

In this newsletter we will try to help you further your knowledge and use of essential oils.

Physical ailment and Emotional Concern

Diabetes and the Use of Essential Oils

by Penny Keay

Diabetes is becoming a far more reaching health concern as many Americans and others continue to become sedentary and obese. Thousands of folks, both young and old are being diagnosed daily with either Type II diabetes or Pre-diabetes. With these diagnoses can come many other health related issues; heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney disease, blindness, slow to heal from injuries or illness just to name only a handful.

We have been asked many times if there are essential oils that can be used to help control blood sugar levels.

Unfortunately there are no essential oils that can help control blood sugar levels.

BUT you will say, I read that cinnamon will help. Please realize this is the spice in powder form that they are speaking about, not the essential oil. In fact there are many herbs and spices that are very helpful for your health when it comes to blood sugar, pancreatic and liver health.

The same plants may produce an essential oil but it will not necessarily provide the same support. Remember that herbs and tincture extracts are incorporating many water based components of the plant whereas the essential oil is only the oil based chemical constituents. And although they may come from the same plant they will have different actions in your body and for your health.

Essential oils can still be very important for diabetics though and I am speaking about this from personal experience as I have Type II diabetes. I'm so glad we started using them 15 years ago. I believe it has helped me both physically and emotionally to keep me healthy.

Diabetics can have many problems besides elevated blood sugar levels. Hopefully you can keep your blood sugar (BG) within a tight range - under 120 most all the time (between 80-100 is ideal). If you can stay within this range it will help you avoid many problems that can arise.

A good plan is to exercise. With exercise, though, may come sore muscles or injuries to joints and skin (blisters). Here is where aromatherapy and essential oils can help. Not only are there many essential oils great at helping relieve painful and sore muscles but as a diabetic you don't want skin injuries or bruising to become an issue. Avoiding any type of infection is extremely important as diabetics have reduced capacity to heal quickly, especially if their BG is not controlled very well.

Essential oils help build your immune system to help you stay healthy when exposed to cold and flu viruses. This is very important too as any type of illness can make it hard to control your BG levels. And again you don't want to have secondary infections get established either.

Emotionally diabetes can cause a roller coaster of emotions. Depression and what I call the "poor me's" along with many other emotions can occur. You can be happy one moment, sad with uncontrolled

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crying the next. You worry about everything. You may have difficulty sleeping, you may lack energy, you may not have any drive left.

Smelling essential oils can definitely make you feel better emotionally. And many essential oils can help you to relax to get a better night's rest. There are others that can make you feel more alert and mentally aware. Focusing and concentration along with memory retention can be helped too.

Using essential oils in massage oils to help increase circulation in the fingers, toes, hands and feet. Diabetics can suffer from poor circulation to the extremities and this in turn causes pain and neuropathy. When there is a loss of the sense of touch because nerves are damaged from the higher BG levels, the sensations may not be able to be restored but massage will help the circulation.

So again, although there are no essential oils to specifically help with blood sugar levels. Essential oils are still very vital to the health and well being of anyone affected by diabetes.

When we consult with someone with diabetes we explain that although there are no specific essential oils for diabetes, there are still a lot of oils to help your health and well being. And of course to help those around you too.

So if you have a muscle ache or stub your toe, strain your leg muscles from all that exercise! Love those kids and grand kids that bring home all those colds and sore throats. You get upsetting news and feel down. Remember there are essential oils that help each and every one of those situations so your diabetes will be easier to keep under control too.

In Summary there are essential oils that can help diabetics deal with the following - along with some suggested oils this list is not all inclusive and you may discover essential oils that work for you and that you prefer:

Build your Immune System: Just about any essential oil will help you build your immune system. Pick any you like and diffuse them regularly.

Fight skin infection bacterial: Lavender, Tea Tree, but all essential oils have varying degrees to fight bacteria.

Fight skin infection fungal: Tea Tree, Thyme, Oregano there are others too

Fight infections general and viral: Eucalyptus, Rosemary, Peppermint, Cinnamon, Thyme, Oregano, our Four Robbers Blend, or Pure Cleansing Blend but all essential oils have varying degrees to fight various infections.

