*, and seven California jimson weed leaves, *Datura wrightii*, are put in a quart and a half of water and allowed to boil moderately. Drink the sagebrush tea while vaporizing over the yerba santa and California jimson weed steam. The next step, that evening, is a massage with olive oil containing a leaf of white sage, *Salvia apiana*, and a leaf of California tobacco, *Nicotiana quadrivalvis*. If California tobacco is not available, a pinch of commercially available tobacco can be used. The massage should especially treat the areas under the arms and below the butt. A gallon glass jar should be filled with fresh water every morning, and add a fresh, white sage leaf. Use this water for drinking and cooking all day, every day. For the next ten to sixteen days, drink a cup of hot chocolate containing a white sage leaf and a mugwort leaf, *Artemisia douglasiana*, every night before bed. It is best to use a traditional chocolate such as Chocolate Ibarra. Heat a cup and a half of water to boiling. Remove it from the heat. Melt two or three tablespoons, two or three wedges, of the chocolate in the water with a whisk. Add the white sage and mugwort leaves to this and steep for a few minutes. For the remainder of the month, put a stick of cinnamon in a cup and a half of water and heat to a simmer. Remove from the heat and add a leaf of white sage. Allow to steep for five minutes before drinking. One month of treatment is needed to relieve anxiety attacks. Over weight people may need to be treated longer than a month. Keep white sage in your life by adding a leaf to your water bottle everyday.

Cecilia Garcia is a Chumash Healer (chumashmedicinewoman.com). James Adams is an Associate Professor in the USC School of Pharmacy. Pauline Fontaine is a Pharmacy Student from Lille, France. Cecilia Garcia and James Adams have written a book "Healing with medicinal plants of the west – cultural and scientific basis for their use" that is available in bookstores, at amazon.com and at abeduspress.com (\$14.95 + tax and shipping).