

# Using Essential Oils

Some tips and suggestions for home-care aromatherapy...

Essential oils are very powerful and should be used with caution. Here are a few tips that you may find useful, although we advise that you consult a fully qualified, registered aromatherapist who will be able to advise you on the safe methods of use.

**Inhalation:** Undiluted essential oils may be inhaled from a tissue or a pillow (4-6 drops). Alternatively they can be inhaled from a bowl of hot water (3 or 4 drops) or a diffuser (see table below), but avoid this if asthmatic. Never inhale essential oils directly from the bottle.

**Shampoo and Bath Foam:** Create unique aromatherapy bath foams or shampoos by mixing up to 30 drops of your own essential oil blend into 100ml of a suitable bath foam base or shampoo base.

**Cream:** Essential oils can be added to vegetable based creams and then developed into facial products or topical creams. Do not add more than 15 drops of essential oil to 50ml of your base cream.

**Pregnancy:** Essential oils are best avoided during the first months of pregnancy. After the third month, many oils can be used safely and effectively. If in doubt, always consult a qualified aromatherapist.

**Bath, Massage, Vaporiser:** See the table below, which gives correct amounts to use depending on age, and a brief guide on how to use.



	12+ Years	Child 2-12 Years	Baby (0-2 Years)	How to Use
<b>Bath</b>	4-6 drops, preferably in a vegetable carrier lotion or detergent base	2-3 drops diluted in a small amount of white lotion or detergent base	1-2 drops diluted in a small amount of white lotion or detergent base	Allow water to run into the bath, then add the essential oils and swish to disperse evenly for about 2 minutes.
<b>Massage</b>	4-6 drops in 10-15ml vegetable carrier oil	2-4 drops in 10ml lotion oil or vegetable carrier	2 drops in 10ml lotion oil or vegetable carrier	Massage directly on the skin. Use very gentle strokes when massaging a baby.
<b>Vapouriser</b>	4-6 drops in a small amount of water (ideally distilled)			Subtle release of aromatic oils into the air to induce relaxation or stimulation. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
<b>Diffuser</b>	3-5 drops per 100ml of water (ideally distilled)			

## Focus on three Popular Oils...

### Cornmint

*Mentha arvensis*

◆ leaf and flower

One of many mint varieties, the cornmint plant grows to around two feet high. The essential oil, which is abundant in the leaf, is a pale, yellow-green with a strong, minty, fresh aroma. Used since ancient times for digestive problems, including toothache, cornmint can also be very effective against headaches and muscular cramp, and with its invigorating and stimulating properties, it can improve and sharpen the mind. There are no documented contra-indications.



### Ho Leaf

*Cinnamomum camphora*

◆ wood and leaf

With its delicate, floral, woody odour, ho leaf essential oil can help with the maintenance of a good respiratory system, and is useful against everyday stresses and strains. Since the 1920s the oil has been harvested for its high linalool content, which is of great importance in the perfume industry. There is no known toxicity in the oil and it blends well with a wide variety of other essential oils, including jasmine, geranium, clary sage and various wood oils such as rosewood.



### Plai

*Zingiber montanum*

◆ rhizome

The plai plant, grows mainly in Thailand, and is related to ginger, to which the clear, pale yellow essential oil displays similar aromatic qualities. It is warming and stimulating to the circulation, but can also produce a calming effect making it useful in the treatment of common aches and pains, and inflammation. It blends well with: lemongrass, ginger, juniper, marjoram and lavender, and is considered safe to use, but may warm the skin if applied directly.



## Cautions and Advice...

- Keep essential oils out of the reach of children at all times.
- Never remove a fixed dropper from a bottle of essential oil.
- Do not apply directly to skin without professional advice.
- Do not ingest without professional advice. If oil is accidentally ingested, seek immediate medical assistance.
- Do not exceed stated doses.
- If splashed in the eyes, dab gently with olive oil on cotton wool. Water does NOT carry or dissolve essential oil.
- Remove essential oil from the hands by washing thoroughly with a mild detergent. This prevents transference to other parts of the body.
- Do not assume that an essential oil has the same properties as the plant from which it has been derived.