

PRIME ORGANICS HONEY

FREE HANDBOOK

Reading the Rock

How to tell real shilajit from an expensive jar of tar

A buyer's handbook, written by people who sell the stuff

Resin, powder, capsule or gummy. How to read a certificate of analysis. Why the fulvic percentage is usually invented. What the research actually covers, and a four week trial that gives you a real answer.

Written by a seller, which you should hold against us

We sell shilajit gummies. This handbook says a gummy is the least dense format on the shelf and that resin is the closer thing to the raw material. Both of those are true and you were going to find out anyway.

The reason this book exists is that the shilajit conversation online is not really about whether it works. It is about whether what you bought is what it says it is. Whole communities do nothing but read lab reports at each other, because this is a material dug out of rock and the contamination problem is real rather than imagined.

Almost nobody sells you the skill of reading those reports, because the skill is inconvenient for sellers. So that is most of what this is.

How to use it. Read the formats chapter and the lab report chapter before you buy anything from anyone. Then use the four week protocol to find out whether it does anything for you specifically, which is a question no guide can answer on your behalf.

This handbook is educational and is not medical advice. It does not diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Nothing here has been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. Shilajit interacts with medication and is not appropriate for everyone. Talk to a doctor before you start, and do not use it to replace advice you have already been given.

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Why shilajit has a trust problem

In this category the argument is not really about whether it works. It is about whether the jar contains what the label says.

Read the shilajit communities for an hour and the pattern is unmistakable. The efficacy threads are short and hedged. The purity threads run for hundreds of comments, with strangers comparing detection limits and arguing about assay methods like it is a hobby, which for some of them it now is.

There is a good reason for that. Shilajit seeps out of rock. Whatever the rock carried, the raw material carries, and that includes lead, arsenic, cadmium and mercury. Purification is not a marketing step in this category, it is the entire safety story, and it is the step easiest to skip quietly.

So the community built its own defence. They learned to ask for certificates, to check for lot numbers, to distrust a percentage with no lab attached. That is a rational response to a market that earned it.

The practical version. Before you compare two shilajit products on price, compare them on whether either seller will show you a current batch report. Very often that question ends the comparison on its own.

The four formats, rated

Every format trades something away. The useful question is which trade suits you, not which one a seller is standing next to.

What follows is one page per format, including ours, with the part we would rather you did not notice written down in the same size type as the rest.

FORMAT	TRADES AWAY
Resin	Dose accuracy and taste, in exchange for the least processed material.
Powder	Visibility of the carrier, in exchange for easier handling.
Capsule	All visibility, in exchange for convenience.
Gummy	Density per serving, in exchange for the highest chance you finish the jar.

The trade that matters most is the one nobody prices in. An extract abandoned in week two has an effect size of zero, whatever its lab report says.

Resin

The purist's choice

Best raw material, worst compliance.

What it is

A sticky, tar-like mass sold in a jar. You dig out a portion the size of a grain of rice and dissolve it.

What it does well

Closest to the raw purified material. Nothing has been added to bulk it out, and you can see what you bought.

What it costs you

Dosing is genuinely difficult. A rice grain is a guess, portions vary enormously between users, and the taste is the single most common reason people quit. Resin is also the format most often sold unpurified, which is where the heavy metal problem actually lives.

Powder

The middle ground

Fine if the ratio is stated. Unverifiable if it is not.

What it is

Resin dried and milled, sometimes on a carrier like maltodextrin.

What it does well

Easier to measure than resin and cheaper to ship.

What it costs you

The carrier is where the bulking happens. A powder that does not state the extract ratio is telling you nothing about how much shilajit is actually in the scoop.

Capsule

The convenient one

Convenience bought with visibility.

What it is

Powder in a shell, usually 300 to 500mg.

What it does well

No taste, exact dose, easy to travel with.

What it costs you

You are trusting the label completely, because you can no longer see or taste the material. Capsules are the easiest format in which to hide a poor extract.

Gummy

What we sell

Best compliance, lowest density. Honest trade, and you should know you are making it.

What it is

Extract suspended in a chewable base, usually with a sweetener and a fruit flavour.

What it does well

The only format most people actually finish. Compliance is not a small point: an extract you abandon in week two has an effect size of zero, whatever the lab report says.

What it costs you

Lower extract per serving than a resin dose, and the base is sugar or a sugar alcohol. If you want the highest possible milligram count per serving, this is not the format for that.

The resin argument, honestly

The most defended belief in this category is that resin is the real thing. Here is the part that is right and the part that is not.

