

AROMATHERAPY: A HOLISTIC HEALING TREATMENT USING ESSENTIAL OILS

Kotresh Yaligar* and Boyapati Madhulatha¹

*Department of Pharmacognosy, Padmini College of Pharmacy, Ektanagar, Dighanchi, Atpadi, Sangli-Dist., Maharashtra, India.

¹Department of Pharmacognosy, Padmini College of Pharmacy, Ektanagar, Dighanchi, Atpadi, Sangli-Dist., Maharashtra, India.

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*Corresponding Author

Kotresh Yaligar

Department of
Pharmacognosy, Padmini
College of Pharmacy,
Ektanagar, Dighanchi,
Atpadi, Sangli-Dist.,
Maharashtra, India.

ABSTRACT

At the moment, the use of alternative and complementary therapies in mainstream medicine has gained momentum. Aromatherapy is one of the complementary therapies that use essential oils as the major therapeutic agents to treat several diseases. The essential or volatile oils are extracted from the flowers, barks, stems, leaves, roots, fruits, and other plant parts by various methods. It came into existence after the scientists deciphered the antiseptic and skin permeability properties of essential oils. Inhalation, local application, and baths are the vital methods used in aromatherapy that utilize these oils to penetrate the human skin surface with a marked aura. Once the oils are in the system, they re-modulate themselves and work in a friendly manner at the site of malfunction or the affected area. This type of therapy utilizes various permutations and combinations to get relief from numerous ailments like depression, indigestion, headache, insomnia, muscular pain, respiratory problems, skin ailments, swollen joints,

urine-associated complications, *etc.* The essential oils are more beneficial when other aspects of life and diet are given due contemplation. This review explores the information available in the literature regarding therapeutic, medical, cosmetic, psychological, olfactory, massage aromatherapy, safety issues, and different plants used in aromatherapy.

KEYWORDS: Aromatherapy, Complementary therapy. Essential oils, Healing, *etc.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite technological advancements of pharmacological medicines, herbal medicines remain the mainstay of medicine for most underdeveloped and developing nations, while growing in popularity in most developed nations. Increased recognition of the value of traditional herbal healing systems is partly due to real and perceived limitations in conventional care and partly due to traditional systems offering a completely different approach to healing than conventional practitioners. Historically, classical botanical pharmacognosy represented the interface between the art and science of herbal medicine.

Subsequently, pharmacopoeias reflected pharmacognostic investigation of plant-based medicines, setting standards to ensure identity, quality, purity, and ultimately, efficacy. In developed countries, there is a trend to establish traditional herbal medicines in the same manner as modern chemically characterized drugs, following conventional models that may not accurately recognize their true value, with the backdrop of the growing worldwide demand for botanical-based medicines.^[1]

Traditional medicine has a long history. It is the total of the knowledge, skill, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences Indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement, or treatment of physical and mental illness. Where the terms “complementary medicine” or “alternative medicine” refer to a broad set of healthcare practices that are not part of that country’s tradition or conventional medicine and are not fully integrated into the dominant healthcare system. They are used interchangeably with traditional medicine in some countries.^[2]

Aromatherapy is an alternative medicine or integrative therapy that works with conventional medicine treatment.^[3]

Aromatherapy is the best practice that uses plant materials and aromatic volatile plant oils including essential oils, for psychological purposes and physical well-being state. This can be offered as a complementary therapy or as a form of alternative medicine. Aroma therapists, who are specialists in the practices of aromatherapy, use therapeutic essential oil blends that are applicable for topical application, inhalation, massage, or water immersion to stimulate a perfect desired response. The aromas that are experienced by aromatherapy and essential oils have a dynamic effect on the mind and body.^[4]

Aromatherapy derived its name from the word aroma, which means fragrance or smell, and therapy which means treatment. This therapy is a natural way of healing a person's mind, body, and soul.^[5] Many ancient civilizations like Egypt, China, and India have used this as a popular complementary and alternative therapy for at least 6000 years.^[6] Aromatherapy has established itself for the treatment of various arrays of complications and conditions. A literature survey reveals that this therapy gained a lot of attention in the late 20th century and is very popular in the 21st century too, and due to its importance, popularity, and widespread use, it is recognized as aroma science therapy.^[7]

