



The Most Frequently Asked Questions About Essential Oils

Pure haven essential oils are highly potent “essences” — and natural chemical compounds — of plants that can be very effective and powerful, as well as gentle. To use our essential oils safely and properly for maximum benefit, please refer to these FAQs.

Important: The information presented here is in no way intended as a substitute for medical counseling. Anyone suffering from any disease, illness, or injury should consult a qualified health care professional.

What are essential oils?

An oil is “essential” in the sense that it contains the “essence” of the plant's fragrance — the characteristic fragrance of the plant from which it is derived. The oils contain the chemical components that naturally occur in plants. They are highly concentrated properties of the herb or plant they are derived from. For example, it takes 256 pounds of peppermint leaf to make one pound of peppermint essential oil and 150 pounds or more of lavender flowers to make one pound of lavender essential oil. Keep in mind when using essential oils that while many find relief using essential oils for various ailments, they are not to be used as a replacement for seeking medical care.

*From NAHA (the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy) –“The term ‘essential oil’ is a contraction of the original ‘quintessential oil.’ This stems from the Aristotelian idea that matter is composed of four elements, namely, fire, air, earth, and water. The fifth element, or quintessence, was then considered to be spirit or life force. Distillation and evaporation were thought to be processes of removing the spirit from the plant, and this is also reflected in our language, since the term ‘spirits’ is used to describe distilled alcoholic beverages, such as brandy, whiskey, and eau de vie. The last of these shows reference to the concept of removing the life force from the plant. Today we know that, far from being spirit, essential oils are physical in nature and composed of complex mixtures of chemicals.”

How do essential oils work?

Essential oils have been in use for thousands of years, some sources suggesting as long as 6,000. The essence of the oil may enter our body through the nose, our lungs, or our skin. Modern research has shown that when you sniff an essential oil, the scent reaches an area in the top of the nasal cavity where there are 50 million smell receptors in each nostril. These receptors connect with the limbic system in the brain.

How do I use essential oils?

Please refer to the product label for appropriate safety and use directions. The essential oil that you choose will depend on the purpose. Do you want it to help elevate your mood, or do you need something to soothe the skin? Please be sure to pay attention to cautions for each oil and application method. It is important to dilute the oils properly with our carrier oil provided, consider your individual sensitivities and/or reactions, and watch closely for adverse effects. Always do a small patch test first. We recommend never ingesting essential oils or applying undiluted (“neat” — directly on the skin) unless under direct care of a certified aromatherapy consultant.

How do I learn more about pure haven essential oils?

This FAQ is a good place to start for essential oil information. Information is provided on our website in the shopping cart under each essential oil. There are many in our field, and on your teams, who have extensive knowledge already; and of course, we are always available to answer any questions you may have. There is also abundant information online and in respected books on the subject. Please see a list of suggested resources at the end of this document.

What makes these essential oils special? What standards does pure haven use when choosing essential oils?

We set out to make safe products in all categories and our oils are no exception. Our essential oils are all organically grown and certified organic, never any pesticides used. All the oils are tested to be herbicide- and pesticide-free by gas chromatography and mass spectrometry, which insures the highest purity standards. Pure haven essential oils are extracted only by cold pressed and steam distilled extraction processes. Solvents, which extend the yield of the oils, are never used.

In short, essential oils are “pure,” or they are not. Oils that have been adulterated are not pure and can contain synthetics, fillers, pesticides, chemicals, or carrier oils. We are proud to bring you the finest oils, containing none of these. We source our essential oils from vendors and properly test each and every batch of oil before we share it. All our oils come from one plant species and are distilled or extracted at the proper harvesting times to assure that the best and purest essences are obtained.

Where do pure haven essential oils come from?

Our oils are grown and processed around the world.