Increase circulation: Any heating type oil - Peppermint, Juniper berry, Sweet Marjoram, Black Pepper, Ginger add any of those to a fixed oil and used as massage

For Sore Muscles: Peppermint, Eucalyptus, Rosemary, Helichrysum, Bay Laurel, Juniper berry

To help with headaches: Lavender, Rosemary, Peppermint

For Depression: Any oils that make you feel happy and good or that you enjoy are the ones to use.

Some folks love the Florals, or Mints - Any Citrus oil as they are all uplifting.

For Memory and Focus: Rosemary, Basil and Lemon!

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Please use our Search bar located on each of our Catalog pages or go to <http://birchhillhappenings.com/results.htm> and you will be able to put your search term in there to help you find information on specific physical and emotional concerns you would like to address. The Search bar located within our website ONLY searches OUR website. If after you have done a search and still can't find the information you need then send us an e-mail and we'll help you the best that we can.

For the Beginners - Aromatherapy

Do you know how to "Get to Know" your Essential oils?

by Penny Keay

In order for you to get to know your essential oils you need to know how to smell them. Everyone wants to smell the wonderful (and not so wonderful) scents of essential oils but most people smell them wrong.

They want to smell them directly out of the bottle. This is one of the worst ways to experience an essential oil. As smelling them out of the bottles you will only smell just a tiny portion of those volatile vapors. Read on to learn the proper way to smell those precious essences when you are trying to learn and memorize their scent.

The proper way is to place 1-2 drops on an unscented piece of clean tissue or cotton pad. Ideally if you have access to what they call a perfumers scenting strip it will be even better.

Next you will want to smell it in intervals. Turn your head away from the tissue or pad, take a breath in and exhale. Then place the pad under you nose about 3-5 inches away and take in a short light whiff. Do not inhale deeply. Make a note of what it smells like. Fruity, herb like, wood like, earthy, etc, use any term or terms that will help trigger your memory the next time you smell that essential oil.

In you next 'whiff', you can inhale a little more deeply. Again take your notes.

Then before you are done this time around you will want to puff a little warm air from your nose onto the pad (just a small puff) and then quickly inhale again. The warming will often bring about other scents you may not have known existed.

Now wait five minutes and take another smell. You can do the short whiff or the longer slow smell. Write your notes.

Smell again after 15, 30 minutes and 1 hour. You can decide how long you want to continue to smell the oils. To really get to know them, you should smell again 24 hours later. Many oils may be totally gone after that length of time. Some though will not. Some will linger for a week or longer. If you are developing blends for perfumery you will want to smell the original piece of cotton several times. Remember natural perfumes made with essential oils may change their scent after a few hours. And you may want to know what scent will be the lingering one.

Remember the 'Lock and Key' of your brain will help you to remember the scents. Next time you are sniffing a blend that has one of the oils you have locked into memory, this 'lock and key' may help you identify one or more of the oils quickly.

Have fun sniffing!!

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Beauty Tips aka Skin and Hair Care

Carrier oils for the skin - HELP I don't know which one to use. How do I chose?

by Penny Keay

This can be a very difficult question as everyone has different skin issues they may want to address.

There are many factors that need to be considered when you are trying to choose a carrier or fixed oil for use on your skin. They include: Age - young skin will need different oils than mature; Environment and Work - are you indoors all the time sitting at a desk or do you work with a lot of water or chemicals so you have frequent hand washing or showering or do you work outside in the sun and wind?; Do you have oily or dry skin?; Do you have skin infections or rashes? How and where is it to be used - Hair, face, body for massage, bath? These all can require different carrier oils.

Each of these may need a different type of carrier oil that you will add your essential oils to prior to using them on your skin.

There are a couple of carrier oils that are good for almost all skin types. And both of these have an indefinite shelf life, which means they won't go rancid or spoil once you have added your essential oils. Of course, you will still need to protect them from heat and tightly capped.

They are Jojoba - which is really a liquid wax, but it is one of the few oils that most resembles our natural sebum - the oil our skin makes.

And the Coconut oils which are also good for almost all skin types. Virgin Coconut oil is well known for its fresh coconut smell. It is very good for just about everyone. Expeller coconut is a second best choice - especially if the smell of coconut would interfere with the final smell of your essential oils you are adding to your skin care product. Fractionated coconut is good too and will easily launder out of clothing should you apply too much to your skin that won't soak in.