The essential oils have gained their importance in therapeutic, cosmetic, aromatic, fragrant, and spiritual uses.^[8] Aromatherapy uses essential oils, as the main therapeutic agents, which are said to be highly concentrated substances extracted from flowers, leaves, stalks, fruits, and roots, and also distilled from resins.^[9] Essential oils are a mixture of saturated and unsaturated hydrocarbons, alcohol, aldehydes, esters, ethers, ketones, oxides phenols and terpenes, which may produce characteristic odors.^[10] They are colorless pleasant-smelling liquids with high refractive index. These oils are so potent and concentrated that they work on pressure points and rejuvenate. The essential oils in plants are present in different areas like pockets and reservoirs, glandular hairs, specialized cells, or even in intercellular spaces. Essence evaporation from the plants shields them from bacterial attack and a warming aura due to essences protects the plant from temperature fluctuations.

There are various methods by which they are administered in small quantities like inhalation, massage, or simple applications on the skin surface, and rarely, they are taken internally.^[6] Inhalation and the external application of these oils for the treatment of mental and physical balance are the very basics of aromatherapy. The therapy of these oils is known to relieve stress, rejuvenate, and regenerate the individual for the next day's work. Olfactory nerves from the nose to the brain are the site of action for these essential oils. These oils have well-proven antibacterial, antibiotic, and antiviral properties, and many published reports elsewhere as well as folkloric practitioners have suggested them to be useful in many other diseases like Alzheimer's, cardiovascular, cancer, and labor pain in pregnancy *etc.*^[11,12]

There is an increased trend nowadays to use this therapy in the treatment of cancer and sleep disorder.^[13] Their organic character and to act in a supportive manner with the body, provide a feeling of well-beingness.^[14] It was found that the locomotor activity of mice increased

significantly by inhalation of rosemary essential oils, which are used in phytotherapy as an activating and refreshing remedy for exhaustion.^[15]

The use of aromatherapy in holistic medicine has taken a long leap within a couple of years.^[16] On reviewing the literature on this therapy, it is found that numerous studies have been carried out to study the effects of this therapy on the human brain and its emotions. Its role in mood, alertness, and mental stress in healthy subjects has been a topic of hot discussion among the scientific community recently. Some researchers tried to investigate the effects on workability, reaction time, and some spontaneous actions on the brain through electroencephalograph patterns and functional imaging studies.^[17]

This therapy was found to be superior when compared to synthetic odors. Synthetic fragrances generally contain irritants, like solvents and propellants irritating some people.^[18] According to aroma therapists, the synthetic odor does not match the importance of essential oils as they are deficient in natural or vital energy; however, this has remained a matter of debate between odor psychologists and biochemists.^[19]

1.1. HOW AROMATHERAPY WORKS

For centuries, essential oils have found their importance as a fragrance with a curative potential on the body, mind, and spirit. These aroma molecules are very potent organic plant chemicals that make the surroundings free from disease, bacteria, viruses, and fungus.^[20] Their versatile character of antibacterial, antiviral, anti-inflammatory nature along with immune booster body with a hormonal, glandular, emotional, circulatory, calming effect, memory and alertness enhancer, is well documented by many scientists⁸. Many pilot projects and studies have been conducted on humans to decipher their nature and role in disease and disorder.^[21]

These oils are known for their energy-specific character, as their potency is not lost with time and age. The stimulation properties of these oils lay in their structure which is closely in resemblance with actual hormones.^[22] The penetration potential of these oils to reach the subcutaneous tissues is one of the important characteristics of this therapy. Their effects are also complex and subtle due to their complex structure and chemical properties. The mechanism of their action involves the integration of essential oils into a biological signal of the receptor cells in the nose when inhaled. The signal is transmitted to the limbic and hypothalamus parts of the brain via the olfactory bulb. These signals cause the brain to

release neuro messengers like serotonin, endorphin, *etc.*, to link our nervous and other body systems assuring a desired change and to provide a feeling of relief. Serotonin, endorphin, and noradrenalin are released from calming oil, euphoric, and stimulating oil respectively to give the expected effect on the mind and body.^[23]

