

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

## Physical ailment

### Are you Prepared for this years Influenza and Cold Season?

by Penny Keay (See special author's note at the end of this article.)

Soon summer vacation will be over and the schools will be buzzing again after several weeks vacation break.

Most of us will have been fairly isolated from the general public or when we have been in congregated areas it was most likely outdoors. So being exposed to viruses and ill folks has been minimal.

But now indoor activities will begin. We will be spending more hours confined indoors not only because of school but as temperatures cool many folks stay indoors more too. This increases the chances of you and your loved ones being exposed to someone that is carrying a flu or cold virus.

As the spread of the H1N1 (Swine Flu) virus has been increasing, many are concerned and wonder what they can do from a natural stand point. In this article are suggestions that apply to ANY kind of influenza or cold virus. As always, you need to use essential oils in a safe and cautious manner and remember that you should always seek medical attention when you are not sure if your cold or flu is more serious.

Prevention is your first line of defense. Having a strong immune system and avoiding folks that are ill is advisable but not always an option. As with many viruses, you are infectious long before you are too ill to be forced to stay in bed. This gives the virus many chances to infect the masses. One infected person sneezing in a crowded room can easily spread certain viruses to hundreds of others.

So what can you do to minimize the chances of getting the virus and what should you do once you are infected?

Eat nourishing whole natural, minimally processed food, get plenty of exercise, rest and utmost is WASH your hands!

Washing your hands frequently should be the first thing that you do when you are out among the public. Now, don't become over compulsive about this but using common sense says - wash your hands after being in public and of course before eating or touching food.

Avoid touching your face and especially the area around your eyes. It is believed by me and others that one mode of transmission of viruses is through the mucous membranes of the eyes. So avoid touching your face or rubbing your eyes.

At home you can use a surface spray made with an all purpose cleaner or distilled water and adding one of several choices of essential oils to it. Simple refreshing blends of the Citrus or Pine oils will help fight surface germs.

Diffusing essential oils into the air by using either a Fan style diffuser or a Tart warmer will freshen the air and fight air borne infectious agents including viral, bacterial or fungal. Remember almost all essential oils have germicidal effects to varying degrees. Some are better than others.

Our favorite blends, and that of many of our customers are diffusing our Four Robbers and Pure Cleansing blends. The essential oils in both of these blends when combined include Clove, Lemon, Eucalyptus, Rosemary, Bergamot, Grapefruit, Cinnamon Leaf and Thyme. (See product listing for essential oils in each blend.)

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Now, although these two blends are especially important once you have been exposed, they can also be diffused daily to help prevent problems and to help build your immune system. And if by chance you do get ill, the oils in these two blends can help with all the symptoms and give you relief too.

Of course, any of the individual oils in these blends can be used alone as they all will help to speed your recovery. The synergistic effect of blending two or more oils together is usually more beneficial. So if possible, blending more than one of these oils from those listed above are more effective against those nasty little viruses.

Another concern is that of secondary infections. After you have nearly recovered from the 'flu' it is not uncommon for another type of infection to get a hold of you. Pneumonia is very common and may even develop while you are down with the flu. The two infections can really bring your immune system down and become life threatening in a matter of a few hours. SEEK immediate medical attention if you have any signs of worsening infection such as but not all inclusive would be high fever and/or difficulty breathing.

Extreme fatigue, coughing and achiness throughout your body are common signs you have more than a cold-type viral infection. Colds often let you continue with a few light activities like watching TV or listening to music, but when the 'flu' hits you can barely lift your head let alone feel like doing anything but try to sleep, moan and groan.

You can use essential oils to help you feel more comfortable. Massage oils for the aches and pains. Add a few drops to the hot bath to help relieve congestion and to warm you up if you feel cold. OR if your fever is too high use a cool cloth to cool your skin. Both Eucalyptus and Peppermint can have heating or cooling effects on your skin when used in a basin of water (wring your cloth out and placed on your forehead). A cool cloth on the forehead and one on the back of the neck can help to bring a fever down to tolerable levels. Also this cool cloth can help to relieve headache pain too. Eucalyptus and Peppermint are great for sinus and head congestion and pain relief too.

The best suggestion is to use a few essential oils that will give you relief of the symptoms that are giving you the most discomfort. And don't forget that old time and all time favorite - Chicken soup and broth. Replenishing your fluids and getting some balanced electrolytes can help prevent dehydration. Dehydration is a big factor in anyone stricken with a fever. Children and adults alike need have their fluids replenished. Broths and teas are some of the best choices for those folks that prefer natural and are avoiding those over the counter 'drinks'.

