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CHAPTER

Why use essential oils internally?

When you want to experience the uplifting, energizing, or calming benefits of essential oils, aromatic use provides a quick, easy way to get the benefits you want. When you want to soothe, moisturize, nourish, or soften the skin, topical use of essential oils can efficiently deliver the desired effect. What then, is the advantage of using essential oils internally? While internal use of essential oils is a mystery to some, research has found plenty of safe, beneficial uses for essential oils internally. Yes, aromatic and topical use of essential oils provides a variety of benefits; however, internal use can be equally beneficial when done properly. Internal essential oil use offers some exclusive benefits for the body that aromatic and topical use simply cannot accomplish.

The benefits of internal use

One of the most common reasons for ingesting essential oils is to reap the internal benefits it holds for the body. Each essential oil possesses a different chemical structure that will provide the body with unique properties and benefits. For example, some essential oils can be used internally to promote healthy cell function, support gastrointestinal health, or maintain healthy immune function, while others may offer internal cleansing benefits.* When used properly, essential oils hold a wide array of wellness benefits that can come from internal use.



In addition to substantial health benefits, internal use also provides a way to add safe, natural, potent flavors to food and beverages. Not only will the addition of essential oils to entrées, drinks, snacks, and baked goods provide a simple way to experience the health benefits of essential oils, it will also add a potent, unique flavor to anything edible.

Is it safe to use essential oils internally?

If you have never used essential oils internally before, it might seem strange to consume something so powerful and potent. However, essential oils come from plants, fruits, and compounds found in nature, and therefore present a safe way to receive internal benefits. You are most likely already incorporating essential oils into your daily diet, as many of the foods we eat contain a small amount of essential oil. Because our bodies are designed to metabolize and process natural compounds like plants and fruit, we are already equipped to **metabolize*** essential oils. Essential oils are merely high concentrations of natural compounds—the part that gives plants their taste and smell. While some essential oils are never appropriate for internal consumption, there are plenty of oils that can be safely taken internally and processed by the body—much like other substances found in nature.

As you will read in chapter two, there is substantial research to support the validity of safely using essential oils internally.

The science behind internal use

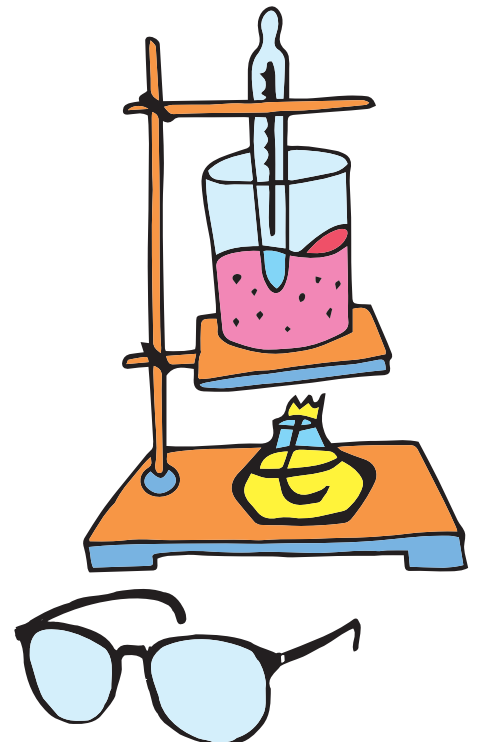
As mentioned, we already consume small amounts of essential oils in our daily diet, so our bodies are equipped to process these types of nutrients. Like other things we consume, essential oils are processed through our body when taken internally, providing the body with specific benefits.

When an essential oil is ingested, it is transported through the gastrointestinal tract, directly into the bloodstream, where it is then carried throughout the rest of the body. As lipid soluble compounds, essential oils can easily be transported to all of the body's organs, even the brain. Because essential oils can be delivered to the organs of the body, they are processed (like other things we consume) through metabolism by the liver and other organs, and then excreted.

While our bodies are designed to metabolize and process natural compounds like essential oils, it is important to remember that the body can only handle essential oils in appropriate doses. You'll learn about appropriate dosage later, but remember that when using essential oils internally, always consider dosage and consumption levels on an oil-by-oil basis. Each essential oil contains different chemical components that will cause unique reactions within the organs and cells of the body. By considering the chemistry and recommended dosage for each individual essential oil, it is possible to safely reap the benefits of internal usage.

