

## Part 1

# Understanding essential oils

## Medicinal essential oils Medicinal aetherole



DR.

### 1. Official definitions:

**Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils and essences to treat human and veterinary pathologies.**

When you put two drops of cypress essential oil in a spoonful of honey to treat a dry cough, use ravintsara to treat flu, put lavender on a burn, or relieve a sprain with wintergreen, you're using aromatherapy!

#### What are essential oils?

An essential oil is a plant extract manufactured according to a process defined by the European Pharmacopoeia and ISO Standard 9235:

*"An essential oil is an odorous product, usually of complex composition, obtained from a botanically-defined plant raw material by steam distillation, dry distillation (...), or a suitable mechanical process without heating (citrus fruit).*

*Essential oils are usually separated from the aqueous phase by a physical process that does not significantly affect their composition."*

Bottles of essential oils can only be labeled as such if, and only if, these manufacturing criteria have been met.

#### Do essential oils have medicinal properties?

Yes, according to this excerpt from the French Pharmacopoeia (2012 Edition):

*"Medicinal essential oils, medicinal aetherole. Medicinal essential oils are essential oils, within the meaning of the European Pharmacopoeia (2098), possessing medicinal properties. Essential oils with medicinal properties may have other uses, including food, cosmetics, biocides, etc." (Source: French Agency for the Safety of Health Products).*

The therapeutic properties of essential oils are powerful and varied: anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-inflammatory, etc. This has long been known through their traditional use, but also confirmed more recently by numerous scientific studies. For example there have been more than 1,200 publications on the therapeutic properties of tea tree essential oil alone.

## 2. Essential oils today

### France breaks all the records for aromatherapy use!

The Persians seem to have been the first to distill aromatic plants, so can be said to have discovered essential oils. Use of oils then spread far and wide throughout the world.

However, modern awareness of essential oils' medicinal aspect, therapeutic potential, and properties were all originally pioneered by research and studies in France, as was the teaching of aromatherapy.

Thanks to trailblazing scientists such as René Maurice Gattefossé, Jean Valnet and their "French School" successors, aromatherapy really took off at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Pharmacists and physicians soon became interested in the therapeutic potential of essential oils, and incorporated it into their medical advice and prescriptions.

Since then some universities have developed qualifications as well as aromatherapy training for health professionals.

Pharmacies are often the main distribution network for essential oils.

And in the past twelve months, one in three people will have used essential oils to treat themselves.

**"Use of aromatherapy has grown considerably over the past 25 years thanks to everyone who has embraced it, a development we can all be proud"**

Essential oils are also used in many other sectors:

- **nutrition:** many aromatic plants are used in cooking (thyme, rosemary, sage, basil, lemon) and beverages (star anise);
- **perfumery:** an industry that makes great use of essential oils such as rose, sandalwood, jasmine, etc.;
- **cleaning products:** soaps and detergents which use aromatic plants such as lavender and pine;
- **cosmetics:** helichrysum, neroli, rosewood;
- **well-being:** at spas & with massages.

# How are essential oils made?

Essential oils are obtained by steam distillation of aromatic plants in a still. For citrus fruits (lemon, tangerine, grapefruit, etc.), mechanical cold-pressing and filtering methods for the outer rind (peel) have to be used, similar to the processes used to extract olive oil. When it comes to citrus fruit, it's better to refer to "essences" to distinguish them from essential oils obtained by distillation. So we talk about essences of lemon, orange, grapefruit, bergamot, etc.

**Essences are photosensitive. They should not be applied to the skin before sun exposure e.g. sunbathing or any work or sport taking place outdoors. Their shelf life is usually shorter than that of essential oils.**

**Aromatic hydrolats** are a co-product of distillation mainly consisting of water and a small concentration of essential oil that has been naturally diluted in water during distillation. Hydrolats generally contain between 1% and 5% of essential oil. They usually have the same properties as essential oil, but the effect is diluted. They can be diffused, applied to the skin, or ingested as needed.

