

**Up** Nature

# Oregano Oil

## FOR BEGINNERS

Report by UpNature



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# 1. Introduction

Oregano oil is derived from *Origanum vulgare*, an herb within the mint family. In its native state, it is to be found in the Mediterranean region as well as western and southwestern Eurasia.

Since time immemorial, this herb has seen a number of uses, from medicinal to an ingredient in haute cuisine. It has made its mark the world over.

Oregano oil, in ancient Greece, was used for many medical purposes, such as for the treatment of snakebites, headaches, spider bites, wounds, and yes, even when you had all the symptoms that are associated with the common cold. Even Hippocrates had something to say about the oil, citing it as a cure for respiratory ailments, digestive problems, and a number of different skin conditions.

In more modern times, research has found that these ancients were right. Oregano has many beneficial medical properties. It is antifungal, anti-allergenic, antiviral, anti-inflammatory,

antibacterial, and a great antioxidant. Besides all this, it even has anti-microbial properties. In fact, it prevents the growth of fungi and bacteria.

What is interesting is that these days, modern medicine would rather prescribe antibiotics for most illnesses, while oregano oil has practically the same benefits, if not more, without the harmful side effects so many of these antibiotics have. Some of these side effects include destroying the probiotics (good bacteria) found in the gut, causing leaky gut because it damages the lining of the digestive system, it lowers our resistance to fight infections, and it reduces the body's ability to absorb vitamins. Essentially, man-made antibiotics target the whole body, not only the specific area that needs healing.

Antibiotics are prescribed as a broad-spectrum medicine to heal just about anything, while the truth of the matter is that they can do absolutely nothing about viral infections. They only work with bacterial infections.

Oregano oil, on the other hand, is a broad-spectrum healer that works with the body, for the body, with little to no known side-effects.



## 2. What makes oregano oil so good at healing?

Oregano oil contains carvacrol and thymol. These two compounds have extremely powerful antifungal and antibacterial properties.

### Carvacrol

Research has proven that carvacrol has myriad benefits to the human body. Carvacrol is found in the oregano herb.

- **As an antiseptic**

It's antiviral and anti-bacterial killing properties makes it great as an ingredient in any home cleaning product.

- **Fights inflammation**

Carvacrol actively fights against the redness and swelling that is associated with injuries and inflammation.

- **Fights organisms harmful to your health**

Research has shown that carvacrol is extremely effective in fighting E. coli, Listeria, Campylobacter jejuni, and even the most resistant forms of Salmonella.

- **Cleans as well as chlorine**

One study indicated that carvacrol was just as effective in cleaning fruit and vegetables as chlorine.

- **Helps to balance blood sugar levels**

Trials using carvacrol have indicated that it was effective in lowering blood sugar levels in humans without showing any side-effects. Caution is advised for those with diabetes, however, as oregano oil could affect the effect of their diabetes medication. Diabetics should consult a healthcare practitioner before embarking on a treatment where oregano oil is ingested.

- **An aid against candida**

Candida, a yeast infection, normally occurs in the mouth or digestive tract. Research on candida in denture wearers has confirmed that carvacrol, and thus oregano oil, is extremely effective in combating this yeast infection.

- **Kills cancer cells**

Although not yet proven 100%, research using carvacrol in different types of cancer cells looks promising. It has, thus far, under clinical conditions, shown to kill off breast and lung cancer cells while also being effective against brain tumors.

## Thymol

Thymol is one of the compounds present in oregano oil and has antifungal, antibacterial, and antimicrobial properties.

This compound is commonly found in topical ointments to treat ringworm or nail fungus. In a tea, it helps combat gingivitis. It is common in non-alcohol hand sanitizers as it has medicinal properties. Applied to wounds, it combats infections.

**Other compounds present in oregano oil:**

## Naringin

Boosts the antioxidant powers of oregano oil while fighting cancer cells.

## Terpenes

Has strong anti-bacterial properties.

## Beta-caryophyllin

Helps to stop inflammation while being of great benefit to those with metabolic syndrome, osteoporosis, and arteriosclerosis.

## Rosmarinic acid

This compound is a proven antihistamine, shows promise in treating asthma, and has, under clinical conditions, shown to prevent atherosclerosis and cancer.



