



Essential Oils: Aromatherapy & Healing

Parts 1 & 2

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Definition of Essential Oils:

Essential Oils are extracted from aromatic plants and come from a variety of plant sources like flowers, grasses, leaves, fruits, bark, seeds and roots. Essential oils are highly concentrated substances often referred to as the “life force of the plant”. These oils contain complex chemical compounds with a diversity of powerful results and pleasant aromas.

The History of Essential Oils:

Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, said, “The way to health is to have an aromatic bath and a scented massage every day.” Don’t we all wish we could have this! As far back as 4th century BC he recognized that burning certain aromatic substances offered protection from contagious diseases. Tales of the importance of essential oils are abundant in ancient Egypt, Babylonia, India, Greece and China, and they were not only used culturally, they were also of high value in trading.

The scientific study of the use of essential oils began with French scientist René-Maurice Gattefosse in the 1920s. Working in his cosmetic/perfume laboratory one day, he burned his arm severely (3rd degree), and thrust it into the nearest liquid. It happened to be a tub of lavender oil, and to Gattefosse’s amazement, the pain lessened immediately. Instead of developing a normal burn reaction of pain, redness, heat, blisters and scarring, the wound healed very quickly and left no mark whatsoever. Gattefosse dedicated the rest of his life to researching the healing properties of essential oils, and it is he who coined the term “aromatherapy.”

The Uses of Essential Oils:

Essential oils are sweet-smelling, but assuming their value is one of charm would be an enormous mistake. These oils are complex in their molecular structure and very powerful. For example, the essential oil of oregano is 26 times more powerful as an antiseptic than anything you can find on your drugstore shelf.

Essential oils are used in a wide array of health issues and offer the following health benefits:

- antibacterial and anti-viral
- antifungal
- analgesic (pain reliever)
- anti-inflammatory

- antidepressant
- sedative, calming
- digestive aid/digestive soothing
- deodorizing
- expectorant
- diuretic
- circulation enhancing

One of the most amazing qualities of essential oils is that a single oil can aid in a variety of ailments. For example, peppermint can be used for headaches, nausea and bloating, mental clarity, as well as mood enhancement. There are a host of oils with many wide and varied benefits.

Essential oils are truly “holistic”. They enter and leave the body with great efficiency, leaving no toxins behind. There are no side-effects and extremely rare adverse results.

Why Use Essential Oils?

The natural, small molecules of essential oils penetrate the skin and get to work with their purity maintained. They are synergistic with human body providing great benefit. Essential oils aid in healing, alleviating toxic build-up and assist in the elimination of toxins. They improve circulation, oxygenation and help neutralize unfriendly bacteria. They also calm and rejuvenate damaged skin.

Production of Quality Essential Oils:

It takes a great deal to produce small amounts of essential oils: for example, sixty thousand rose blossoms are required to produce one ounce of rose oil. With lavender, oil is more abundant - 220 pounds of lavender will provide 7 pounds of oil. Jasmine is extremely sensitive, and must be picked by hand before the sun becomes hot on the first day it blooms and sandalwood trees must be 40 years old and 40 feet high before its oil will be ideal.

Due to the variety of plants and production necessities, it is easily understandable why there is such a variance in prices of pure essential oils. In most cases jasmine is about 92x the price of lemon, and rose oil 65x the price of lavender. Pure essential oils are almost exclusively not oily to the touch and this can be an easy sign of purity. Now that you have a little background and history of essential oils, here are our essential two.

Two Essential Oils To Always Keep On Hand:

1. **Lavender:** a natural antibiotic, antiseptic, antidepressant, sedative and detoxifier. It promotes healing, prevents scarring and stimulates the immune system (specifically to speed the healing process of wounds/burns). It aids with eczema, acne and dermatitis, insomnia and nervous tension as well as headaches and migraines. Lavender also helps prevent flu and colds, and is even being diffused in some hospitals now to reduce use of sleep aids, reduce patient stress and reduce secondary infections. This is my “Windex” (if you’ve seen [My Big Fat Greek Wedding](#) this reference makes sense)!

Lavender is also wonderful for use on pets. They respond amazingly well to its healing properties without our natural tendency towards skepticism. My older cat is 18 years old and he is so used to it he will lean into it when I’m treating an open wound.

2. **Tea Tree:** The antiseptic action of Tea Tree is 100 times more powerful than carbolic acid, but is completely non-toxic. The Aborigines have been using this indigenous tree in their medications for centuries, and today it is scientifically proven to be one of the most effective antiviral, antibiotic, and antifungal agents. Tea Tree is amazing for infections, cuts and abrasions, and is a powerful antiseptic. Although some do not love the aroma, its effectiveness is unquestioned. Blended with peppermint, for example, it makes for a wonderful combination and is commonly used this way in oral care products like toothpaste, mouthwash and in natural foot massage products. This is Veronica's "Windex" and is truly remarkable!

How to Use Essential Oils:

- Candle heated diffusers ~ place water in dish with several drops oil(s) – get creative and mix your favorites
- Fan diffusers ~ put oil(s) on pad or sponge and turn on; fans are nice because there is no heat and therefore no risk if left on
- Roll-On Blends: **Z's Remedies** brand makes a terrific variety of roll-ons, including StressBuster, Pure Joy, Ache Away, Sandman and more, all of which can be applied directly to your person since they are already in a carrier lotion/oil. For example, StressBuster is great for reducing tension, utilizing primarily peppermint and basil. StressBuster is also wonderful for headaches, stomachaches and improving focus. Most of the Z's blends have several uses and benefits, and all of them are effective and smell fabulous!
- Dilute in "carrier oil" of your choice and use directly on skin for healing (jojoba and coconut oil or aloe gel are amazing carriers)
- Use as your new perfume ~ on skin or in hair (neat or blended); your favorite oils = your perfume ☺
- "Neat" ~ test a small area on your skin before you use regularly (usually inside wrist is a good test spot; you can put oils you do well with directly on your skin, for enjoyment, burns, abrasions etc.
- In your bath tub ~ use about 4-10 drops and enjoy (do NOT use too much, it can cause intense detoxification)

Have fun experimenting with essential oils, and be sure to keep the two must-haves, lavender and tea tree, on hand for everyday use!

Health and Bliss,
Lynda