



CHEEKY HERBS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM TINDERBOX

SAMHAIN - 1 MAY 2016

ISSUE No. 87



To ingest or not to ingest

THERE SEEMS to be some debate about whether taking essential oils internally is safe and even necessary.

There is a plethora of unsafe advice about ingesting essential oils on the Internet and amongst other commercial sales pitches and by the same token there is also a lot of scare mongering about their ingestion that creates unnecessary anxiety.

The latter exaggerated precautionary prohibition on ingestion could be partly due to the perceived litigation fears of the many essential oil educators and distributors. At the end of the day, the choices and risks are our own to take.

It is definitely worth a closer investigation into how suitable these concentrated plant extracts actually are for oral ingestion.

Unquestionably, educating ourselves about their character and applications as well as knowing our own unique health requirements will serve us well in making the right decision; instincts and common sense should always prevail.

We would be wise to account for how concentrated a very small amount of essential oil is; and actually the equivalent of ingesting many kilos of

SPECIAL FEATURE INGESTING ESSENTIAL OILS

the actual plant matter.

Everything on earth is made up of chemicals - it is the toxic and synthetics ones that we should try to avoid in favour of the natural plant biochemicals.

All pure essential oils are a very concentrated combination of different volatile aromatic molecules (alcohol, phenol, ester, sesquiterpenes, terpenes, aldehydes to name a few) each with different healing virtues.

Even if these chemical constituents can be of excellent help with all sorts of health issues, they could also have adverse effects if not used mindfully with the proper safety and precautionary measures.

Individual sensitivity and predispositions should always be assessed first and expert advice sought if in doubt.

There is certainly a good place in aromatherapy for ingestion with authentic, botanical essential oils of

impeccable quality; however just like any powerful synthetic pharmaceuticals, essential oils should be ingested thoughtfully for their actions and for limited periods of time.

If there is any concerning or serious pre-existing condition, then taking essential oils orally is best done with the guidance of an experienced practitioner.

How much of which oil for whom

It is all a question of which oils can be safely used internally, in what amounts or dosage and on whom; many oils are relatively innocuous well diluted whereas some oils (such as thyme or camphor) should never be ingested at all.

Trusting our own human instincts about what we would find acceptable or repugnant to ingest can be a reliable indicator as we learn to navigate the aroma and intensity of certain oils.

It is unwise for a person with history of stomach ulcers to take oils in this way or for one on a complex cocktail of allopathic drugs; in which case using the oils differently would be of benefit.

Just as it is with the long-term use of

any powerful drug, the continual ingestion of multiple essential oils on a daily basis can be damaging to the liver, kidneys and potentially strip the lining of the stomach and intestines.

Human internal organs can still be overtaxed trying to process excessive amounts of these natural chemical constituents and they can accumulate in the body and become deleterious to system functions over time.

Food industry uses them

It would be foolish to ignore the fact that essential oils are prevalently used in the food and flavouring industry, which puts things more in perspective.

For instance, peppermint is commonly used in sweets; eucalyptus in cough drops and mixtures and many other strong oils such as aniseed, cinnamon and fennel flavour innumerable foodstuffs and beverages such as liqueurs. The citrus oils that are usually cold-pressed including lemon, orange and grapefruit are commonly added to food to up the ante on that zesty tang.

It is notable too, that many of these

CONTINUED PAGE 2

Grapefruit is often included in unsweetened drinks as another helpful addition to any holistic regime to reduce weight.

Try adding a drop or two of any of the citrus oils to freshly squeezed juice for extra oomph.



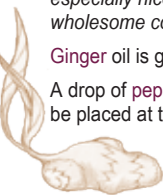
Many people successfully use the controversial method of putting a drop of pure essential oil in a glass of water such as lemon, mandarin or grapefruit, which will certainly make it taste good.

If you choose to do this, the essential oil must be mixed thoroughly and consumed quickly before it separates on the surface. This is

especially nice in mineral water alongside a wholesome cordial.

Ginger oil is great in ginger cookies.

A drop of peppermint or ginger essential oil may be placed at the back of the tongue to quell nausea and calm digestive discomfort, freshening your breath while you are at it.



Try sparingly the spice oils added to a pot of tea or coffee to "chai" it up somewhat.

Add peppermint, orange, lime, cinnamon or ginger essential oil to your homemade chocolate.

Add the spice oils to curries and spicy hotpots.



INGESTING IDEAS



Aromatic cooking

Adding essential oils to cooking does much to enhance and enrich the tastes and aromas of food, while they will also stimulate the olfactory and taste receptors to generate endorphins (mood elevators), which are themselves powerful healing substances. Have some fun using essential oils in cooking; they are wonderful additions to cakes, biscuits, desserts, cordials, casseroles and dips. Some of the healing properties may be lost with the heat of cooking but the flavour will be given that extra boost without resorting to extra sugar or salt.

Try adding oregano or basil essential oil sparingly to your tomato sauces and black pepper to your salsa for more kick. Use lemon oil in your homemade lemonade or cordials, the possibilities are vast. Cooking and processing greatly reduces the intensity and possible hazards of essential oils so we can be more adventurous when choosing from our above list; oils that we would otherwise avoid ingesting differently.

