

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy refers to healing the body and mind using essential oils, the aromas from plants. Inhaling or applying these highly concentrated aromatic plant essences can cheer you up, calm you down, and make you feel better about yourself. The way they are processed in the body is quite complex. At the bridge of our noses is the olfaction bulb – which is an extension of the brain. About the size of a penny it contains 20 million hairs that protrude through a thin layer of mucus membranes. These hairs are actually nerve cells that translate odors into nerve messages. The messages travel to a part of the brain responsible for emotions, moods, feelings, and memories. Odors can also stimulate the release of neuro-chemicals and hormones. University research in Milan, Italy, has found that vanilla can treat anxiety and depression. In Russia, eucalyptus oil has cured a certain flu strain, and American and Japanese researchers are studying the effects of inhaling fragrances to relax claustrophobics, improve productivity in the work place, and even to reduce subway violence.

How To Use Essential Oils

Essential oils' health enhancing, beautifying and mood elevating properties can easily be incorporated into one's lifestyle. Here are some suggestions to help you through the upcoming holiday season:

- ⊗ The “shop-until-you-drop” month is upon us. If December's activities is leaving your gas tank empty look to essential oils such as basil, geranium, pink grapefruit, rosemary, tangerine or cypress to energize and uplift you. For example, start your day off by adding a few drops of essential oils in the final rinse when washing your hair. Or, add some to your moisturizing lotion so their healing benefits can be felt all day (a combination of cypress and grapefruit is good for energy as well as cellulite). If you prefer, after your shower, dab a few drops on the palms of our hands and stroke the fragrance over your face and into your scalp and hair. The scent placed on your hair will last all day!
- ⊗ If you feel chilled by winter temperatures, use warming fragrances such as benzoin (smells like vanilla), cinnamon, clove, ginger, and rosemary (rosemary also enhances memory). Add to your hand lotion and use every time after washing your hands. You'll notice that your hands will stay warm, flexible and moisturized.

HERB STOP

December Highlight



Nature's Scents To Enhance Mind, Moods And Emotions

I met a nurse a few weeks ago who came in to purchase peppermint essential oil. With much enthusiasm she told me about the effectiveness in using the scent of peppermint essential oil in the hospital's recovery room to help alleviate nausea patients experience after surgery. Another nurse who works with children shared one of her experiences with cinnamon essential oil to bring a 3 year old girl out of a coma. Some hypnotists have used vanilla essential oil to assist their patients recall childhood memories. Essential oils are definitively helpful during critical times, but can play a major role in helping us go through life in one piece. They can lessen anxiety, stress, fatigue, depression, anger, confusion, doubt, fear, grief, guilt, sadness, and many other emotional problems.

What Are Essential Oils

Essential oils are the fragrances of plants in their purest, most concentrated form. They are extracted either through steam distillation, with solvents or cold pressed. Fundamentally, these highly fragrant oils are the plant's soul extracted from flowers, leaves, spices, fruits, woods and roots, each with its own benefits to the body and mind. They are the foundation of aromatherapy.

- ⊗ To combat daily stress place a few drops of mandarin, ylang ylang and petitgrain essential oil on a cotton ball. Keep this cotton ball close to you, on your desk, in your car or in your purse. You'll love the scent, the way it makes you feel and you may very well decide this to be your favorite perfume. For stress with mental fatigue use the fragrance of basil.
- ⊗ Can't sleep? Try some valerian, lemon and mandarin essential oil. Place a few drops in a room diffuser or use in a bath before bed. Another way to help you go to "la-la land" is to put a few drops of lavender essential oil on your hairbrush, then comb your hair. This treatment calms your thoughts and relaxes your body. You can also place the oils on a cotton ball and put under your pillow.
- ⊗ For digestive upsets put three drops caraway, fennel or coriander essential oil on a sugar cube or mix into one teaspoon of honey and let it dissolve slowly in your mouth.
- ⊗ When temporary depression is getting a hold of you, try using essential oils of neroli and petitgrain. Neroli essential oil, known as the bringer of joy, has long been used for depression, shock, anxiety, nervous tension, fear and panic. Petitgrain essential oil comes from the leaves and twigs of various citrus plants. Inhaling or massaging this blend gives strength during emotional times.
- ⊗ Do you feel a cold coming on? Drop a little eucalyptus essential oil into some boiling water and take a few deep breaths. Eucalyptus contains disinfectant properties. Inhaling it opens sinuses and breathing passages. Place one to two drops on your pillow before bedtime to help you breathe freely all night.
- ⊗ For a total relaxing and rejuvenating treatment make an appointment with your massage therapist. Ask her/him to include essential oils to invigorate your body, refresh your mind and uplift your emotion.
- ⊗ Essential oils can be used in a humidifier for respiratory problems, stuffy nose, etc.
- ⊗ When traveling use a lamp-ring to diffuse the aromas in your hotel room.
- ⊗ Eucalyptus in the sauna or steam room is very popular and effective for various health complaints.
- ⊗ You can also clean your house with essential oils. The antiseptic properties will fight germs, even insects.
- ⊗ Place a few drops of lavender essential oil on a cotton ball and toss into your last laundry rinse cycle or into the dryer.

- ⊗ Scent your drawers and closets, your shoes, etc. You can even cook with essential oils, although caution is advised.

Essential Oil Combinations

Blending essential oils is an art and a science. Over the years The Herb Stop has created many blends for health and wellbeing. Here are some of our favorites:

Good Night Sleep©

A blend designed to promote deep relaxation and a good night sleep. Scientists have confirmed that the oils in Good Night Sleep© have a sedative and tranquilizing effect on the central nervous system.

Lymph Clear

Massage a small amount of Lymph Clear oil to promote lymphatic circulation, a vital key in keeping the immune system functioning well.

Spasticity

Gently rub a little of this oil blend and let go of tight, sore, tired, spastic and aching muscles.

Cellu-Free

Take action against cellulite! Skin brush affected areas, take a shower, and then massage with Cellu-Free added to almond oil.

Joy

A synergistic oil blend that may help you overcome depression and sadness, and to inspire joy, happiness and to lift your spirit.

Celebrations

Celebrate your special days with a "symphony" of oils to bring you and your loved ones happiness and many blessings.

As you can see, essential oils can easily be used on a daily basis to keep us healthy and balanced and to bring out the potentials that lie deep within us. The uses of the essential oils of flowers and plants have been known since before 400 B.C. to treat physical problems and to beautify skin and hair. Today, scientists confirm that they do affect how we think and feel. But, above all, they stimulate and uplift our spirits.

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