

ESSENTIAL OILS for THE ELDERLY

A guide for caregivers



A natural approach to the golden years.

As a caregiver to a senior, you understand the unique challenges that can come with aging. This sheet will give you ideas for using essential oils in your care routines to support emotional and physical wellness for the elderly.

SENIOR ESSENTIALS



Lavender

Calming
Promotes restful sleep
Soothes aches and irritated skin



Orange

Supports emotional well-being
Regularizes digestion
Encourages appetite



Peppermint

Soothes upset stomach
Opens airways
Energizes
Cools and soothes



Frankincense

Calms nerves
Immune support
Joint support
Promotes cellular health



"My daughter would fidget and ask to leave during visits with Grandma in her care center. I made a massage oil in a dropper bottle with 2 ounces of fractionated coconut oil and 5 drops of lavender essential oil. It became Lucy's job to give Grandma a hand massage when we visited. It gave her something positive to focus on and they both enjoyed the calming aroma." —Amy J.

What are essential oils?

Essential oils are liquids that are steam-released or pressed from plants. They have therapeutic properties that support many aspects of wellness. A quality essential oil is 100% plant derived with no additional processing, preservatives, or other ingredients.

FAVORITE USES

Better sleep

Lavender and cedarwood
Diffuse and apply to feet at bedtime

Waking up/energizing

Orange and peppermint
Add to diffuser

Freshening spaces

Orange, lemon, peppermint, bergamot, lavender
Diffuse almost any oil for a healthy, uplifting aroma

Immune support

Melaleuca, lemon, or an immune support blend

Diffuse to keep air clean; apply to feet nightly

Soothing aches

Peppermint or a muscle blend
Diffuse or apply to chest

Relaxing bath

Lavender
Add 2 drops to bathwater

Foot massage

Peppermint and lavender
Massage a few drops onto feet with lotion to cool, relax, and support joint comfort

How to use essential oils for seniors

Aromatically

Ideal for emotional and respiratory support.

For a group living situation, try adding 1–2 drops of oil to a cotton ball and tuck in to a pocket or pillowcase. This technique confines the aroma to a limited area.

Massage

Ideal for supporting skin, joints, and muscles.

Combine 6 drops essential oil with ¼ cup carrier oil and apply with gentle strokes. The physical contact of massage can also promote bonding between patient and caregiver.

Topically

Ideal for areas of discomfort or irritation.

Add 1–4 drops of essential oil to 2 teaspoons of carrier oil. Apply to affected area or to bottoms of the feet. Apply more carrier oil if needed.

Diffusion

Ideal for freshening stale spaces, purifying the air, or providing emotional and respiratory support for extended periods of time.

Add oils to a diffuser. Start with 30 minutes. Excellent for calming oils such as lavender.

Dietary

Ideal for digestive issues and immune support.

Use the lowest recommended dose (1 drop per 8-ounces of water) and observe reactions carefully. Offer only oils marked as safe for ingestion.

SAFETY NOTE:

Diluting essential oils

Combining essential oils and carrier oil (such as coconut or olive oil) is called dilution. Diluting essential oils helps slow absorption and reduce skin sensitivity. Start with 1 to 2 drops of essential oil in a teaspoon of carrier oil. If an oil feels too hot or too cool, apply more carrier oil to the skin.



"As a professional caregiver, I keep a bottle of lavender with me all day. One of my patients gets angry, agitated, and hard to calm down. I take her aside and rub lavender on her chest, earlobes, and wrists. The lavender coupled with a calm voice always works. She calms down and can rest."

—Leticia S., Licensed Recreational Therapist

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Apply listed oil to pulse points, diffuse, or inhale from the bottle or palms.

