

# How to Use Essential Oils

*Smell is a potent wizard that transports us across thousands of miles and all the years we have lived. The odors of fruits waft me to my southern home, to my childhood frolics in the peach orchard. Other odors, instantaneous and fleeting, cause my heart to dilate joyously or contract with remembered grief. Even as I think of smells, my nose is full of scents that start to awake sweet memories of summers gone and ripening fields far way.*

Helen Keller

Lacking both sight and sound, Helen Keller possessed an acute sense of smell that recorded distinct moments of her life. She could revisit memories each time an identified aroma reached her nose. While most of us are not as adeptly aware of scent as she was, we actually smell each time we breathe. Tiny molecules of aroma elicit psychological, physiological, and spiritual reactions in our bodies and minds. Responses may happen unaware or be intentionally initiated. These are the effects of aromatherapy and the power of essential oils.

## How Do You Use an Essential Oil? It's Simple—You Smell It.

No matter the method of application, you first notice the aromatic scent of essential oils. The “German model” of essential oil use is largely based on inhalation to induce emotional and physiological responses. Scent elicits the quickest response from our brains, faster than sight or sound. Smells not only activate the release of stored emotions and memories, they also rouse the production of hormones and neurochemicals that affect physiology and behavior. Research shows that the sense of smell, though very complex, is a rapid acting and effective way to use essential oils.



As early as 1949, J. E. Amoore, a British scientist, theorized an explanation of smell. He believed each odor was composed of an odorous molecule with a specific geometric shape that fit into a matching receptor neuron, lining the nasal cavity like a key. This connection was believed to trigger nerve impulses going to the brain that stimulated certain physical or psychological responses.

Perfume expert R.W. Moncrieff conducted some of the earliest studies of how aroma affects the brain. In his work, Moncrieff used an electroencephalograph to measure brain wave patterns of people exposed to the aroma of certain essential oils. The study found that basil, black pepper, cardamom, and rosemary induced beta waves, which are associated with attention and alertness. Jasmine, neroli, and rose induced delta brain patterns, which mostly occur in calm or euphoric states.