Fractionated coconut oil is often preferred by massage therapists because it launders out of their sheets and clothes more easily. Also common for massage are Sweet Almond, Apricot Kernel, Sunflower oils. Grapeseed oil is used often for infant massage. Avocado, Macadamia and Sesame oil are often times added to these in small amounts as they can add a little extra nourishment to the skin.

Rosehip seed oil and Hazelnut oil can help the skin to heal after surgery or other scarring. Stretch marks cannot always be prevented even if you apply cocoa butter, shea butter or coconut oils, but the skin will stay soft and supple which may reduce the size and discomfort of the stretching skin.

Carrier oils such as Tamanu are helpful when the skin is injured, as is Calendula infused oils.

Jojoba and Camellia oils are well known and wonderful for hair care.

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Evening Primrose, Borage and Hempseed oils are also very nourishing to the skin, but unfortunately the first two, Evening Primrose and Borage are easily affected by oxidization and will quickly become rancid even if kept refrigerated. We no longer carry the Evening Primrose and Borage oils but we can special order them for you but unless you can use 16 oz at a time and use it up quickly, we suggest you use the sealed capsules you can purchase at any health food store. The oils are sealed tightly in the gel caps and therefore are not exposed to oxygen. You only ever need small amounts of EPO or Borage and in the long run these oils are best purchased in the gel caps. Actually, taking EPO and Borage internally is better for your skin and over all health, than using it on the outside!!

And one more word and to solve a myth: You may have seen it in many aromatherapy books to add Vitamin E or Wheat germ oil to your carrier oil - massage oil blend will help preserve it. This is as other aromatherapists have said - "pure Hogwash"! Neither of them can stop or even slow down the oxidation process of carrier oils. Both have a short shelf life too. The General rule of thumb is - the life of your massage oil or lotion or what ever you have made will only have a shelf life as long as the shortest shelf life ingredient in that blend. So if you have added Evening Primrose, Borage, or Wheat Germ oil to a blend realize it will only be good for about 6 months or so. After that it will start to go rancid.

Likewise if the carrier oil is Jojoba or Coconut oil then the carrier may well outlive the essential oils you have blended in them. Citrus and pine oils will have shorter shelf life than Lavender and Rose or Patchouli etc.

So please consider this when you are making your blends to only blend as much as you can use in a few weeks or a couple of months. As we always suggest you make fresh often so you can get the results you expect.

In conclusion, You may have to experiment a little to find out what fixed oil or blend of carrier oils will give you the results you are looking for when it comes to which is best for your skin and hair. You will quickly discover your favorites.

Around the House and Garden

Spring Cleaning is JUST around the Corner!!

by Penny Keay

Can you believe it? That old Ground Hog says Spring will be here soon. And if you are like me I don't want to spend time indoors cleaning the house when I can be outdoors enjoying the gardens!

So what to do to get your house ready now so you can be outside when Spring arrives? Let's see if we can give you a few ideas. (Al and I cheat right now, as we have hired a couple ladies to come in and clean every couple weeks. Of course they still use what we provide them for cleaning supplies.)

After you have finished dusting, you can make a very simple cleaning solution that will make your house smell great. Simply use a little of our Liquid dish soap - just a little - say a capful in a bucket of water and add your favorite essential oils. Lemon and Orange are all time favorites, but we know folks like to use Four Robbers or Pure Cleansing blends in their cleaning buckets too.

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We have the cleaning ladies use our Citrus All Purpose cleaner (refill) and add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup to a 1/2 gallon of water. They use this when they mop our floors. They love it too, as it doesn't leave any streaks or residue like some of those commercial floor products. And they compliment it's refreshing scent as it smells a whole lot better then the vinegar water they use at other folks homes!

Now don't forget your refrigerator and all those cupboards. Wipe them down too! For the Refrigerator how about adding some baking soda to the water and adding a few drops of Citrus blend or Lime EO.

Before you are all done and still have the vacuuming to do - add a few drops of essential oils to some baking soda again, Shake well, then sprinkle on your carpeting. Let sit for a few minutes and vacuum. Your vacuum cleaner will smell nice afterwards too! Or you can just put a few drops of Essential oils in the vacuum cleaner bag too.

Phew! All done? Now it's time for a nice long hot bath. Don't forget to add some Bath Salts to relieve those kinks and sore muscles!!

Recipes to try

by Penny Keay (unless otherwise noted)

Just for Her – a Happiness blend

Rose Otto – 3 drops
Melissa – 2 drops
Geranium – 1 drop

Blend these together and place just a drop on your aromatherapy necklace or bracelet.