## 3. The health benefits of Oregano Oil

Oregano is great at fighting a number of illnesses and diseases, as shall be explained.

### **A cold buster**

Oregano oil is an excellent expectorant as it aids in loosening and getting rid of mucus and phlegm due to colds or a sinus infection. It also has a soothing action on the throat and lungs, thereby stimulating coughing in order to get rid of phlegm and mucus.

### **Fights inflammation**

The oil plays a soothing role where inflammation occurs, whether internal or external in nature. When taken orally, it reduces inflammation, although it may take a little time. Applied to the skin, it reduces the irritation and redness experienced, while it is great at reducing arthritic pain.

### **Fights infection**

It's antibacterial and antiviral properties help protect you against infections, especially in the urinary tract and colon, as well as against certain illnesses such as cholera and typhoid. Additionally, it cleans and prohibits or addresses skin infections.

## **A natural antibiotic**

A wonderful property of oregano oil, when taken internally, is that it does not kill off gut bacteria in the same manner that antibiotics do while having the same effect. Prolonged use or high dosages, however, can have a detrimental effect on 'good' gut bacteria in the long run.

## **Protects against fungal, viral, and bacterial diseases**

Most diseases experienced by man are due to fungi, viruses, protozoa, and bacteria. Many of these illnesses are infectious. In many instances, skin infections are caused by fungi, and oregano oil, when used either externally or externally, helps to protect your body against this.

## **An immune booster**

Because oregano oil boosts your immune system, it helps to strengthen your immunity against viral infections such as mumps, colds, influenza, and measles. Additionally, it helps your immune system to defend you against a number of immune disorders as it stimulates the body's production of white blood cells. White blood cells are your body's first line of defense against any infection.

## **A powerful antioxidant**

The antioxidant properties of oregano oil help protect your body against the damage done by free radicals as it neutralizes them and at the same time repairs the damage they do. This, in turn, slows down the aging process, as well as serving to protect you against muscular degeneration, wrinkles, certain types of cancer, loss of hearing, and loss of vision.

## **An aid to women**

Oregano oil is great for women particularly as it helps regulate their menstrual cycle. For those who are entering perimenopause, it helps relieve the symptoms associated with this time, as it is a mood balancer and helps regulate hormone production.

## **Digestion**

Taken internally, oregano oil helps with the digestive process in that it causes more digestive juices to be secreted while at the same time increasing the absorption of food.



# 4. How to use Oregano oil: Easy recipes for common problems

## 1. For laundry

To leave clothes fresh and smelling nice while killing off any bacteria or possible parasites, add a few drops to your laundry load.

## 2. Internal parasites

To leave clothes fresh and smelling nice while killing off any bacteria or possible parasites, add a few drops to your laundry load.

## 3. Ringworms

Apply a few drops undiluted oregano oil onto the area. Repeat daily until the problem is gone.

## 4. Bathroom mold or fungus

Mold and fungus are commonly found in the bathroom and other dark, humid areas in a home. Mix a few drops oregano oil with water and spray these areas. It will prevent any mold or fungus from growing. Repeat from time to time.

## 5. Homemade cleaning aid

Add a cup of vinegar and 1/3 cup of bicarbonate of soda to a liter of water. Add a few drops of oregano oil (approximately 5 or 6). This mixture is very effective in the kitchen and bathroom. It is an all in one cleaning, antiseptic, and deodorizing solution.

## 6. For eczema

Eczema can be controlled by adding oregano oil to carrier oil. It should be applied topically. Grapeseed oil or olive oil are great carrier oils. Add three drops oregano oil and three drops tea tree oil to an ounce of carrier oil. Dab or spray on the affected area. Taking six drops of oregano oil orally once a day also helps.

## 7. Congestion

Add three drops of oregano oil to either a carrier oil of your choice or a lotion. Apply to the chest and back.

In the case of nasal congestion, add two drop oregano oil to a clean handkerchief or tissue and inhale frequently.

## 8. Blocked nose due to a cold or sinus infection

Add three to five drops oregano oil to steaming water. Put a towel over your head, bend over the water, and breathe. Be careful not to burn yourself. Another recipe is to dilute two drops in a little carrier oil and dab a little on the upper lip close to the nostrils.