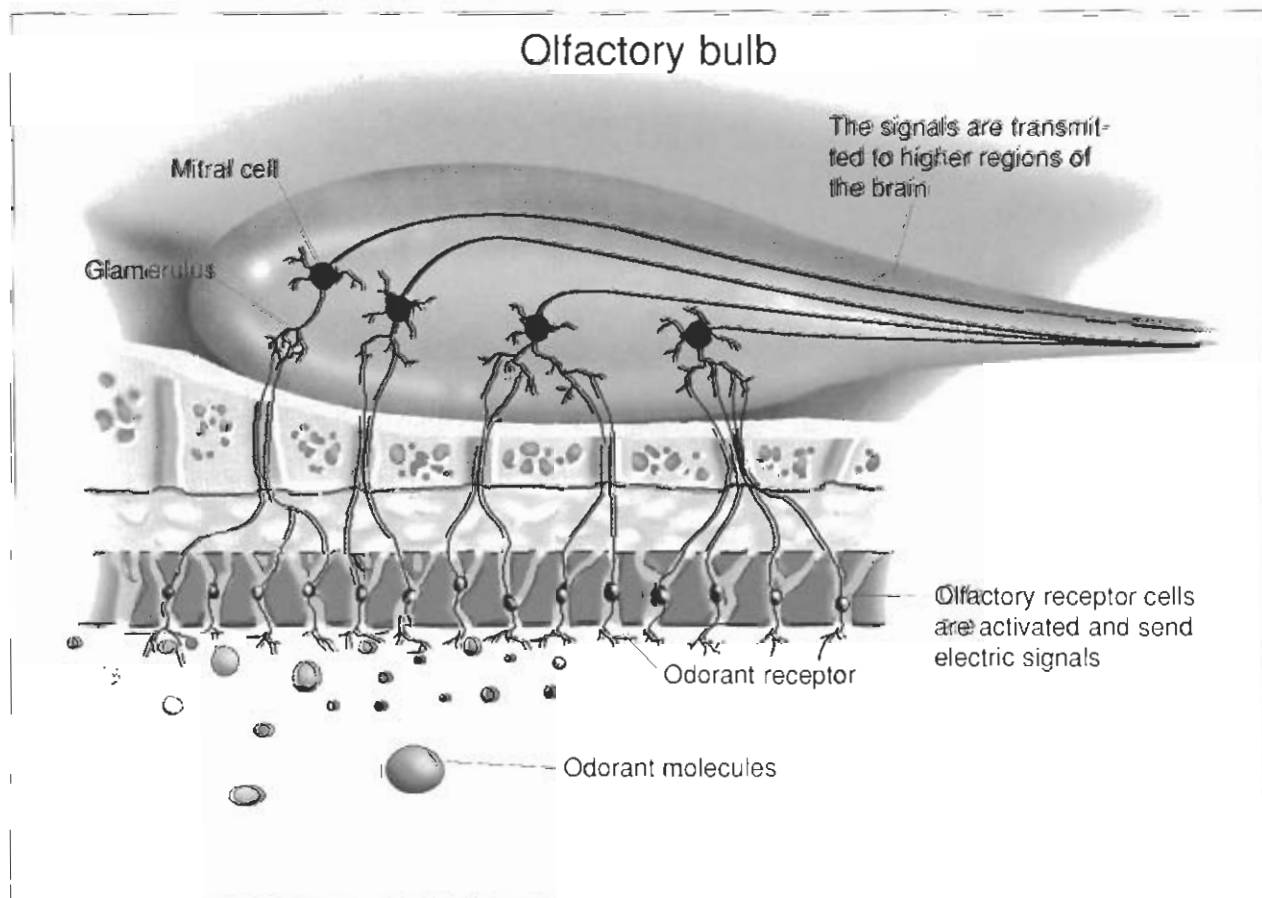
Modern research clearly shows strong connections between scent and psychological responses. In 1993, researchers proved that basil, lemon, lemongrass, and peppermint were psychologically stimulating while bergamot, chamomile, and sandalwood were relaxing.<sup>3</sup> Peppermint and lavender essential oils were found to improve the effectiveness of proofreaders.<sup>4</sup> Oils like peppermint were also shown to increase work performance as much as 15–25%.<sup>5</sup> Peter Badia, Ph.D., found that peppermint also caused changes in his subjects' electroencephalogram results and in their blood pressure, but did not affect their breathing while they were sleeping. Furthermore, churches use incense to enhance a spiritual frame of mind. Frankincense and rose are both known to lift and elevate the mind, allowing greater spiritual focus.<sup>6</sup>

The latest research by Richard Axel and Linda B. Buck, American scientists, expanded Amoore's theory and won the 2004 Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine. Axel and Buck were able to show exactly how humans recognize and remember odors, and explain in greater detail how the olfactory system works.

Axel and Buck's published papers explain that 1,000 different genes code the types of olfactory receptors in human noses. These receptors are located on the

tips of the olfactory receptor cells. Receptor cells and receptors are both positioned in a small area in the upper part of the nasal lining. The receptors on the receptor cells detect the inhaled odor molecules. Each odor receptor reacts to several, specific odor molecules. This enables our body to smell and remember approximately 10,000 different smells.

There are as many odor receptors as there are odorant receptor cells. Each olfactory receptor cell contains only one type of odor receptor. When an odor molecule stimulates an odor receptor, it in turn activates the olfactory receptor cell. An electrical impulse is created by the olfactory receptor cell, relayed to the glomeruli, and then transmitted to higher regions of the brain. There in the brain, the signal elicits a response or may be stored as memory. Memories are activated each time a specific odor is received. The poetic belief that definite odors bring forth memories has now been proven scientifically. Further studies will eventually map how specific odors activate certain physical and psychological responses. Using scent to alter mood is much more common than many of us realize. In light of proliferate, modern research on the sense of smell, it would be inconceivable to doubt the powerful effects of scent on emotional and physical well-being.



