**Essential Oils for First Aid and Health & Wellness**

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**Book of the Month: “Essential Oils For Your First Aid Kit: A How To Guide For Adding Essential Oils To Your Family’s Preparedness Supply & First Aid Kit”** By Elizibeth Rose

This is a simplified guide specifically going into detail on the most used essential oils for first aid situations.

**What are Essential Oils**

Essential oils are concentrated plant extracts that retain the natural smell and flavor, or “essence,” of their source. Unique aromatic compounds give each essential oil its characteristic essence. They are obtained through distillation (via steam and/or water) or mechanical methods, such as cold pressing.

Once the aromatic chemicals have been extracted, they are combined with a carrier oil to create a product that’s ready for use. The way the oils are made is important, as essential oils obtained through chemical processes are not considered true essential oils.

Do NOT take essential oils while pregnant or nursing. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. For any health or dietary matter, always consult your physician. This information is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment for specific medical conditions. Never disregard or delay in seeking medical advice when available. These statements about extracts have not been evaluated by the United States Food and Drug Administration.

**Best Essential Oils to Treat Pain and Inflammation**

1. Chamomile oil to reduce inflammation and pain

Chamomile oil is a great essential oil with analgesic properties which can soothe the pain in inflamed joints and muscles. The calming effect of chamomile can also help get relief from headaches, sore muscles and nerve pain like sciatica and slipped discs. Chamomile also has a soothing effect on the digestive system and can help to relieve pain caused by excess gas and stomach cramping.

A review of the medicinal properties of chamomile found that the plant contains flavonoids which have anti-inflammatory properties. These inflammation-reducing compounds easily penetrate the skin’s surface to reduce inflammation. The review also found that chamomile is effective in treating digestive disorders and relaxing the muscles in the intestines.

Among the ailments that chamomile oil act as an effective pain reliever are: rheumatic pain, muscle spasms, hemorrhoids, stomach ulcers, mouth ulcers, eczema, back pain, and stomach cramps.

To use chamomile oil for pain relief, add a few drops of the essential oil to a carrier oil, such as coconut oil, olive oil or sweet almond oil and massage the sore muscle or the painful joint. You can also add a few drops of chamomile essential oil to your diffuser. Inhale the therapeutic vapors deeply for around 15 minutes until your headache or migraine pain has eased or gone away completely.

2. Lavender oil for pain relief

Lavender is undoubtedly one of the most popular and well-known essential oils for pain relief. Natural treatments using lavender have been used for centuries to relieve migraines and headaches. Lavender contains compounds that act as a mild sedative which reduces stress and anxiety. So, lavender essential oil can help get rid of tension headaches at the source.

A study in 2015 found that lavender oil also contains anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties. In clinical trials, the researchers found that applying lavender oil topically for pain relief was just as effective as some pharmaceutical anti-inflammatories and analgesics.

Another study published in the journal Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine found that applying lavender oil or inhaling it has a pain-relieving effect. For example, massaging lavender oil helps to relieve menstrual cramps when massaged into the abdominal area. Inhaling lavender also had a morphine-like effect in patients recovering from surgery. The study also found that lavender was effective in reducing migraine pain and relieving lower back pain and neck pain.3

To use lavender oil for pain relief, add a few drops of lavender essential oil to your diffuser. Inhale the therapeutic vapors deeply for around 15 minutes until your headache or migraine pain has eased or gone away completely.

Alternatively, rub 1 to 2 drops of lavender essential oil into the palms of your hands. Cup them over your nose and take 4-6 deep and slow breaths to fight acute migraine. Another thing you can do is add 2 to 4 drops of lavender oil on a cotton ball and secure in a zip lock bag to take with you. This will allow you to inhale lavender for headache relief as you go about your daily activities.

Unlike other essential oils which should be mixed with a carrier oil before using on the skin, lavender oil is mild enough to be placed directly on small areas of the skin without being diluted. However if you have a sensitive skin, or use lavender oil on a larger area of your skin, it is best to dilute it.

3. Sweet marjoram

Sweet marjoram essential oil has sedative and anti-inflammatory properties to relieve various types of pain. Doctors from WebMD report that marjoram oil is used to alleviate headaches, migraines, neuralgia (nerve pain), stomach cramps and other intestinal disorders.

One study showed that marjoram oil can be useful in getting rid of chronic neck pain. In the study, a combination of 4 essential oils was used: marjoram, black pepper, lavender, and peppermint. The essential oil remedy was rubbed into the painful area daily for 4 weeks. The patients using the remedy showed significant improvement when compared to the other group using the placebo cream.

