

Essential oils have been a very valuable resource around the world for centuries in the healing process. But did you know that some scents may actually improve your health? Essential oils may also help you relax or sleep, or improve your skin or digestion — their benefits go well beyond a pleasant smell.

Essential oils may have a healing effect mentally, physically, and emotionally. Applications include, **Inhalation:** use through a cool air diffuser or a drop in your hands breath in. **Topical:** Apply to bottoms of feet or back of neck. **Internally:** Label will indicate dietary supplement.

Essential oils are liquids, primarily steam distilled, from plants. It can take a huge amount of a plant to get out even a small portion of essential oil. This is why some essential oils are particularly expensive.

Here are some general rules when looking to purchase essential oils. Look for signs of a high-quality therapeutic-grade oil: pure, medicinal, and steam distilled. You should never apply most oils directly to your skin, as their high concentration can cause a reaction or irritation. Instead, essential oils should be diluted in water or carrier oil like jojoba or almond. And with a few exceptions, as noted below, do not ingest essential oils. You should always talk to your doctor about health concerns, especially if they represent sudden changes in your well-being.

The **10 oils below will help you assemble a natural first-aid kit** for a variety of common minor ailments.

1. **Tea Tree:** Distilled from the Australian plant *Melaleuca alterniflora*, tea tree is one of the oils that can be used topically -- good news, because it's great for treating skin problems like fungus and blemishes. You can dab it on acne blemishes with a cotton swab may help clear your skin, or apply it to skin fungal infections like athlete's foot. It's also found in many skin care products.

2. **Lavender:** Lavender is one of the most versatile oils. That is why it is often called the Swiss Army Knife of essential oils. It offers great relaxing effects but also works on bruises, cuts, and skin irritation too." Dr. Oz says that the scent of lavender may reduce the levels of stress hormones in your blood. That's a good reason to put a few drops in your bath in order to help you relax at night. You can also inhaling its aroma, then sprinkle a few more on your pillow before you hop in bed.

3. **Copaiba:** flowering plant steam distilled from oleoresin. The oleoresin has traditionally has been used for inflammation, Copaiba may also help with colds, bacterial infections (internal and external) Stiffness, muscular aches and pains. **Not for children under 6 years old.**



4. **Chamomile:** You're probably familiar with chamomile used as a tea, but the essential oil has similar properties. It's particularly well known for its relaxing effects, which is why the tea is popular to drink before bed. Add to the effect with a few drops of the oil on your pillowcase.

5. **Peppermint:** Peppermint is another must have oil because of its great benefits. Peppermint purifies and stimulates the mind. It also may increase mental alertness. "Dr. William N. Denver of the University of Cincinnati found that inhaling peppermint oil increased mental accuracy by 28 percent." Peppermint oil is also one of just a handful of oils that can be taken internally, which is fortunate because it's a great recipe to help indigestion — just mix a few drops in water and drink.



6. **Frankincense:** Frankincense is a must-have essential oil in everyone's home. It is used both for relaxation, such as in baths, and to help minor cuts and bug bites heal more quickly. Frankincense has been used for thousands of years. It may be used for depression, inflammation, immunity, and to increase spiritual awareness."

7. **Oregano:** You may have heard of oil of oregano as a flu fighter. This strong-tasting oil has naturally antibacterial qualities, which is why many think it may help to fight colds and other sicknesses. It is taken topically, often by putting a few drops in a capsule — (fill as needed, do not prepare ahead of time), digestive issues, etc. Many people swear by it during flu season.

8. **Lemon:** Lemon oil may be used not only to detox the body but it may also help with acne. If you want a healthy boost in alertness, a bit of lemon oil mixed 50:50 with a carrier is a great way to give your head a lift. Because of its uplifting properties, lemon essential oil is also good for increasing focus and concentration. As a bonus, it may help keep fleas away when used on your pets.

9. **Grapefruit:** Another citrus oil, grapefruit essential oil has properties similar to lemon oil. It's a great choice for people experiencing fatigue and it may help you deal with the effects of jet lag. It's also a natural antiseptic so you can add it to your homemade household cleansers to keep your home safe and clean.



10. **Eucalyptus:** This is a great oil to have on hand if you get frequent colds or suffer from allergies that affect your breathing and make you congested. Eucalyptus may be used to relieve sore muscles and may clear sinuses. It also has many antibacterial properties and has been known to stimulate the immune system. Use it in a diffuser, apply it diluted to the around your nose to relieve nasal congestion. But never ingest it or use it on your skin undiluted, as it can be irritating.

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The products and services are not intended as substitute for regular medical care and are not intended as diagnosis, treatment, prescription of cure for any disease, mental or physical.