## 9. Mouth infection

Place a drop or two of oregano oil on a finger and rub it into the infected area. As oregano oil is a hot oil, it will cause a burning sensation which lasts for two to three minutes. Try not to drink anything for at least ten minutes after each application.

Oregano oil works quickly, and you should start seeing positive results soon after the first application, while only two to three applications are usually necessary for the problem to clear up. If you feel you are unable to stand the burning sensation, wash out your mouth with dairy or almond milk as both have a calming effect.

Another recipe that works is adding four drops of oregano oil to four ounces of water. Swish this in your mouth and spit out. This can be done four times per day.

## 10. A sore throat

Add two drops of oregano oil to water or juice and drink. It eases the pain.

## 11. As an insect repellent

Mix two to three drops oregano oil with a carrier oil such as grapeseed oil and rub into your skin.

Add a few drops oregano oil to a spray bottle filled with water. Shake well before using. It is an excellent insect repellent spray.

## 12. To get rid of nail fungus

Add two teaspoons oregano oil to a basin of lukewarm water. Soak hands and feet in the solution for a few minutes. When you are done, massage the affected nails with a solution of one drop essential oil which has been added to a teaspoon of carrier oil (e.g. olive oil).

## 13. Acne problems

A really easy trick to get rid of acne effectively is by applying oregano oil directly to the spot. Not only does the oil kill the bacteria present, but it helps reduce the inflammation as well. This should be done once in the morning and once at night.

## 14. Get rid of dandruff

Add about five drops or oregano oil to your usual shampoo and use as normal. Your dandruff issues will soon be a thing of the past.

## **15. Insect bites and skin rashes**

A drop of oregano oil to a teaspoon of carrier oil such as grapeseed oil or olive oil applied to insect bites gets rid of the itchiness associated with it. It also helps reduce and heal the occurrence of skin rashes.

## **16. Soothes arthritis pain**

Add three drops to an ounce of carrier oil of your choice and massage into the affected area. It eases the pain and helps to decrease the swelling. A topical salve is also effective.

## **17. Give relief to sore muscles**

Sore muscles due to strenuous exercise or injury find relief with a topical application massaged into the affected area. Dilute a few drops in carrier oil of choice or into coconut oil and massage the muscles. Repeat this for two or three times per day. A topical salve with oregano oil is also very effective when used as a massage medium.

## 18. Oil pulling for healthy teeth and gums

Oil pulling with coconut oil keeps teeth clean and breath fresh. Adding a drop of oregano oil to a teaspoon of coconut oil adds a more pleasant taste while killing off all germs or bacteria.

Oil pulling works as follows: Once the mixture is in your mouth, start swishing it between your teeth in a sucking motion. Make sure all teeth get their turn, as well as the entire mouth, even the area between the gums and cheeks. After approximately three minutes of pulling, spit it out.

## 19. As a mouthwash

Two to three drops of oregano oil added to a glass of water provides an amazing mouthwash and gargle. It sweetens breath while killing the bacteria that cause gingivitis and gum disease.

## 20. To fight skin infections

Add two drops oregano oil to a teaspoon of coconut oil and apply to the infected area. It boosts healing while fighting off the infection.

## **21. Helps with the symptoms associated with psoriasis**

Mix three to five drops of oregano oil with an ounce of carrier oil or salve. Apply to the area twice daily.

Drinking a glass of water with two to six drops of oregano oil also helps with the symptoms.

## **22. To get rid of skin tags or warts**

Apply a drop of this oil to the wart or skin tag twice a day, usually in the morning and again at night. Do so for a few weeks. The skin tag will eventually fall off, while warts will shrink and eventually disappear.

## **23. To get rid of diaper rash**

Mix a few drops of oregano oil with coconut oil and apply to the affected area. It will soothe and heal the rash.

## **24. To get rid of athlete's foot**

Dilute two to three drops in an ounce of the carrier oil of your choice. Massage into the foot two to three times daily. Sprinkling a little baking soda inside your shoe will prevent the problem from re-occurring.

## **25. For a home-made hand sanitizer**

Combine two tablespoons coconut oil and two drops oregano oil. Rub into your hands. Besides softening and conditioning your hands, it sanitizes them as well.



