

Basic Essential Oil Safety

Essential oils are therapeutic substances. Although natural, use the same caution you would with a pharmaceutical or supplement. Cocaine and arsenic are natural too, after all. Oils are not for whimsical daily use but should be looked to with intentional purpose. Use common sense. Don't drive while applying oils, don't run with an essential oil bottle in your mouth, don't stick your finger in your eye, don't blend while texting, scissors dipped in essential oils are still sharp.

- Keep away from children. Most cases of toxicity or injury in oils come from small children unintentionally overdosing. If someone drinks oil, do not induce vomiting. Give milk and call poison control. If oils get in your eyes or on body membranes apply fatty carrier oil or milk to dilute.
- Use caution if you suffer from seizures. If taking pharmaceutical drugs, be aware of possible interactions
- Use caution with children. Do not apply on or to a child's face. See Child Safety Handout on website.
- Be well advised during pregnancy and while nursing. See Pregnancy and Lactation handout on website.
- Consider a bottle of oil concentrate. Only apply undiluted in rare instances (small bite or burn). Dilute oils in a carrier like a vegetable oil (coconut, olive, apricot), aloe vera, witch hazel, lotion etc. See Dilution handout on website and Child Safety handout on website. Never place in ear canal.
- Some oils are phototoxic. Most of them are citrus. Do not go into the sun after using them on your skin. (You won't die but your skin might turn colors or blister). See phototoxic handout on website.
- For household use:
 - If you clean with oils, again remember that they are still therapeutic and that ability will cross over.
 - Essential oils are flammable. Keep away from flames.
 - Use in cooking should be small or with a purpose. Since this is a therapeutic substance its addition will possibly affect those who eat it. Consider it adding Tylenol or soup or pot in brownies.
 - Be mindful of your pets. Oil for cats is controversial and often discouraged. Dogs have a keen sense of smell and therefore they affect more. See Animals and Oils handout on website.
- Ingestion is controversial. **Should ingestion be the educated choice you make for your own empowered self-care use an abundance of caution.** For best use of your money and protection of digestive tract do not place drops directly in a cup of water. Think - oil and water do not mix. The water will not dilute the oil but wash it down.
- If diffusing in a public space, be mindful of those with aversions to smells or allergies. An inhaler or diffuser jewelry might be a more considerate way to use your oils. If diffusing in a public space around children, 'tis best get parental permission. Again, these are therapeutic substances.

*Resource: Thompson, C. (2012) Aromatherapy Certification Course Level 1 revised 2014
Tisserand, R and Young, Essential Oil Safety Second Edition (2013) Elsevier Health Sciences
Last Updated: Sep-15*

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