1.2. CLASSIFICATION OF AROMATHERAPY

1.2.1. COSMETIC AROMATHERAPY

This therapy utilizes certain essential oils for skin, body, face, and hair cosmetic products. These products are used for their various effects as cleansing, moisturizing, drying, and toning. Healthy skin can be obtained by the use of essential oils in facial products. On a personal level, cosmetic aromatherapy of full-body or foot baths will be a simple and effective way to have an experience. Similarly, a few drops of appropriate oil give a rejuvenating and revitalizing experience.^[24]

1.2.2. MASSAGE AROMATHERAPY

The use of grape seed, almond, or jojoba oil in pure vegetable oil during massage has been shown to have wonderful effects. This is also known as the healing touch of massage therapy.^[25]

1.2.3. MEDICAL AROMATHERAPY

The founder of modern aromatherapy Rene-Maurice Gattefosse has used essential oils to massage patients during surgery, thus utilizing the medical aromatherapy knowledge of the effect of essential oils on promoting and treating clinically diagnosed medical ailments.^[26]

1.2.4. OLFACTORY AROMATHERAPY

Inhalation of essential oils has given rise to olfactory aromatherapy, where simple inhalation has resulted in enhanced emotional wellness, calmness, relaxation, or rejuvenation of the human body. The release of stress is welded with pleasurable scents that unlock odor memories. Essential oils are complemented to medical treatment and can never be taken as a replacement for it.^[27]

1.2.5. PSYCHO-AROMATHERAPY

In psycho-aromatherapy, certain states of moods and emotions can be obtained by these oils giving the pleasure of relaxation, invigoration, or a pleasant memory. The inhalation of the oils in this therapy is directed through the infusion in the room of a patient. Psycho-

aromatherapy and aromacology, both deal with the study and effects of aroma be it natural or synthetic. Psycho-aromatherapy has limited itself to the study of natural essential oils.^[11]

Essential oils are volatile liquid substances extracted from plant material by steam distillation or expression. They are mostly extracted from all parts of the plant including flowers, leaves, seeds, resins, roots, or bark. These highly concentrated oils are used for inhalation and topical treatments through skin absorption: inhalation treatments are provided using oil-infused cloths, nasal sticks or patches, or via room diffusion; when used topically, the essential oils are diluted in a fixed oil at a low concentration and used for touch therapy. Dilution is required due to the potential for skin sensitization, contact dermatitis, and phototoxicity from citrus oils.

In the commercial marketplace aromatherapy products containing essential oils are sold in pharmacies, health food shops, specialty stores, supermarkets, and on the internet. Essential oils are also used widely in cosmetics, room diffusers, and in the flavoring and fragrance industry which are governed by cosmetic and consumer product legislation. Consumer demand for essential oils has grown exponentially in recent years due to the interest in natural products to promote health and well-being.^[28]

2. PLANTS USED IN AROMATHERAPY

Many plants have been reported to be used in aromatherapy due to the presence of essential or volatile oils in different plant materials like flowers, barks, stems, leaves, roots, fruits, *etc.* Some of the plants used in aromatherapy are summarized in Table 1.

Table no. 1: Description of essential oils used in Aromatherapy.^[29,30]

S.No	Essential oil	Scientific Name	Family	Plant part	Aroma	Benefits/Uses
1	Arborvitae oil	<i>Thuja plicata</i>	Cupressaceae	Wood	Woody, earthy	Diffuse to purify the air, repel insects, and protect yourself against seasonal and environmental threats.
2	Basil oil	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Herbaceous, slightly spicy	Add to a diffuser during study time to help your child focus on homework. Take internally for occasional anxious feelings, reducing gas,

