

Essential Oil Tips for Home and Self-Care



Key point

The uses covered in this reading are not recommended in a clinical setting. They are intended for personal use only.

Topical

It's very important to use essential oils and carriers without pesticides or synthetic additives.

- Add your favorite essential oil—following appropriate dilutions—to unscented lotions and butters. There are many simple recipes in books and online for making whipped body butters and other types of lotions.
- Add skin-friendly essential oils to a base oil or lotion for your face. Jojoba and coconut oil are excellent carriers for this; use a 2% or less total dilution of oil.
- Add lavender to aloe vera jelly in a 2–5% dilution to create a very effective blend for sunburn. Keep one handy in your refrigerator during the summer months.
- Roll-ons are easy to use and make. Many companies sell pre-made roll-ons, but you can also purchase roll-on bottles to create your own personal blend. Start with a 2–5% dilution in a carrier of your choice to use on your wrist, temples, or neck.
 - A great headache blend is peppermint, lavender, and sweet marjoram.
 - Pain blends are generally 5–10%.
 - Examples of essential oils to use in roll-on blends for stress are lavender, bergamot, neroli, sweet orange, mandarin, patchouli, vetiver, and frankincense.

Cold and flu applications

Use single or blends of essential oils with known antibacterial, antiviral, and congestion relief properties. They can be used via inhalation in aromasticks, cotton balls (in a plastic sandwich bag or pillowcase), diffusers, baths, or a steamy bowl.

There are many essential oils to use for cold and flu, and most essential oil companies sell ready-made blends. Some examples of effective essential oils include eucalyptus, peppermint, thyme, rosemary, lavender, niaouli, tea tree, and ravintsara. Be sure to keep in mind the safe use of essential oils with children.

A topical application using up to 5% dilution can also be effective. An easy method is to add your essential oils to unrefined solid coconut oil in a small jar. Apply to your chest and back a few times a day.

The steamy bowl method can be very effective for relieving nasal congestion, in addition to possibly shortening the length of your illness. Add a couple drops of a single oil or blend to a bowl of hot steamy water. Close your eyes and cover your head with a towel to capture the steam as you place your face over the bowl for a few minutes. Be careful to not burn your nares. This method can be quite intense, so lower your face slowly to begin with.



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Ambience and room clearing

Any number of essential oils can be used to create the aroma of your choice in your personal space. Choose single oils or blends of your choice for ambience, stimulation, relaxation, or reducing germs in the air. Diffusers are best to use intermittently, (e.g. 15 minutes on, 30 minutes off).

Spritzers are also a great method to add scents to your environment or for cleaning. One example is to use a spray instead of a commercial bathroom odor reduction spray. Many blend recipes are available in books or online.

Books

The following books are helpful references on using essential oils for home and self-care.

Purchon, N. & Cantele, L. (2014). *The complete aromatherapy & essential oils handbook for everyday wellness*. Toronto: Robert Rose Inc.

Worwood, V. (2016). *The complete book of essential oils & aromatherapy*. Navato, CA: New World Library.



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