Precautions to take with internal essential oil use

- Essential oils are very potent - less is more. At first, use only a drop or two. Later when you know how your body reacts, you may wish to increase it.
- Use diluted and never on an empty stomach.
- If the flavour is too strong, you can put a couple of drops in a gelatine capsule and take that. Start with two to four drops until you know how your body will react.
- Check for pre-existing health or medication contraindications with your health practitioner.
- Epileptics and people with high blood pressure should consult with their personal health practitioner. They should use caution with high ketone oils such as basil, rosemary and sage.
- Pregnant women should avoid ingestion and stick with skin application of mild appropriate oils.
- Do not give essential oils internally to babies or children under six years old and proceed very carefully for older children.
- Avoid ingesting absolutes; instead choose authentic, unadulterated steam-distilled or cold-pressed essential oils
- Take care not to accidentally get essential oils in eyes or near delicate mucous membranes. Do not add water to neutralise - use vegetable oil (such as olive oil) to eliminate any caustic side effects.
- Toxicity rarely occurs with appropriate use of essential oils and is primarily attributed to misuse and accidental ingestion, especially in young children. Essential Oil Safety by Tisserand and Balacs (1995) is a valuable reference to understanding potential toxicity and lethal dosages.

A little essential oil goes a long way

FROM PAGE 1

commonly ingested so-called "food-grade" oils are rarely the expensive high-grade aromatherapy essential oils that we eagerly seek out for therapeutic means.

Essential oils that are steam distilled from a range of common spices: pimento, basil, black pepper, cinnamon, clove, fennel, ginger, rosemary and a good many other botanicals are routinely ingested on a daily basis.

Bear in mind that the general populace consumes this already without heeding any aromatherapy precautionary advice and without thorough understanding of the appropriate usage and risks for each oil.

Processing and heat would undoubtedly destroy a lot of the intensity of the volatile actives, yet we can see how we can use them artfully to enhance our own cooking adventures and have better control over the choice and their quality.

Adding essential oils to cooking does much to enhance and enrich the tastes and aromas of food, while they will also stimulate the olfactory and taste receptors to generate endorphins (mood elevators), which are themselves powerful healing substances.

How do you use essential oils internally?

Mostly, essential oils should be well diluted in an appropriate cold-pressed vegetable oil carrier.

Remember that essential oils do not mix in water, so if they are added to a glass of water they will float in concentrated form on the surface and potentially pose as a risk by burning the lining of the mouth and throat upon ingestion.

OILS FOR INGESTION

(Read precautions in article above before use):

Lemon, orange, nutmeg, black pepper, peppermint, ginger, mandarin, sage, lavender, rose, chamomile, tangerine, lemongrass, grapefruit, fennel, aniseed, spearmint, coriander, cinnamon bark, oregano, lime, rosemary, clove, basil, geranium, litsea cubeba, rose, cumin, cardamom, manuka, lemon tea tree, lemon verbena.

Sometimes a drop or two will mix quite well in hot herbal tea to augment its healing strength, especially with the addition of honey.

Oral ingestion is by no means the better interface into which essential oils can efficaciously enter the body.

Skin application, whereby the small-moleculed oils efficiently seep deep into the dermis to reach the bloodstream is usually the best course of action.

Olfaction, or smelling essential oils via the nose, is definitely the preferred choice to treat psychotherapeutic or emotional issues; although olfaction is also enjoyed and benefited from skin application.

Whether essential oils are used internally, topically or by inhalation, the healing properties of the oils will still enter into your body to do their work.

It's a long route to travel

The alimentary canal is the pathway by which food enters the body and solid wastes are expelled and includes the mouth, pharynx, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine and anus.

This is a long tract lining with

mucous membranes that could be damaged if the oils are not wisely diluted.

Sometimes, unless it is the digestive system that is being targeted, oral ingestion can be a longer, circuitous route for getting the oils into the bloodstream or where they are needed most.

When using essential oils internally, digestive juices of the stomach may alter the effectiveness of the oil.

In order to target specific parts of the digestive tract, or decrease the risk of inflaming the delicate mouth and throat area for those concerned, gelatine capsules can be quite helpful.

This method can be quite effective for getting peppermint oil to reach lower regions of the alimentary canal for such conditions as irritable bowel syndrome.

This is also a good way for taking oregano essential for different intestinal bacterial infections and imbalances.

The French are not shy with oils

The famous advocate of essential oil ingestion, Daniel Penoël MD recommends a drop or two certain pure essential oils in blends to enhance internal purification without any harmful effects.

He describes how these powerful aromatic molecules will neutralise toxins remaining in the intestinal tract from any past bad eating habits.

Continual boosting of the immune system through ingesting suitable oils correctly is a practice that has been

employed by many French doctors and therapists for years.

It is cited by many experienced aromatherapists that "eating" pure, high-quality essential oils can improve circulation, oxygenation and protect against heart disease, dementia and even cancer.

Clearly, this advice should be prescribed judiciously with professional guidance or as a complementary adjunct to other medical treatments.

Other points of internal entry

For certain conditions, the French will sometimes use essential oils rectally or vaginally as suppositories which are said to be especially effective for lung conditions because the oils are absorbed by the rectal veins and by-pass the liver on the way to the heart-lung circulatory tract.

The suppository is actually a very old form of application, once called a 'bolus'; which was traditionally made with lard.

Today we can use a similar melting point carrier such as cocoa butter, to which we add our herbs and oils and then roll into small balls suitable for rectal or vaginal insertion.

The mixture is kept in the fridge until it is time to carefully insert where it is relevant; the ball slowly melts and coats the walls of the canal where it can effectively exert its healing capacity. This method is effective for treating thrush and haemorrhoids.



37 South Western Highway, Balingup WA 6253
www.cheekyherbs.com • tinderbox@cheekyherbs.com
P 08 9764 1034 • F 08 9764 1560

Information in this newsletter is published in good faith and of a general nature only.