## How to Use the Scent of the Oils:

### Direct Inhalation

- Put several drops of oil into your hands, or on a tissue or cotton ball.
  - Cup your hands over your nose and mouth.
  - Breathe deeply.

### Diffuse oils into the air

- Use a Young Living diffuser that has been specially designed to disperse a fine mist into the room. Young Living diffusers will not heat the oils, ensuring the full, therapeutic benefits.
- Place a bowl of hot water in a room. Sprinkle in a few drops of your favorite oil. The steam will carry oil molecules into the room.
- Fill a humidifier with water. Put a tissue with a few drops of oil in front of the escaping steam. Do not put the oil in the humidifier. It will float on top of the water instead of rising with the water vapor.
- Put a mixture of a few drops of oil and water into a spray bottle, shake vigorously, and spray on yourself or into the air. Shake before each use.

### Steam Inhalation

- Carefully pour boiling water into a bowl. Add a few drops of essential oils. Cover your head and the bowl in a tent-like fashion with a towel. Inhale the steam.

## How Do You Use an Essential Oil? It's Simple—You Rub It On.

The healing power of touch was well documented in 1968 when Tiffany Field, Ph.D., found that premature babies who received massage slept better, gained weight quicker, and were able to leave the hospital much quicker. She also found that massage enhanced wound healing. Other researchers have found that massage increases immune function.<sup>7</sup> Body workers find that adding essential oils to their practice enhances and speeds the healing power of touch.

Star Moree, a Young Living Gold and licensed physical therapist at the Still Pointe Natural Health Center, starts her therapy sessions by rubbing a few drops of the single essential oils of peppermint, lavender, and wintergreen to areas that are pained or inflamed. Peppermint and lavender have proven analgesic properties that are particularly good for low-back pain.<sup>8</sup> Moree says, "I like to see my patients get well fast. When I was doing traditional physical therapy, without the essential oils, I would see results, but it was a long, slow process. The addition of essential oils speeds the healing process."

In 1968, researchers were able to clearly demonstrate the permeability of the human skin. Scientists attached radioactive "tags" to chemicals in cosmetics. These preparations were applied to the skin. Later these tagged chemicals were identified in the volunteers' waste.<sup>9</sup> Another experiment showed that components from English lavender, dissolved in peanut oil, were absorbed through the abdominal skin of humans within minutes and detected in the blood plasma.<sup>10</sup>

In as little as five to twenty minutes, an essential oil that is applied topically is carried into the blood stream, carried to the lungs, and exhaled through the breath. Essential oils are also eliminated through the skin and through the urine. As an essential oil travels through the bloodstream, tissues and organs benefit.<sup>11</sup>

Moree uses the essential oils "neat," a term which means undiluted. French and German health professionals apply pure essential oils directly to the skin. The "British model," which advocates dilution of oils prior to application, is the system largely adhered to by the National Association For Holistic Aromatherapy (NAHA). NAHA works to set the standard of essential oil use in the United States. Much of their philosophy is based on the British model. Because of this influence, NAHA frowns upon direct application of undiluted essential oils. The research, however, does not support NAHA's position. Young Living recognizes the therapeutic benefits of pure, undiluted essential oils, and chooses to apply the model that is most effective for the specific situation. There should be little fear in using essential oils neat as long as the oils are pure and cautions are adhered to.

Essential oils that are diluted by carrier oils are absorbed less rapidly than pure oils.<sup>12</sup> In many instances, neat application is preferable. Lavender, Roman chamomile, and melaleuca oil are all used without dilution, and bring remarkable benefits for acne, rashes, burns, and abrasions. In some instances, such as applying for acne or burns, mixing with a carrier oil would be counterproductive.

Much of the concern of NAHA is attributed to the wide variance in toxicity levels found in various essential oils. Young Living's essential oils meet Association French Normalization Organization Regulation (AFNOR) and International Standards Organization (ISO) certification standards—both European procedures set to test the purity of certain essential oils. (Note: The United States does not have a set standard.)