Keep in mind that not all essential oils are safe for internal use—some essential oils are never appropriate to use internally. We will discuss these essential oils more in chapters two and four.

***Metabolism:** the life-sustaining chemical reactions that occur in cells that help the body with growth, reproduction, resiliency, and response to the environment.



CHAPTER 2 Research

While many have debated the internal use of essential oils for years, the practice is continually confirmed and validated through research and studies. Researchers continue to confirm the safety of internal use of essential oils, and there is substantial information to help users stay within the safe parameters of internal use.



FDA GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe) List

Among many resources, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) list concerning substances that have been identified as safe for use within food products. Each substance included in the list has thorough documentation of safe internal usage, and includes essential oils that have a well-documented history of safe use. Within this list, the FDA recognizes certain essential oils as appropriate preservatives and flavoring agents that are safe to consume. This list also sets general safety guidelines for consumption, in order to protect users from possible toxicity. While the GRAS list is a helpful resource, it is not the only source for determining which essential oils are safe for internal consumption. As you will read later in this chapter, other research can also show which oils are safe for internal use.

For a quick reference, here are the essential oils that have been recognized as generally safe for internal use on the GRAS list:

Basil	Fennel	Lemongrass	Roman Chamomile
Bergamot	Geranium	Lime	Rosemary
Black Pepper	Ginger	Marjoram	Thyme
Cassia	Grapefruit	Melissa	Wild Orange
Cinnamon	Juniper Berry	Oregano	Ylang Ylang
Clary Sage	Lemon	Peppermint	

In addition to this list of essential oils that have substantial documentation of safe use, it is important to remember that there are some essential oils that can never be used internally due to their chemical makeup and effect on the body.

The following dōTERRA essential oils should never be used internally, in any amount:

Arborvitae

Cedarwood

Cypress

Douglas Fir

Eucalyptus

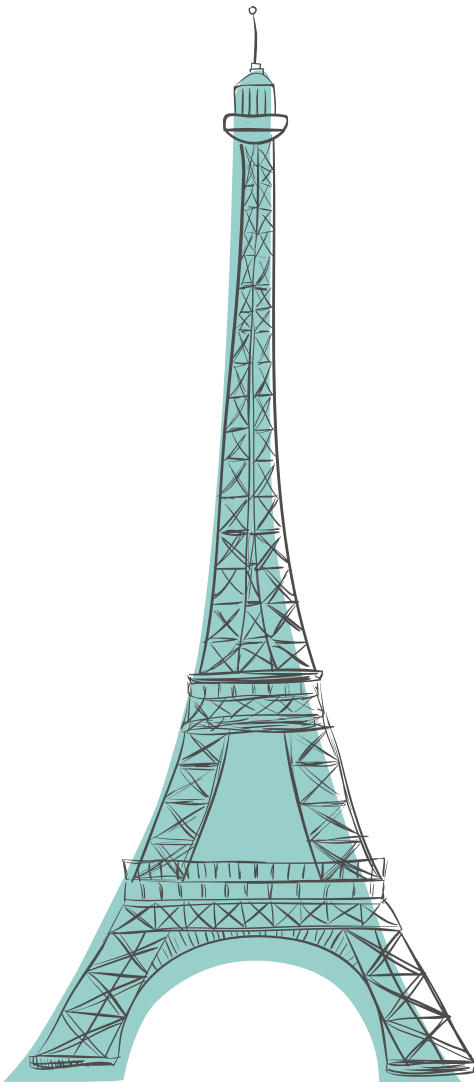
Spikenard

White Fir

Wintergreen

Research

In addition to the FDA GRAS list, research from the essential oil community continues to substantiate the internal use of essential oils. While the GRAS list recognizes essential oils that are safe to use for cooking and flavoring purposes, continued research shows that internal use of essential oils is not only safe, but that it can provide the body with significant benefits.



The French Model

While dōTERRA accepts and upholds the GRAS list, other research and resources support the idea of internal usage for essential oils. The French Model for essential oil application advocates the internal use of essential oils to achieve specific benefits. This model was backed by prominent professionals in the world of aromatherapy like Jean Valnet, Paul Belaiche, and Henri Viaud. The French Model substantiates the idea that essential oils can be used internally for health maintenance and other wellness benefits, as long as correct dosage is applied.

