



Over the last couple of years I've really come to respect what essential oils can do for us, and I've met some amazing people on my journey into what oils can do for us, and for our animals. The power of scent is underrated by us in Western Society and an extremely powerful way to deal with our emotions as well as physically. Did you know- Our nose is the only place where our central nervous system interacts with the outside world! We can be so shut off to scent in our busy daily lives, but just think how one sniff of your favourite scent can transport you back to your memories of an exotic holiday, a time with a loved one, or even your childhood.

These oils can be beneficial at any time, but particularly so for women through the peri/menopausal years; they're a great medicine cabinet to have around for your mind, body and spirit – Here are a choice few:

- Clary Sage – Reduces excess Estrogen and good for PMS symptoms
- Thyme – Improving Progesterone and decreasing low moods
- Geranium – Hormonal and mood balancing, good for your skin
- Lemon – Uplifting and anti-bacterial, good for mouth sores, sore throat and heartburn. Add 2 drops to a jug of water, it gives a more rounded flavour than lemon juice would.
- Rose – Mood lifter/ improves serotonin. The Women's Health blend from Neal's Yard combines rose with geranium and frankincense. 1 drop of Rose oil per 5ml of water, make yourself a face spritz for cooling when you flush.
- Lavender / Chamomile – Reduces cortisol (stress inducer) aids sleep and relaxation. Chamomile and Bergamot when diluted in a carrier oil are also good for relief from vaginal itching.
- Frankincense – Reduces inflammation, and so auto-immune responses. Benefits thyroid activity.
- Rosemary – Muscle ache relieving, especially great for adding to a bath soak with beneficial salts. Also diffuse to clear brain fog, and great blended with spearmint and sweet orange.
- Vetiver – This one is great for you if you feel anxious, also if you dog likes sniffing it you're onto a winner! (Not cats!!)
- Ylang Ylang – Very strong relaxant, used to let go and just be – especially in massage.
- Jasmine – Emotional support – relaxes the mind by calming a hot temperament! Uplifts the spirit and increases confidence; this is one of my favourites.
- Peppermint/Spearmint/Eucalyptus – Cooling! Pop on your feet, or inhale from your hands. Add to water and spritz!
- Grapefruit – detoxifying for the liver (to reduce night sweats). Also for oily skin. Please note this oil can interfere with medication, so please check before taking. Creates a lovely scented water to drink; I love it!

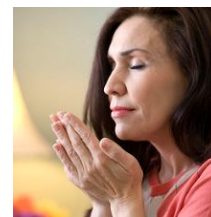
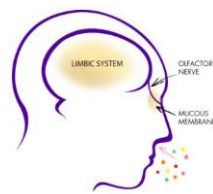


'Uplifting' blend – a very popular one with my clients, with citrus notes of bergamot and earthy sandalwood this is a blend to lift low moods. This blend and all the oils above are available from Oshadhi.co.uk it has the greatest selection I've found.

HOW TO USE ESSENTIAL OILS SAFELY

SMELL

The most powerful way to use oils – within seconds it stimulates the limbic system in your brain (linked to memories and emotions). This means keeping one of your favourite oils to hand can be instantly uplifting at all times. Why not put a few drops in a sniffer stick and keep close by; or a drop into the palm of your hands, rub together and inhale. Lava beads absorb oils and diffuse gently over the day, I create bracelets with lava beads on for just this reason!



DIFFUSING

Nowadays you can get all types of diffusers that blend into the background or look like a modern work of art. A small one does the job just fine and doesn't need to break the bank. Also you can still use an oil burner where it's lit by a candle, with no mess. Both types have a few drops of oil in water, so gently diffuse.

BATHING

A foot soak is one of the most efficient ways to get the benefits of the oils into your body as no sweat glands get in the way. A 2/3 drops in a bowl of water, especially lemon with its strong anti-bacterial qualities, keep those tootsies fresh!

In a bath, you can go up to around 5 drops of oil and therefore can blend, a great soak for achy muscles is geranium, rosemary and peppermint, especially along with a healthy dose of Magnesium salts to really ease muscle aches and tension away...



MASSAGE

An oil touching the skin should always been diluted in a carrier oil like Sweet Almond or therapy grade sunflower or extra virgin olive oil; and coconut oil can be warmed slightly (only about 30 degrees) to melt to allow adding your favourite oil



How about a home-made body scrub?

Since I've done this I've not gone back to shop ones, you do need a hefty dose of your favourite essential oil, maybe lavender for calming or lime for invigoration. Melt 2oz of Coconut oil and pour over 14oz granulated sugar and mix. Once you've got that scrub consistency add up to 50 drops of your favourite oil. Pop it in an airtight container and it's good to go and lasts for a few months!

'Essential Oils for Women's Health' is compiled by Andrea Marsh, from Shiatsu Bodyworks in Cheltenham.

Andrea's keen interest started with essential oils when she found out that dog's self-selected for their health, then whatever the dog liked the owner really did too! Now studying Aromatherapy Andrea introduces the scents of oils into her practise as a lovely way to end a relaxing session, and support clients between treatments.



"The power of scent to empower your health"



Essential oils are highly concentrated, therapeutic agents with multiple benefits for mind, body and spirit. Bear in mind that they require respect and basic understanding of their applications. Essential oils are used in increments of drops, and 'less can be more' when working with pure aromatherapy oils. If you are under the supervision of a health care professional, please consult them before using aromatherapy essential oils. Essential oils can be used by almost everyone, and children over the age of 2. Depending on the oil and the dilution, some people are more sensitive than others, and should exercise greater caution