If there is no European standard for a specific oil, Young Living uses chemical Gas Chromatography (GC) and Mass Spectrometry (MS) performed by a licensed chemist to ensure that all essential oils sold by Young Living Essential Oils are pure and of therapeutic-grade quality. Physical testing such as density, optical rotation, and refractive index are also used. Finally, the supreme tool for testing the quality and characteristics of an essential oil is a highly trained human nose.

Another reason for NAHA's conservative view is fostered by the disregard of enthusiastic oil users who apply some of the essential oils with no regard to the written and verbal cautions that apply to a few specific oils. Young Living is keenly aware of safety data and includes cautions and warnings in Young Living print material and at educational conventions and regional meetings. Young Living adheres to safety regulations prescribed by European journals, found in FDA writings, and provided by the *Essential Oils Desk Reference*, which is compiled by Essential Science Publishing.

"I am always aware of the oils I apply to my clients' skin," reports Moree, "I refer to my *Essential Oils Desk Reference*. I allow my clients to read about the oils. I look at their skin. If I have any question as to whether an oil may be too strong, I will first rub on a thin base of V-6™ Enhanced Vegetable Oil Complex, or some other carrier or massage oil. Then I add two, three, or four drops of the warmer oils, such as oregano or thyme. I refer to these oils as the "big guns," and use them when milder essential oils aren't bringing the desired results. They should be used sparingly. They are potent. For instance, one drop of some essential oils is equal to 100 cups of herb tea. Once I finish applying the warmer oils, as an extra precaution, I add eight to twelve drops of lavender essential oil to finish the treatment. Lavender is very soothing and most of my clients love the smell." Moree's introduction to Young Living Essential Oils came as a result of an advertisement in a health magazine.

"I was an ice-skater when I was growing up. Numerous falls caused severe pain in my back and hips. As an adult, physical therapy helped my pain but did not facilitate complete healing.

At the time that I saw the Young Living ad, I was working in a stress-filled environment. I was in the wrong place. I was supposed to be somewhere else. Once I found the oils, I applied the Peace and

Calming<sup>®</sup> blend on my stomach everyday. It relieved my stomachaches caused by emotional stress. As I was introduced to a greater variety of the essential oils, I could feel a big difference in my hip and back pain."

To measure the results that are achieved with her clients, Moree uses a recognized pain scale. She assesses where they are at before treatment and then re-checks after therapy. She also uses the standard activity scale to monitor their before and after results. Finally, she checks her clients' range of motion before and after essential oil application.

"I am very careful with treatment procedures. Being a licensed professional, I care about my clients. I also do not want complaints filed against the clinic or me. After applying the oils, I take a few minutes to see how the patient responds. If I notice any headaches or nausea, I recognize this as a cleansing reaction to the release of toxins, so I apply less of the essential oils, or I add more of the V-6 Enhanced Vegetable Oil Complex. Almost all of my clients see remarkable results. They also like the fact that they can apply these oils to themselves at home."

In addition to working in the clinic, Moree teaches many classes on the use of essential oils. She has taught classes all over the United States and in Puerto Rico.

"While teaching, I always end my classes by stating that if I have taught anything that is offensive or something that someone disagrees with, I encourage them to make their own decisions and to refer to the safety data published by the Food and Drug Administration. Once again, I refer them to the *Essential Oils Desk Reference* published by Essential Science Publishing. I encourage them to find a way to make essential oils work for them."

