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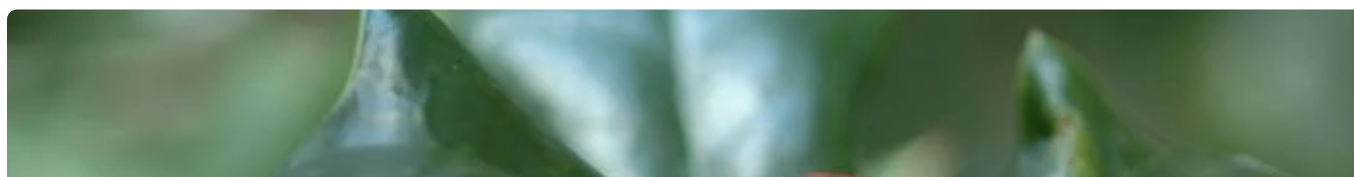
11 Important Benefits Of Wintergreen Essential Oil

by [Meenakshi Nagdeve](#) last updated - January 29, 2020 ✓ Evidence Based

The health benefits of [wintergreen essential oil](#) can be attributed to its properties as an analgesic, anodyne, antirheumatic, antiarthritic, antispasmodic, antiseptic, aromatic, astringent, carminative, diuretic, emmenagogue and a stimulating substance.

The oil of wintergreen is a world-famous name, and it is extremely popular with the people suffering from rheumatism, arthritis, [gout](#), and pain in their bones and joints for any number of reasons. This oil can usually be found in every household because it has many common applications. This oil is readily available and can be found in a wide variety of stores. Wintergreen is the name of a set of plants, native to North America and is believed to have been discovered by Native Americans to eliminate pain in the muscles and joints.

The botanical name of this plant is *Gaultheria procumbens*. The essential oil of this plant is extracted by steam distillation of its leaves. Methyl salicylate and gaultherilene are the two main components of this essential oil and methyl salicylate forms an integral part of almost every antiarthritic and analgesic balm for muscle and joint pain that is available on the market.





Fresh winter green leaves Photo Credit: Shutterstock

Health Benefits of Wintergreen Essential Oil

Let us quickly examine some of the most notable medicinal properties of this highly poisonous, yet very useful, essential oil.

Acts as an Analgesic

When rubbed on the affected area, this oil is readily absorbed through the [skin](#) and the presence of methyl salicylate induces numbness and an anesthetic effect on the nerves there. It also increases the circulation of the blood and brings warmth to the area. ^[1]

Induces Relaxation

This property means that an agent can eliminate pain and induce relaxation. Therefore, it is a combination of an analgesic and a relaxant. Wintergreen essential oil will eradicate pain and drive out stress and tension. This is a very pleasant way of getting sound sleep at the end of the day for those who often lose sleep due to pain or stress.

Fights Arthritis

These characteristics of the essential oil of wintergreen are based on the stimulating property of this oil. This oil fights rheumatism and arthritis in two ways. First, when applied externally, it easily penetrates through the skin around the muscles and tissues and stimulates the circulation of blood in that location. This activity, apart from bringing warmth to the affected area, helps to clear obstructions in the flow of blood, which is one of the major causes of rheumatism and arthritis, and it does not let toxins like uric acid accumulate at that spot. Secondly, although it is absorbed through the skin, it eventually reaches the bloodstream, where it stimulates and increases urination, acting as a diuretic. This speeds up the removal of toxins like uric acid from the body through urination. The removal of excess water, fats, and [salts](#) through urine helps to [lose weight](#), which also reduces the effects of rheumatic conditions. [2]

Relieves Spasms

The relaxing and stimulating effect of this oil reduces spasms in the respiratory, muscular, digestive, and nervous systems while providing relief from congestion in the chest, breathing trouble, asthma, spasmodic coughs, muscular cramps, digestive disorders, spasmodic [diarrhea](#), convulsions, and various nervous afflictions.

Prevents Microbial Infections

The high degree of toxicity of this oil can make it fatal to human beings, and that means that it is fatal to bacteria and other microbes such a virus, fungi and protozoa as well. This quality is utilized to fight an infection that causes sepsis by killing the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus* and cures sepsis. However, care should be taken to avoid direct contact with blood and it should never be applied to open [wounds](#). Neither should it be taken orally to fight sepsis in the internal organs. Just applying this oil on the skin will be enough, as it will easily penetrate the skin, be absorbed by the tissues and will then be absorbed into the bloodstream, thus spreading into the internal organs as well.

