

Ylang Ylang

Cananga Odorata, known as ylang-ylang, is a tropical tree that is native to Southeast Asia. The tree is valued chiefly for its flowers, which yield ylang-ylang oil which is used in the manufacture of numerous beauty products because of its strong floral fragrance, such as perfumes, soaps, shampoos and hair oils (Parrota, 2014).

Ylang-ylang has a variety of medicinal properties and traditional therapeutic uses. In Tonga and Samoa, the bark is used to treat stomach ailments and as a laxative. In Java, the fresh flowers are pounded into a paste for use in the treatment of asthma, and the dried flowers are reportedly used for treating malaria (Manner & Elevitch, 2006).

Wei and Shibamoto (2010) demonstrated that ylang-ylang essential oil has **anti-inflammatory** properties by inhibiting lipoxygenase, an enzyme involved in regulating inflammation. The essential oil was found to inhibit lipoxygenase by about 80% at 0.5 µg/mL, primarily due to compounds like linalool and linalyl acetate. This suggests that ylang-ylang extract has the potential to be a useful anti-inflammatory agent, as it reduces nitric oxide release associated with inflammation.

Ylang-ylang essential oil, obtained through hydrodistillation of its leaves, has a **calming effect** on humans. According to a study by Pujiarti et al. in 2017, inhaling ylang-ylang oil resulted in decreased systolic and diastolic blood pressure, suggesting a sedative effect. Additionally, volunteers who used the oil experienced a lower pulse rate and reduced stress levels. Measurements of alpha brain waves further confirmed that ylang-ylang oil promoted relaxation and decreased stress levels.

NOTES

1. Parrota, J., (2014). *Cananga odorata*. Enzyklopädie der Holzgewächse: Handbuch und Atlas der Dendrologie (pp.1-8). https://www.fs.usda.gov/research/publications/misc/63343_2009%20Parrota%20Cananga%20odorata.pdf
2. Manner, H., & Elevitch, C. (2006). *Cananga odorata* (ylang-ylang), Ver 2.1 . Species Profiles for Pacific Island Forestry. https://www.doc-developpement-durable.org/file/Culture/Arbres-Bois-de-Rapport-Reforestation/FICHES_ARBRES/Arbres-non-classes/Cananga-ylang-ylang.pdf
3. Wei, A., & Shibamoto, T. (2010). Antioxidant/Lipoxygenase Inhibitory Activities and Chemical Compositions of Selected Essential Oils. *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, 58(12), 7218–7225. <https://doi.org/10.1021/jf101077s>
4. Pujiarti, R., Ohtani, Y., Widowati, T. B., Wahyudi, W., Kasmudjo, K., Herath, N. K., & Wang, C. N. (2017). Effect of *Melaleuca leucadendron*, *Cananga odorata* and *Pogostemon cablin* Oil Odors on Human Physiological Responses. *Wood Research Journal*, 4(1), 100–105. <https://doi.org/10.51850/wrj.2012.3.2.100-105>
5. Ishiguchi, A., Saitou, A., Suenaga, K., Ohta, K., & Matsuura, M. (2008). 14. Effects of odors on electroencephalogram and subjective alterations. *Clinical Neurophysiology*, 119(6), e78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clinph.2008.01.039>
6. Moss, M., Hewitt, S., Moss, L., & Wesnes, K. (2008). Modulation of Cognitive Performance and Mood by Aromas of Peppermint and Ylang-ylang. *International Journal of Neuroscience*, 118(1), 59–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207450601042094>