						or for soothing support during menstruation.
3	Bergamot oil	<i>Citrus bergamia</i>	Rutaceae	Peel of fruit	Citrus, sweet	Use aromatically or topically if you're feeling stressed, or need some extra self-confidence. Taken as a supplement, it can soothe the nervous system, and support a healthy metabolism.
4	Black Pepper oil	<i>Piper nigrum</i>	Piperaceae	Fruit	Spicy	Black Pepper assists in digestion, supports healthy breast tissue in women, and promotes a healthy colon.
5	Blue Tansy oil	<i>Tanacetum annuum</i>	Asteraceae	Flowers	Subtle floral, herbaceous, camphoraceous, sweet	This blue-tinged oil is perfect for a restoring massage when your body is tired. It is also great for the skin, particularly for the appearance of blemishes or to soothe an irritation.
6	Cardamom oil	<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i>	Zingiberaceae	Seeds	Spicy, cool, mint	Cardamom can promote clear breathing and maintain respiratory health. It also may help when you experience occasional indigestion. Aromatically, Cardamom encourages calm and relaxed feelings.
7	Cassia oil	<i>Cinnamomum cassia</i>	Lauraceae	Stembark	Spicy, slightly woody	Add to water to support hydration, and to support a healthy metabolism. Take one to two drops internally to promote the healthy function of your immune system, as well as healthy cardiovascular system function.
8	Cedarwood oil	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Cupressaceae	Wood	Woody	A skin care powerhouse, Cedarwood is great for

						improving the appearance of blemishes and keeping your skin looking fresh and healthy. When you've had a hard day, it can help to diffuse Cedarwood to soothe your mind and unwind.
9	Cilantro oil	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>	Umbelliferae/A piaceae	Seed	Herbaceous	An excellent internal cleanser and detoxifier, Cilantro is also an efficient surface cleanser. When applied to your skin, it is a soothing and cooling oil. In addition, it supports a healthy immune system and digestive tract.
10	Cinnamon Bark oil	<i>Cinnamomum zeylanicum</i>	Lauraceae	Stem bark	Spicy	Cinnamon Bark oil sustains a healthy urinary tract and kidneys. Used as part of your dental routine, it can also cleanse the gums, and mouth, and maintain clean teeth.
11	Clary Sage oil	<i>Salvia sclarea</i>	Lamiaceae	Leaf and Flower	Herbaceous	Diffuse Clary Sage to reduce feelings of anxiousness or stress and promote calm and relaxation. It also helps promote healthy-looking hair and scalp when added to shampoo or conditioner. Or, apply Clary Sage to the abdomen during your menstrual cycle for a soothing massage.
12	Clove oil	<i>Eugenia caryophyllata</i>	Myrtaceae	Flower bud	Spicy	Taken internally, Clove enhances your body's ability to absorb other nutrients, supports healthy bones, and may calm tense muscles. Clove is also energizing oil that can

						help you wake up or stay alert.
13	Copaiba oil	<i>Copaifera reticulata, officinalis, coriacea, and langsdorffii</i>	Leguminosae-Caesalpinoideae	Resin	Woody, sweet, spicy, balsamic	Copaiba is a powerful antioxidant that protects your cells from damage and can help calm and soothe your nervous system. It can also be applied topically to promote feelings of clear breathing.
14	Coriander oil	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>	Umbelliferae/Apiaceae	Seed	Spicy, herbaceous	Use it to clean hard surfaces throughout the home. If you have oily skin, apply it in your moisturizer to keep your complexion clear and reduce the appearance of blemishes. It helps support healthy lung and respiratory function.
15	Cypress oil	<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	Cupressaceae	Needles and twigs	Woody	During times of change, diffuse to balance your emotions and to reduce any anxious feelings you may experience. Apply it to the skin before any physical activity for a boost in energy.
16	Douglas Fir oil	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	Pinaceae	Needles and twigs	Woody	A wood oil that helps to purify the skin, and also promotes feelings of clear airways and easy breathing. Diffuse in your home to freshen and purify the air at the same time.
17	Eucalyptus oil	<i>Eucalyptus radiata</i>	Myrtaceae	Leaf	Camphoraceous	Diffuse Eucalyptus or apply it to your chest to encourage feelings of clear breathing and open airways. Inhale the aroma of Eucalyptus to diminish feelings of tension and promote feelings of