Marjoram is also a good essential oil to relieve toothache if you place a drop or two directly on and around the sore tooth. If you find it too potent, mix the sweet marjoram oil with a half teaspoon of olive oil and use a cotton ball or your finger to access the painful tooth.

4. Eucalyptus essential oil

Eucalyptus essential oil is a powerful pain reliever to help get rid of nerve-related pain and the discomfort caused by blocked sinuses. Even a small amount of eucalyptus oil is enough to relieve headaches, arthritis, muscle and joint pains. The pain-reducing properties of eucalyptus essential oil are due to the anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibacterial compounds in the oil.

A clinical trial into using eucalyptus essential oil for pain relief found that inhaling eucalyptus oil can help to relieve post-surgery pain. In the trial, researchers found that patients who received eucalyptus oil after surgery experienced less pain and lower blood pressure levels.

If you have sinus pain because of a cold, flu, or other respiratory infections, the University of Maryland recommends inhaling eucalyptus essential oil to help unblock sinuses and relieve the pain. They also report that ointments containing eucalyptus oil are effective for treating joint and muscle pain.

5. Peppermint essential oil

The antispasmodic properties of peppermint essential oil make it a great natural remedy to treat arthritis and intestinal problems. As well as helping to relieve arthritic pain, peppermint oil is also antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and kills off fungal infections. Peppermint essential oil, like eucalyptus oil, is a natural decongestant and can help to relieve painful blocked sinuses.

Peppermint essential oil is refreshing and cooling and contains a significant amount of menthol. Amongst its many uses, menthol is known to help relax and ease tension headaches and muscular aches and pains.

A study in Germany found that peppermint oil is just as effective as paracetamol when used to treat tension headaches. People who suffered from regular tension headaches applied peppermint oil to their forehead and temples every 15 minutes. The study showed that peppermint oil can help to relieve regular headaches without the side effects of frequently taking pain-killers.

Peppermint essential oil also has an antispasmodic effect when ingested. Enteric-coated peppermint oil capsules relieve intestinal pain associated with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). One study reported that “peppermint oil is a safe and effective short-term treatment for IBS.”

6. Rosemary essential oil

The analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties of rosemary oil make this a great essential oil for chronic pain relief. The University of Maryland reports that rosemary can also help to improve blood circulation (which is important in pain management) and relieve muscle pain and spasms. In fact, rosemary essential oil has been approved by the German government for use in pain relief.

A study into the effectiveness of rosemary oil to reduce pain and inflammation was shown to boost the effect of popular pain relief medications. The study found that rosemary oil can be used topically as a painkiller on its own or it can be used together with analgesic drugs to help improve their effectiveness.

7. Thyme

If you suffer from backache, muscles pains, or inflammation in joints, then thyme essential oil can help to provide you needed relief from acute or chronic pain. The anti-inflammatory properties of thyme essential oil easily penetrate the surface of the skin to reduce pain.

A study published in the Journal of Lipid Research found that a compound in thyme called carvacrol suppresses COX-2, an enzyme connected with inflammation. Many non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) also work to suppress COX-2 to kill off the pain. The researchers reported that the analgesic and inflammation-reducing properties of thyme oil have a use in the treatment of many diseases.12

Other studies have shown that the antispasmodic effect of thyme essential oil help reduce menstrual cramps and is as effective as ibuprofen.

8. Clary sage

Clary sage (Salvia sclarea) is an essential oil to relieve the pain of muscle cramps and menstrual pain. The analgesic effect of clary sage is due to molecules in the oil that have pain-relief properties.

The website Examine.com reported on a study involving women who experienced higher than average menstrual pain. A massage oil using a combination of lavender, clary sage, and rose oil was massaged daily to the abdominal area. After one or 2 days, the women reported a significant reduction in painful menstrual symptoms.

The journal Phytotherapy Research found that salvia species extracts also have a calming effect on your mind as well as analgesic and muscle relaxant properties.

Clary sage essential oil can also help to get relief from pain associated with abdominal cramping.

9. Sandalwood

Sandalwood is an essential oil to fight inflammation and joint pain. The essential oil of sandalwood also helps to relax muscles and prevent muscle spasms.

Another way that sandalwood helps to manage pain is by sedating the nervous system. A study in the journal Planta Medica found that inhaling sandalwood essential oil has a relaxing effect and reduces the production of adrenaline. Another study found that sandalwood oil has an anti-inflammatory effect similar to that of ibuprofen and other NSAIDs.

