

elixir

See also: **elixír**, **élixir** and **elíxir**

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Etymology

From Medieval Latin *elixir*, from Arabic **الْإِكْسِير** (*al-ʾiksīr*), from Ancient Greek **ξηρόιον** (*xēríon*, “medicinal powder”), from **ξηρός** (*xērós*, “dry”).

Pronunciation

- IPA^(key): /ɪˈlɪksə(ɹ)/, /ə-/ , /-ɪə(ɹ)/
- Rhymes: -ɪksə(ɹ)

Noun

elixir (*plural elixirs*)

1. (*alchemy*) A liquid which converts lead to gold.

- **2002**, Philip Ball, *The Elements: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford 2004, p. 59:

For Chinese alchemists, gold held the key to the **Elixir**, the Eastern equivalent of the Philosopher's Stone.

2. (*alchemy*) A substance or liquid which is believed to cure all ills and give eternal life.

3. (*by extension*) The alleged cure for all ailments; cure-all, panacea.

- **2015**, The Boston Globe, Steven Pinker, *The moral imperative for bioethics* (<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2015/07/31/the-moral-imperative-for-bioethics/JmEkoyzITAu9oQV76JrK9N/story.html>):

The silver-bullet cancer cures of yesterday's newsmagazine covers, like interferon and angiogenesis inhibitors, disappointed the breathless expectations, as have **elixirs** such as antioxidants, Vioxx, and hormone replacement therapy.

4. (*pharmacy*) A sweet flavored liquid (usually containing a small amount of alcohol) used in compounding medicines to be taken by mouth in order to mask an unpleasant taste.

Derived terms

- elixir of life

Translations

alchemy: liquid which was believed to turn non-precious metals to gold

- Arabic: اَلْكِسِيْر *m* (ʾiksīr)
- Catalan: elixir *m*
- Chinese:
 - Mandarin: 鍊金藥, 炼金药 (liànjīnyào)
- Danish: eliksir *n*
- Finnish: eliksiiri (*fi*)
- Georgian: ელექსირი (eleksiri)
- German: Elixier (*de*) *n*
- Greek: ἐλιξήριο (*el*) *n* (elixírio)
- Hungarian: elixír (*hu*)
- Italian: elisir (*it*) *m*
- Japanese: エリクサー (erikusā)
- Korean: 엘릭서 (ellikseo)
- Portuguese: elixir (*pt*) *m*
- Russian: эликсир (*ru*) *m* (eliksír)
- Spanish: elixir (*es*) *m*
- Turkish: eliksir (*tr*)

liquid which is believed to cure all ills

- Chinese:
 - Mandarin: 仙丹 (*zh*) (xiāndān), 萬能藥, 万能药 (wànnéngyào)
- Danish: eliksir *n*
- Dutch: elixer (*nl*)
- Finnish: eliksiiri (*fi*)
- Georgian: ელექსირი (eleksiri)
- German: Elixier (*de*) *n*, Zauberkranz *m*, Heilmittel (*de*) *n*
- Greek: ἐλιξήριο (*el*) *n* (elixírio)
- Hungarian: elixír (*hu*)
- Italian: elisir (*it*) *m*
- Japanese: 万能藥 (bannōyaku)
- Persian: اَكْسِيْر (*fa*) (eksir)
- Portuguese: elixir (*pt*) *m*
- Russian: эликсир (*ru*) *m* (eliksír), панаце́я (*ru*) *f* (panacéja)
- Scottish Gaelic: brìgh *f*, ìocshlaint *f*
- Spanish: elixir (*es*) *m*
- Turkish: eliksir (*tr*)

- Hindi: अमृत (hi) 𑂔 (amṛt)

pharmacy: sweet taste-masking liquid

- Danish: eliksir 𑂔
- Dutch: elixer (nl) 𑂔
- Finnish: eliksiiri (fi) 𑂔
- French: élixir (fr) 𑂔
- Georgian: ელექსირი (eleksiri)
- German: Elixier (de) 𑂔, Heilmittel (de) 𑂔
- Greek: ἐλιξήριο (el) 𑂔 (elixírio)
- Italian: elisir (it) 𑂔
- Japanese: エリクシル (erikushiru), エリキシル (erikishiru)
- Portuguese: elixir (pt) 𑂔
- Russian: эликсир (ru) 𑂔 (eliksír)
- Turkish: eliksir (tr)

The translations below need to be checked and inserted above into the appropriate translation tables, removing any numbers. Numbers do not necessarily match those in definitions. See instructions at Wiktionary:Entry layout#Translations.

