



## What is Aromatherapy?

Aromatherapy can be defined as the ancient art and science of blending naturally extracted essential oils from aromatic plants, to balance, harmonise and promote the health of body, mind and spirit.

Aromatherapy aims to enhance well-being, relieve stress and help in the rejuvenation and regeneration of the human body. It has been used throughout history in various forms of traditional medical practices throughout the world's greatest civilisations. Nowadays, Aromatherapy is widely accepted by orthodox and complementary practitioners as one of the most comprehensive of the natural therapies.

### How are Aromatherapy Oils Used?

Essential oils are primarily absorbed into the body in two ways, via the skin or by inhalation via the olfactory and respiratory systems.

Essential oils may be applied to the skin using the following methods:

- **Massage:** a base of vegetable oil is blended with a few drops of essential oil(s) and used to massage the body, allowing the aromatic molecules to penetrate the skin.
- **Compresses:** a few drops of selected oil(s) are added to water (either warm or cold). A cloth is soaked in the aromatic water then applied to the affected body area.
- **Bathing:** a few drops of essential oil(s) are mixed with an emulsifier (e.g., unscented bubble bath or full fat milk) and added to freshly run bath water. Essential oils can also be added to an unscented shower gel for use in the shower.

### Selection of Essential Oils for an Aromatic Treatment

When attending a consultation with a suitably qualified Aromatherapist, generally the following will apply:

- A thorough medical consultation will be conducted in order to establish the client's medical history and any pre-existing conditions
- The aromatherapist may also assess the client's wellbeing and stress levels to gain a deeper understanding
- Essential oils are then selected for that individual person based on their current health needs and taking into account any safety issues that may arise
- Usually a full body massage is carried out covering the legs, back/neck, abdomen, arms, face and scalp
- However, sometimes it may be more appropriate to give a massage treatment which focusses on only one part of the body, e.g., the back/neck/shoulders
- At the end of a treatment, the client will usually receive some aftercare advice from the therapist e.g., nutritional advice, increased water intake, possible suggestions on diet/exercise, etc. In addition, they may be provided with aromatic product(s) for use at home.

We hope you have found this introduction informative, but if you require further information, please contact us [www.ifaroma.org](http://www.ifaroma.org)