

Folk Medicine

The aerial part of *Pistacia lentiscus* is used in some regions of Spain as a popular cure for hypertension (Villar *et al.*, 1987). In Tunisia, the plant is used as treatment against various pains and rheumatism (Lemordant *et al.*, 1977). The resin of *Pistacia lentiscus* has been widely used for its antiulcer activity, to treat catarrh and as a stimulant. The aerial parts have been also used in folk medicine for their antihypertensive action (Bonsignore *et al.*, 1998b). *Pistacia lentiscus* is valued because it is the source of mastic gum, which has been widely used to strengthen gums, deodorize breath, combat diarrhea and tuberculosis, etc. (Fernández *et al.*, 2000). The mastic resin was used in ancient Egypt as incense and to embalm the dead. It has also been used as a preservative and a breath sweetener. Mastic oil was also mentioned in Dioskourides in ancient Grecian times and by Christopher Columbus in 1493 (Drugs.com, mastic, 2012). Commercial application of mastic resin includes its use as an adherent, in protecting luster from glass, porcelain, bone, wood, and metal. Mastic resin is used in alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, in some cosmetic mixtures and perfumery, and in dentistry as a filling material ingredient and in toothpaste production. The resin has been used traditionally as a chewing gum and for use against lip dryness (Duru *et al.* 2003). In Turkey, the leaves are used in eczema treatment, paralyses, diarrhea, throat infections, renal stones, jaundice, asthma, stomachache, as stringent, anti-inflammatory, antipyretic, pectoral and stimulant (Kordali *et al.*, 2003; Kılıç and Akay, 2005). Bark of *Pistacia lentiscus* has been widely used as a traditional folk medicine against hypertension in some regions of Spain (Kordali *et al.*, 2003; Wyllie *et al.*, 1990). The plant is used as analgesic, sedative and for treatment of peptic ulcer (Eskander *et al.*, 1995). The fat extracted from *Pistacia lentiscus* fruits is consumed in food and also used as raw material in soap production in some regions of Turkey (Tuzlaci and Aymaz, 2001).

The resin obtained from *Pistacia lentiscus* var. *chia* is a gum mastic or masticha. Gum mastic is used in cosmetics and perfumery, as a flavouring in food technology and for its antimicrobial activity, especially against *Helicobacter pylori* (Baytop, 1984; Kılıç and Akay, 2005).