Aromatherapy

An Introduction to the Therapeutic Uses of Essential Oils

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Essentials

Origins: Essential oils may be found in virtually any part of the plant: seeds, flowers, fruit, leaves, stems, roots, bark, wood, needles and resins.

History: "Aromatherapy" is a relatively new term (1920's) for the use of essential oils, also called aromatic oils. Aromatic oils have a 5,000-year history. Early use of essential oils in China, India, and Persia & Egypt has been recorded. The earliest scriptures of the Hindu religion— the *Vedas*— mention hundreds of essential oils. Knowledge and use of essential oils has been maintained and advanced for over 3,000 years through the Indian practice of Ayurvedic medicine.

Basic Properties: Most essential oils, although highly concentrated, do not appear "oily." As oils, they are lighter than water and highly fluid. They are primarily lipid (fat) soluble rather than water-soluble—allowing for easy, fast penetration into the skin and bloodstream. Oils are absorbed through capillaries, lymph ducts or the lungs (when oils are inhaled). Once applied to the skin or inhaled, the body takes about 30-90 minutes to entirely absorb the essential oils. Strong blood circulation increases absorption rate.

Laboratory Tests: The first recorded, scientific laboratory studies of essential oils measured their antibacterial properties. These tests were begun in response to an observation that tuberculosis cases in the flower-growing districts of France during the late 19th century were virtually nonexistent, a rare finding in the days of mass tuberculosis outbreaks and other communicable disease pandemics. French workers who processed fragrant flowers and herbs remained free of respiratory illnesses. Studies found that the microorganisms of several illnesses (tuberculosis, yellow fever, cholera & diphtheria) were killed by essential oils. Since then, a century of experiments have supported the antimicrobial, antiseptic powers of essential oils.

Essential oils kill infectious germs while promoting useful, beneficial microorganisms. They do not indiscriminately attack the body like most pharmaceuticals, rather they support the body's own immune system. They do not attack or weaken the organism while they are busy destroying the disease.

Quality and Gas Chromatography/ Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS): It is essential to buy high quality oils; cheap oils or "bargains" are almost always of poor quality. In order for essential oils to have a therapeutic effect they must be pure plant extracts. The best way to assure purity and quality of each batch of oil is by knowing your source and testing the oil with Gas Chromatography/ Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS).

Gas Chromatography (GC) is a method of separating the volatile compounds in essential oils into individual components. The result is a linear graph that charts these components. Mass Spectrometry (MS) identifies each of these components and their percentages. This process is used to identify any adulteration of the essential oil tested. Adulterated oils or perfume oils will not offer therapeutic effects and may in fact cause allergies, headaches and chemical sensitivities .

The precise breakdown of the chemical components in individual oils provided by GC/MS reports is important as the therapeutic benefits and safety issues of essential oils are, in large part, determined by their chemical makeup.

Testing every batch of oil with GC/MS technology assures purity and gives us the exact chemistry of each oil. This process is vital for medicinal blending and for quality assurance.

Storage: Essential oils must be stored in dark, airtight, glass bottles. Exposure to light, oxygen, and heat will begin to break the oils down and they can become skin irritating. If oils are stored appropriately, they may last 7-10 years, although the optimum time varies. Some oil's aromas actually improve with age, with the exception being citrus oils – they should only be kept for one to two years. All oils need to be kept cold. The ideal temperature is 65°F, although between 45°-65° is adequate.

Concentration: It takes a lot of plant material to make a small amount of oil. For example, it takes 25-30 roses to produce **one** drop of Rose essential oil! A half-ounce of pure essential oil can last a long time, since only small amounts are used for the intended medicinal effects.

Dilutions: Depending on the specific oil and the situation, a total of 5-18 drops of essential oil goes into 1 oz of carrier oil. These amounts vary based on the person for whom you are making the blend (see dilutions below) and on the strength of the specific oil you are using. For example, you can use several drops of Lavender to every 1 drop of Rose.

1% dilution= 5-6 drops of essential oil to each ounce of carrier oil or cream. This dilution is used for children, elders, chronically ill persons, and pregnant women.
2% dilution= 10-12 drops of essential oils to each ounce of carrier oil or cream. This dilution is used for massage oils for the average adult.
3% dilution= 15-18 drops of essential oil to each ounce of carrier oil or cream. This dilution is used for specific illnesses or for acute injury.