						relaxation.
18	Fennel oil	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Apiaceae	Seeds	Herbaceous, licorice	Put a drop of Fennel in water or tea to combat any sweet tooth cravings you experience and to support the overall health of your digestive tract. Traditionally, Fennel was used to relieve monthly discomfort during menstruation.
19	Frankincense oil	<i>Boswellia carterii, sacra, papyrifera</i>	Burseraceae	Oleo gum-resin	Resinous	Frankincense possesses a variety of internal benefits, some of which are supporting cellular health, digestive health, healthy lung and respiratory function, and healthy joint function. Used topically it has the power to rejuvenate the skin, reduce the appearance of blemishes, and soothe. The aroma gives you feelings of peace, satisfaction, and overall wellness.
20	Geranium oil	<i>Pelargonium graveolens</i>	Geraniaceae	Leaf	Floral	A major skin-and-haircare hero, Geranium helps beautify, smooth, and keep your skin and hair looking healthy. Beyond this, you can diffuse or wear it to naturally repel insects. It also supports healthy blood pressure already in the normal range.
21	Ginger oil	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Spicy	It can help reduce gas, bloating, or occasional indigestion. Or, take with you on a road trip to put in your water or a Veggie Cap to deal with any motion

						sickness.
22	Grapefruit oil	<i>Citrus X paradisi</i>	Rutaceae	Fruit rind/peel	Citrus	The uplifting scent can help motivate you to stay on track with your fitness goals. Beyond this, drink a drop or two of water to support a healthy metabolism.
23	Helichrysum oil	<i>Helichrysum italicum</i>	Asteraceae	Herb	Herbaceous, floral, sweet	Apply it to the skin to help reduce the appearance of wrinkles and blemishes. Used in a diffuser, it helps soothe feelings of mental fatigue. It may also support your nervous, immune, and cardiovascular systems.
24	Jasmine oil	<i>Jasminum grandiflorum</i>	Oleaceae	Flower	Floral	Apply directly to the skin to balance mood throughout the month and help inspire feelings of joy, peace, and self-confidence. It's highly useful in skincare as it protects the skin and promotes a glowing complexion.
25	Juniper Berry oil	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Cupressaceae	Berries	Woody	Juniper Berry will support your kidney and urinary tract function and also use it as an excellent internal cleanser and detoxifier. Used in skincare, it is a natural toner.
26	Lavender oil	<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Flower	Floral, powdery	Restful is the defining characteristic of Lavender—it provides qualities that relax you and promote peaceful sleep. Diffuse it to ease feelings of tension or anxious feelings. Use it on occasional skin irritations or in your shampoo to keep hair looking healthy.
27	Lemon oil	<i>Citrus limon</i>	Rutaceae	Fruit rind/peel	Citrus	Highly useful to improve mood, Lemon

						is also a great oil to use internally for seasonal respiratory discomfort. It also is a great surface cleanser when added to homemade cleansing sprays.
28	Lemongrass oil	<i>Cymbopogon flexuosus</i>	Poaceae	Leaf	Citrus, Herbaceous	When diffused or worn on the skin, Lemongrass can repel insects, or heighten your awareness and help you feel positive. It can also be used with Fractionated Coconut Oil for a soothing massage on joints and muscles.
29	Lime oil	<i>Citrus aurantifolia</i>	Rutaceae	Fruit rinds	Citrus	Used internally, Lime may support cholesterol levels and blood sugar levels already in the normal range. It also can support healthy metabolism and weight management.
30	Marjoram oil	<i>Riganum marjorana</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Leaf	Herbaceous	Marjoram supports a healthy immune system and may have a positive effect on the nervous system. Can be applied topically to lessen feelings of stress.
31	Melaleuca (Tea Tree)	<i>Melaleuca alternifolia</i>	Myrtaceae	Leaf	Camphoraceous	Tea Tree protects the body against seasonal or environmental threats and supports a healthy immune system. It also possesses reinforcing and rejuvenating properties for the hair, skin, and nails.
32	Melissa oil	<i>Melissa officinalis</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Flower Leaf, stem.	Herbaceous	Melissa supports healthy cellular function—particularly in the breast, ovaries, blood, epithelial