SO ..., BEFORE you are stricken with the flu or a cold, get your essential oils ready. If you have been using essential oils for a while, you know those that are your favorites to use for various conditions and symptoms. But if you are new to using them the best suggestion is to read through several of our past newsletters looking for the essential oils for symptomatic solutions i.e. coughing, congestion, headaches, muscle soreness and aches etc.

You may have many of them already in your home. Now, if the oils you have are old (say over 2-3 years) and have been opened you might want to consider getting a fresh supply before you or someone in your family gets ill.

**What do WE do when we have been exposed to a viral infection?** First we diffuse Four Robbers and Pure Cleansing throughout the house. Especially in the rooms we spend the majority of our time in. Also prior to going to bed we use a blend of each of these in carrier oil such as Jojoba or Fractionated coconut oil. I prefer Jojoba as it absorbs into the skin more quickly. Then we rub some of these on both of our feet and put on a pair of clean socks. This preventive measure has kept Al and I from getting ill many times over the past several years.

**Now what do we do should we be caught off guard and start to show symptoms of illness?** First is diffusing the Four Robbers and Pure Cleansing in the rooms and of course the foot applications, BUT we also will gargle with warm

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water that we have added sea salt to. We will gargle a couple of times with that mixture then with a fresh 4 oz glass of warm water, we add either 1 drop of Oregano OR 1 drop of Thyme ct. linalol. Then we gargle with that several times. It may burn like crazy on a sore throat but gargling with that every 2 hours will speed your recovery. For us, by the next morning our sore throat is gone.

The next thing we do is use essential oils for any other specific ailment that is giving us discomfort. If it is a headache, a little peppermint and rosemary (with a carrier or our new roll-on version) and dab a little on the back of our neck or temples or wherever the head is aching.

**What to do concerning small children, babies, pregnant women and the elderly?** As for the use of essential oils you should follow the guidelines for the youngest member of the house hold. And in general it is suggested that only half the amount of essential oils should be used for babies, children (under two), pregnant and the elderly that are used for an average adult when diffusing or in massage. Only if the older members of the house are in their own confined rooms should normal adult suggested amounts be used.

Some essential oils (namely Eucalyptus and Peppermint) can potentially cause airway constriction in small children and babies. These two oils in particular should never be applied to the skin or chest/neck area, even when diluted, to those under two years of age. AND use lesser amounts should be used when diffused too in the rooms they are in.

**A special note for pregnant women:** Flu in anyone can be very serious but influenza in a pregnant women can be even more dangerous and life threatening to not only the mother but also the baby. If you become ill see your doctor. AND only after they have given you the okay to use essential oils for your illness whether it is the flu or the cold should you use them. Reports by the CDC say that pregnant women are at more risk especially with the H1N1 virus of having complications. So seek medical attention if you are pregnant and have the flu or a cold.

**In Review:** Be prepared. Wash your hands frequently, Eat good meals with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, eat your lean proteins too. Exercise and get plenty of rest. Stay away from ill folks and like wise, when you are feeling under the weather stay at home and away from others too. Diffuse essential oils especially after you have been out in public or confined where you have seen or heard folks that are not feeling well. Remember too that although essential oils are great at many things, they are not a 'cure all' and you must seek medical attention as needed.

We do hope you and your family will use essential oils now to build your immune systems and to ward off any viral or bacterial infections. Use them safely and responsibly to stay healthy and happy throughout the next several months. Take care!

Please read a few of our past Tips of the Week or Past Newsletters for symptomatic relief of aches and pains in muscles and headache relief, chest and nasal congestion, coughing and more. You will most likely find you have several oils on hand that at least can help you feel better. There are also suggestions for disinfecting surfaces too found throughout our website. Below are some helpful links where you can find more information about use of essential oils for prevention and symptomatic relief.

Tips of the Week Index is <http://birchhillhappenings.com/aromatip/aromatip.htm>

Past Newsletters Index is <http://birchhillhappenings.com/news.htm>

Recipes Index is <http://birchhillhappenings.com/recipes/recipes.htm>

Here are a few articles that may be very helpful. There are many more you may want to read from those Indexes listed above. These that follow may give you a quick reference with immediate information.