An Energizing and Spirit Lifting Blend

Bergamot – 15 drops
Grapefruit – 15 drops
Orange – 10 drops
Frankincense – 8 drops

Blend the above essential oils in an Amber glass bottle. Use several drops in any aromatherapy diffuser. A fan diffuser will help to circulate the essential oil molecules in a larger area. And this blend may help your fellow office workers be more productive!!

The Get You Going in the Morning Bath

Sandalwood or our S'Woods Blend – 3 drops
Rosemary – 3 drops
Cedarwood – 2 drops

Fill the tub with warm water. Swirl water and add the essential oils.

A Nice Refreshing Bathroom Cleaner Scent

Cypress – 8 drops
Eucalyptus Globulus – 8 drops
Juniper Berry – 8drops
Pine – 4 drop

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Rosemary – 4 drop

Emulsifier – 1 teaspoonful

Distilled water - 8 ounces

PET bottle with Spray top.

Blend essential oils well in PET plastic bottle then add a teaspoon emulsifier. Mix thoroughly. Then add the distilled water and shake well. Spray around the room, let sit for a bit then wipe clean.

If you prefer you can just blend the essential oils together and use in any aromatherapy diffuser – such as on a scent ball or terra cotta disc.

BIRCH HILL HAPPENINGS NEWS

Hello Everyone,

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!!!

Hope you have or had something Special planned with your Loved Ones for today (or if you are reading this on Sunday for yesterday)!! Al and I are going out to dinner and then home again for a night of watching movies! (Yep, we love watching movies!!)

Oh boy! Hasn't this winter been a busy one? The weather has been crazy all around the world. Cold, Wet, Icy, Snowy conditions here in the North America. And Europe has been having its share too. And all our readers from the "Land Down Under" you have had hot and dry (and nasty brush fires). With out a doubt, we will all be looking forward to the changing of the seasons.

We have a few exciting announcements. Finally we have back in stock our Virgin Coconut oil. We found a new supplier and they have even better coconut oil than what we had before.

It is EXTRA VIRGIN Coconut oil and is certified organic. It smells just like real fresh coconuts. This is about the best coconut oil for nourishing your skin. We are offering it in a larger size too - a 32 oz jar for easier scooping!

If you don't want to smell coconuts then by all means buy the Expeller pressed or Fractionated coconut oils as they won't interfere with the essential oil scent you add. They are still good for your skin too.

We have a new size of glass beaker - 250 ml. And have added a new set of the 3 sizes. If you are like me, after I'm done experimenting with the small batches, I like to make larger batches of my recipes - so we figured you might like a little bigger mixing/pouring beaker too!

Watch for the next "What's New" e-mail notice as our New Oil and Tart warmers diffusers are on there way from the manufacturers and we are very excited about them. There are ones that plug into the wall outlets in your kitchen or bath. Also there will be some smaller warmers that we are sure you will enjoy too. They are about half the size of our current electric tart warmers and will have the major advantage of taking up less space on your counter or table or desk. Not to mention they weight less so will cost less in shipping fees.

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Next will be the new Potpourri dishes and Reed oil or Silk Flower vases. All organic material Potpourri made with our very own essential oils will be available too. This will be a much better choice for the health conscience folks than those fragrance oil laden commercially prepared potpourris. And we will have new potpourris that can be used in some of the new smaller electric warmers too! How exciting!!

We are very so very excited about all these new additions and so if you haven't already, be sure to sign up to receive our What's New e-mail notice so you will be notified when we have them in. They should be here this next week and so once I have the photos and add to cart buttons ready we will send out the notice they are available too.

We will be adding items to the clearance /sale page too as one of the manufacturer of some of our present Tart and Oil warmers have discontinued some of their products. So since we need room for the new ones we need to sell these others. So watch that page too starting this next week.

That's about it for this time. Stay, safe, snug and warm and have a wonderful Valentine's Day.

Hearts, Hugs and Kisses from Us!!

As always, if you have suggestions, questions or comments please feel free to send us an e-mail to bhinfo@birchhillhappenings.com and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Yours in Aromatherapy,

Penny & Al

Be sure to visit us on line at

<http://birchhillhappenings.com/aroma1.htm>

for all your Essential oils and Aromatherapy Supplies needs.

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