## 5. Carrier oils

Many essential oils are quite strong and could cause severe reactions or sensitization when applied in an undiluted form. They are usually diluted with a carrier oil and then applied. Carrier oils are usually vegetable oils. They are called ‘carrier oils’ because they are used to carry the properties of the essential oil over onto the skin. The majority of essential oils should never be applied to the skin directly.

Carrier oils that work well with oregano oil include coconut oil, olive oil, and grapeseed oil. Carrier oils, while diluting the essential oil, does not in any way hinder the essential oil’s action. It prevents waste caused by excessive applications of the oil while it prevents discomfort, as essential oils are highly concentrated and could cause rashes when used on their own. This is specifically the case with topical applications.



## 6. Base salve

You need not only use a combination of oils to apply your treatment topically. A salve works just as well and you can make a larger quantity at a time. You would need to start with a base salve and then add your oregano essential oil during the final stage. Two salve recipes are included.

### 1. Cocoa butter base salve

#### The ingredients:

¼ cup Cocoa butter

¼ cup Shea butter

¼ cup Coconut oil

Vitamin E – 2 capsules (optional)

#### Method:

Use a double boiler. In the bottom pan, bring enough water to a slow boil without touching the underside of the top pan.

Combine all ingredients (adding vitamin E if using it). Allow the ingredients to melt while stirring slowly.

Take the double boiler off the stove and stir in twelve drops of oregano oil.

Pour the mixture into your containers and allow to cool before sealing them.

**Note:** the salve does not harden immediately. It takes a few days, so be patient.

This is a very silky, creamy salve and it smells really good. If you want your consistency to be thicker, add less olive oil or almond oil.

## 2. Beeswax base salve

### The ingredients:

Beeswax: 1 tablespoon plus 1 ½ teaspoons

Extra Virgin Olive Oil: 1 cup

Coconut Oil: 1 cup

Vitamin E (optional): 2 capsules

### Method:

Place a double boiler on the stove. The heat should be medium. Do not allow the water in the bottom pan to reach the underside of the top pan. The water should be hot, but not boiling. Ingredients should only be warm enough to make mixing easy.

Add ingredients in the following order: first, the olive oil, and then, the coconut oil. Stir through. Add the beeswax, slowly stirring until melted. Finally, add the vitamin E oil if you are using it.

Once ingredients are nicely combined, remove the double boiler from the stove and add twelve drops of oregano oil. Pour into your containers and wait until the mixture is cooled before sealing.

The salve will start to harden almost immediately.

Both of these salves can be applied to areas where there are symptoms of dermatitis or eczema, on inflamed, reddened areas, or as a massage ointment for arthritis and sore muscles.



## 7. A hot oil

Oregano oil is what is considered a ‘hot’ oil. This means that, when applied to the skin directly, it causes a burning sensation. This oil needs to be diluted with carrier oil or in a salve for topical use. The only exceptions are when treating skin tags or moles. In this case, the oil should be applied with a Q-tip, taking the necessary precaution not to touch the surrounding skin.



## 8. Oregano does not only treat the symptoms

Western medicine has the habit of treating the symptoms of an illness. In other words, it aims at managing disease instead of addressing the root cause.

In dealing with patients, western medicine uses man-made medications that usually have a number of (usually negative) side-effects. These are not often mentioned, and the patient finds himself in a situation where he is treated for another symptom which is, more often than not, a side effect of the original medication.

Oregano oil addresses not only the symptoms associated with a condition. It deals with the cause. Where taken topically for an infection, for example, as well as internally, it not only clears up the symptom but addresses the cause of the symptom as well. It is not suggested, however, that you do not go to a medical doctor if ill. What is suggested, however, is that the problem could be avoided in the first place if the correct herbal supplements were taken. Oregano oil is one of these versatile herbal supplements that could benefit you in a vast number of ways.



## 9. Precautions when using oregano oil

### **A possible reaction to cosmetics and soaps**

If you encounter any irritation or discomfort, stop using oregano oil. Sometimes, a rash is a sign that your body is busy with a detox. In this instance, drink more water so that these toxins can be eliminated quicker. Toxins are often found in the soap and skin products we use, and the perfumes in them could trigger this kind of reaction when oregano oil is used. Consider changing these brands to something more environmentally friendly, and, before using oregano oil again, do a small test patch with the oil (diluted in carrier oil or in a salve) before continuing.

