

Bulgarian Lavender

Bulgarian Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), a subspecies of *Lavandula Angustifolia*, is known for its high-quality essential oil with a rich aroma profile. It has been traditionally used in aromatherapy and herbal medicine for its calming and soothing properties. It is used in pharmacy, phytotherapy and aromatherapy as one of the most popular herbal remedies to treat central nervous system disorders, such as anxiety, stress, depression and sleep disorders.

Lavender oil, obtained from the flowers of *Lavandula Angustifolia* (Family: Lamiaceae) in Bulgaria by steam distillation, is chiefly composed of linalyl acetate (3,7-dimethyl-1, 6-octadien-3yl acetate), linalool (3,7-dimethylocta-1,6-dien-3-ol), lavandulol, 1,8-cineole, lavandulol acetate, and camphor (Koulivand et al., 2013). Linalool and linalyl acetate are rapidly absorbed through the skin after topical application with massage and are thought to be able to cause central nervous system depression (Jager et al., 1992). Linalyl acetate was also reported to be a good source of antifungal and antibacterial compounds. Linalyl acetate and its derivatives have antifungal properties that can inhibit the growth of pathogenic fungi causing dermatophytic diseases. The results proved that epoxides and hydroperoxides of linalyl acetate are beneficial to human health, having the potential to be used for medical purposes (Khayyat, 2020).

A Bulgarian research team had already reported on certain central neurotropic effects of lavender and found this to be relaxing, calming and stress relieving (Tasev et al., 1969). This suggests its potential therapeutic use in addressing anxiety and stress-related issues.

As shown in a clinical study of women college students (Lee et al., 2006), the scent of Bulgarian lavender shows a beneficial effect on insomnia and depression. These results are in agreement with the findings of Diego (1998) who tested the efficiency of Bulgarian Lavender in affecting mood, EEG patterns of alertness and mathematical computations. This result of a test was assessed with 40 adults where the so-called lavender group subsequently had increased power in the EEG, suggesting increased drowsiness, and reported on a less depressed mood and of feeling more relaxed; furthermore they performed some (simple) mathematical computations faster and more accurately upon aromatherapeutical treatment.

The relief of stress and the relaxant property of lavender oil – a problem especially found in hospitals, hospices and homes for the aged, was emphasized again by Lis-Balchin (1997) as well as by Delaveau et al. (1989). In order to test the hypothesis that lavender oil has a sedative effect and that the resultant sleep promotes therapeutic activity, a pilot study was arranged with acutely ill elderly people as well as later on with long-term patients. The results showed a positive trend towards sleep improvement using Bulgarian lavender.

NOTES

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