



water

ESSENTIAL OILS FOR AROMATHERAPY

What are essential oils?

Essential oils are the highly concentrated version of the natural oils in plants, shrubs and trees, extracted from many different parts, including the roots, leaves, stems, flowers, fruit and bark. Essential oils have been used throughout history in many cultures for their medicinal and therapeutic benefits on different levels - physical, psychological and spiritual. Essential oils treat the whole being rather than individual disorders. Regular use of aromatherapy is a gentle and effective way of maintaining good health. It can instill a positive attitude towards life. It triggers latent feelings at a deeper level within us. By using essential oils in different ways, the body can function more efficiently and the effects of stress and strain are alleviated.

There are two primary reasons that plants produce essential oils.

Protection: plants use essential oils for protection from pathogens such as fungus, pests and other invasive plants or animals. Plants produce essential oils as part of their stress response to changes in climate or to protect themselves from harsh environmental conditions.

Attraction: plants also use essential oils to lure pollinators with their irresistible fragrances. These properties are important components of essential oils.

The two most popular methods to extract essential oils from plants are distillation, the most popular method in use today, and expression, a technique employed for obtaining the oils from the rinds and peels of fruits such as oranges, mandarins and lemons. The rinds are pressed or grated, and then the oils from the torn cells are collected in a sponge and squeezed out.

How to use essential oils:

Aromatherapy Diffusers

Essential oil diffusers, or aromatherapy diffusers, offer a safe and easy way to fill a space at home or in the office with the fragrant benefits of essential oils. A small amount of essential oil has a big impact on our well being if it is diffused in the air we breathe.

Inhalation

This application is simple and can be done just about anywhere whenever you need to feel calm and uplifted, or when you are traveling or are exposed to germs, to illnesses. For direct inhalation, simply open a bottle of an essential oil, place it below your nose and inhale deeply. For palm inhalation, add a drop or two of your favorite skin-friendly essential oil to the palm and inhale deeply.

Massage

Massage is one of the most effective and beneficial treatment techniques. Essential oil constituents pass through the skin, are taken into the bloodstream and can be carried to all the cells of the body. Pure essential oils are much more concentrated than the whole plant, which is why it is recommended to dilute essential oils with carrier oils before applying them to the skin. There are many great carrier oils to choose from, such as grape seed, avocado, sweet almond, wheat germ, hemp seed, apricot and olive. All are nourishing oils that have a long shelf life. Dilutions are typically 1-3%. For adults, a 2-3% dilution is recommended for most purposes, while for children 1% is generally safe. Note: 1% dilution is 1 drop per 5 ml, 2% dilution is 2 drops per 5 ml, etc.

Facial steam

Add 1-5 drops of an essential oil to a pot of hot water. Cover the head with a towel and allow the steam to circulate inside the towel. This practice is excellent for opening the sinuses, easing headaches, and invigorating the skin. Both eucalyptus and rosemary essential oils are great for facial steams.

Baths

Aromatic baths are a luxurious way to relax, pamper the skin or just to feel better. Always mix an essential oil with a carrier oil, as the carrier oil protects your skin, and helps the essential oil to disperse through the bath water. A generally safe dose is 5 drops of an essential oil to a tablespoon (15 ml) of carrier oil.

Compresses

Compresses are a great way to utilize essential oils for bruises, wounds, aches, pains, exposure to heat or skin problems. Mix 10 drops of an essential oil in 100 ml hot water. Soak a clean cloth and wrap area to be treated. Leave the compress on for 10-20 minutes. Lavender and tea tree essential oils are good to use in compresses.

Spritz

Fill a spray bottle with distilled water (tap water can also be used, but certain minerals may alter the desired outcome). Preferably add 30% rubbing alcohol, as the alcohol helps the essential oil to mix more easily in the water and for the air freshener to dry faster. Approximately 1 drop essential oil per 10 ml spray bottle. The spray can be used as an air freshener, body spray, linen spray, etc.

Avatar essential oils

Avatar essential oils are 100% pure natural authentic and expertly selected essential oils.

Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*) reduces the feeling of pain in the body. Therefore it is helpful in the case of headaches, sprains, muscle pain, etc. Bergamot lowers body temperature, reduces fever and improves blood circulation. Bergamot cures infections in the intestines and kidneys and eliminates intestinal parasites. It reduces nervous tension, anxiety, stress and relaxes nerves and muscles. Bergamot helps wounds to heal faster.