Translations to be checked

- Arabic: اكسير ('iksīr)
- Hebrew: אֵלִיִּיר, אֵלִיִּיר, אֵלִיִּיר
- Korean: 연금술의 영액 (yeon-geumsul-ui yeong-aek)
- Latin: (please verify) elixir 𑂔, (please verify) elixirium 𑂔
- Slovak: (please verify) elixír 𑂔
- Swedish: elixir 𑂔

Asturian

Verb

elixir

1. to choose
2. to elect

Synonyms

- escoyer

Dutch

Etymology

From Medieval Latin *elixir*, from Arabic الإكسير (*al-ʾiksīr*), from Ancient Greek ξηρόν (*xērion*, “medicinal powder”), from ξηρός (*xērós*, “dry”)

Pronunciation

- Audio (file)

- Hyphenation: elixir

Noun

elixir *n̄* (plural **elixirs**, diminutive **elixirtje** *n̄*)

1. elixir

Synonyms

- elixer

Derived terms

- maagelixir
-

Portuguese

Noun

elixir *m̄* (plural **elixires**)

1. (*alchemy*) elixir (liquid which was believed to turn non-precious metals to gold)
 2. (*fiction*) a magical potion
-

Spanish

Noun

elixir *m̄* (plural **elixires**)

1. *Alternative spelling of **elíxir***
-

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Elixir of life

The **elixir of life**, also known as **elixir of immortality** and sometimes equated with the name philosopher's stone, is a potion that supposedly grants the drinker eternal life and/or eternal youth. This elixir was also said to cure all diseases. Alchemists in various ages and cultures sought the means of formulating the elixir. The concept originated in ancient India or China where the concept preceded that in Europe by millennia.

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The mythological White Hare making the elixir of life on the Moon, from Chinese mythology.

History

China

In ancient China, many emperors sought the fabled elixir with varying results. In the Qin Dynasty, Qin Shi Huang sent Taoist alchemist Xu Fu with 500 young men and 500 young women to the eastern seas to find the elixir, but he never came back (legend has it that he found Japan instead). When Shi Huang Di visited, he brought 3000 young girls and boys, but none of them ever returned.

The ancient Chinese believed that ingesting long-lasting precious substances such as jade, cinnabar or hematite would confer some of that longevity on the person who consumed them. Gold was considered particularly potent, as it was a non-tarnishing precious metal; the idea of potable or drinkable gold is found in China by the end of the third century BC. The most famous Chinese alchemical book, the Danjing yaojue (Essential Formulas of Alchemical Classics) attributed to Sun Simiao (c. 581 – c. 682 CE),^{[1][2]} a famous medical specialist respectfully called "King of Medicine" by later generations, discusses in detail the creation of elixirs for immortality (mercury, sulfur, and the salts of mercury and arsenic are prominent, and most are poisonous) as well as those for curing certain diseases and the fabrication of precious stones.



Xu Fu's first expedition to the Mount of the Immortals. By Utagawa Kuniyoshi.

Many of these substances, far from contributing to longevity, were actively toxic and resulted in Chinese alchemical elixir poisoning. The Jiajing Emperor in the Ming Dynasty died from ingesting a lethal dosage of mercury in the supposed "Elixir of Life" conjured by alchemists.

India

Amrita, the elixir of life has been described in the Hindu scriptures (not to be confused with Amrit related to Sikh religion (see Amrit Sanskar)). Anybody who consumes even a tiniest portion of Amrit has been described to gain immortality. Legend has it that at early times when the inception of the world had just taken place, evil demons (Ashur) had gained strength. This was seen as a threat to the gods (Devas) who feared them. So these gods (including Indra, the god of sky, Vayu, the god of wind, and Agni, the god of fire) went to seek advice and help from the three primary gods according to the Hindus: Vishnu (the preserver), Brahma (the creator), and Shiva (the destroyer). They suggested that Amrit could only be gained from the samudra manthan (or churning of the ocean) for the ocean in its depths hid mysterious and secret objects. Vishnu agreed to take the form of a turtle on whose shell a huge mountain was placed. This mountain was used as a churning pole.

With the help of a Vasuki (mighty and long serpent, king of Nagloka) the churning process began at the surface. From one side the gods pulled the serpent, which had coiled itself around the mountain, and the demons pulled it from the other side. As the churning process required immense strength, hence the demons were persuaded to do the job—they agreed in return for a portion of Amrit. Finally with their combined efforts (of the gods and demons), Amrit emerged from the ocean depths. All the gods were offered the drink but the gods managed to trick the demons who did not get the holy drink.

The oldest Indian writings, the Vedas (Hindu sacred scriptures), contain the same hints of alchemy that are found in evidence from ancient China, namely vague references to a connection between gold and long life. Mercury, which was so vital to alchemy everywhere, is first mentioned in the 4th to 3rd century BC Arthashastra, about the same time it is encountered in China and in the West. Evidence of the idea of transmuting base metals to gold appears in 2nd to 5th century AD Buddhist texts, about the same time as in the West.

