

## Aromatherapy and Hypertension

### What is Hypertension?

Hypertension is another name for 'high blood pressure'. NHS Choices website states that,

“Blood pressure is recorded with two numbers. The systolic pressure (higher number) is the force at which your heart pumps blood around your body.

The diastolic pressure (lower number) is the resistance to the blood flow in the blood vessels. They're both measured in millimetres of mercury (mmHg).

As a general guide:

- **high blood pressure** is considered to be 140/90mmHg or higher
- **ideal blood pressure** is considered to be between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg
- **low blood pressure** is considered to be 90/60mmHg or lower

A blood pressure reading between 120/80mmHg and 140/90mmHg could mean you're at risk of developing high blood pressure if you don't take steps to keep your blood pressure under control.

### Risks of high blood pressure

If your blood pressure is too high, it puts extra strain on your blood vessels, heart and other organs, such as the brain, kidneys and eyes.

Persistent high blood pressure can increase your risk of a number of serious and potentially life-threatening conditions, such as:

- heart disease
- heart attacks
- strokes
- heart failure
- peripheral arterial disease
- aortic aneurysms
- kidney disease
- vascular dementia

If you have high blood pressure, reducing it even a small amount can help lower your risk of these conditions.

## Causes of high blood pressure

It's not always clear what causes high blood pressure, but certain things can increase your risk. You're at an increased risk of high blood pressure if you:

- are over the age of 65
- are overweight or obese
- are of African or Caribbean descent
- have a relative with high blood pressure
- eat too much salt and don't eat enough fruit and vegetables
- don't do enough exercise
- drink too much alcohol or coffee (or other caffeine-based drinks)
- smoke
- don't get much sleep or have disturbed sleep

Making healthy lifestyle changes can help reduce your chances of getting high blood pressure and help lower your blood pressure if it's already high.”

## How Can Aromatherapy Help with Hypertension?

Certain essential oils may help to reduce high blood pressure by dilating small blood vessels and reducing stress. Potential essential oils include:

- Clary Sage (*Salvia sclarea*)
- Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Marjoram (*Origanum majorana*)
- Melissa (*Melissa officinalis*)
- Ylang Ylang (*Cananga odorata*)
- Lemon (*Citrus limon*)

Always contact a qualified Aromatherapist who will guide you on the oils that are suitable for your individual needs.

## References:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/>
- The Art of Aromatherapy by Robert Tisserand
- Aromatherapy – An A-Z by Patricia Davies
- The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy by Salvatore Battaglia
- The Encyclopedia of Essential Oils by Julia Lawless
- Encyclopedia of Aromatherapy by Chrissie Wildwood
- Essential Oils in Colour by Rosemary Caddy
- Aromatherapy Workbook by Marcel Lavabre
- Aromatherapy for Health Professionals by Shirley and Len Price

To find a practitioner to discuss your needs [click here](#)