

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils are very safe and easy to use. However, it is important to remember that therapeutic grade essential oils are highly concentrated plant extracts and should be used with reasonable care. It is beneficial to have an understanding of the characteristics of various oils and necessary precautions.



Never apply oils directly to the eyes or ear canal. After application, avoid rubbing the eyes, around the eyelids, handling contact lenses, or touching the interior of one's nose. The skin around the genitals and mucous membranes areas are also sensitive and prone to irritation.

Dilute with oil, not water. If you happen to get an essential oil somewhere you did not intend, or experience discomfort when applying it to your skin, please use a carrier oil or pure vegetable oil to rinse or dilute the area. Using water will increase the discomfort.

Use a carrier oil with babies, children and those with sensitive skin. Care should be used with babies, children, and the elderly. Their skin is more sensitive and susceptible to irritation, burning, or stinging sensations. Use a carrier oil to protect this sensitive skin against irritation. When applying oils to babies & children, ensure they will not accidentally get the oils in their eyes or mouth (bottoms of the feet and then covered with socks, or along the spine are good locations).

"Warm oils" Some oils, such as cinnamon, thyme, oregano, cassia and clove, can feel very warm or even hot/burning on the skin and therefore should be diluted with a carrier oil when used topically, even on adults. Peppermint is a "cooling" oil, but is another oil you may want to dilute.

Some essential oils are photosensitive. Photosensitive oils, primarily citrus oils, react to radiant energy or light such as natural sunlight, sunlamps, or other sources of UV rays. The result is a dark pigmentation or a rash on the skin. To avoid issues with photosensitive oils, wait a minimum of six hours before exposing skin where you have applied citrus oils to UV rays/sunshine.

Internal Use. While most essential oils on the market should not be taken internally (and this warning is usually on the label), certified pure oils are labeled as dietary supplements and are safe for internal use, in small quantities. Mild oils may be taken under the tongue or in water, hot oils should be placed in capsules. Many oils may be used in cooking recipes for flavoring and/or therapeutic benefit.

Pregnancy & Nursing. While oils applied topically at ordinary levels should not be harmful to a developing fetus, please use caution with essential oils during pregnancy. Popular oils generally considered safe to use during pregnancy include: bergamot, ginger, geranium, lavender, lemon, sandalwood, wild orange and ylang ylang, however, other oils may also be suitable; consult your healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns. Additional oils may be helpful during and after delivery. Internal use of peppermint can reduce milk supply in some mothers, so you may want to avoid it prior to delivery and while nursing.

Critical health conditions. Persons with asthma, epilepsy, high blood pressure, or other critical health conditions can definitely benefit from essential oils, but may want to consult a healthcare professional. In general, those with **epilepsy** should be cautious or avoid: fennel, basil, birch and digestive blend; those with **high blood pressure** should be cautious or avoid thyme and rosemary.

A little goes a long way. Essential oils are pure concentrates. The higher quality the oil, the more potent it will be and smaller amounts are required. One or two drops is considered a dose. **Less oil, more often, is best.** Unlike synthetic medications, you do not need to wait 4 hours before using an oil again. Apply the oil; if there is still pain, apply more again in a few minutes.

Essential oil and bath water. One common application method is in a bath. When using undiluted oil in bath water, use a dispersing gel (bath/shower gel can work) to prevent oil from pooling as a concentrated drop in the water. Also note that oils will evaporate quickly in very hot water.

Many oils are flammable. Keep them clear of open flame, spark, or fire hazards.

BASIC SKIN TEST

For those with sensitive skin or prone to irritation, a skin test can help prevent an unwanted reaction.

Place a small amount of carrier oil such as coconut or olive oil, followed by a small amount of the essential oil on the inside of the elbow, underside of the forearm, or wrist.

After approximately 1 hour, check the area(s) for any type of reaction. If an essential oil causes irritation, further diluting the oil with a carrier, or applying a carrier first, then followed by the essential oil will usually make the oil comfortably usable.

Most users will not react to quality, pure oils and they can be safely applied for a direct powerful effect. Melaleuca & Lavender are mild even for more sensitive skin and can usually be effectively used undiluted on burns, insect bites, pimples, and other skin eruptions for most adults.

Essential oils are powerful and are very efficacious even when they are applied with a carrier oil, so do not hesitate to use a carrier oil if needed. Carriers are also helpful for massage and when applying to larger areas.



POPULAR CARRIER OILS

- ◆ Fractionated coconut oil
- ◆ Jojoba oil
- ◆ Grape seed oil
- ◆ Almond oil
- ◆ Avocado oil
- ◆ Olive oil