Ylang-Ylang (*Cananga odorata*) fights depression and relaxes both the body and soul, thereby driving away anxiety, sadness, and chronic stress. It also has an uplifting effect on one's mood and induces feelings of joy and hope. It may be an effective treatment for those undergoing nervous breakdowns and acute depression after a shock or an accident. Ylang-Ylang is effective in lowering blood pressure and helps maintain healthy skin.

Frankincense (*Boswellia frereana*) is effective as an antiseptic and can be applied to wounds to protect them from tetanus and becoming septic. It is equally good on internal wounds and protects them from developing infections. Frankincense oil is a useful preventive measure against oral issues, such as bad breath, toothaches, cavities, etc. Frankincense lowers blood pressure, improves digestion and has anti-aging properties.

Cedar Wood (*Juniperus virginiana*) essential oil has an anti-inflammatory effect on arthritis. It cures toothache and strengthens the gums. Cedar Wood cures obesity and high blood pressure and urinary tract infections. Cedar Wood oil prevents wounds from becoming septic as well as protecting them from tetanus germs. It can safely be applied externally on wounds as an antiseptic. Cedar Wood stimulates metabolism.

Lavender (*Lavendula officinales*) essential oil has a calming scent which makes it an excellent tonic for treating migraines, headaches, depression, nervous tension and emotional stress. The health benefits of lavender oil for the skin can be attributed to its antiseptic and anti-fungal properties. Lavender has great anti-bacterial and anti-viral qualities which increase immunity in a range of diseases. Lavender can be used as an insect repellent.

Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) has antiseptic qualities for healing wounds, cuts, etc. It is effective for treating a number of respiratory problems including a cold, cough, asthma, etc. Eucalyptus removes exhaustion and rejuvenates. It can also be effective in the treatment of stress and mental disorders. Massaging eucalyptus oil on the surface of the skin helps to relieve stress and muscle pain.

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) has the ability to boost mental activity and increases concentration. Rosemary can strengthen the entire body and help the healing process of delicate organs such as the liver, brain and heart. Rosemary is an appetite stimulant often used for indigestion. Rosemary essential oil is a disinfectant and is often used as a mouth wash. Rosemary oil is widely used for hair care.

Tea Tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) provides relief from coughs, cold, bronchitis and congestion. Tea Tree heals wounds quickly and protects from infections. It reduces dandruff and hair loss. It boosts the immune system and cures viral infections. Tea Tree oil is effective against fungal and bacterial infections. Tea Tree oil has a stimulating effect on hormone secretions, blood circulation and promotes absorption of nutrients from food.

Citronella (*Cymbopogon nardus*) essential oil fights depression and gives relief from anxiety, sadness and negative feelings. It provides relief from inflammation and is rich in antibacterial and antiseptic properties. Citronella clears stomach infections and helps to cure menstrual spasms, cramps and coughs. Citronella stimulates blood circulation and the secretion of hormones. Citronella is an effective insect repellent.

Patchouli (*Pogostemon cablin*) essential oil works great for people suffering from depression and helps to get over feelings of sadness or loss, filling one with new hope. Patchouli essential oil protects wounds from developing into infections. Patchouli stimulates contractions in muscles, nerves and skin. It helps strengthen the gums, prevents sagging skin, eliminates body odor and reduces body temperature during fever.

Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) essential oil is used topically, massaged into the skin. It improves tone and protects against acne. Basil is effective in providing relief from colds, influenza and fever. It helps in treating asthma and bronchitis and is useful in treating indigestion, constipation and flatulence. Basil oil improves blood circulation and aids in improving eye health. Basil relieves stress and depression.

Lemon Grass (*Cymbopogon citratus*) boosts self esteem, confidence, hope and mental strength; it uplifts the spirit and fights depression. Lemon Grass reduces pain and inflammation in muscles, joints and teeth. It inhibits microbial and bacterial growth in the body. Lemon Grass is helpful during breastfeeding. It helps to clean out the kidneys and increases urination. Lemon Grass works as an antiseptic for internal and external wounds.

