



Crystals of cinnabar, a mercury sulfide mineral, are highly desirable due to their extreme rarity. Massive and drusy cinnabar habits are more common and can be found widely distributed. Before the discovery that mercury was toxic, cinnabar was used medicinally during the 16th century. It was rubbed on the skin and taken internally and, paradoxically, it was thought that cinnabar was an “elixir of immortality.” Modern day mercury is extracted from cinnabar and used in thermometers due to its ability to expand and contract with minute changes in temperature.

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