

“About Aromatherapy” Reference Fact Sheet

Not designed to be a complete guide and/or listing

AROMATHERAPY

“Aromatherapy is the controlled and skilled use of essential oils to maintain health and wellbeing and to prevent imbalances and illness on the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels, for the good of mankind and preservation of the entire planet”. Valerie Cooksley, RN

Aromatherapy Defined

Aromatherapy is both an art and a science that encompasses the controlled and skilled use of pure essential oils for promoting health and well-being. Aromatic plants, essential oils, floral waters and their extracts have been used for thousands of years throughout history – by every major culture. There are several applications for aromatherapy including massage, aesthetics, psycho-emotional, as well as clinical and therapeutic usage. It is considered an holistic and natural alternative for health maintenance.

To date, there is no licensing for “aromatherapists”, however, many health professionals practice safe use under their individual license, albeit nursing, massage therapy, naturopathy, etc. Although, it is highly recommended that a thorough course of study be undertaken in aromatherapy if one wishes to practice this holistic methodology within the framework of their present license.

What are Essential Oils?

Essential oils are very concentrated, complex volatile components which are responsible for giving scent to various botanicals. They are steam distilled from the flowers, leaves, fruit, seed, bark, wood, root or resins of a particular plant. It is important to know the Latin/botanical name of the essential oil you are purchasing – as some species have several different bio-types, resulting in a different essential oil chemotype or major chemical constituent. It is also imperative to know the country of origin, how the material was processed, how it was grown, and was it rectified or reconstituted. Only the highest quality pure and authentic essential oils should be used for therapeutic results, preferably organically farmed or wild crafted sources. Highly processed, denatured, adulterated or oils of compromised quality or synthetic origination do not have a place in true aromatherapy and should not be used in the therapeutic setting.

Aromatherapy Applications – Safety and Use

Essential oils can be used in many pleasurable, health promoting and preventative ways -from aiding minor common ailments , stress related diseases and skin problems to preventing the spread of bacterial infections, relaxing the mind and body or stimulating the immune system. Essential oils can be mixed with massage oils and lotions for topical application, inhaled via air dispersion, applied by compress and experienced through aromatic baths with the use of salts or other emulsifying agents. More often than not, essential oils are diluted and mixed with a carrier before applying to the body.

Not all essential oils produced, nor sold over the counter, are safe for personal or professional use. Some essential oils are skin irritating and phototoxic, and some are considered unsafe and possibly hazardous. Therefore it is important to gain proper knowledge and training of their properties and safety. Special care should be given for young children, the elderly, pregnant women, and persons with a history of epilepsy and asthma.

AROMATHERAPY

“To provide aid and support to a person, an animal, plant

*or even the soil, by making use of a natural substance
extracted from an aromatic plant,
mainly by means of steam distillation”.*

Dr. Daniel Penoel