It is also possible that the alchemy of medicine and immortality came to China from India, or vice versa; in any case, for both cultures, gold-making appears to have been a minor concern, and medicine the major concern. But the elixir of immortality was of little importance in India (which had other avenues to immortality). The Indian elixirs were mineral remedies for specific diseases or, at the most, to promote long life.

Europe

In European alchemical tradition, the Elixir of Life is closely related to the creation of the philosopher's stone. According to legend, certain alchemists have gained a reputation as creators of the elixir. These include Nicolas Flamel and St. Germain.

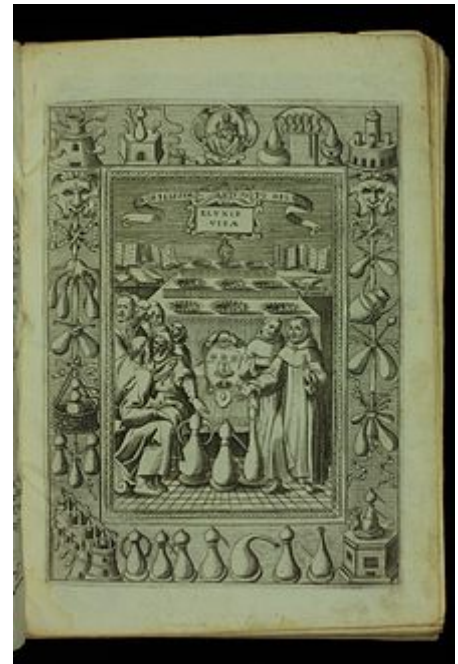
Japan

In the eight-century Man'yōshū, 'waters of rejuvenation' (変若水 *ochimizu*) are said to be in the possession of the moon god Tsukuyomi. Similarities have been noted with a folktale from the Ryukyu Islands, in which the moon god decides to give man the water of life (Miyako: *sīlimizi*), and serpents the water of death (*sīnimizi*). However, the person entrusted with carrying the pails down to Earth gets tired and takes a break, and a serpent bathes in the water of life, rendering it unusable. This is said to be why serpents can rejuvenate themselves each year by shedding their skin while men are doomed to die.^{[3][4]}

Names

The Elixir has had hundreds of names (one scholar of Chinese history reportedly found over 1,000 names for it), among them Amrit Ras or Amrita, Aab-i-Hayat, Maha Ras, Aab-Haiwan, Dancing Water, Chasma-i-Kausar, Mansarover or the Pool of Nectar, Philosopher's stone, and Soma Ras. The word *elixir* was not used until the 7th century A.D. and derives from the Arabic name for miracle substances, "al iksir". Some view it as a metaphor for the spirit of God (*e.g.*, Jesus's reference to "the Water of Life" or "the Fountain of Life"). "But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14) The Scots and the Irish adopted the name for their "liquid gold": the Gaelic name for whiskey is uisce beatha, or water of life.

Aab-i-Hayat is Persian and means "water of life".^[5] "Chashma-i-Kausar" (not "hasma") is the "Fountain of Bounty", which Muslims believe to be located in Paradise. As for the Indian names, "Amrit Ras" means "immortality juice", "Maha Ras" means "great juice", and "Soma Ras" means "juice of Soma". Later, Soma came to mean the moon. "Ras" later came to mean "sacred mood experienced listening to poetry or music"; there are altogether nine of them. Mansarovar, the "mind lake" is the holy lake at the foot of Mt. Kailash in Tibet, close to the source of the Ganges.



Dell' elixir vitae, 1624

In popular culture

The elixir of life has been an inspiration, plot feature, or subject of artistic works including animation, comics, films, musical compositions, novels, and video games. Examples include L. Frank Baum's fantasy novel *John Dough and the Cherub*, the science fiction series *Doctor Who*, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, *House of Anubis*, the popular manga *Fullmetal Alchemist*, the light novel *Baccano!*, and the movie *Professor Layton and the Eternal Diva* of the popular Professor Layton franchise.

See also

- Ageing
- Al Khidr
- Ambrosia
- Cup of Jamshid
- *Death Becomes Her*
- Elixir
- Fountain of Youth
- Holy Grail
- Magu (deity)
- Panacea
- Rejuvenation

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2. "Tan chin yao chueh – occultism" (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/582108/Tan-chin-yao-chueh>). *britannica.com*.
3. Nelly Naumann (2000). *Japanese Prehistory: The Material and Spiritual Culture of the Jōmon Period* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=Yrla4QyhFasC&pg=PA133>). Otto Harrassowitz Verlag. p. 133. ISBN 978-3-447-04329-8.
4. Nevsky, Nikolai (April 1971). Masao, Oka (ed.). *月と不死 [Tsuki to fushi]* (<https://docs.miko.org/index.php/%E6%9C%88%E3%81%A8%E4%B8%8D%E6%AD%BB>) (in Japanese). 平凡社. ISBN 9784582801859. Retrieved

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إكسِير

See also: اكسير

Contents

Arabic

- Etymology
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Arabic

Etymology

Borrowed from Ancient Greek ξηρόιον (*xēríon*, “medicinal powder”).