Aside from helping with injuries and joint soreness, the direct application of pure essential oils has other advantages. Essential oils penetrate the skin through a process referred to as diffusion. The molecules of the essential oils pass through the skin and penetrate the blood stream. Here they are able to stimulate the nervous system, act on the internal organs, and soothe the emotions. Since essential oils dissolve readily into fat, they easily enter areas in the body that are rich in fats, such as the liver and the brain. Similar to Moree, many massage therapists, physical therapists, and other body workers who use touch include essential oils as part of their practice. A fairly recent addition to the list of professional users of

essential oils for massage and external application are nurses. British nurses are insured by the Royal College of Nursing for using essential oils externally to improve patient care. In the United States, more than **thirty states** currently allow the use of complementary therapies, including the external application of essential oils as part of holistic nursing care.<sup>13</sup>

## How to Apply an Essential Oil to the Skin

1. Essential oils may be rubbed directly on the skin in a number of locations on the body, depending on the particular oil used and on the effects you are trying to achieve. Common areas of application include:
  - The crown, temples, and forehead
  - Behind the ears, on the ears, and on individual teeth
  - The neck and upper back
  - On the abdomen, over vital organs such as the kidneys and liver
  - On the soles and top of the feet, and the ankles.
2. Rubbing essential oils onto the body may help soothe muscle soreness and induce a calming effect. They may induce other physical reactions not related to the musculoskeletal system.
3. When applying essential oils for the first time, do not apply more than two single oils or blends at one time.
4. Start with two drops of an essential oil on the skin and massage it in. Wait for a while to determine how the skin will react and to check for cleansing reactions.
5. If redness or irritation occurs, immediately apply V-6 Enhanced Vegetable Oil Complex or olive oil. This will stop the burning. Do not try to rinse the area with water as this may carry some of the oils deeper into the skin.
6. Keep essential oils away from the eyes and do not put them into the ears.
7. Avoid handling contact lenses or rubbing eyes with your fingers after touching essential oils.
8. Mix essential oils with creams or lotions and apply to the skin.
9. Make hot or cold compresses infused with essential oils, or apply an essential oil on the location of the discomfort and then apply an icepack or hot pad.

## How Do You Use An Essential Oil? It's Simple—You Take It As a Supplement, Internally.

Taking essential oils internally is the most misunder-

stood method of use. Are they safe when taken as supplements? Years of research and empirical use provide a resounding "yes." Several French doctors (Valnet, Belaiche, and Gattefosse) freely used essential oils and popularized their internal use for their patients, particularly for digestive complaints. Because most of the research and internal use occurred in France, internal use of essential oils is often referred to as the "French Model."

Art Davis, M.D., a practicing medical doctor in Rico, California, is a long-time user of essential oils. Viewed somewhat as a maverick, yet well respected by the hospital staff and the community where he lives, Dr. Davis is not new to alternative medicine. He became interested over thirty years ago when his mother had a nervous breakdown and was placed in a mental institution. There, she was diagnosed with hypoglycemia. "We changed her diet, gave her supplements, and saw a remarkable recovery. Since then I have studied alternative treatments and used them in my practice when I felt they would be most beneficial."

Dr. Davis attributes his education about essential oils to D. Gary Young and Young Living. "Gary did a lot of traveling in the early days of the company. I followed his seminars around the country. I learned a lot from his presentations. I also attend the yearly conventions where I receive a lot of information. My research on essential oils is very supportive of the teachings that come from Young Living."

While most of his usage is external, Dr. Davis will on occasion recommend the internal use of an essential oil for specific conditions. "As a medical doctor trained in diagnosis, I am able to determine certain conditions that a patient has. As a result, I can suggest oils that have been tested for that condition. I find essential oils particularly helpful to treat symptoms. For instance, I use the essential oil blend 'Thieves' for sore throats with great success." Extensive research on the individual essential oils in this blend and other individual oils supports Dr. Davis's practice.<sup>14 \*</sup>

In the United States, the American Medical Association listed certain oils for oral use in their 1930 publication, *Useful Drugs*.<sup>15</sup> With the advent of the pharmaceutical age, the internal use of essential oils, along with herbal medicine, almost became extinct. Fortunately, food and drink industries continued to use pure oils for flavorings until cheaper,

synthetic copies were created. In 1993, Mark Pendergrast published a recipe that is believed to be John Pemberton's original formula for Coca-Cola. In addition to several other ingredients, the original Coke contained orange, lemon, nutmeg, cinnamon, coriander, and neroli essential oils.<sup>16</sup>

Some of the controversy surrounding essential oils as internal supplements may have originated with Madame Marguerite Maury, a biochemist who set up some of the first aromatherapy clinics in Paris. Unlike her contemporary, Valnet, Madame Maury was not a medical doctor and did not feel comfortable suggesting essential oils internally. Maury was more interested in using essential oils for beauty therapy.

