

# The Healthy Living Report

## 7 Essential Oils with Scientifically Proven Health Benefits

**T**he essential oils market was valued at more than \$7 billion globally in 2017, and it is predicted to reach the same level in the United States by 2024. But, first and foremost, what are essential oils? Essential oils are extracted from plants using a physical mechanism, generally distillation or mechanical pressing, to obtain these very powerful compounds. They're commonly used for aromatherapy, but they may also be used topically (on the skin) for various uses. While the prominence of essential oils may appear to be a passing fad, scientific proof of their health benefits exists.

Furthermore, experts continue to advocate for further study on the advantages and hazards of essential oils. In the meanwhile, see a professional to ascertain whether any of these supplementary therapies are appropriate for you.

### 1) Lavender essential oil

As is the case with many essential oils, there are various varieties of lavender essential oil. The most common variety is *Lavandula angustifolia*. According to studies, lavender essential oil possesses



antibacterial properties. Lavender oil was shown to destroy a prevalent bacteria on human skin in just five minutes in one research. Lavender essential oil has also been demonstrated to kill yeast and viral pathogens that cause skin diseases. Lavender aromatherapy has been proved to help with sleeplessness and contains antioxidant and anti-inflammatory qualities, according to a study (1).

### 2) Lemon essential oil

Lemon essential oil has been discovered to offer several biological benefits(2), including antioxidant, analgesic (pain reliever), and insect repellent. In research



that compared it to DEET, a synthetic insect repellent, lemon essential oil was proven to be an efficient mosquito repellent. It's also been proved to help with mood, focus, recall, and cognitive function. Lemon and other citrus essential oils may cause phototoxicity, a skin irritation that happens when the oil is applied topically and subsequently exposed to sunlight, depending on how it is extracted. Lemon oil that has been pressed is phototoxic. However, lemon oil that has been distilled is not.

### 3) Peppermint essential oil

Peppermint oil has been demonstrated to improve alertness, as well as fight mental fatigue and loss of memory. Many studies(3) have found that applying

peppermint oil to the skin can help with various pains, including tension headaches, neck discomfort, and even the pain that persists (sometimes excruciatingly) following shingles. Topical use of diluted peppermint essential oil resulted in hair growth, including the number of hair follicles and the depth of the roots, in at least one research study. Peppermint oil was shown to be even more effective in promoting hair growth than minoxidil, a medication present in many types of hair restoration treatments for human baldness, according to the same study.

### 4) Bergamot essential oil



Like other citrus essential oils, Bergamot oil has been demonstrated to soothe and boost mood. Bergamot has also been shown to provide pain relief(4) and aid in the healing of wounds. Cold-pressed bergamot oil was tested against nine distinct microorganisms in

at least one research study in which Bergamot was found to have potent antibacterial properties. Bergamot has been revealed to have antioxidant and antifungal effects in other studies. Because pressed bergamot might be phototoxic, avoid using it topically in direct sunlight.

### 5) Tea tree essential oil



Tea tree oil, also known as melaleuca essential oil, has been discovered to have insecticidal properties. It has long been used to eradicate head lice, and scientific data supports its efficacy, which is higher than that of the standard permethrin lice treatment. However, because natural products, such as essential oils, are not regulated by the FDA, the American Academy of Pediatrics advises against using tea tree oil on children. Tea tree oil contains antibacterial and anti-inflammatory characteristics, and it has been demonstrated

to be more successful than over-the-counter acne treatments in treating acne with fewer side effects.

### 6) Orange essential oil

Orange essential oil comes in a variety of forms, including sweet orange and bitter orange. However, many of the advantages are similar. Orange oil has antioxidant, antifungal, and antibacterial effects in both forms. Both have been demonstrated to alleviate anxiety and relax the nervous system. When compared to a control group, aromatherapy employing bitter orange oil was proven to lower the degree of labor pain in one research. In a separate investigation, sweet orange oil (together with grapefruit and lemon essential oils) was found to have anti-carcinogenic properties against leukemia cells. Orange essential oil has a minimal phototoxicity risk.

### 7) Frankincense essential oil



For thousands of years, Frankincense oil has been utilized in aromatherapy. It is

used as incense in religious rituals, and research(7) has shown that it has natural antibacterial characteristics and may be used as an air cleaner. Boswellic acid, one of the primary components of frankincense essential oil, has been discovered to have anti-tumor activities in studies. Researchers discovered that frankincense oil inhibited bladder cancer cell development while causing no damage to normal bladder cells in one investigation. These researchers concluded that frankincense essential oil might be effective as a therapy option, but additional study is needed. There are various varieties of frankincense essential oil, each with its own set of advantages.