Noun

إكْسِيرٌ • (ʾiksīr) *m* (plural أَكْسِيرٌ (ʾakāsīr))

- elixir

Declension

Declension of noun إكْسِيرٌ (ʾiksīr)

Singular

Informal

إكْسِيرٌ
ʾiksīr

Nominative

إكْسِيرٌ
ʾiksīrun

Accusative

إكْسِيرًا
ʾiksīran

Genitive

إكْسِيرٍ
ʾiksīrin

Dual

Informal

إكْسِيرَيْنِ
ʾiksīrayn

Nominative

إكْسِيرَانِ
ʾiksīrāni

Accusative

إكْسِيرَيْنِ
ʾiksīrayni

basic singular triptote

Definite

الْإكْسِيرُ
al-ʾiksīr

الْإكْسِيرُ
al-ʾiksīru

الْإكْسِيرَ
al-ʾiksīra

الْإكْسِيرِ
al-ʾiksīri

Definite

الْإكْسِيرَيْنِ
al-ʾiksīrayn

الْإكْسِيرَانِ
al-ʾiksīrāni

الْإكْسِيرَيْنِ
al-ʾiksīrayni

Construct

إكْسِيرٍ
ʾiksīr

إكْسِيرٍ
ʾiksīru

إكْسِيرٍ
ʾiksīra

إكْسِيرٍ
ʾiksīri

Construct

إكْسِيرَيْنِ
ʾiksīray

إكْسِيرَانِ
ʾiksīrā

إكْسِيرَيْنِ
ʾiksīray

Genitive	إِكْسِيرَيْنِ 'iksīrayni	الْإِكْسِيرَيْنِ āl-'iksīrayni	إِكْسِيرِيْ 'iksīray
Plural		basic broken plural triptote	
	Indefinite	Definite	Construct
Informal	أَكَايِسِيرِ ?	الْأَكَايِسِيرِ ?	أَكَايِسِيرِ ?
Nominative	أَكَايِسِيرٌ ?	الْأَكَايِسِيرُ ?	أَكَايِسِيرٌ ?
Accusative	أَكَايِسِيرًا ?	الْأَكَايِسِيرَ ?	أَكَايِسِيرَ ?
Genitive	أَكَايِسِيرٍ ?	الْأَكَايِسِيرِ ?	أَكَايِسِيرٍ ?

Descendants

- → Medieval Latin: elixir

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Ξηρίον

Contents

Ancient Greek

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Ancient Greek

Etymology

From ξηρός (*xērós*, “dry”).

Pronunciation

- (5th BCE Attic) IPA^(key): /kseː.rí.on/
- (1st CE Egyptian) IPA^(key): /kse'ri.on/
- (4th CE Koine) IPA^(key): /ksi'ri.on/
- (10th CE Byzantine) IPA^(key): /ksi'ri.on/
- (15th CE Constantinopolitan) IPA^(key): /ksi'ri.on/

Noun

Ξηρίον • (*xēríon*) ἡ (genitive **Ξηρίου**); *second declension*

- a desiccative powder for wounds

Inflection

Second declension of τὸ ξηρίον; τοῦ ξηρίου (Attic)			
Case / #	Singular	Dual	Plural
Nominative	τὸ ξηρίον tò xēríon	τὼ ξηρίω tò xērío	τὰ ξηρία tà xēría
Genitive	τοῦ ξηρίου toû xēríou	τοῖν ξηρίων toîn xēríoîn	τῶν ξηρίων tôn xēríôn
Dative	τῷ ξηρίῳ tôi xēríoî	τοῖν ξηρίων toîn xēríoîn	τοῖς ξηρίοις toîs xēríoîs
Accusative	τὸ ξηρίον tò xēríon	τὼ ξηρίω tò xērío	τὰ ξηρία tà xēría

Vocative	ξηρίον xēríon	ξηρίω xērío̅	ξηρίᾱ xēría
Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This table gives Attic inflectional endings. For declension in other dialects, see <i>Appendix:Ancient Greek dialectal declension</i>. 		

Descendants

- Arabic: الإكسیر (al-'iksīr)

Further reading

- ξηρίον (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.04.0057:entry=chri/on>) in Liddell & Scott (1940) *A Greek–English Lexicon*, Oxford: Clarendon Press
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