Apathy	Rosemary	Confused	Clary sage
Anxious	Lavender	Isolated	Cedarwood
Anger	Orange or lavender	Cynical	Orange
Agitation	Lavender	Distrust	Geranium
Belittled	Bergamot	Lonely	Marjoram
Clingy	Eucalyptus	Sad	Geranium

PHYSICAL SUPPORT

Aches/Discomfort	Frankincense, lavender, peppermint	Apply to affected area.
Bad Dreams	Lavender, juniper berry	Diffuse or use on bottoms of feet.
Bladder Support	Cypress	Apply over bladder area at bedtime.
Bowel Support	Ginger, rosemary, orange	Massage onto abdomen.
Circulatory Support	Clary sage, lavender, ylang ylang	Inhale or diffuse. Add to bath.
Cognitive Support	Rosemary, lemon, clary sage	Inhale or diffuse.
Digestive Support	Ginger, lemon, peppermint	Apply topically to abdomen, add a drop to a glass of water
Dry, Scaly Skin	Lavender	Apply diluted lavender to affected area.
Ear Discomfort	Lavender, basil, melaleuca	Apply behind the ears, not inside them.
Immune Support	Lavender, basil	Apply to affected area.
Joint Support	Lemongrass, wintergreen	Apply to affected area.
Loss of Appetite	Basil, cardamom, ginger, rosemary	Inhale or diffuse.
Memory Support	Clary sage, rosemary, lemon	Inhale or diffuse.
Renal Support	Frankincense, lemon, juniper berry	Inhale, apply topically, or add 1 drop of lemon or juniper berry to an 8-ounce glass of water.
Respiratory Support	Eucalyptus, lavender, peppermint	Inhale or diffuse.
Skin Health	Helichrysum, lavender, melaleuca, ylang ylang	Apply to affected area.
Trouble Sleeping	Lavender and cedarwood	Diffuse or use on bottoms of feet.
Upset Stomach	Ginger, lavender, peppermint	Massage onto abdomen.

See the blog at www.ShareOils.com for more ideas and recipes.

For more information about essential oils contact:

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS: Keep oils out of reach of children. Do not use in the eyes or ear canal or on mucous membranes. If irritation occurs, apply a carrier oil. Do not add water. Citrus oils can increase sun sensitivity; allow at least 12 hours between application and exposing skin to the sun. **DO NOT INGEST** arborvitae, cedarwood, cypress, eucalyptus, white fir, or wintergreen. If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have liver or immune issues, talk to your doctor about ingesting.

DISCLAIMER: This handout has not been evaluated by the FDA. The products and methods recommended are not intended to treat, diagnose, cure, or prevent illness or disease. It is not a substitute for medical advice.

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"In the time we have been using essential oils as part of our person centered care approach, I have seen a major decrease in behaviors and mood improvement with our residents and staff. Lavender works so well for calming patients who are experiencing anxious feelings and agitation. Diffusing orange and grounding blend in the common areas keep staff and residents calm, while also reducing stress. I personally always keep a bottle of peppermint at my desk to help relieve aches and tension."

—Chris S., ED, LVN
Executive Director, Continuing Care Retirement Community



SELF CARE FOR CAREGIVERS

Providing care and support for seniors can be physically taxing and emotionally challenging. Support your well-being with these essential oils.

- Inhale peppermint to perk up your mood.
- Inhale orange to combat stress.
- Ward off digestive discomfort with a few drops of ginger.
- Let go and relax by massaging bergamot into your temples and wrists.
- Unwind with a foot bath (see recipe below) and a phone call with a friend.
- Scent your bedroom with lavender and cedarwood for restorative sleep.

ROLLER RECIPES

To make: add listed essential oils to a 10 ml roller bottle, then fill bottle with carrier oil of choice. Apply directly to affected area or to the bottoms of feet.

- Tummy Tamer: 2 drops peppermint. Apply around belly button.
- Breathe Easy: 1 drop cypress, 1 drop eucalyptus, 1 drop lavender. Apply to chest and under nose.
- Skin Soother: 5 drops helichrysum, 5 drops lavender, 5 drops melaleuca, and 3 drops ylang ylang. Apply gently to bruised or irritated skin.

FOOT BATH

Combine 2 cups Epsom salts with 5 drops essential oils. Shake. Add to a regular bath or foot bath.