[What oils have Anti-viral properties?](http://birchhillhappenings.com/aromatip/tip4108.pdf) - <http://birchhillhappenings.com/aromatip/tip4108.pdf>

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[Better Than Mom's Remedy for Colds and Flu Recipe](http://birchhillhappenings.com/aromatip/5909.pdf) (Similar to Vick's Vapo rub only made with pure essential oils) -  
<http://birchhillhappenings.com/aromatip/5909.pdf>

[What is an Expectorant?](http://birchhillhappenings.com/aromatip/5409.pdf) <http://birchhillhappenings.com/aromatip/5409.pdf>

[Coughing and Coughs](http://birchhillhappenings.com/v952006.htm) <http://birchhillhappenings.com/v952006.htm>

[Influenza and Colds, Immune building](http://birchhillhappenings.com/v942006.htm) (2006 Newsletter) <http://birchhillhappenings.com/v942006.htm>

[Headaches](http://birchhillhappenings.com/v822005.htm) <http://birchhillhappenings.com/v822005.htm>

To read an article that was written by me when Swine Flu first appeared in the news and our suggestions for prevention and help if you get infected please visit the following page: <http://birchhillhappenings.com/swineflu.htm>

**SPECIAL WARNING:** You may have seen or may read an article about "Star Anise" botanical name "Illum verum Hooker" also referred to as *Anisum setellatum*. The article speaks about Tamiflu having some of its chemical constituents derived from Star Anise. It should not be assumed that Star Anise would have the same effectiveness as Tamiflu. Star Anise extract/essential oil goes through a lot of chemical processing (17 step process) to extract the one component that is used in Tamiflu. It is no way the same as the original plant.

Star anise the herb or essential oil has no documented research or evidence that it would be effective against any influenza virus. Please realize that the herbal extract and the essential oil from a herb or other plant will not necessarily contain the same chemical constituents and may not have the same reaction or result when used. Do not use Star Anise herb or essential oil for any "flu" as this would be a very unsafe practice. It is documented that Star Anise has been known to produce allergic and irritant reactions when applied to the skin. And as stated before there is no research or documentation that it is effective against any flu.

Authors note: There is much news about the H1N1 strain of influenza and many of you are asking what you can do to be prepared. So this article should help you if you should choose to use Essential oils to help you with this season's influenza. Essential oils can be used for many symptoms associated with the 'flu'. The amount of relief will vary from individual to individual. And remember essential oils are complimentary to your health care not a substitute for professional medical care.

## Emotional Concern

### Back to School Jitters & More

by Penny Keay

The other day as I was shopping, I couldn't believe the shelves were stocked (and being depleted) with "Back to School" Supplies. Where has the summer gone?

Our own children are all grown and so getting ready for the First "BIG" Day back to School are no longer on our minds. Many of you have preschoolers' and then there are those that have children all the way and up through the years to College students. (Or maybe you are starting classes as an adult yourself?!?)

#### Where does Aromatherapy fit in for all the different ages?

For any and all, including parents and others, the anticipation and fear of the unknown can be very stressful. Anxiety, both the kind that is caused by the excitement of the starting something new, and the anxiety of separation from the familiar family and friends can cause undue stress.

Restlessness, arguments, changing routines and more can bring even more stress.

For most of these stressful situations diffusing essential oils in the home will help every ones nerves! Lavender is known to relieve stress and produce a calming, relaxed atmosphere. Bergamot is another great oil to try especially to help with restlessness. Also using Citrus oils (Lemon, Grapefruit, Orange and Lime) can brighten most

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situations being they are uplifting. To help Mom remember all the little things, a little Rosemary, will help with mental alertness. (For students, Rosemary while studying will also help). To keep minds alert you may want to try a mint or mint energizing blend or our Concentration blend.

Bedtimes will soon be changed as you start the new routines. Try a relaxing bath with a few drops, again, of Lavender. This will be most enjoyable to help little ones and others to wind down for the night.

So, while doing all the other "Back to School" shopping don't forget to check your supplies of essential oils and make sure your diffusers are ready to go. For use of essential oils that is discreet you can apply a drop to a terra cotta pendant or other jewelry before your child heads off to school.

Last but not least, take a moment to reflect on these special times with your kids.

They grow up so fast. Enjoy the time you have with them knowing the scents and smells you surround them with are all part of the childhood memories we continue to enjoy and share as we become adults. (Aromatherapy, for those who are not familiar, affects the limbic system which is part of the brain that helps scents to bring back memories from the past!)

Anyway, these are just a few ways to use essential oils and Aromatherapy as your children head back to school. I'm sure you can think of more.