As the amount of available research on internal essential oil use grows, traditional internal usage practices are validated, and new uses are continually being discovered. Despite this research, some believe that any ingestion of essential oils will cause toxicity. In the next chapter, you will learn about dosage and toxicity—most importantly that toxic reactions only occur when someone uses a contaminated essential oil, essential oils not approved for internal use, or uses essential oils in an excessive dose.

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CHAPTER

Safety guidelines

When it comes to safely using essential oils internally, there is a lot to consider. Most importantly, we must remember that not all essential oils are created equal—each essential oil has its own chemical makeup, its own set of benefits, and reacts with the body in its own way. In addition, essential oils are not created equally because harvest, production, and testing can vary from distributor to distributor. This means that while some essential oils are pure and thoroughly tested, others include fillers, preservatives, or impurities that lower the quality of the oil, and make it unsafe for internal use.

Appropriate doses

You must also consider your own personal health history, and any health conditions before using essential oils internally. Consult with your physician before internal application, and consider your personal state of health.

Once you've considered all of the safety factors, you must still use essential oils in appropriate doses to ensure safety during internal use.

Whether you are using essential oils aromatically, topically, or internally, using the proper dosage is the best way to maintain safe use. While the appropriate dose will vary from person to person based on health status, age, size, and the oil itself, there are a few general guidelines that will help the user to stay within the parameters of safe use for internal application.



Getting Started

For internal use, it is best to start with the smallest dose possible, 1–2 drops. From here, the dose can be increased as needed (again, this will depend on the age, size, and health status of the individual, as well as the desired benefit they are trying to achieve.)

Recommended Dose

Depending on the specific oil or blend, the recommended dose for internal usage ranges from 1–5 drops. Beyond this point, increasing the dose will no longer add benefit, and taking too much can be potentially harmful for the body. It is better for the user to take smaller doses and repeat the dose every 4–6 hours as needed.

Daily Dose

Typically, no more than 20 drops of essential oils should be consumed internally within a 24-hour period, but this maximum can be higher or lower depending on the oil in use. If the user gets close to the maximum, any dose should be discontinued for an extended period of time to ensure safety. Lower daily doses are recommended when using an essential oil internally over an extended period of time, rather than isolated accounts.

Strong oils

Each essential oil has a unique chemical makeup, which causes different reactions within the body as the oil is processed through the body's systems. When used internally, some essential oils should not be placed directly on the tongue or directly in the mouth and swallowed due to their individual chemical design and how it effects the body. Some oils are merely too strong to be taken directly, or without altering the application method. These oils can be taken internally by adding two or three drops to a veggie cap, putting one or two drops in recipes, or placing one drop of oil in at least four ounces of liquid. The following are considered “strong oils” and should be used cautiously due to their potency:

Cassia

Cinnamon

Clove

Cumin

Oregano

Thyme

Sensitivity

As mentioned, the safe internal use of essential oils varies from individual to individual. An essential oil may have an effect on one person and not on another, which is why it is important to consider internal use on an oil-by-oil basis.

Essential oils cannot cause true allergic reactions

It is important to know that essential oils do not contain allergens, and therefore cannot cause a true allergic reaction. An allergic reaction occurs when the body experiences an abnormal immune reaction following exposure to a protein molecule that is typically harmless. CPTG Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade® essential oils are made up completely of volatile aromatic compounds found in nature; they don't contain any protein molecules—so they cannot create a true allergic response.

While essential oils cannot cause allergic reactions, they can still cause sensitivity reactions in some people because we each have different sensitivity threshold levels. When sensitivity to an essential oil occurs, it can create symptoms that are similar to an allergic reaction.

How will I know if I am sensitive to a particular oil?

Sensitivity to an essential oil can cause responses in the skin, digestive system, respiratory system, and other areas of the body. Some of the signs of an essential oil sensitivity include pain, swelling, or tenderness in the skin, skin irritation, difficulty breathing, and stomach upset.