Cautions: Most essential oils must *not* be put directly on the skin or taken internally as they can burn or irritate the skin, mouth and stomach. Essential oils are combined with "carriers" such as creams or vegetable and nut oils (e.g., almond oil, grapeseed, avocado oil & jojoba oil) and then applied to the skin.

Essentials

Language of Aromas

Top Note: The first smell to arise from a blend and evaporate quickly. The top note fragrance is usually light, fresh, sharp, penetrating, and airy. They add brightness and create the first impressions of your blend. The aroma of top note oils reminds me of wind chimes or a flute. Top notes stimulate and clear your mind, uplifting your energy.

Examples: Bergamot, Lemon and Grapefruit, Orange

Middle Note: Called the "heart" note, these oils give the blend softness, fullness, and can round off any sharp edges. Middle notes can have both top and base note aromas within them. They are harmonizing for your blends -- middle notes provide balance both physically and energetically. They are soothing and harmonizing for the mind and body.

Examples: German Chamomile, Roman Chamomile, Eucalyptus, Geranium, Helichrysum, Lavender, Lemongrass Marjoram, Ravintsara, and Rosemary

Base Note: These oils provide a deep, warm, grounded quality to your blend. They function as "fixatives" and help reduce the evaporation of top notes. Base notes add intensity to a blend and often have an earthy aroma. The aroma rises slowly to your nose, unlike top notes, which penetrate quickly. Base notes are used to relieve stress, anxiety, and insomnia. They are calming and grounding. Most oils derived from woods, resins, and roots are base notes. Some of these oils can actually *improve* with age.

Examples: Opoponax, Patchouli, Sandalwood, Spikenard, Vetiver, and Ylang Ylang

When blending, try to add one drop at a time to your blend, then mix and smell. Allow the blend to unfold slowly and inform you about what oils to add and how much. We often need much less essential oil than we might imagine. Remember to keep track of the blends you make – the number and type of oil in the blend.

Buzzwords for Beginners

Adulterant - a substance, artificial or natural, added to an essential oil, which was not originally present in the oil at the time of distillation.

Base Oil (Carrier Oil) - vegetable or nut oils, i.e. sweet almond, grapeseed, jojoba.

Diffuser - a device that disperses essential oils into an area. The three basic types are clay, candle and electric.

Dilute - adding a small amount of essential oil to a larger amount of base oil to make it safe for use on the skin.

Distillation - method used to extract essential oil from the plant. Steam distillation is the most common form of distillation.

GC/MS (Gas Chromatograph/Mass Spectrometer) - a device used by analytic chemists to determine the precise makeup of a given substance. Used in Aromatherapy to determine the precise chemical constituents of an essential oil, and whether it is pure or adulterated with synthetic chemicals or other products.

Essential Oil - highly aromatic substance found in specialized cells of certain plants. Technically, when this substance is in the plant, it is called an "essence." After distillation of a single type of plant, the aromatic substance is referred to as an essential oil. Essential oils may be used by plants for protection from predators, to attract pollinators, or for other, yet unknown, uses.

Herbally Infused Oil - these are oils that carry the medicinal properties of certain herbs. Carrier oil is infused with the medicinal herb, the plant is strained off, and the remaining oil can be used directly on the skin.

Neat - use of an undiluted essential oil on the skin.

Notes - as in *top, middle*, and *base* notes. This is a type of classification system based on aroma, to identify certain oils. Generally, essential oils from citrus peels are top notes, essential oils from flowers, leaves and stems are middle notes, and essential oils from roots are base notes.

Orifice Reducer - a device used to reduce the size of the opening of a bottle, making dispensing easier and more accurate.

Phototoxic - the use of the oil makes one’s skin more prone to damage from the sun’s UV rays. Primarily the citrus oils, especially lemon and bergamot, as well as Angelica oil, are phototoxic oils.

Volatile - describes how quickly a substance disperses itself into the air. In aromatherapy, top note essential oils may be referred to as "highly volatile," meaning that they disperse quickly out of the bottle and into the air.