Sandalwood essential oil can be mixed with a carrier oil to make a pain-killing ointment for sore muscles, knee pain, and rheumatic conditions. Or, you can add a few drops to your diffuser to inhale to get relief from headaches, migraines, anxiety, and stress.

10. Juniper

Massaging juniper essential oil is an excellent way to relieve stiffness and pain associated with arthritis, rheumatism, and gout. Doctors at WebMD report that people take juniper oil to numb pain and treat painful muscles and joints.

The website Enclyopedia.com says that there are many ways you can use juniper essential oil to relieve pain. You can add some to a bath and soak in it to relieve muscle pain. Or you can get rid of the painful symptoms of gout and rheumatoid arthritis by applying a juniper berry compress on the painful joint. Of course, you can also mix juniper oil with a carrier oil to make a natural pain-relieving ointment.

11. Ginger

Ginger essential oil can alleviate joint pain and ease muscle stiffness. The anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties of ginger are due to a compound called gingerol. Ginger oil is effective for pain relief when massaged into sore joints or painful muscles.

A review of the therapeutic properties of ginger found that it’s a natural remedy for rheumatoid arthritis, menstrual cramps, joint inflammation, and osteoarthritis. The review also found that ginger has a similar pain-relieving effect as NSAIDs like ibuprofen.

12. Frankincense

Another essential oil which has analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties is frankincense essential oil. Frankincense also reduces muscle tension by helping you to relax and reduce stress.

Frankincense oil can be combined with a carrier oil to rub into joints for effective pain relief. The Journal of Ethnopharmacology in 2016 published a study showing how frankincense has pain-reducing qualities. The oil works to block COX-2 (an enzyme connected with inflammation) and “exhibits significant anti-inflammatory and analgesic effects.”

13. Yarrow

Yarrow is a medicinal herb and its essential oil helps to relieve intestinal cramping and rheumatic pain. Teas made from yarrow contain properties that reduce inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract and can treat abdominal pain. The oil can also be used topically on inflamed joints to increase movement and reduce symptoms of arthritis and rheumatic pain.

The DARU Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences reported that yarrow is also useful in treating painful conditions like gout, eczema, dermatitis, rosacea, and other inflammatory skin conditions.

14. Wintergreen

Use wintergreen essential oil to treat chronic lower back pain, muscles aches, and ease stiff joints. Wintergreen has been used for centuries for pain management and has pain-relieving properties similar to aspirin.

The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine found that wintergreen can provide amazing pain relief from lower back pain. The researchers found that massage oil with 2.5% wintergreen oil had the same effect as 325 mg aspirin when massaged into the lower back. The benefit of using wintergreen essential oil as a pain killer is that it is a safe treatment with no harmful side effects.

15. Vetiver

Vetiver is a little-known medicinal plant that isn’t widely known in Western countries. The soothing effect of vetiver essential oil calms all sorts of inflammation and is particularly good at providing relief from inflammation in both the circulatory and nervous system. It brings relief to general aches and pains, especially for rheumatism, arthritis and muscular pain and headache.

Doctors from WebMD say that vetiver oil is used topically for relieving stress, joint pain, and muscle pain.

16. Helichrysum

Helichrysum essential oil is a powerful pain reliever that can also help to repair damaged skin. Helichrysum essential oil is anti-inflammatory and analgesic and can help manage many chronic pain conditions as well as nerve pain. You can also apply helichrysum oil directly to an injury to reduce muscle pain and prevent bruising.

The Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology found that the pain-relieving power of helichrysum works in 3 ways. Helichrysum reduces inflammatory enzymes, kills off free radicals, and reduces swelling.

You can also apply helichrysum essential oil as an after-sun treatment to get relief from sunburn pain and prevent further skin damage.

Application of helichrysum can be done by using a few drops mixed with a carrier oil and massaging it into the painful area.

17. Black pepper oil

The oil extracted from black pepper can be used to relieve muscle aches and pains. The potent essential oil helps to increase blood circulation to the painful area, reduce inflammation, and is also antibacterial.

Black pepper essential oil can help eliminate neck pain and shoulder aches. It has been used together with marjoram, lavender, and peppermint oil to treat recurrent pain in the neck and shoulder areas.

18. Lemongrass

The refreshing scent of lemongrass essential oil not only helps to boost your mood, but it can reduce the symptoms of inflammatory painful conditions like arthritis and rheumatism. You can also use the healing power of lemongrass essential oil for sore muscles.