						tissues, brain tissue, and colon tissue. It is an oil well-known for its ability to calm nervousness and promote emotional well-being.
33	Myrrh oil	<i>Commiphora myrrha</i>	Burseraceae	Oleo-resin	Resinous	A great massage oil, Myrrh promotes emotional balance and awareness. It also offers great cleansing benefits for the body, especially when it comes to the mouth and throat.
34	Neroli oil	<i>Citrus x aurantium</i>	Rutaceae	Flower, Leaf,	Floral, slightly herbaceous	From the flowers of the bitter orange tree, Neroli is emotionally uplifting and may help to reduce feelings of anxiousness. It also can soothe skin and support a youthful-looking complexion.
35	Oregano oil	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Leaf, Flower	Herbaceous	Oregano possesses significant immune-boosting properties and may be relaxing to the musculoskeletal system. It can also be used as a powerful cleansing or purifying agent.
36	Patchouli oil	<i>Pogostemon cablin</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Leaf	Earthy, musky-sweet	The unique aroma of Patchouli helps to balance your emotions. When it comes to skincare, Patchouli is a triple threat: it reduces skin imperfections, blemishes, and the appearance of wrinkles.
37	Peppermint oil	<i>Menta piperita</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Leaf	Herbaceous and camphoraceous	The minty aroma of Peppermint very clearly helps with two issues: the occasional upset stomach and healthy respiratory function. Apply it

						topically to relieve feelings of tension
38	Petitgrain oil	<i>Citrus aurantium</i>	Rutaceae	Leaf & twig	Woody, green	The “manly Lavender”, Petitgrain is primarily calming and relaxing oil that can ease feelings of tension, calm the nervous system, and promote restful sleep. It may also support the cardiovascular, digestive, and immune systems.
39	Roman Chamomile oil	<i>Anthemis nobilis</i>	Asteraceae	Flower	Herbaceous	Primarily Roman Chamomile promotes youthful-looking skin, and additionally healthy-looking hair. It can also be taken internally to soothe both your body and mind. Its aroma is soothing, helping to ease away anger and irritability.
40	Rose oil	<i>Rosa damascena</i>	Rosaceae	Flower petal	Floral	Adding Rose to your skincare routine will help balance moisture levels and contribute to producing an even skin tone. It is also a romantic personal fragrance that can turn around a gloomy day.
41	Rosemary oil	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Flower	Herbaceous, Camphoraceous	The energizing nature of Rosemary can help reduce occasional fatigue and nervous tension. Diffusing it can help you maintain concentration on any task or naturally repel insects. Finally, it supports the healthy functioning of a variety of internal organs.
42	Sandalwood (Indian)	<i>Santalum album</i>	Santalaceae	Heart wood	Woody	Sandalwood oil helps to restore moisture to hair and give it a silky

						shine. They also help to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and prepare you for a restful night's sleep.
43	Siberian Fir	<i>Abies sibirica</i>	Pinaceae	Needle & twig	Woody, Christmas trees	Stimulate the senses and help to reduce feelings of stress while going through difficult situations. Used topically, Siberian Fir brings soothing comfort to the body after vigorous exercise or during a massage.
44	Spearmint oil	<i>Mentha Spicata</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Leaf	Herbaceous, sweet	Similar to Peppermint, Spearmint can help reduce the occasional upset stomach and promote healthy digestion.
45	Spikenard oil	<i>Nardostachys jatamansi</i>	Valrianaceae	Rhizome/ root	Earthy	he earthy aroma of Spikenard is calming and uplifting to the mood. When used on the skin, it purifies and leaves behind a clean, healthy glow.
46	Tangerine oil	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Flower & Leaf	Citrus	Diffusing Tangerine helps to purify and cleanse the air, or using it in a homemade cleaner also cleanses and purifies surfaces. The delicious flavor of Tangerine is made all the sweeter with some amazing internal benefits: supporting a healthy digestive system and metabolism.
47	Thyme oil	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>	Lamiacea (Labiatae)	Leaf 7 Flowering top	Herbaceous	Thyme is an excellent internal cleanser for the gastrointestinal tract and the digestive system. It can be massaged into the abdomen to ease normal symptoms of