- Lavender/*Lavandula Angustifolia*: Bulgaria
- Rosemary/*Rosmarinus Officinalis*: Tunisia
- Lemon/*Citrus Limonum*: Argentina
- Peppermint/*Menthe Piperita*: India
- Eucalyptus/*Eucalyptus Globulus*: Portugal
- Cinnamon/*Cinnamomum Zeylanicum* (included in Five Defense): Sri Lanka
- Clove Bud/*Eugenia Caryophyllata* (included in Five Defense): Sri Lanka

- Tea Tree/Melaleuca Alternifolia: Australia
- Frankincense/Boswellia Carterii: Somaliland and USA
- Oregano/Origanum Vulgare: Hungary
- Sweet Orange/Citrus Sinensis: Mexico
- Cedarwood/Cedrus Atlantica: Morocco
- Roman Chamomile/Anthemis Nobilis (included in Tranquility): USA

I have been asked about “therapeutic grade” oils. What does this mean?

We have borrowed this excellent statement from a licensed aroma therapist to answer this question: “Essential oils do not have a classification or grading system established by any industry standard, but we will put it in ‘layman’s terms’ for you to be able to better understand what quality can mean in the essential oil industry.

“First, the lowest quality is found in the essential oils used in the food and flavoring industry. They do not possess the properties we look for in pure therapeutic essential oils, as they are added to and manipulated to make a consistent product that will reveal the same flavor as is expected time and again in the industry.

“Next, is the quality of the essential oils used by perfumers. They smell good, but do not necessarily have the constitution we look for in therapeutic aromatherapy. In fact, the perfumer and food quality essential oils are often found to be adulterated and extended. Many times, synthetic (man-made and/or petroleum-based) materials have been added to them to achieve a certain taste or smell which the manufacturer needs or wants.

“The third and highest quality of essential oils are those that are PURE and true plant essences - coming from one plant species. This is the best of the best. They are not adulterated or altered in any way. Please be aware there are some companies that tout their oils as ‘Therapeutic Grade’ or ‘Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade’ essential oils. This is only THEIR specific company ‘grading’ system; it is not provided by an outside source.

“As stated above in the essential oil industry as a whole, there is NO SUCH classification or grading. It is just THEIR own company designation. These types of companies will also have you ‘believing’ ONLY their oils are ‘therapeutic,’ which is totally wrong. Ours are of highest purity and quality and absolutely recommended for therapeutic aromatherapy uses.”

What is a “carrier oil”? How should I use it?

The carrier oil pure haven offers (jojoba oil) is a blend of jojoba and sunflower oils, chosen because these oils are the most hypoallergenic oils available to the majority of the population. Both oils absorb quickly and, as an added benefit, will also moisturize the skin. Use the carrier oil to properly dilute the essential

oils and ensure that they are applied according to directions. Please know that diluting the essential oil will not dilute the desired effect. Some oils, like lavender, are very mild. However, lemongrass and oregano are stronger.

We suggest that you apply diluted oils in a small amount to the wrist, as a patch test. If there is any sensation or burning, discontinue. Most essential oils should never be used undiluted on the skin. Instead, they should be combined with “real” oils (called carrier oils), waxes, butters, alcohols, or other diluting measures. Because they’re so concentrated, if you don’t dilute, you may end up with an unfortunate reaction and unhappy skin. We prefer to err on the side of caution; that’s why we do not recommend using oils “neat” (directly on the skin).

What is the proper ratio of carrier oil to essential oil?

Please refer to this essential oil dilution chart:

carrier oil	1% dilution	2% dilution	3% dilution	5% dilution	10% dilution
5 ml (1 tsp)	1 drop	2 drops	3 drops	5 drops	10 drops
10 ml (2 tsp)	2 drops	4 drops	6 drops	10 drops	20 drops
15 ml (3 tsp)	3 drops	6 drops	9 drops	12 drops	24 drops
1 oz (2 tbsp)	5-6 drops	10-12 drops	15-18 drops	25-30 drops	50-60 drops
2 oz (4 tbsp)	10-12 drops	20-24 drops	30-36 drops	50-60 drops	100-120 drops

- **1% dilution:** Best for children, pregnant women, elderly, subtle energetic effects (i.e. meditation), people with long-term illnesses. It is also a good idea to start with a low dilution for anyone who has sensitivity to fragrances or chemicals.
- **2% dilution:** Best for healthy adults to use for everyday issues such as skin care and on a long-term basis. It is also a good dilution to use for massage oils.
- **3% - 10% dilution:** This is best to use for an acute injury to muscle, tendons, or bones, for pain relief, or issues related to a cold, flu, or allergies. These blends are only used for a week or two because of the stronger concentration of essential oils. The amount used will depend on the individual and it is best to start with the smaller dilution and work up as needed.