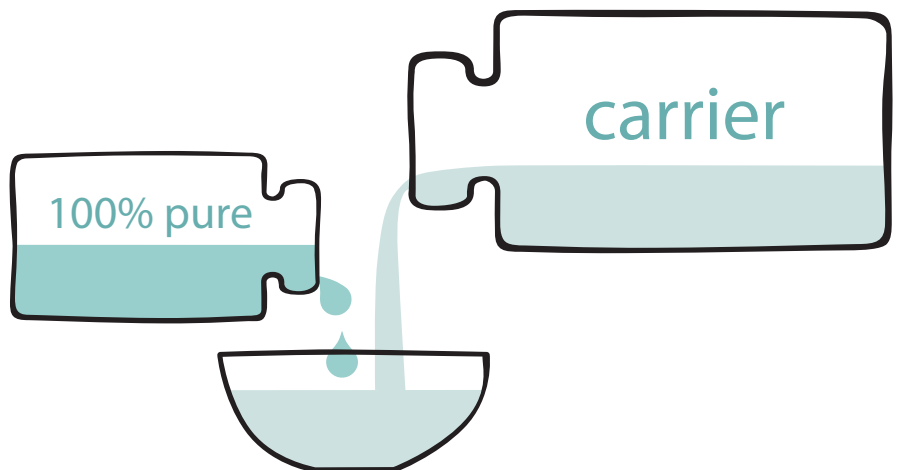
How to handle essential oil sensitivity

If you develop a sensitivity to an essential oil, you can easily manage your essential oil application to avoid sensitivity or discomfort. Since sensitivity to an essential oil is not the same as an allergic reaction, you may still be able to use that essential oil with a different form of application. For example, if you experience sensitivity after using an essential oil internally, you may still be able to use that oil aromatically or topically.

Essential oil sensitivity can also be caused by dosage. If you've experienced sensitivity with a particular essential oil in the past, you can try diluting the oil, or simply take a smaller dose to see if the sensitivity was caused by a high dosage of the oil.

If you ever experience a sensitivity reaction to essential oils in the digestive system, it is important to immediately discontinue use of that oil. If a large

amount of oil was consumed, contact poison control immediately. If only a small amount of the oil was consumed, you can help subside the sensitivity by drinking plenty of fluids. If the reaction becomes prolonged or severe, it is always wise to seek medical attention.



Toxicity

Essential oils are completely safe to use internally, as long as the appropriate dosage is observed. In the most extreme cases, exceeding dosage recommendations for oils can lead to toxicity. Toxicity is when a substance reaches a point that it becomes harmful or damaging to the body. Any substance (even natural, seemingly harmless substances) can become toxic if used in an inappropriate dose.

Although essential oils have a potential for toxicity when used in incorrect dosages (just as water, minerals, vitamins, and other substances do), the toxic dose of an essential oil is always far above the recommended dosage. An individual would have to far exceed the dosage recommendations for an essential oil to put themselves within the dangerous range of toxicity.

CHAPTER

How to use essential oils internally

Now that you know the benefits of using essential oils internally, that they have been proven safe to use, and how they interact with the body, you might be wondering, “How exactly do I use essential oils internally?” There are many methods for internal essential oil application that even essential oil beginners can enjoy. Below are a few simple ways to use essential oils internally.

Water

To enjoy the internal benefits of essential oils, you can always add a drop or two to a glass of water. Not only will essential oils add potent flavor to plain water, but this provides an easy way to use essential oils internally.



Supplement Capsules

Another simple way to use essential oils internally is to place a few drops into a supplement capsule. dōTERRA® offers vegetarian capsules that are free of preservatives and animal products, and are easy to digest.

Direct Application

Essential oils can also be placed directly in the mouth and swallowed for internal benefits. Keep in mind that essential oils are extremely potent, and even one drop on or under the tongue will be powerful. For essential

oils that are too powerful to take directly, dilute a drop in at least four ounces of water before swallowing. Remember, essential oils like Cassia, Cinnamon, Clove, Cumin, Oregano, and Thyme should always be diluted.

Cooking and Baking

Adding essential oils to your favorite food dishes and baked goods is a wonderful way to experience the flavor-enhancing benefits of essential oils, not to mention their benefits for the body. The smallest amount of essential oils can enhance the flavor of any entrée, beverage, dessert, marinade, or any other dish that can use complimentary flavors.



A few things to remember before you get started

If you are just getting started with internal use, take a look at the tips below to ensure proper application.

