

Aromatherapy and Cancers

What is Cancer?

Cancer is a condition where cells in a specific part of the body grow and reproduce uncontrollably. The cancerous cells can invade and destroy surrounding healthy tissue, including organs. Cancer sometimes begins in one part of the body before spreading to other areas. This process is known as metastasis.

More than one in three people will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime. In the UK, the four most common types of cancer are:

- Breast cancer
- Lung cancer
- Prostate cancer
- Bowel cancer

There are more than 200 different types of cancer and each is diagnosed and treated in a particular way. You can find links on this page to information about other types of a cancer.

What are signs of cancer?

Change to your body's normal processes or unusual, unexplained symptoms can sometimes be an early sign of cancer.

Symptoms that need to be checked by a doctor include:

- A lump that suddenly appears on your body
- Unexplained bleeding
- Changes to your bowel habits

But in many cases your symptoms won't be related to cancer and will be caused by other, non-cancerous health conditions.

How to reduce risk of cancer

Making some simple changes to your lifestyle can significantly reduce your risk of developing cancer.

For example:

- Healthy eating
- Taking regular exercise
- Not smoking

For more information please visit www.nhs.uk

How aromatherapy helps for cancer?

It has also been postulated that some essential oils or their components could complement conventional cancer treatments which essential oils have a positive effect on the immune system, at a chemical level, over and above their direct effects on tumour cells.

The side effects of some conventional treatments for cancer can be very hard to endure. The cancer patients were mainly undergoing chemotherapy and radiation therapy following surgery and without exception, they found the going very tough. Aromatherapy has become the main complementary used in the UK to support oncology patients.

Cancer is a very serious disease and establishing and implementing safe levels for potentially carcinogenic or photocarcinogenic essential oils is therefore of great importance. In some cases the level of risk is such that the oils should probably not be used at all in aromatherapy. In addition certain essential oils can irritate or sensitize the skin regardless of light exposure.

Anti-oxidant activity is at the foundation of many of the therapeutic properties attributed to essential oils and their constituents, including a range of 'anti-cancer' effects. Although the treatment of cancer does not form part of aromatherapy practice, several investigations have highlighted this potential of essential oils. These oils might be used in prescriptions with a preventative intention, or when maintenance or enhancement of general wellbeing is the main goal.

Aromatherapy/ Essential Oils is used safely by patients with cancer for short-term benefits and primarily focus on other health-related conditions to improve their quality of life such as stress, depression and anxiety.

Essential oils which can be used for cancer conditions:

Essential Oils suggestion for Stress

- Chamomile, Roman oil (*Chamaenemum nobile*)
- Chamomile, German (Blue) oil (*Matricaria recutita*)
- Lavender oil (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Marjoram, Sweet oil (*Origanum majorana*)
- Benzoin oil (*Styrax benzoin*)
- Cardomon oil (*Elettaria cardamonum*)
- Cedarwood, Atlas oil (*Cedrus atlantica*)
- French Basil oil (*Ocimum basilicum*)
- Geranium oil (*Pelargonium graveolens*)
- Jasmine oil (*Jasminum officinale*)
- Lemongrass oil (*Cymbopogon citratus*)
- Patchouli oil (*Pogostemon cablin*)
- Vetiver oil (*Vetiveria zizanoides*)
- Thyme oil (*Thymus vulgaris*)

Essential Oils suggestion for Anxiety

- Lavender oil (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Frankincense oil (*Boswellia carteri*)
- Sandalwood oil (*Santalum album*)
- Juniper oil (*Juniperus communis*)
- Ylang Ylang oil (*Cananga odorata var.genuina*)
- Neroli oil (*Citrus aurantium var.amara*)
- Hyssop oil (*Hyssopus officinalis*)
- Jasmine oil (*Jasminum officinale*)

Essential Oils suggestion for Depression

- Chamomile, Roman oil (*Chamaenemum nobile*)
- Lavender oil (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Marjoram, Sweet oil (*Origanum majorana*)
- French Basil oil (*Ocimum basilicum*)
- Rose oil (*Rosa damascene, Rosa centifolia*)
- Everlasting oil (*Helichrysum italicum*)
- Clary sage oil (*Salvia sclarea*)
- Sandalwood oil (*Santalum album*)
- Vetiver oil (*Vetiveria zizanioides*)
- Ylang Ylang oil (*Cananga odorata var.genuina*)

Essential Oils suggestion for Insomnia

- Chamomile, German (Blue) oil (*Matricaria recutita*)
- Chamomile, Roman oil (*Chamaenemum nobile*)
- Lavender oil (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Neroli oil (*Citrus aurantium var.amara*)
- Hops oil (*Humulus lupulus*)
- Sweet marjoram oil (*Origanum majorana*)
- Rose oil (*Rosa damascene, Rosa centifolia*)
- Sandalwood oil (*Santalum album*)
- Thyme oil (*Thymus vulgaris*)
- Valerian oil (*Valeriana fauriei*)
- Vetiver oil (*Vetiveria zizanioides*)
- Yarrow oil (*Achillea millefolium*)
- Ylang Ylang oil (*Cananga odorata var.genuina*)

Essential Oils suggestion for Nausea

- Ginger oil (*Zingiber officinale*)
- Peppermint oil (*Mentha piperita*)
- Greenland Moss oil (*Ledum groenlandicum*)

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

Reference:

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- The encyclopedia of Essential Oils, Julia Lawless
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- The Healing intelligence of Essential oils: The Science of Advanced Aromatherapy, Schnaubelt PH.D., Kurt
- Aromatherapy for Health Professionals – Elsevieron Vitalsource , Price, Len; Price Shirley
- Aromatherapy an A-X: The most comprehensive guide to Aromatherapy every published, Davis, Patricia
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cancer/>
- <https://www.cancer.gov>treatment>cam>
- <https://www.breastcancer.org>
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- <https://integrativehealthcare.org>
- <https://integrativeoncology-essential.com>

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