How often can essential oils be applied? How much do I use?

For application on skin, use 1-2 drops in a carrier oil like jojoba oil. Using more is not necessary and may be harmful. For many common uses, a couple of times a day is most likely enough to provide results.

Essential oils are very potent and powerful. Excessive use of essential oils may increase the risk for adverse reactions. **IMPORTANT:** In the case of essential oils, more is definitely NOT better.

Where do I apply essential oils?

Always apply to skin and never ingest essential oils. Applying to the affected area is a good place to start. If you have digestion problems, apply the oils to the stomach; for a headache, apply the oils to the temples and hairline. Please keep essential oils away from eyes and ears.

Should I use directly on skin?

Some essential oils, when applied to the skin, can cause a hot or burning sensation. We recommend using all essential oils with a carrier oil unless you are an aromatherapy expert and have already used oils successfully. Never use without a patch-test procedure prior to first use.

What if I have a reaction?

If you experience a slight rash or discomfort, discontinue use. Apply more carrier oil to the affected area instead of water, as this may increase discomfort. Essential oils are powerful; if you use an essential oil that seems to irritate or burn your skin, you should add more carrier oil to the affected spot. This dilutes the oil. Do not use water. Oil and water do not mix. Once you have emulsified the oil this way, you can wash it away with soap and water; but always dilute it with a carrier oil first.

Important note: Please be sure you are using pure haven personal care and cleaning products, as contact with chemical-based products may also trigger a reaction.

What should I do if I get essential oils in my eyes?

If you get essential oils in your eyes, quickly flush the eye with a carrier oil like jojoba or coconut oil; milk or cream applied to the affected eye will help as well. This should happen almost immediately. At that point, you can flush the eyes with fresh water to remove the carrier oil or milk.

Any “off limits” areas for these essential oils?

Please avoid contact with sensitive areas, including eyes, ears, genitals, and mucous membranes.

In what other ways can I use essential oils?

There are three ways essential oils enter the body:

1. Applied to the skin (we recommend diluting with our carrier oil only)
2. Inhaled
3. Ingested (not recommended)

Within the two approved methods for use, there are several types of application methods. For example, you can apply essential oils topically using compresses, baths, or massaging them into the skin when diluted with our carrier oil. Some essential oils are irritating to the skin because of their chemistry. These would need more dilution or might better be used by inhalation. The application method depends on the

condition to be treated and the desired effect. For example, mood effects might be best addressed by either inhalation or topical application. For fast action, inhalation might be preferred. Baths involve both inhalation and topical absorption.

Note: If you are unsure about which application method to use, please consult a certified aromatherapy consultant.

Can I ingest my essential oils?

We recommend that you DO NOT take essential oils internally. For safety reasons, and legal reasons, we recommend “external use only.” It is a known and proven fact that most essential oils will produce better effects when inhaled or used for massage (absorbed through the skin). Taking essential oils internally will not necessarily be better than the proven methods of inhalation and massage.

How long is essential oil safe to diffuse?

Generally, our understanding is that you should never diffuse any essential oil more than one hour, but some more potent oils or blends should only be diffused for 20 minutes!

Note: Only use baby- and child-safe oils in your diffuser when children are around. Please consult a physician if you are unsure of which oils are safe. You should not use a diffuser around pets, as it can be deadly to cats and possibly other pets.

How can I inhale essential oils?