You should not bring oregano oil into contact with sensitive areas of your body, such as the genitals, ears, or eyes. It will cause an irritation in this area. If you feel you want to use it, however, weaken the dilution considerably.

When starting out with oregano oil, it is a question of a little goes a long way, especially at first. Start out slowly, and increase the frequency of use as time goes by. For example, use the oil only one or twice a day to start out with, and increase it to three to four times daily after a few days. This limits the possibility of any adverse reactions taking place.

If ever in doubt, consult an essential oil specialist to help you with correct dosages.

## **Use caution when used on children**

Many essential oils can be used on children. Oregano oil is one of these. Do remember, however, that you need to make a much weaker dilution (one drop per teaspoon of carrier oil) than you would with an adult, and apply it to the bottom of their feet. This is really great when they have a cold or the flu.

## **Reactive to sunlight and UV rays**

Hot oils, such as oregano oil, tend to have a reaction to sunlight. When applying it to the skin, try to stay out of the sun or UV light for between 12 to 48 hours after each application.

## **Reactive to certain medications**

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## **Reactive to sunlight and UV rays**

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## **Pregnancy/breastfeeding**

You should not take oregano oil while pregnant. It is a powerful emmenagogue, meaning it encourages menstruation. This implies that it would increase your chances of having a miscarriage and is thus highly dangerous in pregnant women.

Oregano oil should also not be taken by mothers who are breastfeeding as it reduces milk production.

## **Allergy trigger**

Those who are allergic to certain herbs such as lavender, mint, marjoram, basil, sage, and hyssop should be cautious when using oregano oil. It can trigger an allergic reaction.

## **Blood sugar levels**

Oregano oil lowers blood sugar levels. Those who have type 1 or type 2 diabetes should be very cautious when using oregano oil. In these instances, it is recommended that a healthcare practitioner is consulted before use.



# 10. Possible contra-indications associated with oregano oil

When taken in moderation, oregano poses no real side effects although precautions need to be taken as has been described. As with all medications, not matter their form, there are certain possible contraindications with oregano oil and they are not to be taken lightly.

## **Excessive ingestion of oregano oil**

Ingesting large dosages of undiluted oregano oil has devastating results. It causes irritation in the stomach, esophagus, and membranes that are in your mouth. It can also cause mild to moderate stomach upsets.

If you find yourself in this position, drink dairy milk or almond milk as it will serve to soothe the areas which are affected.

Oregano oil should be ingested in diluted form e.g. in a carrier oil, or added to your tea, coffee, juice, or water.

## **Excessive topical application**

Constantly applying oregano oil, even in a diluted form, to sensitive skin can result in severe itching or burning. Applying it to the skin twice to three times daily is enough.

Where the skin has been affected due to an over-application, wash the area with dairy milk or almond milk for the relief of the symptoms.

## The problem with probiotics

Probiotics are the bacteria present in your gut. Not all bacteria are bad for you. Probiotics are essential for your continued health.

They are, in fact, 'good' bacteria.

Studies, however, have found that oregano oil depletes the levels of certain beneficial bacteria, namely, *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* and *Lactobacillus plantarum* when used for an extended period.

These two bacteria live in the colon and help with digestion while protecting your body from any bad bacteria.

Because the prolonged use of oregano oil, i.e. when taken internally, kills off this beneficial bacteria and results in possible gastrointestinal illnesses, a probiotic supplement is suggested. Probiotics can be bought over the counter, but you need to ensure that you also ingest 'live' probiotics. Natural probiotic supplements include fermented/unfermented milk, soy, natural yogurt, and miso.

## It could affect your liver

When you constantly use high dosages of oregano oil, you run the risk of building up toxic levels of thymol in the kidneys, nervous system, as well as the liver.

Because oregano oil is so concentrated, it can be toxic if taken orally. Use needs limiting to three doses on a daily basis and not for more than three weeks at a time.



# 11. In closing

Oregano oil, as a natural medicine, has a vast array of benefits associated with it. As with all things, however, moderation is essential. Never use more than is recommended, nor use it when taking other medication without proper medical supervision.

A natural-occurring medicine, oregano oil needs proper dosage. It is always recommended that, when in doubt, you consult a healthcare practitioner that is clued up on essential oils and their particular uses.