

## An Introduction to Essential Oils

An essential oil is a liquid that is obtained through the distillation process. This liquid is extracted from different parts of a plant, i.e. its roots, its leaves, its stems, and its bark. Don't let the name throw you; essential oils aren't really oils at all, and they don't leave you with an oily sensation either.

Because essential oils are extracted from plant material, they often contain the nutritional essence of the plants themselves. In concentrated form, these essential oils can impart incredible health benefits, if and when they are ingested into the body.

Some essential oils are combinations of several oils. These combined blends allow you to gain the benefits of each individual essential oil at a much lower price than if you bought the oils individually. Of course, if you like mixing your oils yourself, you should probably steer clear of these.

### Essential Oils and Aromatherapy

You already know that essential oils contain a large amount of nutrients. But how can you take advantage of those same nutrients? You could probably swallow the extracts, but they might not go down so well. So what are the alternatives?

One alternative is to use the essential oil as a lotion. What you do is you dilute the essential oil with a carrier oil, such as apricot kernel oil or grape seed oil. You then apply the mixture as you would a lotion.

The other alternative is aromatherapy. By using the essential oils in an aromatherapy session, you will be able to enjoy the physical and psychological benefits that they offer. In an aromatherapy session, you inhale vapor produced from the oils. The aroma will enter your body, enter your lungs, and get absorbed into your bloodstream.

### How Much Do Essential Oils Cost?

Depending on the rarity and function of the oil involved, the price may vary. Essential oils that are relatively common will be priced lower than those that are hard to find. Oils that are more difficult to extract will be more expensive as well.

### Essential Oils and Your Safety

Although essential oils can be used to improve your health, in some ways they can worsen it as well. The best way to think of an essential oil is as a prescription drug. They're that powerful. You should never use such drugs without knowing much about them - it's the same with essential oils.

First, always read up on the oil that you are planning to use. Take careful notice of the physiological changes that it can induce. Take note of the potential side effects as well.

Second, never take essential oils internally. Keep in mind that these are extracts; in other words they are highly concentrated liquids. In most cases it is unsafe to drink them. Stick to the skin application and the aromatherapy.

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### About the Author

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