## Aromatherapy Tip for the Beginner (and sometimes even those more advanced)

### What's the best way to Keep my Essential oils Fresh?

by Penny Keay

You have just spent a lot of hard earned money on several precious essential oils. But how do you keep them from being destroyed.

The biggest factors to harming your essential oils are heat and oxygen.

Protecting them from heat is simple. If you have space in your refrigerator, keep them in there. If not, then keep them in a dark, cool cupboard away from any source of heat, is a must.

Oxygen causes essential oils to - oxidize and change the constituents within the oils. Breaking them down and making them 'weak'. Oxygen freely mixes with the constituents to form other compounds and will deteriorate your oils quickly.

The best way to help protect them from deterioration due to oxygen is to keep your bottles tightly closed even when you are busy blending. Take the cap off, pour or measure out what you need from that essential oil bottle then cap the bottle again.

The other thing is to eliminate 'head space' in the bottle. As you use your essential oils, transfer them into smaller containers as soon as possible. So when the bottle is capped there is little free air space available in the bottle.

To be sure your oils are at their peak, try to buy oils that you can use within a few short months. It may appear to be more expensive but buying smaller amounts that are used up rather than a larger container sitting in your essential oil box spoiling is really a better alternative than risk using bad or deteriorated oils.

Using oils that are fresh will bring about better therapeutic results than essential oils that have been opened for months and not stored properly.

What about protecting them from light? Well, the main reason to protect from light is the heat factor. Many aromatherapists will tell you to store your oils in amber, blue, green or violet glass. Well, sorry to tell you but clear glass is able to protect your oils just as well as the colored glass. The UV light is absorbed in the clear glass (or any colored glass) before it reaches the essential oils.

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This was discovered while doing research at the University of Tennessee that the UV light was absorbed by glass whether it was clear or colored. They were attempting to cause photo-chemical reactions using clear glass. After repeated attempts it was discovered that they had to obtain specialized glass made only from quartz in order for the UV light to be able to pass through the glass and cause the reactions (changes in components).

There is one exception to the colorless glass rule and it pertains to any of the oils that have chamazulene (this is the constituent that gives several essential oils their blue color) included in this group are the oils of Roman and German Chamomile, Yarrow, Blue Tansy and other blue oils - any visible light (not necessarily UV) - even what might sneak through a colored bottle will cause the blue color to fade. The color is only affected. By far and large the biggest detriment to the "blue oils" is still oxygen and heat. Keep them in a cool, dark (preferably a refrigerator) place to help preserve them and their color.

So rest assured any color or colorless glass will protect your oils as long as you keep the cap tightly closed and the oils away from any kind of heat source.

Keeping your essential oils in a cardboard box is fine. You can find a few storage and carrying cases around the internet. Finding small enough box that can easily be kept in a corner of your refrigerator. There are convenient wooden storage boxes available from Birch Hill Happenings Aromatherapy too. (We are sorry to report that we are out of stock of our wooden boxes at this time - we are waiting for components to get them made and had hoped our supplies would have arrived before this newsletter was released - Please check back as we do expect them to be available very soon. )

Just remember to keep your oils away from heat and tightly capped. Ideally only purchase what you can use up within 6 months to a year. Be sure to replace your oils as needed to keep them potent for your therapeutic uses.

## Around the House and Garden

### Ant Trails

by Penny Keay

Not sure about other parts of the USA or world but starting in July here in Minnesota, we see the appearance of those tiny little pink-tan 'grease' or 'sugar' ants. Since I've never lived anywhere else I can't tell you what type of ants might invade your home.

Anyway, they are not welcome in our home. So what do we do? Simply where we find the "Ant Trail" we place a few drops of peppermint oil on a small piece of cardboard along their 'trail'. I have followed the trail of ants (well if I can) and located the area they are entering the home. Also we place a few drops on the threshold of all the doors too. If I discover they are entering through a window, I put a drop there too.

Our business is located in the lower level of our home and I never have seen an ant where the essential oils are stored and poured. And have never seen them near the entrance for the business either. I've only seen them in the kitchen and bathroom of our home. Of course, not for long once I put out the peppermint oil.

Please note that I am not putting actual drops of essential oil directly on any finished surface. I will apply them to a cotton ball or to a terra cotta disc (used to keep mice away too) or just a piece of scrap cardboard and set it in the area.

Obviously they don't like the smell of peppermint. I have also learned recently that orange and lemon oils and possibly even other citrus oils are deterrents to ants. I haven't had a chance to test any of them out as the ants have 'left the premises' for this year.

