

# Managing Stress with Aromatherapy



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## Introduction

With stress that emerged as the risk factor that was involved in 3 from 10 causes of highest death in developed countries, the beneficial influence from aromatherapy essential oils must be considered.

As part of strategy to overcome stress. This aromatherapy oil not only could help you to pass the specific crisis point, but also could overcome the influence stress chronic that was disappointing.

## How does Aromatherapy Works?

Aromatherapy uses concentrated essential oils extracted from herbs, flowers, trees and other plants. The essential oils are believed to have an effect on both psychological and physiological level. Depending on the mix and blend, this effect may be either to stimulate or relax.

When we inhale the essential oils, the scents from the oils activate the olfactory nerves in the nose. This triggers the limbic system which gives our emotions and also involves the creation and retrieval of memories associated with smells.

When we have an aromatherapy massage, essential oils rubbed into the skin and absorbed into the bloodstream by passing through the sweat glands and hair follicles. From here the oil taken by the lymph and interstitial fluid to other part of the body.

[Want to know more about How does aromatherapy works?](#)

Essential Oils are never applied neat. They are diluted, commonly in carrier oil, at a 2.5% ratio for the average person or 1% for children, elderly people or pregnant women.

Notes: Essential Oils have to be applied with caution on a damaged skin. Before you applied essential oils, [I suggest you read safety precaution first](#)

[Don't forget to check what essential oils consider to be toxic.](#)

Many health professionals are still skeptical over its true medical properties but will admit that it does appear to have some benefit, however short-lived, on stress and anxiety.

## **A case study ... using essential oils to alleviate stress and anxiety**

Researchers at the Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Trust, Reading, recently broke new ground by studying the effects of aromatherapy in the intensive care unit as a means of helping to alleviate anxiety and stress.

122 patients were randomly selected to receive either massage, aromatherapy (using essential oil of lavender), or bed rest. All of the patients were assessed before and after the therapy sessions which included physiological stress indicators as well as subjective evaluations given by the patients themselves as to their levels of anxiety, mood and ability to cope with their intensive care experience.

93 patients (77%) completed the subjective assessments and whilst there was no significant difference in the physiological stress indicators between the three groups, those patients in the aromatherapy group reported significantly greater improvements in their mood and perceived levels of anxiety. patients who received aromatherapy were found to be less anxious and more positive immediately after the treatment. Although the improvements were temporary, the results revealed a demonstrable improvement in the aromatherapy group.

Dunn C; Sleep J; Collett D Sensing an improvement: an experimental study to evaluate the use of aromatherapy, massage and periods of rest in an intensive care unit. Journal of Advanced Nursing (ENGLAND) Jan 1995, 21 (1) p34-40

Source : [Internet Health Library](#)

## **How you do it?**

One of the best methods for enjoyed the aromatherapy oil was with [aroma oil burner](#). To use aroma oil burner, you just mix the essential oils with water and heated with a tea light candle under it. When water evaporated, steam brought oil to air. A part from that, you can directly smell the essential oils from the bottle. But be careful because the smell will be too strong and thick.

You can put the essential oils in the lamp with a ring around it. The essential oils put it in the ring and when the lamp heated, the oil will be dispersing through the air. [More details on how to use it.](#)

Some people like to use spray. First fill the spray with the water, then add the essential oils, shake well then spray.

Last, you can use the essential oils to have a massage, I'll discuss about massage later after this. But first let me tell you what essential oils that benefits for stress.

[Check out other aroma diffusers](#)

## **How does it relieve stress?**

Aromatherapy Oil that can reduce stress to overcome the common problems which can be connected with stress as the tension, panic attacks and the chronic fatigue are:

- \* Sweet Marjoram for reducing panic attacks.
- \* Lavender is good for relaxation and deal with stress.
- \* Rosemary is good for concentration
- \* Juniper Berry for reducing anger and panic.
- \* Geranium for reduce the feeling stress and panic.
- \* Chamomile for reduce the feeling stress.
- \* Clary sage is good for relaxation
- \* Sandalwood for insomnia and depression.