Where the resin reputation came from, and why it is partly earned

Resin is the least processed format, and for a material dug out of rock that genuinely matters. When the supply chain is short and the seller purifies properly, resin is the closest thing to the traditional material. That part of the belief is correct and we are not going to argue with it.

Where it stops being true

Least processed also means least controlled. The heavy metal failures that made this category famous were overwhelmingly resin, because unpurified resin carries whatever the rock carried. A gummy from a tested batch is a safer purchase than an untested jar of resin, every single time.

The dose nobody measures

A rice grain is not a unit. Studies on the ingredient use stated milligram doses. If you are eyeballing resin twice a day, you do not know your dose within a factor of two, which means you cannot compare your experience to anyone else's or to any study.

The format that gets finished wins

Across the forums the most common reason men stop taking shilajit is the taste, not the price and not the absence of an effect. An extract you take for four weeks beats a better extract you abandon in nine days.

What we are actually claiming

Not that a gummy is stronger than resin. It is not. We are claiming that a tested extract you will still be taking in week four is the version that has a chance of doing anything for you.

Fulvic acid and the invented number

The headline spec on every shilajit label, and the one most often made up.

The percentage is the most invented number in the category

Fulvic acid content is the headline spec, which is exactly why it is the one most often inflated. There is no single agreed assay, so two honest labs can return different numbers for the same jar, and a dishonest seller can pick whichever method flatters them.

A lower number from a named lab beats a higher number from nobody

Men in the shilajit subreddits worked this out the hard way. Treat an unsourced 80% as a marketing claim and a lab-reported 20% as information.

Watch for the method

A credible report names the assay it used. If the certificate gives a percentage with no method, you cannot compare it to anything, including the product next to it on the shelf.

Fulvic is not the whole story anyway

Shilajit is a mixture. Fulvic acid is the marker everyone standardised on because it is measurable, not because it was proven to be the active part.

How to read a lab report

Five checks. Learn these and you can evaluate any seller in this category in about ninety seconds.

Ask for it, in writing, tied to a lot number

A certificate of analysis reports on one specific batch. A COA with no lot number cannot be matched to the jar in your hand and is decoration.

ICP-MS is the method you want to see

Inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry is the standard for trace metals. If the report does not name a method, that absence is the finding.

Read the heavy metals block first

Lead, arsenic, cadmium, mercury. For a material that comes out of rock this is not an optional section, and it is the reason this category has the reputation it has.

Non-detect is honest, a flat zero is not

Non-detect means below the lab's detection limit, and that is the correct way to report it. A certificate claiming absolute zero is telling you the seller wrote it, not the lab.

Check the date

A four year old report on a product you are buying today covers a batch that no longer exists.

Where it comes from, and why that matters less than you think

Origin is the most marketed and least verifiable thing on a shilajit label.

Altai, Russia and Kazakhstan

Lower altitude, colder, and the source of a large share of what is sold in the West. Often excellent, and often the region named on a label whether or not the material came from there.

Himalaya and Karakoram

The traditional and most marketed origin, spanning several countries with very different regulation. Origin here tells you less than the batch report does.

Gilgit-Baltistan

High altitude, small scale, and the region most often named when a seller is genuinely proud of a single source. Also the most imitated claim, for the same reason.

Why origin is the weakest signal on the label

There is no origin certification anyone audits. A region is a marketing input. A lot-numbered ICP-MS report is a verifiable one. When they conflict, believe the document.

The one origin question worth asking

Not 'where is it from' but 'is it single source or blended'. Blending across regions is common, it is not dishonest, and it makes any origin story on the front of the jar approximate at best.

The four metals, one page

You do not need to be a chemist. You need to know which four words to look for and what a good report does with them.

Lead

The one that made this category famous. There is no benefit to any amount, so what you want on a report is non-detect or a figure well under the limit your market sets.

Arsenic

Naturally present in soil and rock, so trace amounts are expected. Look for the report to distinguish total from inorganic arsenic where it can, because inorganic is the one that matters.

Cadmium

Accumulates in the body and clears slowly, which is why the limits are strict relative to how little you see.

Mercury

Usually the least problematic of the four in a mineral product, and still worth confirming rather than assuming.

How to judge the numbers without being a chemist

You do not need to know the limits by heart. You need the report to state a limit and show the result under it. A report with results and no limits is asking you to do the work it should have done.

Six red flags

You will keep being sold to after you close this book. These are the tells.

A percentage with no lab and no method

The single most common tell. If nobody is named, nobody is accountable.

Photos of mountains instead of documents

Every seller has a mountain photo. Very few have a current batch report. Notice which one you were shown.

