

## Essential Oils and your Skin

Essential oils have been around for thousands of years and are derived from plants. These oils are extracted from the seeds, roots, leaves, and even the skins of the plants. In fact the oil is what gives plants and flowers their fragrances.

What can be found in these essential oils? Vitamins, hormones, and other natural elements. The oils vary in concentration in their natural form. Synthetic oils, by contrast, have a more consistent composition. Experts say that synthetic and natural essential oils work equally well.

Nobody knows exactly how essential oils work, but we do know they are absorbed through the skin and into the bloodstream. The best place on the skin to administer essential oils is inside the wrist, the eyelids, and behind the ears. These areas of skin are thin, which allows for easier absorption.

The best essential oils for your skin are:

- \* lavender, ylang-ylang, geranium, and jasmine if you have hormonally or stress reactive skin
- \* chamomile and rose (if you are interested in using environmentally sensitive oils)
- \* neroli, geranium, and frankincense for overexposed skin

Joni Loughran, in "Aromatherapy for Skin and Hair Care," recommends these strategies for essential skin care :

1. Drop eight to ten drops of essential oil into the bath. Use with warm water to relax, or with cool water to invigorate or calm inflammation.
2. Massage your body with the essential oil. Add twenty to twenty-five drops of essential oil to two ounces of canola or any other vegetable oil. If your skin tends to break out, rinse off with soap and water in the shower after your massage.
3. Make a facial compress . Add two to five drops of essential oil to a basin filled with water, stir, and immerse a clean washcloth. Squeeze out excess water and apply the cloth to your face.
4. Add essential oil to moisturizing products, ten to twenty drops for every two ounces.

These are a few of the dozens of uses for essential oils. Try some—and your skin will thank you for it!