Some health problems that can be connected with stress and potentially was helped with aromatherapy oils were:

- \* The tension of nerves. Oil that can make you more relax and flexible are basil, bergamot, cedarwood, chamomile, cinnamon, frankincense, geranium, lavender, marjoram, neroli and ylang ylang.
- \* The panic and the fear. Essential oil which can make you relax are cedarwood, cypress, geranium, juniper berry, lavender, melissa, neroli, rose, thyme, ylang ylang.

\* Self esteem low. Essential oil which can increase and support self esteem are caraway, cedarwood, fennel, ginger, hyssop, juniper berry, laurel bay, pine, rosemary, tea tree, thyme.

\* The Anger. Essential oils which can give you more peace are bergamot, chamomile, grapefruit, lavender, rose, yarrow.

\* The Insomnia. Essential oils which can give you calm and relax are basil, chamomile, Melissa, neroli, rose, sandalwood, thyme, ylang ylang.

\* The Depression. Essential oils which can give you support and comfort are basil, bergamot, clary sage, chamomile, grapefruit, lavender, Melissa, neroli, orange, rose, sandalwood, thyme, yarrow, ylang ylang.

\* The relationship between other people. Essential oil which give you balances body and mind and friendship are caraway, fennel, geranium, ginger, juniper berry, lavender, marjoram, neroli, patchouli, peppermint, rose, ylang ylang

\* Fatigue. Essential oils which give you relax are basil, cinnamon, citronella, coriander, ginger, grapefruit, hyssop, jasmine, lavender, lemongrass, peppermint, nutmeg, rosemary, ylang ylang.

## **The Recipes**

Here are some selections of aromatherapy blends to be used for relieve your stress.

### **Restful Sleep Bath**

This bath is perfect for preparing your body and mind for deep, restful sleep. In India, vetiver is known as "the oil of tranquility." The smoky scent of vetiver blends well with chamomile. Rich in magnesium, Epsom salts relax the muscles and nervous system.

- 3 drops vetiver essential oil
- 5 drops chamomile essential oil
- 1 cup Epsom salts

Mix essential oils and Epsom salts in a small container. Add to a bathtub of warm water. Soak for 20 minutes in a dimly lit bathroom, gently towel dry and go immediately to bed.

### **Peaceful Mind Blend**

40 drops Sandalwood essential oil  
10 drops Lemon essential oil  
30 drops Rose Otto

Combine essential oils in a small glass vial. To use in an aromatherapy candle diffuser, place 5 drops of the blend into the diffuser cup along with approximately 1 ounce of water.

### **Stress-Busting Spray**

10 drops lavender essential oil  
5 drops frankincense essential oil  
5 drops juniper essential oil  
4 ounces spring or purified water  
1 teaspoon vodka or distilled witch hazel

Mix essential oils with vodka or witch hazel in a 4-ounce atomizer bottle. Add water and shake well.

### **Lavender-Geranium Soap**

An aromatherapy shower is a great alternative if you don't have time for a bath, or as a way of setting a relaxing tone for your day. Adding essential oils to unscented liquid body soap is an easy way to enjoy the positive benefits of aromatherapy every time you shower. Lavender, geranium and lemon create a spicy-sweet bath and shower soap that combines relaxation with mood brightening.

20 drops lavender essential oil  
10 drops geranium essential oil  
10 drops lemon essential oil  
4 ounces liquid unscented body soap

Pour liquid body soap into a plastic squeeze-top bottle. Add essential oils and stir thoroughly.

## **Mood-Mending Lavender-Chamomile Bath**

Chamomile, lavender and neroli soothe the mind and spirit and help ease the anxiety and depression that often accompany stress.

- 5 drops lavender essential oil
- 3 drops chamomile essential oil
- 2 drops neroli essential oil
- ½ cup baking soda

Mix all ingredients together in a small container. Add to a bathtub of warm water and soak for 15 to 30 minutes.

## **Scentual Stress Relief**

Give these wonderfully relaxing bath salts as a gift or save them for yourself and indulge in some fragrant stress relief.

