Essential Oils: Uses in Headache Disorders

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Disclosures

- I am not a physician and cannot answer disease specific questions.
- Information from this talk is not intended to replace your current medication, medical plan of care, or the advice of your licensed healthcare professional.
- **These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.**

Current organizational positions:
- Executive Board of Directors, Miles for Migraine
- Patient Advisory Board, Miles for Migraine
- Patient Leadership Council, National Headache Foundation
- Headache on the Hill Advocate for Arizona and Texas

Former organizational position:
- Treasurer, American Headache & Migraine Association

Current International Aromatherapy Associations:
- National Association of Holistic Aromatherapy
- Alliance of International Aromatherapists
- International Aromatherapy and Aromatic Medicine Association

I receive compensation from Young Living
Headache Types & Oils For Support

- Migraine
- Abdominal migraine
- Tension-type
- Cluster
- Trigeminal neuralgia
- Neuritis (occipital, supraorbital)
- Sinus
- Rebound
Headache Types & Oils For Support

- Migraine - (T/A) - basil, peppermint, copaiba, lavender
- Abdominal migraine – (T) lavender, ginger, German chamomile, sweet orange
- (I) lemon, peppermint, basil
- Tension-type - (T) - Idaho blue spruce, Idaho balsam fir, wintergreen, peppermint
- Cluster - (T/A) - frankincense (carterii), German chamomile, Helichrysum
- Trigeminal neuralgia – (T/A) - frankincense (carterii), Idaho balsam fir
- Neuritis (occipital, supraorbital) – (T/A) - wintergreen, peppermint, copaiba
- Sinus – (T/A) - Eucalyptus globulus, Eucalyptus radiata, peppermint
- Rebound – (A) - Eucalyptus globulus, rosemary, frankincense (carterii)

* (I) Internal, (T) Topical, (A) Aromatic

Common Migraine Symptoms

- Brain fog
- Fatigue
- Muscle tightness
- Anxiety
- Nausea
- Pain
Common Migraine Symptoms

- **Brain fog** – (T/A) – peppermint\(^3,49,50,51,53\), Idaho blue spruce, frankincense (sacra)
- **Fatigue** – (T/A) – peppermint\(^50\), nutmeg, lemongrass
- **Muscle tightness** – (T) - Idaho blue spruce, Idaho balsam fir, wintergreen\(^57,58\), peppermint\(^8,9,54\), Eucalyptus globulus\(^54\)
- **Anxiety** – (T/A) – lavender (I)\(^2,6,25,26,27,28,29,30,34,36,40,55,59\), Roman chamomile\(^5,6,55\), blue tansy, cedarwood
- **Nausea** – (I/T/A) – peppermint\(^7,22,23,47\), ginger\(^22,23,24\), patchouli (vomiting)
- **Nerve pain** – (T) - wintergreen, peppermint, marjoram, copaiba

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Common Migraine Triggers

- Seasonal allergies / hay fever
- Sinus issues
- Sleep issues
- Gut health
- Stress
- Hormones
- Strong odors
Common Migraine Triggers

- Seasonal allergies / hay fever – (T/A) combo of lavender, lemon\(^{45}\), and peppermint
- Sinus issues – (T/A) – peppermint, dorado azul, Eucalyptus globulus
- Sleep issues – (T/A) – lavender\(^{2,35,36,37,42,43,44}\), valerian, cedarwood, Roman Chamomile\(^{5,56}\)
- Gut health – (I/T) – peppermint\(^{52}\), ginger, cumin, lavender\(^{31,32,60}\)
- Stress – (T/A) – lavender\(^{38,39}\), Roman chamomile\(^{55}\), blue tansy, cedarwood, valerian
- Hormones – (T) – Female: clary sage\(^{10}\), basil, Idaho blue spruce
  Male: Idaho blue spruce, rosemary, sage
- Strong odors – (A) (1 drop on mask) peppermint, lemongrass

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Factors In Oil Ineffectiveness

- Poor quality
  - Warning signs:
    - “Flammable” (few oils have a low flash point, e.g.: frankincense / Boswellia carterii, sacred frankincense / Boswellia sacra)
    - “Aromatic Only”
    - “Do not ingest” on edible plant oils, not food grade quality
    - Expiration Date

- Incorrect quantity
  - Know how much is too much or too little
  - Frequency of application

- Incorrect application
  - Choose method appropriate for your need

- Incorrect storage practices
  - Avoid direct sunlight
  - Avoid heat (do not leave in car or use in steam devices)
  - Shelf life and oxidation (citrus)
Application Methods

- Aromatically
  - Indirect diffusing (non electric)
    - Earrings
    - Necklace
    - Bracelet
    - Car vent clip
  - Direct inhalation
    - Cupping the nose
    - Directly from bottle
  - Diffuser (cold water mist device)
Application Methods

- **Topical**
  - On the skin (location matters)
    - Back of neck
    - Temples
    - Under nose
    - Behind / around base of ears
    - Forehead
    - Around navel
    - Reflexology, acupressure, chakra points
  - Bath
  - Massage
Application Methods

- Topical

- Cautions:
  - Dilute properly based on specific oil and age
  - “Hot” oils are skin irritants (cinnamon, clove, peppermint, wintergreen, oregano…)
  - Sun and UV exposure: know which oils are phototoxic (citrus and a few others) and for how long (6, 12, or 24 hours)
  - Avoid eye area and other sensitive areas
  - Avoid if pregnant or lactating
  - Allergy to plant the oil is extracted from
Application Methods

- Internal
  - Cautions:
    - Food grade oils only
    - Only oils from edible plants (FDA GRAS [Generally Recognized As Safe] List)
    - Dilute with food grade carrier oil – avocado, coconut, grapeseed oil
    - 1 drop is generally sufficient
  - Capsules for targeted GI support
    - Regular
    - Delayed Release
Summary

- Biological preference - No one oil works for everyone
- Blends of oils tend to work better than a single plant oil
- Oils can be used before an attack
- “The sooner the better”
- Consistency is key
- Start low and slow
- Check for contraindications in current medicines and medical conditions
- Always notify your doctors of all supplements and essential oils you are taking
Resources

► Online:
  ► Dr Axe
  ► PubMed
  ► FDA essential oil GRAS list

► Evidence based reference guides:
  ► Essential Oil Desk Reference – Life Science Publishing
  ► Evidence-Based Essential Oil Therapy – Dr Scott Johnson
  ► Essential Oils Ancient Medicine – Dr Josh Axe
  ► Essentials – Lindsey Elmore, PHARMD
Additional Recommendations

- Probiotics – aim for 10 strains, 10-20 million CFU, on empty stomach
- Read ingredient labels
- Eliminate toxins, reduce chemical burden on the body
  - “Green” ≠ plant based or non-toxic
  - Women, on average, use over 500 chemicals on their body daily
- Advocate for changes in healthcare, insurance, treatments, and legislation. If we don’t, who will?
- Get involved with organizations and/or support groups
Thank you!

- Follow me at
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