Other essential oils may work better for the area you live. Essential oils that may also work to make the ants go marching include: Orange, Lemon, Grapefruit, Cinnamon leaf, Clove, Eucalyptus, Citronella, and Lemon tee tree.

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If you have a recipe or know that there are other essential oils that work to keep the ants from entering your home let us know.

PS. There are many different ant species that can invade homes. The only ones we have ever been bothered with are the tiny little sugar ants. We hope that we never have to experience any of the other types that can invade homes and hope you don't have to either.

## Recipes to try

by Penny Keay (unless otherwise noted)

### **For the Sick Room Spray**

Eucalyptus Globulus – 6 drops  
Pine Needle - 4 drops  
Bergamot – 4 drops  
Tea Tree – 2 drops  
Rosemary – 2 drops  
Peppermint – 2 drops  
Emulsifier such as our Coconut Emulsifier or Polysorbate 20 – 25 drops  
Linen Spray or distilled water – 2 ounces

Blend the essential oils with the emulsifier then add this mixture to the linen spray. Shake well. Spray several sprays around the room. Can also be sprayed on surfaces such as door knobs and faucet handles, be sure to wipe dry after a few minutes.

This blend can also be used in any diffuser by omitting the emulsifier and linen spray. Just blend the essential oils and use in any diffuser. In a sick room a fan diffuser may be the best choice.

### **Stuffy nose Inhaler Blend**

Peppermint – 2 drops  
Eucalyptus – 2 drops  
Rosemary – 2 drops

Blend these together and apply to the cotton used in any nasal inhaler. Replenish as needed. Simply place the inhaler near your nostrils one at a time and inhale slowly 2-3 times. Repeat as needed.

### **A Floral Summer time Relaxing Milk Bath**

½ cup Heavy Cream  
Lavender – 5 drops  
Ylang ylang – 3 drops  
Jasmine – 2 drops

Blend the essential oils into the heavy cream then add to your hot bath! Yes the water will become cloudy! But simply sit back and enjoy. Light a few candles and play some relaxing music.

### **The “Man’s” Deodorant Powder**

S' Woods Blend – 20 drops  
Lime – 10 drops  
Jasmine – 6 drops  
Talc powder – 2 ounces

Blend the essential oils together then place all on a cotton pad or cotton ball. Place this in the bottle of Talc powder. Shake well and often for the next 24-48 hours. THEN it is ready for use.

After showering and drying well, apply a small amount to your palm and apply to the opposite underarm area. Repeat with the opposite arms. DO NOT SHAKE this powder on as you don't want to create a dust cloud! You don't need a lot and just like any type of fine powder you do not need to have it sailing in the air for you to inhale!!

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**BIRCH HILL HAPPENINGS NEWS**

**Hello Everyone,**

August has arrived and I thought this newsletter would have made out to you back in July but it just didn't quite make it.

The summer is zooming by quickly and before you know it fall will be knocking at our door. And here Al and I are wondering what we have been doing all summer!! We have been so very busy and well, need I say more, I'm sure your summer has been crazy busy too!

We hope your summer has been great and the weather has cooperated with your vacations and family outings. We hope we have some nice weather during the month of August as our grand daughters are coming to visit and stay with us for a week in mid month. And of course Grandma and Grandpa have to be able to spoil them a little by taking them here and there. Our County Fair is going on the week they are here so - lets see what we can do to spoil them there!

The summer has kept us busy with new ideas for our customers. We are working on updating the websites ordering format. You will notice that several pages have the new format and I'm working on the rest. We hope to make the ordering process more streamlined as best we can.

We have several new products - here is a quick listing - for complete details visit our online catalog or What's New page.

New - Plug -in- Warmers - 3 new colors/styles

New - Heating Plate Warmers - 3 new colors/styles

Fiber bits - Unscented now available so you can scent your own - 2 sizes available

150 ml Beaker and a new 3 beaker set

Aloe Oil - Aloe Powder in Soya oil - Great for use in massage oils as no emulsifier is needed.

New Beaded Jewelry designs - some just for men! These are all "one of a kind" so it will be first come, first serve!

New Terra Cotta Pendants - 2 new designs

New Terra Cotta Disc Diffusers - 5 new designs

Thin tipped pipettes - a great big hit!!

Happy! Happy!! Blend - a replication of YL's Joy!

And more items coming weekly!

Please visit our Clearance page too as we have several items that are being discontinued or that are on clearance.

As always, if you have suggestions, questions or comments please feel free to send us an e-mail to [bhinfo@birchhillhappenings.com](mailto: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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