						menstruation in women.
48	Vetiver oil	<i>Vetiveria zizanioides</i>	Poaceae	Root	Earthy	The sesquiterpenes in Vetiver give it a grounding effect on your emotions and mood. It can also help support the immune system when taken internally.
49	Wild Orange oil	<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	Rutaceae	Citrus Rind (Peel)	Citrus	When the weather gets cold outside, Wild Orange is a great go-to to keep your healthy immune system supported. Wild Orange contains powerful antioxidants to maintain overall health and protect from oxidation.
50	Wintergreen oil	<i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>	Pyrolaceae	leaf, stem & fruit	Herbaceous	Wintergreen is a useful massage oil when you need to unwind, relieve tension, or reduce occasional stress. You can add a drop or two to your facewash to reduce the appearance of blemishes.
51	Ylang Ylang oil	<i>Cananga odorata</i>	Annonaceae	Flower	Floral	Use Ylang Ylang on your scalp to help with the appearance of healthy and shiny hair. The aroma alone helps promote a positive outlook and, at the same time, a night of restful sleep.

3. ESSENTIAL OIL SAFETY ISSUE

The essential oils are generally safe with minimum adverse effects. Several of these have been approved as food additives and fall in the category of generally recognized as safe by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.^[31] The most common adverse events are eye, mucous membrane, and skin irritation and sensitization, particularly to oils containing aldehydes and phenols. Phototoxicity of essential oil that contains furocoumarins, for example, *Citrus bergamia*, is also reported. Contact sensitization is more likely to occur due

to oxidation of monoterpenes, often due to inappropriate storage conditions.^[32] Cross-sensitization to other essential oils and foods is also possible. Allergy from inhaled essential oils can occur; however, data about exposure levels are limited, and many of the reports concern perfumes rather than aromatherapy essential oils.^[33] An exceptional case of airborne contact dermatitis was reported only once in the context to aromatherapy without massage.^[34] The aromatherapy utilizes non-defined mixtures of these essential oils without disclosing their plant sources. Allergic reactions have been reported in a few instances, especially with topical administration. These oils are not free from oxidization reactions with age and are reported for the change in their chemical composition on storage for a long time. Reversible prepubertal gynecomastia was reported in one study on repeated exposure to lavender and tea tree oils by topical administration.^[35] There is always a big controversy that arises when the safety of these essentials is discussed. No well-defined studies have proved that these essential oils are harmful. In the case of some isolated studies, we have observed that these are not safe, but the majority of studies have not proved these oils if used in aromatherapy are harmful.^[36]

4. CONCLUSION

From the above reports and study, we can conclude that aromatherapy is the natural and noninvasive gift of nature for humans. It's not only the disease symptoms that are eradicated but the whole body is rejuvenated by the use of aroma. Aromatherapy regulates the physiological, spiritual, and psychological upliftment for the new phase of life. This therapy is not only preventive but also can be used in the acute and chronic stages of disease. Pharmaceutical industries are trying for environmentally friendly, alternative, and natural medicine for diseases associated with pathogens and metabolism. There may be a possibility of enhancing the rate of reaction and bioavailability of drugs from the use of these essential oils.

If properly studied, these volatile oils may have a synergistic effect with the drugs used in the treatment of central nervous system disorder. Moreover, the time at which the plant contains the maximum amount of volatile oil with various chemical constituents also is a matter of discussion. Essential oils can be a useful non-medicinal option or can also be combined with conventional care for some health conditions, provided safety and quality issues are considered. The tilt of the scientific community towards complementary and alternative medicine has given the new hope to reduce the unwanted effects of modern medicine by

these essential oils and if properly explored to their full potential, this therapy can be a boon not only to the patients but also to the common man.

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