The journal Molecular and Cell Biology of Lipids found that lemongrass inhibits inflammatory responses in the body. It does this similar to thyme and frankincense essential oils by blocking the COX-2 enzyme.

19. Rose geranium

Rose geranium essential oil can help to relieve knee pain, muscle aches, and back pain. You can also use rose geranium essential oil to get pain relief from shingles and other nerve-related painful conditions.

A study from 2013 found that rose geranium essential oil can be a good and safer alternative to many anti-inflammatory drugs. The results of the study were that rose geranium has a similar effect to some anti-arthritis and anti-rheumatic drugs. It also reduces inflammatory responses in the skin, and is a great essential oil for neuralgia.

20. Bergamot

Bergamot essential oil is usually associated with Earl Gray tea. However, you can use bergamot essential oil to relieve headaches and reduce stress-related anxiety.

A study into the calming effect of bergamot found that, when inhaled, it released certain hormones which reduce the sensitivity of your nerves to pain.

So, if you have a headache, sprain or other types of pain for which you would usually take analgesic pain killers, then try rubbing some bergamot essential oil mixed with a carrier oil on the affected area.

Precautions When Using Essential Oils

Essentials oils are very potent and powerful. Therefore, generally, you should never apply them directly to the skin and they should always be diluted in a carrier oil.

In general, you should use up to 4 drops of essential oils for every tablespoon of carrier oil. You can mix different essential oils together as long as you keep to these proportions.

You should not use essential oils on pregnant women and young children unless directed otherwise by a certified aromatherapist or another medical professional.

How to Use Essential Oils for Pain Relief

There are many essential oils that provide relief from pain and inflammation. Some essential oils act as analgesics, which mean that they relieve pain. Other essential oils reduce inflammation and are excellent for treating pain associated with rheumatic and arthritic conditions. Many essential oils also help to relax muscles and calm the nerves under the skin. While you can use any of the above mentioned essential oils for pain relief on their own, it is also beneficial to blend some of them together for an even greater effect.

To make massage oil to apply essential oils for topical pain relief, you can dilute them in a carrier oil such as coconut oil, jojoba oil, olive oil, sweet almond oil or castor oil. Here are the benefits of using some of these carrier oils for pain and inflammation relief:

•Coconut oil has been shown to have anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties and can help to reduce pain and skin inflammation.29 It also helps the healing properties of essential oils to penetrate the skin deeper.

•Jojoba oil is very close to sebum – the oily substance produced by the skin to protect it. Jojoba oil also helps to combat inflammation and keep your skin healthy. Studies have shown that jojoba oil also helps the skin to absorb topical drugs.

•Extra virgin olive oil helps to reduce pain and inflammatory responses in the skin.

•Castor oil has anti-inflammatory properties. A study into the effect of ricinoleic acid in inflammation also discovered that it has properties similar to those found in capsaicin – a known natural pain relief remedy. Capsaicin reduces pain by decreasing a chemical in the body which sends pain signals to the brain.

More Ways to Use Essential Oils for Pain Relief and Inflammation

For headache – Blend 4 drops of essential oil with one tablespoon of a carrier oil and apply a small amount of the mixture to the temples and massage gently. Make sure to stay away from the eyes. Headache can also be relieved by inhaling the oil: sprinkle a few drops of the oil onto a cloth or tissue, or use an aromatherapy diffuser or vaporizer.

For sinus pain – Inhaling essential oils is a very simple way of alleviating sinus pain. Boil some water, pour it in a large bowl and add a few drops of the chosen essential oils. Put a towel over your head and lean over the steamy bowl to inhale the fragrance-full vapors. Do this for about 10 minutes, after which you can reheat the water and repeat.

Bath soak – Good to soothe tired, aching muscles, relieve arthritis and rheumatism. Put a few drops of essential oil in a hot bath (you can also add 2-3 cups of Epsom salt to enhance the effect). It’s a good idea to mix the essential oil drops in a small amount of carrier oil first and then add to the bath.

Massage oil for larger areas – Use about 10-12 drops of essential oil per 1 ounce (30 ml) of carrier oil and massage this oil blend into any painful body part.

Hot or cold compress – To make hot compress to relieve sore muscles or joint pain take about a pint of hot water, as warm as you can comfortably tolerate, and add a few drops of your selected essential oil to it. Soak a small towel and squeeze the excess water. Then place it over the painful area. Some people find that alternating between hot and cold compress helps to alleviate their pain. A cold compress is made exactly the same as the hot compress, but ice or refrigerated water is used instead of the hot water, and the compress is replaced when it has heated up to body temperature.

