Nutmeg Encyclopedia Article

Nutmeg

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Nutmeg

Nutmeg, the common spice obtained from the aromatic seed of the tree *Myristica fragrans* (native to the Moluccas, the spice islands of the East Indies), has been used for centuries for food and medicinal purposes. It has some HALLUCINOGENIC activity when consumed in large amounts. Since nutmeg is found in most kitchens, including food-preparation areas found in prisons, it has been used by prisoners. Therefore, it has been removed from ready access in prisons to the tighter control of drugs of abuse; Malcolm X wrote about such use.

Figure 1 *Nutmeg*

Nutmeg contains elemicin and myristicin, whose structures have some similarities to the hallucinogen MESCALINE as well as to the Psychostimulant AMPHETAMINE. It has been hypothesized that elemicin and myristicin might be metabolized in the body to form an amphetamine-and/or mescaline-like compound, but this has not been proven. The effects of nutmeg have been reported to have some similarities to those produced by MARIJUANA; however, the large amounts of nutmeg that must be ingested to get behavioral effects can cause dry mouth and thirst, increases in heart rate, vomiting and abdominal pain, severe headaches, agitation, and panic attacks.

See Also

Lysergic Acid Diethylamide and Psychedelics; Plants, Drugs From)

Bibliography

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