

# The Essentials of Essential Oils

Discover the *benefits* for cold & flu season



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Essential oils are increasingly popular options for natural healing. But although they are natural, we need to respect Mother Nature's power and remember that *natural* does not equate to *safe*. While these oils can be healing, they can also be quite harmful at inappropriate concentrations. With the cold and flu season in full swing, it is important that we learn how to use essential oils safely *before* inviting them into our natural healing repertoire. So, let's look at how essential oils can find a place in your home pharmacy toolkit. You will be amazed at how quickly and effectively you'll be able to use them in your day to day life.

## What are essential oils?

Essential oils are volatile aromatic compounds from highly concentrated natural constituents found in plants. They give the plant its characteristic odor and carry many of the healing components from the plant parts.

Through their healing actions, essential oils can help re-balance your system, reinforce your immune system, and affect your emotional state.

## Preparing essential oils

Before applying essential oils on your baby or toddler, it is important to understand dilution ratios and application methods. Dilution of an essential oil with a carrier oil – such as olive oil, coconut oil, grapeseed oil, or almond oil – is an important step in the safe topical application of these powerful fluids, as the application of undiluted essential oil can cause rashing or burning of the skin.

### DILUTION RATIOS

AGE	DILUTION	METHOD
6-24 months	0.25%*	For local topical area
2-6 years	0.5%	For local topical area

\* For example: 0.25% = 1 drop per 4 teaspoons of carrier oil

Note: Essential oils should not be used on or around children under the age of 6 months due to their sensitive systems.

## Application Methods

The effects of essential oils on your body and mind vary depending on the application method you choose.

Topical application is typically used for local issues such as muscle soreness, cough, congestion, colic, or spot treatments for skin issues. Diffusion of oils, on the other hand, involves the dispersion of a mist that gently fills the air with the aroma and healing benefits of your chosen oil. This method is most effective for emotional regulation, enhancement of focus, respiratory issues, or general cold and flu symptoms.

## Where to apply essential oils?

How does one know exactly where to apply the oils? Is it best to inhale, or should the diluted oil be applied topically on the chest? Or the feet?

If your baby has never been exposed to essential oils, I suggest either wearing the oils you'd like to try on yourself, or diffusing them into the air, in order to introduce your baby to the strength of their aromas. Start with single oils such as lavender, chamomile roman or citrus oils first. If your baby tolerates the scent of the oils well, you may consider using them topically.

Always dilute the essential oils prior to topical application according to the ratio appropriate for the age of your child (see chart above). Start by applying the oils on the soles of their feet, one of the parts of the body considered least sensitive, and thus a good testing ground. Wait at least 24 hours for any signs of allergies or sensitivities. If irritation occurs, wash the area with warm soap and water, then rub some carrier oil over the application area to prevent the irritation from getting worse.

After ensuring there are no adverse reactions to the oil, you can apply on other parts of the body. Choose the location based on desired effect. A few areas of interest include the chest (cough and congestion), back of the neck (headache or muscle tension), crown area (calming, congestion), and behind the ear lobes (sleep, headache).

Essential oils, when safely used, are wonderful tools that can help support the wellness of your entire family. •

## Selecting The Right Oil

Which essential oils are safe for babies and toddlers? Here is a short list to get you started:

- » Lavender (soothing and calming)
- » Chamomile Roman (soothing for colicky babies)
- » Citrus oils (antibacterial)
- » Tea tree (antibacterial)
- » Pine (respiratory)
- » Dill (digestion)
- » Marjoram (congestion)

## DIY Chest Rub For Congestion

This is a great essential oil based recipe for the cold and flu season. Makes 5 x 1 oz. (30g) jars.

### Ingredients:

- » 30g or 2 Tbsp of beeswax
- » 64g or 1/2 cup of organic Coconut oil
- » 64g or 1/2 cup of sunflower oil

1. Add all the above ingredients into a glass Pyrex measuring cup and melt using a double boiler technique. Once melted, remove from heat and add:

- » 10 drops of frankincense essential oil
- » 10 drops of tea tree essential oil
- » 10 drops of fir or rosalina essential oil
- » 10 drops of marjoram essential oil

2. Gently mix the oils into your base and pour into clean jars.

3. Let sit for 3-4 hours at room temperature or leave it in the fridge until it solidifies.

**Usage:** Take a penny sized portion on the palms of your hands and gently massage into the bottoms of the feet. If the baby can tolerate the smell, it can also be applied over the chest area.