SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils are safe and easy to use. However, it is important to remember that therapeutic grade essential oils are highly concentrated plant extracts and should be used with reasonable care.

Check with your doctor if you are on medications, are pregnant or nursing or have critical health concerns.

Start Slowly. If you are new to essential oils, start out slowly. Don’t slather 10 new oils on your skin first day. Introduce a few oils, then in the next day or two, try a few more. If you have sensitive skin or are prone to irritation, do a skin patch test before using an oil.

Use a carrier oil to dilute your essential oils, particularly with babies, children, the elderly and those with sensitive skin. Diluting an oil can protect sensitive skin against irritation, and will not reduce its effectiveness, so when in doubt, please dilute your essential oils.

“Warm oils” Some oils, such as cinnamon, thyme, oregano, cassia, black pepper and clove, can feel very warm or even hot/burning on the skin and therefore should be diluted with a carrier oil when applied topically, even on adults. Peppermint is a “cooling” oil, but is another oil you may want to dilute.

Never apply oils directly to the eyes or ear canal. After application, avoid rubbing the eyes, around the eyelids, handling contact lenses, or touching the interior of one’s nose. The skin around the genitals and mucous membranes areas are also sensitive and prone to irritation. When using oils on babies and children, apply in an area where they will not accidentally get oil into their eyes, such as the back of the neck, the along the spine or on the bottoms of the feet.

Photosensitive Oils. Some oils, primarily citrus oils such as lemon, lime & bergamot, react to radiant energy or light such as natural sunlight, sunlamps, or other sources of UV rays. The result is a dark pigmentation or a burn/rash on the skin. To avoid issues with photosensitive oils, apply citrus oils to an area of the body that will not be exposed to UV rays/sunshine.

Internal Use. While most essential oils on the market should not be taken internally (and this warning is usually on the label), certified pure oils labeled as dietary supplements are safe for internal use, in small quantities. Mild oils may be taken under the tongue or in water, hot oils should be placed in capsules, and can be diluted with a carrier/vegetable oil or taken with food. Many oils may be used in cooking recipes for flavoring and/or therapeutic benefit.

Pregnancy & Nursing. Oils applied topically at ordinary levels should be safe for a developing fetus, however, please use caution with essential oils during pregnancy. Popular oils generally considered safe to use during pregnancy include bergamot, lavender, lemon, geranium, ginger, sandalwood, wild orange and ylang ylang. Other oils may also be suitable; consult your healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns. We recommend avoiding clary sage until delivery. Fennel can help support a normal milk supply, while use of peppermint can reduce milk supply in some mothers, so you may want to avoid internal use of peppermint (and blends containing it) in the weeks prior to delivery and while nursing. Additional oils may be helpful during and after delivery.

Essential oil in bath water. When using undiluted oil in bath water, add it to Epsom salts or a bath/shower gel to prevent oil from pooling as a concentrated drop in the water. Also note that oils will evaporate quickly in very hot water.

Diffusing around pets. When diffusing oils around pets, make sure that the door to the room is open and the pet is free to leave. Most animals enjoy the oils and can benefit from them, but the pet must to be able to move away from the diffuser when they need a break. Avoid using melaleuca (tea tree) on/around cats. See the book SpOil Your Pet by Mia K Frezzo & Jan C Jeremias for guidance on using oils with your pets.

Everyone can benefit from essential oils to support a wellness lifestyle. Those with critical health concerns may want to consult a healthcare professional. In general, those with epilepsy should be cautious with or may want to avoid: Rosemary, fennel, sage & eucalyptus as in rare cases, these essential oils may trigger seizures in some people with epilepsy.

Dilute with oil, not water.

If you happen to get an essential oil somewhere you did not intend, or experience discomfort when applying it to your skin, please use a carrier oil or pure vegetable oil to rinse or dilute the area. Using water will increase the discomfort.

Popular carrier oils include fractionated coconut oil, jojoba oil, grape seed oil, almond oil, avocado oil and olive oil.

A little goes a long way.

Essential oils are pure concentrates. The higher quality the oil, the more potent it will be and smaller amounts are required.

One or two drops is considered an application. Less oil, more often, is best.

Unlike synthetic formulas, you do not need to wait 4 hours before using an oil again. Apply the oil; if the issue or concern remains, apply more again in a few minutes.