

The background of the slide features several stalks of lavender flowers in shades of purple and blue, set against a dark blue background. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing individual blossoms and others as dense clusters. The stems are green and have small, narrow leaves.

# Essential Oils: Uses in Headache Disorders

MICHELE S. VARGAS  
AROMATHERAPIST

# 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<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Abdominal migraine – (T) lavender, ginger, German chamomile, sweet orange
- ▶ (I) lemon, peppermint, basil
- ▶ Tension-type - (T) - Idaho blue spruce, Idaho balsam fir, wintergreen, peppermint<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ 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

3. Göbel H. Der Nervenarzt 1996;67:672-681

4. Sasannejad P. Eur Neurol 2012;67:288-291



# Common Migraine Symptoms

- ▶ Brain fog
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Muscle tightness
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Nausea
- ▶ Pain



# Common Migraine Symptoms

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

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

2. Kasper S. Intl J Psych Clin Prac 2013;17:15-22  
5. Amsterdam JD. Altern Ther Health Med 2012;18:44-49  
6. Srivastava JK. Mol Med Report 2010;3:895-891  
7. Pillai AK. Pediatr Blood Cancer 2011;56:234-238  
8. Barbar A. Pharm Acta Helv 1990;65:170-174  
9. Ou MC. J Altern Complement Med 2014;20:771-779  
22. Lua PL. J Altern Compl Med 2012;18:534-40  
23. Hunt R. Anesth Analg 2013 117:597-604  
24. Misharina TA Prikl Biokhim Mikrobiol 2014;50:101-07  
25. Kasper S. Int J Psych Clin Pract 2013;1:15-22  
26. Schuwald AM. PloS One 2013;8:c59998  
27. Uehleke B. Phytomed 2012;19:665-71  
28. Woelk H. Phytomed 2010;17:94-99  
29. Umezu T. Jpn J Pharm 2000;83:150-53  
30. Umezu T. Pharm Biochem Behav 2006;85:713-21

34. Bradley BF. Hum Psych Clin Exper 2009;24:319-30  
36. Johannessen B. Complem Ther Clin Pract 2013;19:209-13  
40. Louis M. Am J Hosp Palliat Care 2002;19:381-86  
41. Kritsidima M. Comm Dent Oral Epid 2010;38:83-87  
47. Stea S. Evid Based Comp Altern Med 2014;2014:726341  
49. Varney E. J Altern Comp Med 2013;19:69-71  
50. Barker S. Percept Mot Skills 2003;97:1007-10  
51. Moss M. Int J Neurosci 2008;118-59-77  
53. Norrish MI. Int J Psychophysiol 2005;55:291-98  
54. Gobel H. Phytomedicine 1995;2:93-12  
55. Cho MY. Evid Based Comp Altern Med 2013;2013:1-6  
59. Lehrner J. Physiol Beohav 2005 15;86:92-95



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

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

10. Hur MH. Evid Based Complement Alternat Med 2012  
31. Hawrelak JA. Altern Med Rev 2009;14:380-84  
32. Baker J. AMJ Physiol Gastroint Liver Physiol 2012;303:G825-36  
35. Soltani R. Int J Ped Otorhin 2013 77:1579-81  
36. Johannessen B. Complem Ther Clin Pract 2013;19:209-13  
37. Guillemain J. Ann Pharm Fr 1989;47:337-43  
38. Takhashi M. Nat Prod Commun 2012;7:1539-44  
39. Kim S. J Altern Comp Med 2011;17:823-26

42. Arzi A. Chem Senses 2010;35:31-40  
43. Goel N. Chronobiol Int 2005;22:889-904  
44. Lewith GT. J Altern Comp Med 2005;11:631-37  
45. Ferrara L. ISRN Pharm 2012;2012:404606  
52. Goerg KJ. Ailment Pharmacol Ther 2003;17:445-51  
55. Cho MY. Evid Based Comp Altern Med 2013;2013:1-6  
56. Rossi T. Pharmacol Res Commun 1988;20 Suppl 5:71-74  
60. Lis-Balchin M. Phytother Res 1999;13:540-42





# 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  
<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/cfrsearch.cfm?fr=182.20>
- ▶ 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, PHARM.D



# 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
  - ▶ [facebook.com/groups/HealthHacks/](https://facebook.com/groups/HealthHacks/)
  - ▶ [youtube.com/c/MicheleBert](https://youtube.com/c/MicheleBert)
  - ▶ Instagram: @MicheleBlumVargas
  - ▶ Twitter: @MicheleBlum
  
- ▶ Contact me at
  - ▶ [info@michelevargas.com](mailto:info@michelevargas.com)