- 20 drops lavender essential oil
- 10 drops sandalwood essential oil
- 5 drops rose otto
- 3 drops ylang ylang essential oil
- 2 cups sea salt
- 2 cups Epsom salts

Mix oils with salts in a bowl. Transfer to a pretty glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. To use, simply add a handful of the salts to your bathwater.

## **Mood-Calming Spray**

- 10 drops cedarwood essential oil
- 10 drops bergamot essential oil
- 2 drops lavender essential oil
- 4 ounces spring or purified water
- 1 teaspoon vodka or distilled witch hazel

Mix essential oils with vodka or witch hazel in a 4-ounce atomizer bottle. Add water and shake well.

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## Body & Soul: Melt Stress Away with an Herbal Massage



This is a wonderful article which discusses the many benefits of massage, and includes recipes for making your own massage oils. Not only fun to create, blending your own customized massage oils also makes for fantastic gifts!

Article Written by Kathi Keville

Combining herbs with massage creates a sensual experience so indulgent, it can be difficult to remember the massage is also therapeutic. This combination of herbs and massage is so successful that hospitals are studying — and using — aromatherapy massage to relieve stress and anxiety, and to promote healing.

If you've ever given or experienced a massage, you know that slow, relaxed breathing allows muscles and a tense mind to relax. I like herbal massage because this deep breathing comes automatically as the client begins to inhale the herbs' aromas. Even bodywork techniques that require little or no massage oil, such as acupressure or foot reflexology, are enhanced when a small amount of aromatherapy massage oil is placed on the fingertips. I've seen clients slip into deep relaxation so quickly during an aromatherapy massage that they seem to melt into the massage table.

### Essential Oil Facts

The magic of aromatherapy is in essential oils. Derived from medicinal herbs, just a few drops of these oils turn almond oil (or any other mild vegetable oil) into instant massage oil. Essential oils work in two ways: The natural aroma of essential oils causes emotional and physical responses via the brain. Plus, they penetrate the skin to underlying tissue and the blood system to distribute their therapeutic properties. Massage oil offers the safest way to use essential oils, which are so concentrated that they rarely are used undiluted.



For massage, the most important essential oils are those that produce relaxation, reverse insomnia and reduce depression, anxiety and pain, including headaches and stiff joints. The most popular essential oils for massage are those that do double duty by relieving both muscle pain and stiffness while calming emotional distress. Examples are chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*), lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) and marjoram (*Origanum majorana*). Some essential oils often found in massage oils for their antidepressant, relaxing aromas are bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*), scented geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens*), neroli (*Citrus reticulata*), rose (*Rosa spp.*), sandalwood (*Santalum album*) and the tropical flower ylang ylang (*Cananga odorata*).

Aromatherapists suggest that clary sage (*Salvia sclarea*) be used to encourage emotional release. Various combinations of these oils can be mixed together to combine their properties and create a pleasing scent.

Massage oil also may contain small amounts of stimulating essential oils, such as peppermint (*Mentha x piperita*), clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*), cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*), ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) and rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*). These warming oils are used in liniments to relax tight muscles. Their scents also increase an individual's alertness and focus. In a form of traditional Thai massage I've studied, therapists place hot packs of herbs over tight muscles to loosen them before massage.

## **Massage Oil Selection**

Several brands of aromatherapy massage oils are available at health-food stores, and massage practitioners who practice aromatherapy often have a selection of oils from which you can choose. Whether you are the therapist or the recipient, be sure the massage oils are made with pure, undiluted essential oils derived from plants rather than synthetics. The bottle or brochure should state the purity and provide specific Latin names for the herbs. Also, make sure the label says "essential oil" rather than "fragrance oil."

It's important that the person receiving massage enjoys the aroma. Ask for a sample sniff of the oil before it's used on you. Even though many people find an essential oil like lavender pleasant and relaxing, others may associate the scent with bad memories, leaving them anything but relaxed!

I've found that lightly fragranced massage oil is most therapeutic. For this reason, aromatherapy massage should be done in a well-

ventilated room with a fan or a good air filter to remove scents from the air. You may be surprised how strong the fragrance in a room can become — especially noticeable when you walk outside and take a few deep breaths, then come back inside.