Therapeutic Properties

Alterative - tending to restore normal health; cleans and purifies the blood; alters existing nutritive and excretory processes, gradually restoring normal body function.

Analgesic - numbs pain.

Antibacterial - destructive to bacteria.

Antifungal - inhibits growth of fungus.

Anti-infectious - helps the body strengthen its own resistance to infectious organisms and rid the body of illness.

Anti-inflammatory - alleviates inflammation.

Antipyretic - dispels heat, fire and fever (from the Greek word *pyre*, meaning fire).

Antiseptic - assists in fighting germs/infections.

Antispasmodic - relieves spasms of voluntary and involuntary muscles.

Antirheumatic - prevents and/or relieves rheumatic pain and swelling.

Antiviral - inhibits growth of viruses.

Astringent - firms tissue and organs; reduces discharges and secretions.

Carminative - relieves intestinal gas pain and distention; promotes peristalsis.

Cephalic - remedy for the head, usually clearing and stimulating.

Cicatrisant - cell-regenerative for skin, healing for scars.

Decongestant - reduces nasal mucus production and swelling.

Diaphoretic - causes perspiration and increased elimination through the skin.

Diuretic - promotes activity of kidney and bladder and increases urination.

Emmenagogue - helps promote and regulate menstruation.

Emollient - smoothes, softens and protects the skin.

Expectorant - promotes discharge of phlegm and mucous from the lungs and throat.

Therapeutic Properties

Haemostatic - stops the flow of blood. An astringent that stops internal bleeding or hemorrhaging.

Hypotensive - lowers high blood pressure.

Immune stimulant - stimulates functioning of the immune system.

Laxative - promotes bowel movements.

Mucolytic - breaks down mucus (pulmonary).

Nervine - strengthens the functional activity of the nervous system; may be either a stimulant or sedative.

Rubifacient - oil increases local blood circulation, can causes minor skin irritation, vasodilation and local analgesic effect.

Sedative - calms and tranquilizes by lowering the functional activity of the organ or body part.

Stimulant - increases functional activity of specific organ or system.

Sudorific - increases sweating.

Vasodilator - helps to dilate blood vessels.

Safety Information

Essential oils are renowned for their immune-supporting and emotion-balancing qualities. When used respectfully and according to the guidelines outlined in this manual, Aromatherapy is a simple and delightful way to support health. In order to ensure safe use of essential oils, please take note of the following precautions:

1. The following essential oils should *not* be used with anyone suspected of being vulnerable to epileptic seizures: Camphor, Fennel, Hyssop, Rosemary, Lavandin, Sage, Spike Lavender, Peppermint and Thuja.

2. Essential oils should be used very cautiously during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. Essential oils should be used during these times *only* under guidance of an Aromatherapist and/or medical professional knowledgeable about essential oils. Oils are to be used at a 1% dilution only during pregnancy.

3. People with high blood pressure should not use Hyssop essential oil.

4. Always dilute essential oils in carrier oils before applying them to the skin. Use a total of 5-18 drops of essential oil in 1oz of carrier oil. If undiluted essential oil contacts your skin, you may experience tingling or burning sensations. Immediately apply carrier oil to the affected area.

5. For children, elders, pregnant women and those with serious health conditions, essential oils need to be diluted to a maximum of 1%, (a total of 5-6 drops of essential oil to 1 oz of carrier oil).

6. Do not use essential oils directly on the fur or skin of animals.

7. As a general rule, many citrus oils, (including Bergamot), as well as Cumin, Opoponax, Angelica Root, Rue, Lemon Verbena, and Tagetes are photosensitizing. Sunlight or sunbed rays must be avoided for at least 12 hours after application. These oils applied to the skin at *any* dilution will likely increase the chance of severe burns from ultraviolet light.

8. Do not put essential oils in or around the eyes or near other orifices. If essential oil does contact these areas, immediately flush with carrier oil and wipe off excess. If irritation persists, seek medical advice.

9. Persons who have allergies to perfumes or who have asthma should proceed cautiously with oils.

Essential oils should never be used internally without medical guidance.
Keep all essential oils out of the reach of children; they can be poisonous if swallowed.

