

Use Eucalyptus Oil to Breathe Easier, Kill Germs, and More

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One of the few essential oils most people can identify by smell alone; eucalyptus is very popular because of its effectiveness and range of uses. Originally from Australia, where it was first used by the aborigines, the locals started distilling and using the oil in the 1780s. The eucalyptus is one of the world's tallest, deciduous trees, with some varieties growing as high as 465 feet. Making up about 75 percent of Australia's flora, the eucalyptus comes in 600 species, with about 15 yielding valuable oil. The oils fall into one of three categories of use: medicinal, perfumery, or industrial. All the oils are steam distilled from leaves that have that recognizable fresh and clean scent. As essential oils in their natural state are more powerful and effective than the single constituents chemists prefer, this article focuses on medicinal uses rather than industrial ones.

Exceptional germ killer

The most commonly used oil for aromatherapy is *eucalyptus globulus*, with a strong, camphor-like scent. Others have basically the same traits but are slightly more gentle and include *eucalyptus radiata*, *eucalyptus smithii* and *eucalyptus citriodora*. Whichever species you have or can find, eucalyptus essential oil has especially powerful germicidal properties. For example, place a two percent mixture in an aroma burner to kill 70 percent of *staphylococcus* bacteria in a room. Another example: researchers in India found eucalyptus to be effective against several strains of *E. coli*. The medicinal properties of eucalyptus oil include: anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, decongestant, deodorant, antiseptic, antibacterial, anti-viral, anti-fungal, expectorant, febrifuge, vermifuge, immune-stimulant, antibiotic, diuretic, analgesic, and cephalic (aids concentration). It cools the body in summer and protects the body in winter.

Breathe easier

Eucalyptus has a strong influence on breathing and is best known for its effective use against respiratory ailments of any nature including colds, catarrh, coughs, allergies, bronchitis, flu, throat infections, asthma, congestion, sinus problems, etc. It can help regenerate lung tissue, and aid in the whole breathing process. It stimulates red blood cell functioning, increasing the oxygen supply to every cell in the body, which explains part of why it is helpful in any diseased state. To treat respiratory ailments, inhale the oil. Use in a vaporizer or humidifier, aroma lamp, spray, add a few drops to a bowl of hot water, place a towel over your head and breathe deep. You could also add to cough drops (commercial lozenges available) or chest ointment, or gargle to soothe sore throats. Place a drop or two topically over the infected area, such as the throat, the Eustachian tubes for ear infections, lymph nodes, etc.

If you need to use eucalyptus for longer than two or three weeks, it is good to have another species to

mix it up, or you can combine with other oils that have similar properties such as niaouli, pine, Swiss pine, hyssop, or thyme.

Additional uses for eucalyptus

Eucalyptus' effectiveness at all things respiratory overshadows its other uses. Just remember that it is antibacterial, anti-viral, anti-fungal, and anti-inflammatory, which means it is useful for most ailments.

1. **Wounds and infections** - Eucalyptus is a traditional treatment for malaria. (The trees are planted in swamps in North Africa to prevent the spread of malaria as well.) It is effective against other insects' bites and stings as well. Its germicidal properties provide antiseptic protection to wounds, burns, cuts, abrasions, and ulcers. It promotes healing in slow healing wounds, helping new tissue form where needed. Eucalyptus has a history of effective use against childhood illnesses and infections such as cholera, measles, scarlet fever, mumps, tuberculosis, and typhoid. Combine with chamomile and lavender in baths for chicken pox. Also useful against UTIs and candida, herpes simplex virus, and shingles blisters. Add eucalyptus oil to a cold compress to help bring down fever. It tonifies the thymus gland, boosting immunity.

2. **Pain Relief** - Eucalyptus is effective against muscle and joint pain. From migraines to rheumatism, lumbago to sprained ligaments and tendons, and fibrositis to general aches and pains; eucalyptus is an effective, local pain killer. The analgesic and anti-inflammatory nature can even relieve nerve pain. Massage the oil in a circular motion on the affected area.

3. **Manage disease** - Eucalyptus oil is effective at lowering blood sugar (diabetes) and relieving pain (fibromyalgia). It is one of several essential oils found to have comparable action to traditional antibiotics against disease-causing hospital pathogenic bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Streptococcus C* and *D*, various species of *Proteus*, *Klebsiella spp.*, *Salmonella typhi*, *Haemophilus influenza*, and more.

4. **Mental stimulant** - Most ill people are down - depressed, experience brain fog and are fatigued. Eucalyptus stimulates the mind, aids concentration, and relieves mental exhaustion. It has a cooling effect upon strong emotions, rejuvenating the spirit and relieving stress. It leaves you refreshed and more balanced. Effective treatment for convalescence. A combination of eucalyptus and peppermint applied topically to forehead and temples was shown in a double blind study to relieve headaches better than acetaminophen and aspirin. It was found to increase intellectual capacities and logical thought processes.

5. **Personal hygiene** - Eucalyptus benefits skin, hair, and teeth. From acne and blemishes to dandruff, sunburn to repelling insects, eucalyptus has many uses in the personal care area. It is useful against cavities, gingivitis, and other dental infections as well.

6. **Household uses** - Add eucalyptus to homemade soaps. It is often found in toothpastes, detergents,

and mouthwash. Use it for pet care, such as a flea deterrent for dogs. Add eucalyptus oil to saunas, spas, and bathtubs to disinfect and refresh. Use to disinfect and deodorize rooms. Remove tar from clothes or skin harmlessly with this oil as well.

Considerations for use

All essential oils should be kept out of the reach of children and pets. Oral ingestion of five milliliters of *eucalyptus globulus* by a three-year-old could prove lethal. Keep it away from the eyes. Be sure to use cautiously on sensitive skin until you ascertain whether or not you react to it. Use under the advisement of a qualified practitioner in the presence of high blood pressure or epilepsy. As with most essential oils, it may counteract homeopathy remedies; don't even store them together.

As you can see, eucalyptus is valuable, powerful medicine. It is readily available, inexpensive, versatile, and stores easily for a long period of time. It is a valuable addition to any holistic medicine cabinet or disaster preparedness kit.

Sources for this article include:

<http://www.greenlivingtips.com>

<http://www.herbreferance.com/eucalyptus.html>