## Is it Safe to Use Essential Oils?

Essential oils may have hazards if utilized incorrectly. Essential oils are very concentrated, so even the mildest of them, such as lavender oil, can in rare cases, cause skin irritation or allergic responses. One technique to help reduce the risk of side effects is to dilute essential oils with another oil, such as coconut oil. Also, even when the oils are diluted, be wary of possibly hazardous responses in youngsters, particularly

toddlers. When breathed, peppermint oil, for instance, can have substantial negative effects, even in older children. Essential oils, according to scientists, can interact negatively with drugs.

Before using essential oils or any other therapy, always consult your doctor.

## Is it Safe to Use Essential Oils on Pets?

The quick answer is **no**; however, this isn't always the case. Animals metabolize things they breathe or absorb



through their skin in different ways to humans. Depending on the respiratory and metabolic systems of the animals, essential oils might be hazardous. Use essential oils with caution near cats, birds, and reptiles.

Today's pet owners recognize the many advantages that essential oils have over drugs and harsh chemicals for helping their dogs with various health and emotional issues. These natural alternatives can treat skin problems, deal with fleas and other parasites, and

calm nervous, anxious, and distressed pups.

## References:

- 1) Effect of Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) Essential Oil on Acute Inflammatory Response (nih.gov) (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5878871/>)
- 2) 12 Citrus Essential Oil Benefits As Proven by Science | WellMe (<https://wellme.com/health/essential-oils/citrus/benefits/>)
- 3) Peppermint Oil | NCCIH (nih.gov) (<https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/peppermint-oil>)
- 4) Bergamot Essential Oil: Facts, Health Benefits, Uses, and Recipes (doctorshealthpress.com) (<https://www.doctorshealthpress.com/food-and-nutrition-articles/alternative-remedies-food-and-nutrition-articles/bergamot-essential-oil-health-benefits/>)
- 5) [www.nccih.nih.gov/health/tea-tree-oil](http://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/tea-tree-oil)
- 6) Essential Oils in the Ambulance | Science-Based Medicine (sciencebasedmedicine.org) (<https://sciencebasedmedicine.org/essential-oils-in-the-ambulance/>)
- 7) Frankincense--therapeutic properties - PubMed (nih.gov) (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27117114/>)

# Getting started with Essential Oil Blends

## Quick Guidelines To Help You Get Started:

- You will need a cold-air diffuser. These diffusers usually require a small amount of water to be added, along with the oils. (Usually around 70 mL)
- Since anything that heats the oils can damage some of their beneficial properties.
- Cold air diffusers are the best way to preserve all the beneficial properties of your precious essential oils.
- Follow the manufacturers directions on your diffuser.

## Focus Blend

This blend is perfect for increasing alertness, or when you need a quick pick-me-up:  
2 drops wild orange essential oil  
2 drops peppermint essential oil

## Clean and Fresh Blend

Creates a welcoming atmosphere in your home or office with this one:  
2 drops lavender essential oil

2 drops lemon essential oil  
2 drops rosemary essential oil

## Eliminate Odors Blend

We are animal-people, and we've had our fair share of "incidences" in our house. Whenever this happens, I like to diffuse this blend. It freshens up the air in no time:

2 drops lemon essential oil  
2 drops melaleuca essential oil  
1 drop cilantro essential oil  
1 drop lime essential oil

## Respiratory Support Blend

Use this blend to support respiratory function—especially during the winter months.  
1 drop lemon essential oil  
1 drop eucalyptus essential oil  
2 drops peppermint essential oil  
1 drop rosemary essential oil

## Deep Breath Blend

This blend is great for the evenings when trying to slow your brain down, and I also like to diffuse it in the bedroom as I fall asleep:  
1 drop bergamot essential oil

1 drop patchouli essential oil  
1 drop ylang ylang essential oil

## Bug Repellent Blend

This combo isn't one that I'd necessarily wear as perfume, but it contains a collection of oils that most creepy-crawlies dislike:

1 drop lemongrass essential oil  
1 drop thyme essential oil  
1 drop eucalyptus essential oil  
1 drop basil essential oil

## Immune Booster Blend

A perfect option when your body needs a little extra boost:

1 drop rosemary essential oil  
1 drop clove essential oil  
1 drop eucalyptus essential oil  
1 drop cinnamon bark essential oil  
1 drop wild orange essential oil

## Anti-Stress Blend

Feeling frazzled? This is one of a favorite combo:  
2 drops frankincense essential oil  
2 drops bergamot essential oil

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