Claims about testosterone with a number attached

Human evidence on shilajit is thin. Any seller quoting you a precise percentage lift is quoting a study that either does not exist or does not say what they claim.

Traditional use presented as clinical evidence

Long traditional use is a real reason to investigate something. It is not a trial result, and a seller who blurs the two is doing it deliberately.

No stated dose

If the label will not tell you milligrams per serving, you cannot compare it to anything and neither can we.

A brand with no 'not for you'

Shilajit is genuinely wrong for several groups, listed later in this book. A seller who names none of them has not thought about you.

What the research actually covers

The honest state of the evidence, including the part that does not flatter us.

What exists

Compositional analyses describing fulvic and humic content, trace minerals and dibenzo-alpha-pyrones. Small human studies, mostly on fatigue and on male fertility markers, in modest sample sizes.

What does not exist

Large, replicated, well-controlled human trials of the kind that would let anyone promise you an outcome. Anyone who tells you otherwise is selling harder than the literature allows.

What that means for you

Shilajit is a reasonable thing to try and an unreasonable thing to expect a documented result from. Treat it as an experiment with an honest timeline, which is what the protocol at the back of this book is for.

Why we are telling you this on our own product's guide

Because you can read, and because the first time a seller overstates the evidence you stop believing the rest of what they say. We would rather you trusted the parts that are true.

Dosing and timing

Most bad first experiences in this category are dose problems, not product problems.

Start low and hold it

Whatever the format, start at the low end of the label and stay there for two weeks before you judge it. Most of the bad first experiences in this category are dose problems.

Morning, with water

Most men take it in the morning. Reports of disturbed sleep from late dosing are common enough to be worth avoiding, and there is no reason to take it at night.

Consistency beats size

Daily at a modest dose reads better across the forums than a large dose taken when remembered.

Cycle if you feel it fading

Four to six weeks on, one to two weeks off is the common pattern. There is no trial telling you to do this, it is accumulated user practice and we are labelling it as such.

Do not stack it with three new things

If you add shilajit alongside two other new supplements you have learned nothing about any of them.

How to compare two products in five steps

The maths sellers would rather you did not run, in the order that makes it quick.

Convert everything to cost per serving

Jar size and serving size differ wildly across formats. Price per jar is not a comparison, price per serving is.

Then convert to cost per stated milligram

A cheap serving at a third of the extract is not cheaper. If a seller will not state milligrams, you cannot run this step, which is itself the answer.

Weigh in the finish rate, honestly

If you know you will not take resin daily, its cost per serving is theoretical. Price the version you will actually use.

Discount anything you cannot verify

An unsourced percentage should count as zero in your comparison, not as the number printed.

Buy the smallest size first

Whatever the per unit maths says. You are buying an answer about your own body before you buy a supply.

The ninety second seller test

Eight questions. Run them on any shilajit seller, including us, before you spend anything.

- ✓ Ask for the current certificate of analysis. Not a policy page, the document.
- ✓ Check it carries a lot number, and that the lot matches what you are being sold.
- ✓ Check the date. Anything older than the batch in front of you is irrelevant.
- ✓ Find the heavy metals block. Confirm it names limits, not just results.
- ✓ Confirm the method is named. ICP-MS for the metals, and some stated assay for fulvic.
- ✓ Read the fulvic percentage last, and only trust it if a lab is named beside it.
- ✓ Check the label states milligrams per serving. If it does not, you cannot compare it to anything.
- ✓ Look for a 'who should not take this' section. Its absence tells you how much thought went in.

If a seller fails step one, you can stop. Everything after it depends on a document that does not exist.

What to take it with

One real caution, one genuinely better purchase, and the mistake that wastes a whole month.

Creatine

Far better evidenced than shilajit for anything performance related, and cheap. If you are building a stack from scratch, this belongs in it before we do.

Magnesium

Works on sleep, and sleep is where most energy complaints actually live. No interaction to worry about.

Iron

The one real caution. Shilajit carries iron, so do not stack it with an iron supplement unless a blood test told you to take one.

Caffeine

Fine together. Just do not start both habits in the same week or you will not know which did what.

Everything at once

The most common mistake. Four new things in one week produces a feeling and zero information.

What to expect and when

Written down so you stop checking on day three, and so you actually stop at week four if nothing has happened.

WINDOW	WHAT IS REASONABLE
Week 1	Usually nothing. If something changes on day two, that is worth noting but it is not a result yet.
Weeks 2 to 3	The window where men who respond usually start reporting steadier energy through the afternoon.
Week 4	The honest decision point. Compare against the baseline you wrote down, not against how you feel today.
Beyond	If four weeks of consistent dosing changed nothing measurable, it is not working for you. Stop, and put the money somewhere with better evidence.