Recipes for Blending

Massage Oil
1oz jojoba oil (or any carrier oil you like), 2% dilution (10-15 drops)

4 drops Grapefruit
4 drops Lavender
4 drops Sandalwood

Moisturizing Cream
2oz unscented cream, 2% dilution (10-15 drops)

6 drops Sandalwood
2 drop Geranium
2 drop Ylang Ylang

Steam Blend
(Makes enough for 20 steams)

10 drops Ravintsara
10 drops Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*)
5 drops Lemon

Use 1 drop of this mixture in a bowl of steaming, hot water. Close your eyes and drape a towel over your head and the bowl. Breathe deeply.

Supplies for Blending

Glass bottles with caps
Orifice reducers
Jars for cream
Carrier oils
Unscented cream
Labels and pens
Glass measuring cup
Towels (or paper towels)
Glass stirring rods
Notebook and pen
Essential oils

Aromatherapy Book List

• *Aromatherapy: An A-Z*	Patricia Davis
• *Aromatherapy Workbook*	Shirley Price
• *Aromatherapy: A Complete Guide*	Kathi Keville
• *Aromatherapy for Health Professionals*	Shirley Price
• *Subtle Aromatherapy*	Patricia Davis
• *Aromatherapy for Common Ailments*	Shirley Price
• *Essential Oil Safety*	Tisserand/Balacs
• *The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy*	Salvatore Battaglia
• *Aromatherapy For Healing The Spirit*	Gabriel Mojay
• *Earthly Bodies and Heavenly Hair*	Dina Falconi
• *The Aromatherapy Companion*	Edwards
• *Hydrosols*	Suzanne Catty
• *Clinical Aromatherapy*	Jane Buckle

Aromatherapy Resources

National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy (NAHA)
www.naha.org

Alliance of International Aromatherapists (AIA)
http://www.alliance-aromatherapists.org/

Aromatherapy Publications

1. NAHA Aromatherapy Journal - USA
www.naha.org

2. Vita Danzare – Canada (previously called Aromascents Journal**)**
http://vitadanzare.com/

3. International Journal of Clinical Aromatherapy (IJCA) - France
www.ijca.net

4. Aromatherapy Today - Australia
www.aromatherapytoday.com

5. **International Journal of Professional Holistic Aromatherapy - USA**
http://enhancements.abmp.com/international-journal-of-professional-holistic-aromatherapy

Education

Aromahead Institute, School of Essential Oil Studies
Andrea Butje
Email-andrea@aromahead.com
www.aromahead.com

International Directory of Essential Oil Distillers
Buy essential oils directly from distillers around the world!
www.aromahead.com

Essential Oils

Aromatics International
Lolo, Montana. Aromatics International imports essential oils directly from distillers. Each oil is GC or GC/MS tested.
The GC report is on the website and can be printed. All the oils are either organic, wild crafted or unsprayed.
Email Karen: karen@aromahead.com
www AromaticsInternational.com

Essential Elements
St Petersburg, Florida. Imports essential oils directly from distillers.
Each oil is GC or GC/MS tested. All the oils are either organic, wild crafted or unsprayed.
Email Minta: essential.elements@mac.com
www.essentialelementssite.com/

Florial
France. These oils are high quality, good prices and the GC reports are on the website. They also sell soaps, diffusers, carrier oils and herbally infused oils.
Email Alain: info@florihana.com
www.florihana.com

Stillpoint Aromatics
Sedona, Arizona. Imports imports high quality essential oils directly from distillers. Most oils are GC or GC/MS tested. All the oils are either organic, wild crafted or unsprayed.
Email Joy or Cindy: wellness@stillpointbalance.com
www.stillpointaromatics.com

Tours of France

Essential Oil Resource Consultants (EORC)
Bob and Rhiannon Harris, Provence, France
011-33-494-84-2993 Phone and fax
essentialorc@aol.com
https://essentialorc.com/resources/

Professional Insurance

Indie Beauty Network
Offers insurance for aromatherapy companies and a network for finding companies and advertising.
donnamaria@windstream.net

Associated Massage and Bodywork Professionals
Offers insurance for aromatherapy companies.
www.abmp.com/home