In the 1950s, Maury took her beauty therapy techniques to Great Britain. There she established the model of diluting the oils and massaging them into the skin. Hence, oral applications were not introduced as part of essential oil therapy in England.

Like all supplements, essential oils fall under the watch of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA is concerned with the safety of all forms of supplements and often cite that there is no standard to monitor purity and quality. As a safety precaution, the FDA has created a Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) list that gives the names of essential oils that they deem as safe for external and internal use. Young Living oils excel in this area—YL's essential oils are tested for absolute purity in Europe and in private U.S. clinics.

A great benefit of using essential oils internally is in their therapeutic value—they work! Clinical research documents many cases responding to internal essential oil use when no other application was effective. Many Young Living distributors write and ask the company which oils are recommended for a specific disease. Unfortunately, all companies, including Young Living, are restricted from making claims about the therapeutic applications of supplements. This is frustrating for distributors, yet in order to continue to sell products, Young Living must comply with current FDA, Federal Trade Commission (FTC), American Medical Association (AMA), and a number of other stringent guidelines set forth by regulating agencies. We recommend that distributors be proactive in finding the documented research available to them on the health benefits of natural products. Excellent sources for this information include books, tapes, and DVDs published by Essential Science Publishing ([www.essentialscience.net](http://www.essentialscience.net)).

Therapeutic recommendations of any substance are restricted to licensed health professionals, mainly medical doctors. Unfortunately, many of the training programs for essential oil use and other alternative healing modes are sought after by the layperson, not licensed health professionals. In a majority of cases, people who are legally able to use the supplements are not trained on correct applications. The tide is turning, however, and there are licensed professionals seeking this vital, alternative healing knowledge. Dr. Davis is a prime example of this.

"Making unsubstantiated claims is what the AMA is against. The layperson has to be very careful not to make health claims. As a doctor, I too walk a fine line. If I get poor results or if a patient does not respond well, I am liable. So far, I have been very successful using essential oils as part of my practice."

Other cases where Dr. Davis sees amazing results with the oils are in the area of gastrointestinal and respiratory disorders, insect bites, and mood disorders. "I use small doses of oregano essential oil internally with great success. Often patients experiencing nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea quickly become symptom free when I use oregano.

"Purification"™ and Melrose"™ are excellent for insect bites. I rub Peace and Calming™ on excited children and have suggested Joy™ to a nurse suffering from extended sadness," remarked Dr. Davis.

The confusion surrounding the internal use of essential oils is largely based on a lack of knowledge. Even though there is ample literature supporting internal use, most aromatherapy training programs do not teach this mode. Many adhere to the belief that the internal use of all essential oils is toxic—this is erroneous. Toxic reactions are the results of contaminated oils, taking excessive doses, or taking oils that should not be taken internally. The largest number of complaints against essential oils is from people who take them internally while ignoring proper dosage recommendations and precautions. There are a few essential oils best used externally, such as tansy, wintergreen, eucalyptus, pennyroyal, and a few others. As stated earlier, essential oils are extremely powerful and in many cases higher doses do not equate with better results.

## How to Take Essential Oils Internally as Supplements

- Read instructions carefully.

- Take only as directed by a reputable manufacturer.
- Take only as directed by a licensed professional trained in the therapeutic use of essential oils.
- Do not **exceed recommended dosages** unless advised by a knowledgeable professional.
- Recognize that dosage is dependent on the age and size of the person (e.g., small children and the elderly would take a much smaller dose than a 250-pound male).
- Make sure the essential oil is on the Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) list. This list is included in the Young Living Essential Oils User's Guide, which accompanies every order.
- Dilute essential oils with almond oil, olive oil, or rice milk before taking internally.