The rule that saves money. If four consistent weeks changed nothing you can point to in writing, it is not working for you. Stop. That is a real result, not a failure.

Who should not take it

Six situations. The last one is the actual risk in this category and it is not theoretical.

- ✗ Anyone pregnant or breastfeeding. There is no safety data that would justify it.
- ✗ Men with haemochromatosis or any iron overload condition. Shilajit carries iron.
- ✗ Anyone with gout or a history of raised uric acid, which is a documented caution.
- ✗ People on blood pressure, blood thinning or diabetes medication who have not cleared it with a prescriber.
- ✗ Anyone buying unpurified raw resin off a marketplace with no batch report. That is the actual risk in this category, and it is not theoretical.
- ✗ Anyone expecting it to replace sleep, food or training. It will lose that fight every time.

Say this plainly. Shilajit carries iron and has a documented caution around uric acid. If either of those words means something in your medical history, this is a conversation with a doctor before it is a purchase.

The four week protocol

One variable, four weeks, a written baseline. It is the only way to get an answer you can trust about your own body.

Week 1 • Baseline, no shilajit

- ✓ Write down energy 1 to 10 at 10am, 3pm and 8pm, every day.
- ✓ Fix your wake time and hold it, including the weekend.
- ✓ Change nothing else. You are building the number you will judge against.
- ✓ Read the COA for whatever you bought. If there is not one, that is your first finding.

Week 2 • Start, low dose

- ✓ Begin at the low end of the label. One serving, morning, with water.
- ✓ Do not add anything else this week.
- ✓ Keep scoring three times a day.
- ✓ Note taste, stomach and sleep, which is where early problems show up first.

Weeks three and four

Week 3 • Hold

- ✓ Same dose, same time. Resist the urge to increase it.
- ✓ If you are going to feel a difference, this is usually the window.
- ✓ Keep training and sleep steady so they are not confounders.

Week 4 • Decide

- ✓ Compare week 4 scores against week 1. Look at the pattern, not one good day.
- ✓ No measurable change across two weeks means it is not working for you.
- ✓ If it is working, that is when a bigger pack starts making sense, and not before.

Buy the small size first. Work out whether it does anything for you before you buy a quarter of it. A seller telling you to start with the biggest pack is optimising their order value, not your answer.

The tracker

Print it, or use the Notion version that came with it. Score three fixed times a day. The pattern is the data, never a single day.

Two weeks fits on this page. Week one is your baseline, so take nothing while you fill it in.

Questions buyers actually ask

Is resin better than a gummy?

Resin is the denser raw material. A gummy is the one most people actually finish. If you will genuinely take resin daily for a month, take resin. Most men do not, which is the whole reason our format exists.

Why does it taste like that?

That is the material, not a fault. It is the most common reason men quit resin, and the reason flavoured formats exist at all.

How much fulvic acid should I look for?

Look for a number with a lab and a method attached. A sourced 20% is worth more than an unsourced 80%.

Can I take it with coffee?

Yes. There is no interaction worth worrying about, and morning dosing suits most people.

Will it raise my testosterone?

We are not going to tell you that. The human evidence is too thin to support the claim, and any seller quoting you a percentage is quoting something that does not say what they say it says.

How long before I know?

Four weeks of consistent dosing, judged against a written baseline. Anything shorter is guesswork.

Sources and honest limits

Search terms rather than links, so they keep working and so you see the whole literature instead of the one paper we would have picked.

- ✓ Shilajit composition and fulvic acid: search PubMed for 'shilajit composition fulvic acid'.
- ✓ Shilajit and fatigue: search PubMed for 'shilajit fatigue' and 'shilajit chronic fatigue'.
- ✓ Shilajit and male fertility markers: search PubMed for 'shilajit spermatogenesis' and 'shilajit male infertility'.
- ✓ Heavy metal contamination in shilajit: search PubMed for 'shilajit heavy metals' and 'mineral pitch contamination'.
- ✓ Uric acid caution: search PubMed for 'shilajit uric acid'.
- ✓ ICP-MS for trace metals in supplements: search for 'ICP-MS dietary supplement heavy metals method'.
- ✓ Every reference above is to research on the **INGREDIENT**, in its own dosing and format. None of it studied a finished product, and none of it studied Shilajit Gold Gummies.

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The format you will still be taking in week four

Shilajit Gold Gummies exist because most men do not finish a jar of resin. That is the entire argument, and it is the one we can actually defend.

Read chapter five first and hold us to it. If a seller will not show you a current batch report with a lot number on it, that includes us, do not buy from them.

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