Bottles

SKS Bottle & Packaging, Inc.
A varied selection of glass and plastic bottles, jars, lip balm tube
518-880-6980 Phone
518-880-6990 Fax
www.sks-bottle.com

E.D. Luce Packaging
Unique bottles: lip balm, roll-on perfume, small frosted sprays, perfume bottles
562-802-0515 Phone
562-802-0501 Fax
www.essentialsupplies.com

Specialty bottles
A varied selection of glass and plastic bottles and jars.
206-340-0459
www.specialtybottles.com

Majestic Mountain Sage
Lotion/body bar tubes, pipettes for filling lip balm tubes
www.the-sage.com

Aromatics International
Blank Inhalers - white, purple and red
www AromaticsInternational.com

Smell Strips

Perfumers apprentice
www.perfumersapprentice.com

Carriers

The Jojoba Company
Unrefined **jojoba** oil in bulk
800-256-5622
www.jojobacompany.com

Mountain Rose
Great website for all carrier oils, witch hazel, butters, dried herbs, grapefruit seed extract, borax, menthol crystals, Vitamin E, and aloe vera.
www.mountainroseherbs.com

Aromatics International
All organic and unrefined: Tamanu oil, Jojoba oil, Shea Butter, Cocoa butter, Beeswax, Lotion, Hydrosols.
www AromaticsInternational.com

RealSalt
Real Salt is extracted from deep within the earth, crushed, screened, and packaged without any bleaching or refining. Use for food or baths.
www.realsalt.com

Unscented Lotion

Elizabeth Van Buren, Inc.
Unscented Aroma Lotion
800-710-7759
www.elizabethvanburen.com

Aromatics International
All organic and unrefined: Tamanu oil, Jojoba oil, Shea Butter, Cocoa butter, Beeswax, Lotion, Hydrosols.
www AromaticsInternational.com

Glass stir rods and pouring beakers

Indigo Instruments
www.indigo.com

Questions To Ask Essential Oil Companies

Are your oils tested with GC/MS technology?

Do you test each batch of oil?

Can you provide the batch specific GC/MS with the oils I buy?

Can you provide the season and year the oil was distilled?

Can you provide a list of which of your current oils are organic?

Common "Interesting" Answers

I don't need to test my oils, I trust my suppliers.

We test a few oils but not all of them.

We test all our oils but don't provide the GC for the customer.

We know they are pure from their energy and smell.

My supplier tests all the oils so I don't have to.

There is more to oil then the GC; the GC gives you a limited amount of information.

Activity

1. What are two therapeutic properties for Bergamot?

2. Are there any safety concerns for Opopanax?

3. What is the Latin name for Rosemary?

4. If you want to make an oil blend that has a decongestive (mucolytic) effect, what oils could you choose from?

5. Your new client Bella is feeling anxious and upset. She has developed a skin irritation and wants a blend to help calm her nerves and help her skin. Which oils might you choose?

6. Which essential oils are extracted from the leaves of a plant?

7. Which oils may be phototoxic (photosensitizing)?

8. Which oil is to be avoided during pregnancy?

9. What is the common name for the oil with the Latin name *Cymbopogon citratus*?

10. Which countries are the following oils from (hint: look on the essential oil bottle)?

Lavender:
Siberian fir:
Orange:

11. What are three factors that will cause deterioration in an essential oil? (Hint, look on p.2)

12. What does GC/MS stand for? (Hint…p.2)

13. What does it mean when we say “use an oil neat”? (Last hint, p.5)

Consultation Form

Name_____

1. How would you describe your overall health?

2. What do you hope essential oils will do for your health?

3. What health issues are you working on?

- What type of treatment(s) have you tried for this issue?

- What has helped?

- What symptoms are most difficult for you?

4. Are you pregnant or trying to become pregnant?
5. Do you have epilepsy, other seizure disorder or brain disorder?
6. Do you have high or low blood pressure?
7. Do you have any allergies?

Explain the reasons for choosing each of the oils in your blend. Mention any specific therapeutic properties and emotional qualities that supported your choice for adding this oil to your blend. Write the directions you gave for the use of your product.