To find out more about the properties of a particular hydrolat and how to use it, refer to the corresponding essential oil in the alphabetical list: its properties, method of administration, and age(s) for use will be identical, only the strength will be reduced due to dilution. It can be difficult to preserve hydrolats, so use them quickly and in the meantime store them in the refrigerator.

**Vegetable oils (VO)** are natural products derived from cold pressing the fruits or seeds of oleaginous plants: olives, almonds, argan, etc. They consist of saturated and unsaturated fatty acids, vitamins, and molecules specific to each vegetable oil (this is known as the "unsaponifiable fraction").

They are used as carriers to dilute essential oils and essences applied to the skin. Their varying density, nourishing effect, and benefits of their own make them an ideal base. Vegetable oils should not be confused with essential oils or essences.

# Neroli

ANXIETY  
FRAGILITY  
DEPRESSION

**Citrus aurantium ssp amara**

## CHARACTERISTICS

### Essential oil

#### Botanical name:

*Citrus aurantium* L.  
ssp. *amara* Engl.

#### Part used:

Blossoms

#### Origin:

Morocco

#### Chemotype:

linalool, nerolidol,

farnesol

#### Biochemical

#### family:

60% monoterpenol



## AT A GLANCE

### Orally



From 7 years  
old

### Skin use



From 30 months  
old  
To be diluted  
in VO

### Diffusion



From 30 months  
old

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT AND ESSENTIAL OIL:

Neroli essential oil is an essential oil made from the flowers of the bitter orange, and sometimes goes by the name of orange blossom oil. Both rare and precious, the blossoms are harvested by hand in spring before sunrise. It takes several tons of flowers to obtain only 1 kg of essential oil, which explains its rarity and price.

Listed in the French pharmacopoeia, neroli is used pharmaceutically as an essential oil or as orange flower water. It is also widely used in perfumery and in cooking to flavor pastries.

The action of neroli essential oil is similar to that of petitgrain (bitter orange): relaxing, soothing, sedative and comforting.

A real luxury, this is an essential oil appreciated by connoisseurs who use it sparingly during the most difficult periods of life, in diffusion, massages, herbal teas, and so forth.



## Properties & common uses

### CALMS THE NERVOUS SYSTEM, GOOD FOR:

- Anxiety
- Emotional fragility
- Depression
- Sleep disorders
- Nervous indigestion

### ANTIOXIDANT & ANTI-AGING ACTION, GOOD FOR:

- Beauty regimens
- Mature skin
- Wrinkles
- Radiant complexion



## How to use

### EMOTIONAL FRAGILITY:

**Orally:** Neroli: 2 drops of EO on a neutral tablet or in a teaspoon of honey, 3 to 4 times a day.

### ANXIETY:

**Orally:** Neroli: 2 drops of EO on a neutral tablet or in a teaspoon of honey, 3 to 4 times a day.

**Skin use:** Neroli: 2 drops of EO applied neat to elbow and wrist creases, 3 to 4 times a day.

### SOOTHING ATMOSPHERE:

**Diffusion:** Neroli: 5 drops of EO in an ultrasonic diffuser 3 to 4 times a day in living spaces.

## Doses & methods of administration

### ORALLY

**From 7 years old:** 1 drop, 3 to 4 times a day

**From 15 years old:** 2 drops, 3 to 4 times a day

### ON THE SKIN

**From 30 months:** 1 to 2 drops, 3 to 4 times a day, diluted in 2 to 4 drops of VO per drop of EO

**From 7 years old:** 1 to 5 drops, 3 to 4 times a day, diluted in

2 to 4 drops of VO per drop of EO. Can be used neat

**From 15 years old:** 1 to 10 drops, 3 to 4 times a day, diluted in

2 to 4 drops of VO per drop of EO. Can be used neat

### DIFFUSION

**From 30 months:** 1 to 2 drops per diffusion, 3 to 4 times a day

**From 7 years old:** 1 to 5 drops per diffusion, 3 to 4 times a day

**From 15 years old:** 1 to 10 drops per diffusion, 3 to 4 times a day

### SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Perform a skin test beforehand for sensitive skin

Not recommended for asthmatics

### SHOULD NOT BE USED BY:



Pregnant or breastfeeding women



Infants under 30 months



Epileptics