- Always follow the recommended directions for use. Check the labels of essential oil bottles or essential oil supplements to ensure that you are following the manufacturer's instructions for intended use. If you have specific health concerns or conditions, it is always a good idea to consult your physician before using essential oils.
- Always start with one drop. As mentioned, essential oil application should be considered on an oil-by-oil basis. By starting with a small amount, you can become more acquainted with each essential oil and how your body responds to the oil's chemistry. Then, you can increase the number of drops you are using to achieve the desired results once you know how your body reacts to each individual oil.
- Always verify that the essential oils you are using are free of contaminants and impurities in order to protect your body from harm. While dōTERRA® uses third-party testing and analytics to ensure each essential oil bottle reaches high standards without chemical impurities, this isn't true for all essential oil distributors. By using thoroughly tested, high quality essential oils, you'll be able to safely and easily use essential oils internally.
- Always use essential oils that are recommended for internal use. Remember, there are some essential oils that should never be used internally—in any amount. Always check labels and instructions for use to ensure the essential oil is meant for internal use.

Cooking with essential oils

For centuries, essential oils have been used to add flavor to meals because of their potent nature and ability to enhance natural flavors. When cooking with essential oils, remember, a little goes a long way. Because essential oils are so concentrated, even the tiniest drop can provide a serious amount of flavor.



When cooking with essential oils, rather than adding an entire drop to your dish, dip a toothpick into the bottle to extract flavor and stir the dipped toothpick in with the other ingredients. You can always add more flavor, but adding too much essential oil could overpower and even ruin the dish.

It may take some experimentation, but as you start to use essential oils to flavor and enhance your food, you will soon experience the benefits that these natural extracts have to offer, and enjoy your favorite recipes even more.

Effective methods for internal application

Now that you've learned all about internal use of essential oils, are you ready to get started? Below are some specific suggestions for effective methods of internal use.



Basil

Add to your favorite Italian dishes for a refreshing, complimentary flavor



Black Pepper

Add to soups, entrées, meats, and salads, to enhance the flavor and aid in digestion*



Cassia

Ward off hunger cravings and aid digestion by adding 1–2 drops of Cassia (with a little Lemon oil) in a glass of water



Cinnamon

Place one drop in tea or hot water and drink slowly to soothe an irritated throat*



Coriander

Take a few drops after eating a large meal to help with digestion*



Dill

Add 1–2 drops to herbal tea before bed to help promote restful sleep*



Frankincense

Add 1–2 drops to a veggie capsule to help support healthy cellular function*



Grapefruit

Add 1–2 drops to your water to support a healthy metabolism



Bergamot

Place a few drops in your regular tea to create Earl Grey



Cardamom

Add to bread, salads, and meat for flavor and to soothe occasional stomach discomfort*



Cilantro

Add to salads, dips, marinades, and stir fry for flavor*



Clove

Take in veggie capsules to support cardiovascular health*



Cumin

Add 1–3 drops to soups, stews, and curries for a warm, spicy flavor



Fennel

Place one drop in tea or water to help fight sweet tooth cravings



Ginger

Add to your favorite sweet and savory dishes for flavor



Lavender

Take internally to reduce anxious feelings*



Lemon

Take internally to help with seasonal respiratory discomfort*



Lime

Add one drop to drinking water to enhance flavor



Myrrh

Add 1–2 drops to ¼ cup of water with a little agave or honey to help ease the stomach*



Peppermint

Add 2–3 drops to your favorite smoothie recipe for a refreshing boost of flavor



Roman Chamomile

Add 1–2 drops to hot drinks or herbal teas to soothe the body and mind*



Tangerine

Add 1–2 drops to smoothies, teas, lemonade, or water for flavor



Vetiver

Add to tea or hot drinks during the winter season to promote immune-supporting properties*



Ylang Ylang

Take internally for antioxidant support*



Lemongrass

Add to entrées and meat dishes for flavor and to promote healthy digestion*



Marjoram

Add 1–2 drops to water, citrus drinks, or veggie caps to support healthy immune system function*



Oregano

Put one drop in place of dried oregano in spaghetti sauce, pizza sauce, or on a roast



Petitgrain

Take internally to help calm the nervous system, ease tense feelings, and promote restful sleep*



Spearmint

Add to any drink, dessert, salad, or entrée to promote digestion and enhance flavor*



Thyme

Use 1–2 drops in meat and entrée dishes to add a fresh, herbal flavor



Wild Orange

Add a drop to your water for a burst of flavor and to promote overall health*

** These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent disease.*

Essential oils you should not use internally include:

Arborvitae
Cedarwood
Cypress

Douglas Fir
Eucalyptus
Spikenard

White Fir
Wintergreen