Essential oils can be inhaled using a variety of techniques and devices. Essential oils can be placed in a diffuser, sometimes with water (be sure to read the directions) and sometimes with heat so they evaporate. Essential oils should never be directly burned as the chemical structure is dramatically changed with incineration (Buckle, 2003). Several drops of essential oil can be placed on a tissue or cotton ball and allowed to evaporate into the air. If you want a more intense dose, sniff the tissue. Use common sense and take a small test sniff first. If a milder, more constant exposure is desired, simply keep the tissue in your immediate vicinity.

Can essential oils be combined?

Essential oils can be combined to help you get your desired result. Each oil will give you a different result. Since each person is different, the results will be different. A good rule of thumb is to learn your oils and how they specifically affect you. You can only do this by allowing the oils to work with you and take notes on how you’re affected. Inhale one oil per day. Listen to how the oil resonates within you. Is your head clearer? Are your senses sharper? Do you feel calm? Are your lungs expanding? Did it cause a headache? Whatever happens, make notes. There are guidelines for each oil and what each does, but they are just guidelines.

Note: When you diffuse a blend, do not mix it with other oils.

How long will my essential oils last? What is the shelf life?

Shelf life varies with different essential oils; some will actually improve with age. Some important things to remember:

- Keep your oils in a cool, dark space. Heat and light can affect the shelf life.
- One of the most detrimental factors is the exposure to oxygen, so do keep the caps on as much as possible.
- Citrus oils that have less viscosity can be kept about 12-18 months if stored in a cool space.
- Other oils can be stored anywhere from 25 years, except for those that improve with age.

The following oils can improve with age. Here are suggested “keep” dates:

- Sandalwood: 6-12 years
- Vetiver: 6-8 years
- Myrrh: 6-8 years
- Frankincense: 2-4 years
- Spikenard: 6-8 years

Can I use essential oils during pregnancy or while nursing?

Prior to use of essential oils, we recommend seeking the advice and recommendation of a trained healthcare advisor or certified aromatherapy consultant*, who is experienced in essential oil usage.

More on essential oil use during pregnancy:

There are many opinions on this, and we wanted to share this one from Wellness Mama:

“Essential oils can affect hormones, gut bacteria and other aspects of health, and extreme care should be used when taking them while pregnant or nursing. The effects of essential oils can be compounded in utero, and extreme care should be taken with essential oil use during pregnancy. Again, I’m not saying they should not be used during pregnancy, but that extreme care should be taken and research done first. Stick to aromatherapy and very diluted use of approved essential oils in skin care recipes and baths. I also always re-test an oil in a diluted skin test before using it during pregnancy. Many oils are considered safe during pregnancy, especially after the first trimester (depending on the source), but again, would check with a professional and use caution with any herbs used during pregnancy. Even oils that are considered safe may be harmful to certain women, and there is some speculation that the actions of some oils on hormones can cause dangerous hormone imbalances during pregnancy.”

Can essential oils interact with prescription medications?

If you have a disease or medical condition, or if you are using a prescription medication, it is recommended that you consult with a certified aromatherapy consultant and/or your doctor.

How does exposure to sun affect essential oil use?

Some essential oils, especially citrus oils, contain natural molecules that react with sunlight and may cause a sensitivity reaction. When using oils and blends that contain lemon, avoid sunlight for 12 - 48 hours after applying.

What about the use of essential oils if I have a medical condition?

Always seek the advice of the prescribing physician or pharmacist about potential interactions between the medication and the chosen essential oil. It is wise to also seek advice from a certified aromatherapist since not all doctors understand how essential oils and medications interact.

Additional Resources

www.learningabouteos.com

www.roberttisserand.com

(Tisserand's book titled, *Essential Oil Safely*, also provides useful information.)

www.aromahead.com - Offers a free intro class and has a blog with good information.

<http://www.alliance-aromatherapists.org/>

<http://www.naha.org/>

Thank You!

Thank you for your interest in learning more about pure haven essential oils. We are happy to share this information with you. If you have more questions, please feel free to contact us at CustomerService@purehaven.com.

The information presented is in no way intended as a substitute for medical counseling. Anyone suffering from any disease, illness, or injury should consult a qualified health care professional.