**Make Your Own All-Natural Homemade Body Wash**

By Riley E. Carlson

If you’re looking for an all-natural way to keep your skin clean and smooth, you’ll love this homemade body wash! My recipe includes coconut oil, raw honey, Castile soap, essential oils and Vitamin E – these ingredients are totally natural and great for keeping your skin soft and smooth. Plus, it smells amazing! Check out the tutorial below to see how I made mine.

I’m a huge fan of all-natural bath products (especially in the cold winter months), so I thought I’d share this homemade body wash with you all. It’s totally easy to make, and it really works great at keeping your skin moisturized! Simply pour these all-natural ingredients in a big glass bowl, stir the mixture thoroughly, then pour it all into a reusable container for your shower.

As a homesteader, I try to make as many of my own homemade products as possible. This recipe is fantastic for homesteaders on a budget, and it is made with 100 percent all-natural ingredients. This homemade body wash is perfect for the whole family.

Homemade body wash ingredients:

•½ cup coconut oil

•½ cup raw honey

•1 cup liquid Castile soap

•20 drops essential oil (vanilla or lavender)

•1 tbsp. Vitamin E oil

Step 1: Combine your ingredients.

Use a funnel to pour 1 cup of liquid Castile soap into a reusable glass or plastic bottle. Slowly add 1/2 cup of melted virgin coconut oil. Add 1 teaspoon of Vitamin E oil, ½ cup of raw honey, and 10-15 drops of your favorite essential oil.

Step 2: Shake well.

Twist the cap onto your bottle, then shake the bottle vigorously to combine the ingredients.

Step 3: Stick it in the shower or bath.

Shake well before each use. Lather on every day for soft glowing skin.

**How to Repel Pests with Essential Oils**

Stacy Bravo

In my previous article, 10 Natural Ways to Repel Spiders, I talked about natural pest control for spiders using anything from a salt water solution and a white vinegar spray to essential oils…and much more!

Now, let’s talk about natural pest control using essential oils for other common pests such as cockroaches, ants, flies, mosquitoes, and mice.

1. Cockroaches

Essential Oils: Citronella, Peppermint, Lemongrass, and Cypress

Apply a few drops of citronella oil to a few cotton balls – also, consider adding peppermint oil or lemongrass as well. Then place the cotton balls in trouble areas such as cupboards or under the sink. You can also make a spray solution by adding a half cup of water and 5 drops of cypress essential oil and 10 drops of peppermint oil. Spray the solution wherever the cockroaches appear.

2. Ants

Essential Oils: Peppermint

Lightly sprinkle peppermint oil within the trouble areas. Another common natural way to get rid of ants is by using white vinegar. Fill a spray bottle with white vinegar and spray where ants commonly appear inside your home. Black pepper or cayenne pepper may also be used to defend areas from ants by sprinkling it in places where ants tend to show up.

3. Flies

Essential Oils: Clove, Lavender, Citronella, and Peppermint

Place a handful of dried cloves into a bowl and sprinkle a few drops of clove oil, lavender oil, and citronella oil or peppermint oil on the dried cloves. Add the these essential oils to the dried cloves regularly. Place in areas where flies may linger such as your front and back doors, kitchen, and near the garage.

4. Mosquitos

Essential Oils: Citronella, Lemongrass, Peppermint, and Lavender

Put a few drops of citronella oil or lemongrass oil in an oil burner. Using a citronella candle works well too. Also, you can place five drops each of citronella oil, lemongrass oil, peppermint oil, and lavender oil on a ribbon. Hang the ribbon from doorways, your patio, or a window to deter flies from entering your home.

5. Mice

Essential Oils: Peppermint, Eucalyptus, and Spearmint

Place a few drops of peppermint, eucalyptus, or spearmint oil on a few cotton balls and position them where you suspect mice are. Mice may appear behind appliances such as a fridge, washer, and dryer. Mice can also reside in an attic and/or garage. Look for places where mice may be entering the house and place cotton balls there as well. This can deter mice but further measures may be required if the infestation is serious.

To repel insects and other pests outside of your home, please check out my article Plants That Repel Insects and Pests.

**Resources**

<http://lifewithrose.com/> https://www.aromaweb.com/essentialoils/index.php

<http://youngliving.com/> https://aromatools.com/

<http://seedtoseal.com/> https://theherbalacademy.com/

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/>

https://info.achs.edu/blog/credible-essential-oil-databases-for-research