## Other Uses of Essential Oils

In addition to inhalation, massage, and internal use, the following list provides other ways to experience the beneficial effects of essential oils:

- Create a first aid kit using essential oils such as "Thieves" and lavender for mild burns, cuts, scrapes, and other minor ailments.
- Augment mood management protocols.
- Induce more restful sleep.
- Supplement your antibiotic, antihistamine remedies (under direction of a health professional).
- Enhance nutritional supplements.
- Improve efficacy of personal care products.
- Clean with them—such as washing clothes, dishes, floors, and furnishings.
- Balance energy through calming or energizing.
- Use in cooking. (See article on page 59.)
- Use as gargles and mouthwashes.
- Utilize as a disinfectant for clothes, diapers, hands, and bathroom surfaces.
- Add to furniture polish. Sandalwood and cedar are particularly nice.
- Scent your favorite stationery. Some of the pure oils such as lavender, cedar, peppermint, and melissa do not stain or leave residue.
- Sprinkle a few drops in the bath or add to your favorite bath gel.
- Massage into scalp to improve circulation and increase hair quality.
- Add to paint to buffer its smell.

## Keep it simple.

No matter the ailment, we can all be healers by offering a hardy bouquet of flowers, filled to the brim with the heady scent of essential oils. One whiff of

aroma can lift you physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. With more learning, experience, and education, and at times, under the direction of a health professional, the bottled essential oils can make significant changes in a person's well-being.

Called the "life force" of a plant, essential oils are miracles of nature. They are gifts. A single oil contains hundreds of components that trigger a number of responses in the human body. They can make all who receive them feel cared for. They can elicit fond memories from times past. How do you use an essential oil? It's simple. No matter your choice—inhaling, applying to the skin, or taking internally—you will receive ample benefit. You can even mimic nature and give the oils away as gifts. You will notice a change in both the receiver and yourself.

*"It is imperative to recognize that Dr. Davis is a licensed M.D., and as such can determine the sickness he is dealing with. Young Living does not prescribe the use of oils and encourages people to consult a medical professional for diagnosing all conditions"*

### Notes

1. Jane Buckle, *Clinical Aromatherapy: Essential Oils in Practice* (Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 2003), 355.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. Linda Smith, *Healing Oils Healing Hands* (Arvada: HTSM Press, 2003), 67.
5. Buckle, *Clinical Aromatherapy*, 104.
6. Smith, *Healing Oils*, 98.
7. Buckle, *Clinical Aromatherapy*, 146.
8. *Ibid.*, 15.
9. Victoria H. Edwards, *The Aromatherapy Companion* (Pownal: Storey Books, 1999), 68.
10. Jane Buckle, "Aromatherapy: What Is It?" *HerbalGram* (Austin: American Botanical Council, 2003), Issue 57, 50.
11. Edwards, *The Aromatherapy Companion*, 90.
12. Buckle, *Clinical Aromatherapy*, 25.
13. Buckle, "Aromatherapy: What Is It?", 2.
14. In 1960, Manuzella and Sicurella reported on the antibacterial activity of 133 essential oils *in vitro*. In 1993, Zakarya examined the antimicrobial activity of 21 essential oils of eucalyptus. In 1987, Dans and Rötche of the Department of Biochemical Sciences, at the Scottish Agricultural College in Auchincruive, Scotland, tested 50 essential oils against 25 genera of bacteria *in vitro*. In 1994, Michael Smith, a London-based pathologist gave an analysis of the antibacterial properties of several essential oils on MRSA. (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), a bacteria resistant to antibiotics. The oils tested included oregano, thymol from thyme, chamomile, lavender, cypress, peppermint, ravensara, juniper, lemon, palmarosa, and eucalyptus. The list goes on as new research supports essential oils against bacteria and viruses.
15. Buckle, *Clinical Aromatherapy*, 138.
16. Everything 2, <http://everything2.com/index.pl>.

