



Relieving OA Symptoms With Essential Oils

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The Five Best Essential Oils for Osteoarthritis

If you haven't had the pleasure of exploring how aromatherapy and essential oils could ease your osteoarthritis symptoms, you are in for a treat! Not only do they have anti-inflammatory properties, but essential oils can also help improve your mood, relieve pain and ensure a restful night's sleep.

A huge benefit to adding essential oils to your OA toolkit is that they are natural and have been known to be as effective as over-the-counter NSAIDs for pain relief.

Essential oils are aromatic compounds derived from plants, and as with any chemical, it is best to start small and observe for any allergic reactions. If you use any essential oil directly on your skin, be sure to try it out in a small amount and dilute it at first.

Check with your doctor before adding essential oils to your diet as they may interact with prescriptions you're currently taking.

A Beginner's Guide to Essential Oils

I was first introduced to essential oils through a colleague at my school. She provided an overview of the ways essential oils could help with the air quality in my classroom. Our small, musty classroom seems to feel brighter when we walk into the smell of citrus.

My essential oils journey was launched with a small diffuser and an assortment of essential oils to try. The more I enjoyed them, the more I wanted to learn how I could use these oils to aid with osteoarthritis symptoms.

Diffusing the oils into the air is a simple way to try a variety of oils without committing to a large amount of one particular kind. Once you identify your favorites, you can adjust your order accordingly.

You can also choose to apply an essential oil directly onto your skin, and I had a great deal of luck trying a small roll-on of lavender oil.

A Holistic Approach

Stress plays such a significant role in managing any chronic condition that anything you can do to relieve it will help diminish your symptoms.

It's been my experience when I make an effort to relax by taking in my favorite scents, and my muscles thank me because they relax at the same time.

The Best Essential Oils for Osteoarthritis

There are specific oils that are known for their anti-inflammatory and pain relieving properties:

- **Turmeric:** in pill form or stirred in to a smoothie, turmeric is being touted as a fantastic addition to your OA toolkit. There are recipes for all kinds of tastes, and even simply adding some to your tea could provide you with its benefits.
- **Ginger:** ginger is well known for aiding with nausea symptoms, and its relaxing properties can calm inflammation.
- **Peppermint:** properties include anti-inflammatory and pain relief, not to mention tasty! Highly recommended mixed in with a lotion to soothe on sore joints.
- **Lavender:** mixed together or by itself, lavender is known to relieve pain and swelling when applied topically.
- **Lemon:** one of my go-to favorite scents, lemon is a huge mood booster and successful anti-inflammatory.

Where to Start

As with any new therapy, you want to introduce the use of essential oils to your body gradually.

In time you will be able to mix together various oils to get the results you want, but when you're just starting out you may want to consider adding one a time and documenting your results.

You can find what you are looking for online or in local health food store. Most supermarkets carry a variety of oils or supplements, and you can also help support a local entrepreneur by purchasing from an independent seller. Be sure to do a little checking before signing up for any recurring product membership until you are sure how these oils will work for you.

Once you've tried various ways of enjoying essential oils, keep your body guessing by changing favorites every so often. In conjunction with the other ways you manage your OA symptoms, using various applications will ideally keep pain and inflammation at the lowest possible level.

Diffusers

Starting off with a diffuser is a simple way to try different oils by scent and determine which ones provide their desired effect. Be sure to clean the diffuser regularly and keep track of the oils you try.

Since this method of enjoying essential oils isn't ingested or used topically, any health risk from trying it this way is pretty low.

Powders/Oils for Cooking

Adding turmeric or peppermint oil to a smoothie can be a convenient way to reap the oils benefit for a more long-lasting effect. There are numerous recipes for teas, smoothies and more. My local coffee place offers a delicious turmeric and ginger tea!

You can also find several kinds of supplements to add to your health; as always, check with your doctor and keep track of what you are taking to avoid any unpleasant interactions.

Topical Oils

Combining oils with various lotions or salves can provide direct relief to inflamed joints or sore muscles. Eucalyptus is a hit in this department, and you can also create your own roll on with your own choice of oils.

Bringing it Together

Managing chronic pain and inflammation is a constantly evolving process. One of the hardest things about it is

being able to pinpoint successful treatments because symptoms can overlap.

However, keeping track of your medications, nutrition, sleep, exercise and how you are trying to use of any of these oils will give you a framework to work with.

It's important to keep an open mind and to continue to expose your body to as many ways to find relief as possible. When used in a comprehensive approach to treating arthritis symptoms, essential oils can provide welcome relief.