

DETOX WITH AROMATHERAPY

The indulgences of Christmas now start to weigh heavy on our minds and for some, our bodies! It is good that we enjoy the Christmas break and indulge ourselves; however there is a price to pay. Our bodies are very efficient at absorbing vitamins and minerals from the protein, fibre, fats and carbohydrates that we feed it however our bodies use this input not only for the benefit of our bodies but also unfortunately, in the process, produce toxins that can damage our cells. A toxin is defined as a poisonous substance produced by living cells or organisms and is a natural process within our bodies.

Normally our body is very efficient at cleansing our bodies of toxins however after an indulgence it may struggle to cope, especially if that indulgence has included alcohol. Processed foods, alcohol and caffeine in any guise are the main offenders in today's lifestyle.

Eating healthily and burning off calories with exercise is great and also helps to increase our metabolic rate and overall make us feel fitter and healthier. Increasing the metabolic rate helps to stimulate the lymph nodes which in turn drain the lymphatic system washing out toxins. This is why after exercise you often want to go to the toilet. Given that the production of toxins is a natural process then unless you are a saint and have been 100% healthy then it is safe to assume that any effort to eliminate toxins will be a good thing. Of course we are not talking about excesses of the body which is a more serious and important issue to be handled by medical experience.

Much has been written about toxic cleansing and you will have your own opinions on what can or can not work or even if you want to be bothered by the whole subject. In aromatherapy we use the properties of the pure essential oils to help stimulate the lymphatic system and detoxify our bodies.

The most efficient method of detoxing the body is a massage followed by washing your system through with water. This is when water, yet again, comes to our rescue and helps us support our body processes. Massage appears to work for two key reasons, firstly the act of massage in itself not only helps us feel good and relaxes the muscles it also stimulates the lymphatic system. A report quoted on 24th October 2010 by a US research team stated that a massage increases lymphocyte cells which help the immune system defend the body. The second reason is that many pure essential oils have the kind of properties that will not only help stimulate the lymphatic system but also help with the drainage process. They enter the bloodstream through the pores of the skin and their chemically complex properties are said to have a direct effect on the body, mind, and spirit.

When creating a massage blend it is important not to forget that this is also a wonderful opportunity for your senses, muscles and skin so additional oils should be used.

The pure essential oils to consider using include:



Grapefruit is a brilliant essential oil that not only smells good, it gives energy and most importantly is said to help break down fat cells and reduce cellulite.



Fennel is one of those essential oils that is used in many massage blends for its ability to calm, stimulate the lymphatic system and tone the skin. It is great for all skin types.

Juniper is said to improve circulation, is anti-inflammatory and provides pain relief.



Lemon is a known as a physical tonic and helps stimulate blood and lymphatic circulation to effectively cleanse the body when losing weight.

Marine Pine is used for increasing metabolism and is a mild diuretic for washing away those toxins. Do not use too much of this!



Rosemary is currently being investigated by California's Burnham Institute for Medical Research for beneficial effects on circulation to the brain, hands and feet. Rosemary is thought to work like ginkgo not only boosting circulation but also delivering protective molecules that preserve tissue and protect from ageing.

Use no more than 4 of the above oils together.

FOR THE SKIN AND AROMA CONSIDER:

Geranium is best described as balancing, and is used in skin care and body care products for those with either dry or oily skin. Geranium blends well with all oils.



The Queen of Oils, Rose which is a wonderful aroma and a gentle essential oil that makes you feel good and is excellent for the skin. Rose will blend with all oils.

Chamomile is well known for its skin calming properties and is often used by people with skin problems and is considered to be one of the few oils that can be used with children.



Lavender a favourite with many for anti stress and feel good and will mix with all oils.



Ylang ylang is soothing and relaxing, and its sweet aroma is usually irresistible and regarded by many as an aphrodisiac. However do not use too much of this as you could end up with a headache.



Use no more than 2 of the above oils in the mixture.

How much oil do you use?

The essential oils should never be used direct onto the skin and need to be diluted in carrier oil sometimes referred to as base oil. The carrier oil can also be beneficial and can certainly make your skin not only feel good but also perhaps clear small blemishes.

There is a whole range of carrier oils available and each has its own properties. A light, clear, smell free carrier oil that is used in most recipes is grape seed. You could just as easily use sunflower oil. However these oils have little or no properties of their own whereas there are some really nice carrier oils with great properties to compliment your blend of pure essential oils. There is sweet almond, evening primrose, wheat germ, and the new 'wonder oil' being hyped in the press at the moment, Tamanu from the tamanu nut and is said to be amazing at reducing scar tissue and even helping reduce inflammation in the muscle from arthritis and rheumatism due to its ability to be easily absorbed through the three layers of skin directly into the muscle.

Beware of any oils that contain nut if there is a chance of an allergy. Also make sure that what you are using is 100% pure and undiluted as many unscrupulous retailers will dilute an expensive good quality oil with a lesser cheaper oil.

For a 100ml of carrier oil add no more than 40 drops of pure essential oil and if you are using an absolute like Rose, which is very concentrated, then use less. If you are going to blend your own massage oil then take it slowly when adding essential oils shake the mixture frequently and smell it a couple of times, no more as too much could have a negative effect, until you get an aroma that you are happy with. Always mix oils in a room with an open window. Make sure that you label the bottle to ensure the correct use of the contents and keep away from children.

Once it is mixed let it sit for at least 30 minutes to blend then when you are ready warm the oil before use to let it come out of the bottle easier and absorb better into the skin. If you are unsure of what you are doing try a small patch of skin first and wait for 10 minutes to see if there is any adverse reaction. Then massage and enjoy knowing it is helping. When the massage is over drink plenty of water for the next 24 hours and flush away those toxins!

Now that you feel good about yourself keep it that way and cut down on eating the things that are not good for us.

MAKE YOUR OWN APPETITE SUPPRESSANT

Once you have mastered the art of mixing massage oils try the following recipe to use during the day to help ward off the hunger pangs.

- 10ml bottle with dropper and cap
- 10ml grape seed carrier oil
- 2 drops of vanilla oleoresin pure essential oil
- 1 drops of grapefruit pure essential oil
- 1 drop of fennel pure essential oil
- 1 drop of pettigrain pure essential oil

This blend is based on the need to reduce a tendency to eat due to overactive metabolism. Mix the ingredients together, shake well and leave to blend before use. Massage a small amount into pulse points on the wrist area and smell when you feel hungry or diffuse in an oil burner or diffuser to fill the room with a great aroma.

The key component is vanilla, the scent of which is said to boost the 'happy hormone' serotonin. The smell can activate the brain cells that reduce appetite while at the same time blocks the neurons that usually increase appetite. A study at St Georges' Hospital, London found that wearing a vanilla patch significantly reduced the desire to eat sweet food. Those who wore the patch shed an average of 4lb in 4 weeks compared to 1.5lb for those not wearing the patch.

Research the properties of each oil before you use it and remember to never use undiluted pure essential oils directly onto your skin plus always use the best quality and freshest that you can afford for maximum effect. If you are pregnant use pure essential oils sparingly.

You can ask questions and download recipes and ideas at www.primrosearomatherapy.co.uk