Eliminates Foul Smells

Although it has a pungent aroma, it is not unpleasant. In certain cases, it can be used to overcome or mask foul smells, but

this oil is not for regular application, as it is quite powerful.

Acts as an Astringent

Astringents like the essential oil of wintergreen have a lot to offer. It induces contractions in muscle tissue, skin, blood

vessels, and [hair](#) roots. The contraction of muscles and skin adds firmness to the muscles and lifts the skin, making you feel better and look younger. When it comes to blood vessels, this contraction helps to curb hemorrhaging from wounded or impacted vessels. The hair roots are also contracted and strengthened by this astringent effect.

Relieves Flatulence

You may want to enjoy its carminative effects, but never take this oil orally, even in very light dilutions. Instead, once it is diluted in water, it can be rubbed on the belly which will eventually expel the gases. [\[3\]](#)

Promotes Urination

The diuretic property of essential oil of wintergreen comes from its stimulating qualities. It stimulates the organs in the urinary system and filtration of water by the kidneys, thereby increasing the frequency and quantity of urine. This is of great help as it speeds up the removal of toxins like uric acid and protects from diseases like rheumatism, arthritis, and others which are caused due to the accumulation of toxins. It also removes excess water, fat, and salt from the body, thus helping cure [edema](#), waterlogging, and hypertension, while aiding in [weight loss](#). This also keeps kidneys and the urinary bladder clear and prevents the formation of stones in those places.

Acts as an Emmenagogue

Obstructed menstruation is a big problem faced by many women, more so in large cities. This condition should not be taken lightly as it may give rise to very serious problems like uterine ulcers and even uterine cancer. It results in pain in the

abdominal region, irritation, annoyance, [hair loss](#), failing health, and various feminine problems. This problem can be sorted out with the help of an agent that can clear this obstruction and restart the menses. Furthermore, it can also make them regular. Luckily, there are many essential oils which can do this and the essential oil of wintergreen is one of them. It promotes menstruation and also helps get rid of problems like nausea, fatigue, and pain associated with difficult periods. But again, this cannot be stressed enough, it should not be taken orally.

Wintergreen essential oil has cosmetic properties. Photo Credit: Shutterstock

Stimulates Blood Circulation

Wintergreen essential oil is basically a stimulant and it promotes the discharge of gastric juices, bile, hormones, enzymes, ovarian and uterine discharges and even urine by stimulating the liver, gallbladder, endocrinal glands, and the uterus. It also

stimulates the circulation of blood and lymph, digestion, excretion, and the nerves.

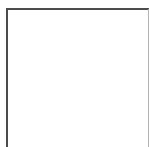
Other Benefits

It is frequently used to treat snake bites, dog bites, stings from poisonous insects like scorpions, wasps, and bees. It is also beneficial for infected and rotting wounds, sores, and ulcers. Furthermore, it can also be used to counter obstructed blood circulation resulting from frostbite and extremely low temperatures, since it has a warming effect.

Word of Caution

The essential oil of wintergreen is highly poisonous due to the presence of methyl salicylate. It should never be ingested and should not be used in [aromatherapy](#). External application is sufficient for making this oil work inside since it easily seeps through the skin and is absorbed by the muscles and tissues. Furthermore, if accidentally ingested, it can cause severe damage to internal organs like the liver and kidneys. One more cautionary note, an excessive external application on the skin can also turn fatal because of absorption of excessive methyl salicylate in the tissues and consequently in the bloodstream. There have been examples of death of sportsmen, one of those is a sportsman who rubbed too much of a relaxing ointment on his thighs which contained methyl salicylate. For this reason, it should never be given to patients who are hyper-reactive to salicylates.

Blending: The essential oil of wintergreen blends well with essential oils of [mint](#), narcissus, [oregano](#), [thyme](#), [vanilla](#), and [ylang-ylang oils](#).



About the Author

[Meenakshi Nagdeve](#), Co-Founder, Organic Facts is a health and wellness enthusiast and is responsible for managing it. She has completed the [Nutrition And Healthy Living Cornell Certificate Program](#), Cornell University, US. She holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Management from IIM Bangalore and B. Tech in Metallurgical Engineering and Materials Science from IIT Bombay. Prior to this, she worked for a few