Clary Sage (*Salvia sclarea*) is primarily used as a cleanser for the eyes. It helps to brighten the eyes, improves vision and protects against loss of vision due to premature or normal aging. Clary Sage can boost self-esteem, confidence, hope and mental strength, thereby efficiently fighting depression. Clary Sage is used for skin care because it reduces skin inflammation, balances and regulates the production of natural oils in the skin.

Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*) boosts the activity of the brain and helps to remove nervous tension and memory loss. Cinnamon has antibacterial, anti-fungal and anti-microbial properties. It helps to improve the circulation of blood and to remove blood impurities. Cinnamon oil is a great mosquito repellent. The pleasant aroma of Cinnamon oil makes it very effective as a room freshener. It is often added to potpourris.

Clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*) is used most prominently in dental care. The germicidal properties of the oil make it very effective for relieving dental pain, toothache and sore gums. Clove oil is useful for boosting the immune system and is often recommended for skin care, especially for acne patients. Clove serves as an excellent stress reliever. It has a stimulating effect on the mind and removes mental exhaustion and fatigue.

Orange (*Citrus sinensis*) boosts immunity and helps to avoid both septic and fungal infections and tetanus as it inhibits microbial growth and disinfects wounds. Orange essential oil provides quick and effective relief from inflammation, whether internal or external. Orange oil alleviates anxiety, anger and depression. Orange oil relaxes muscular and nervous spasms. It helps in removal of excess gas and toxins.

Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*), due to its antiseptic properties, is very useful in dental care. It also eliminates bad breath and helps teeth and gums to fight off hazardous germs. Peppermint increases immunity and aids in digestion. Peppermint oil is a good remedy for nausea and headaches. Like most essential oils, Peppermint oil which has a refreshing nature, is able to provide relief from stress, depression and mental exhaustion.

Geranium (*Pelargonium odorantissimum*) promotes cell health, encourages the recycling of dead cells and the regeneration of new cells. Geranium is a powerful cicatrissant; it helps scars and other spots on the skin to fade and vanish. It facilitates blood circulation just below the surface of the skin and also helps promote a uniform distribution of melanin. Geranium balances hormones and relieves stress and depression.

Neroli (*Citrus aurantium*) essential oil is an anti-depressant, driving away anxiety, sadness and chronic stress. It has an uplifting effect on the mind and induces feelings of joy and happiness. Neroli is antiseptic; it eliminates bacteria and keeps the body free from microbial infections and toxins. Neroli increases the libido. It stimulates digestion and increases appetite. Neroli promotes the generation of new cells.

Fragrance oils

Sandalwood (*Santalum album*) has for centuries reserved a place of dignity and respect in many civilizations of the world, especially in India where Sandalwood is considered holy and indispensable in almost all social and religious rituals and ceremonies. Sandalwood improves memory and stimulates your powers of concentration. It induces relaxation, calmness, concentration, inner vision, and positive thoughts.

Rose (*Rosa damascena*) is widely considered to be one of the most beautiful flowers in the world. The flower is an integral part of innumerable stories, legends, myths and legacies. The Rose boosts self esteem, confidence and mental strength while efficiently fighting depression and relieving anxiety. Rose aroma oil evokes positive thoughts, spiritual relaxation, happiness, hope and feelings of joy.

Jasmine (*Jasminum officinale*) has a strong yet sweet, pleasing and romantic fragrance, which is very common in flowers which bloom only at night. Jasmine has an uplifting effect on the mind and actively fights depression. The aromatic effect of Jasmine stimulates the release of certain hormones in the body, including serotonin, which results in a boost of energy. Jasmine evokes feelings of happiness.

White Musk in the perfume industry is a class of synthetic aroma compounds which emulate the scent of deer musk. White Musk has a clean, smooth and sweet scent. It is used as a flavoring and fixative in cosmetics and perfumes, supplying the base note for many perfume formulas. What makes musk so indispensable is its unique property to balance the composition and add a subtle touch of sensuality and warmth.

Precaution

Always keep bottles tightly closed to avoid evaporation. The aromatherapy blends are for external use only and must be diluted with carrier oils before applying directly to the body. Pregnant women should consult a physician before use. Keep bottles containing essential oils out of reach of children.



New School Crafts, Aurobrindavan,
Auroville 605 101, Tamil Nadu, India
avatarav@auroville.org.in