You don't need to be a massage therapist to qualify for using body oils with massage. Even if you aren't skilled in specific techniques, you still can give friends a therapeutic rub. Nurses who give their patients Therapeutic Touch have found that touch alone enhances healing. Or, treat yourself to self-massage to reap the benefits of aromatic oils.

I prefer using several massage oils, each one containing its own selection of essential oils chosen to treat a different condition. That way, I can address a client's specific concerns, say to relieve a headache or sprained ankle. Or, how about lavender massage oil with cocoa butter for a pregnant belly? Babies love massage, too, provided you work gently but don't tickle, and stick to gentle oils like lavender and chamomile. (Massage oil for babies and young children should contain no more than half the amount of essential oil as oil for adults.)

## **The Extra Touch**

Aromatherapy is handy in other ways during massage. One way to enhance relaxation is to place a warm herbal compress over tight muscles. To do so, soak a soft washcloth in a quart of hot water with about five drops of essential oil. Wring the cloth out and place over the tight area for three to five minutes, removing before it cools. This type of compress — warm or cold, depending upon what feels best — also can be placed over the eyes and/or the back of the neck to relieve a headache or eyestrain.

Try a lavender, chamomile or scented geranium compress followed by a five-minute foot massage on a friend after he or she has had a hard day at work, and you'll completely change the rest of his or her evening, I guarantee. Or, give your own eyes a break by applying a compress, then massaging around the edge of the bone surrounding your eye sockets. Using compresses also can be adapted to a popular face massage technique used at spas. Place two warm washcloth compresses over the face, arranged so the person can breathe easily. Remove after a few minutes and follow up with a facial massage. A good sequence begins at the chin and moves up "against" gravity using very gentle, circular strokes. Remember to work around the ears and the jaw, areas that hold a lot of tension, and to go easy around the eyes, where skin is very thin.

## **Custom Massage Oils**

Make your own massage oil by adding six to eight drops of essential oil to each ounce of carrier oil, such as sweet almond, apricot kernel or another light vegetable oil. This amount is the total number of drops to use even if you add more than one essential oil. Blending several essential oils together is an art you develop through experience as your nose learns how the oils relate to each other. Begin by limiting your combinations to two to four oils. Once you're comfortable blending, take aromatherapy to the next level by creating a different custom-designed blend for each person.

## **Relaxing Massage Oil**

2 ounces carrier oil  
9 drops lavender oil  
6 drops scented geranium oil  
1 drop marjoram oil

## **Essences from Your Herb Garden**

To make your own massage oil from the herbs in your garden, select the most aromatic part of the plant you wish to use. Herbs that produce the essential oils mentioned in this article are good examples.

Chop the fragrant flowers or leaves and place them in a very clean glass jar. Add enough almond oil to barely cover all the plant material, but keep it completely submerged. Stir the contents to make sure any air bubbles are released. This is especially important if you are using fresh rather than dried herbs.

Place the jar in a warm area, such as in the sun or by a woodstove for two days, or in a crock pot set on a very low heat setting overnight (the temperature should keep the oil just below simmering). When it is done, the oil will smell strongly of the submerged herb. Strain the herbs through a kitchen strainer. If necessary, restrain through a finer strainer to remove all plant residue, which would feel uncomfortable when the oil is rubbed across the skin.

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Kathi Keville ([www.AhaHerb.com](http://www.AhaHerb.com)) is author of 12 aromatherapy and herbal books, including Herbs: A Complete Guide to the Healing Art (Crossing Press, 1995).

Another related articles which will help you are :

## **Aromatherapy for the Nervous System**

Article Written by Kathi Keville

The nervous system provides the intricate connection between mind and body. As a result of mental or emotional responses, a problem in one area of the body may affect another.

For stress in general, try bergamot, chamomile, lavender, melissa, clary sage, neroli, rose or jasmine. For insomnia due to mental agitation or overwork, clary sage, marjoram, ylang-ylang and neroli can help you unwind. Headaches due to nervous tension are also helped by these oils, but keep in mind that headaches can result from many causes, from indigestion to hormonal problems, and should be treated appropriately.

### **Relaxing/Antidepressant Formula**

- 3 drops lavender
- 3 drops neroli
- 2 drops marjoram
- 2 drops ylang-ylang
- 1 drop chamomile
- 2 drop clary sage
- 1 ounce carrier oil

This can be used as a massage or bath oil.

Neuralgia, or nerve pain, is best remedied by treating the cause, although essential oils do alleviate the pain, especially when used in conjunction with massage.

### **Neuralgia Relief**

- 5 drops helichrysum
- 3 drops chamomile
- 2 drops marjoram
- 2 drops lavender
- 1 ounce carrier oil

Combine ingredients and use for massage.

Herbal Adjuncts-Herbs can stimulate or relax the nervous system. A number of plants are relaxing, including California poppy (completely

safe, with no addictive alkaloids), hops, valerian, passionflower and catnip.

One of the best tonics to repair the nervous system is wild oats (even eating oatmeal does some good); others include skullcap and vervain. St. John's wort repairs damaged nerves and helps overcome depression.

*This article is excerpted from [Aromatherapy: A Complete Guide to the Healing Art](#)*

## **Essential Oils and Stress**

Another author which also discuss about stress and depression is Valerie Ann Wordwood through her book "The Fragrant Mind."

According to Valerie that stress has several levels and each level has to be treated differently.

### **Aromatherapy Blend for Stress Level One**

Level one is for people who have problems like tiredness, aches, and pains, occasional depression. This is called Normal stress. Normal stress is what one would feel after narrowly escaping a car accident - short of breath and with racing heart.

Blend 1 : 10 drops of Eucalyptus Citriodora , 15 drops Geranium and 5 drops lavender

Blend 2 : 15 drops of Mandarin, 5 drops of Ylang ylang and 10 drops of petitgrain.

### **Aromatherapy Blend for Stress Level Two**

Level two is for people who have problems like anxiety/depression, food allergies, persistent infection, sub-acute disease, hidden weakness (such as otherwise dormant viral infections). This chronic situation is called distress. It happens when we get overloaded on the natural chemicals because we're stimulated by stressful situation too much and it gets bottled up.

Blend 1: 10 drops Clary sage, 5 drops Chamomile Roman, 5 drops of Lavender and 10 drops of Geranium.

Blend 2 : 10 drops of Ormenis Flower\*, 5 drops of Ylang ylang, 5 drops of petitgrain and 10 drops of sandalwood.

### **Aromatherapy Blend for Stress Level Three**

Level three is for complex pattern of symptoms (anything from suicidal tendencies to stomach pain), fear, withdrawal from society and despair.

Blend 1 : 5 drops of Roman Chamomile, 15 drops of Clary Sage and 5 drops of Ormenis Flower\*.

Blend 2 : 6 drops of Geranium, 14 drops of Eucalyptus Citriodora and 10 drops of Mandarin.

All the blends have been designed for general use with stress. The quantities can be diluted with 30 ml (1 oz) of base oil to make a massage oil, or make a synergistic blend of oils using these proportions and use in the bath and in all room and inhalation method.

\*Ormenis Flower (Chamomile Maroc).

Latin name is Ormenis multicalus.

Ormenis Flower has been long been mistaken for and used as chamomile while it can't be said to be anything like it, nor have the chemical constituents of chamomile.

According to Valerie, all essential oils are potentially can help combat stress because they are used in massage and baths, which are themselves therapeutic procedures. Of course, essential oils go much deeper than this and some essential oils work particularly well on stress. Indeed, they are so effective that essential oils may provide the most successful way of coping with the problems associated with and caused by stress.

Each of aromatherapists has their own favorite oils to use in the fight against stress and the ones listed above consist of those in common use and easily available.

*This article is excerpted from [The Fragrant Mind](#)*

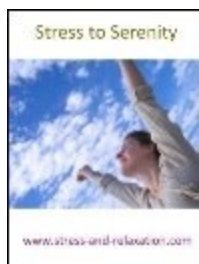
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