



Frankincense

(*Boswellia carteri*)

Stock #3899-9 (5 ml.)

Frankincense essential oil is often used in costly cosmetics and toiletries as a dry skin treatment to rejuvenate and tone the skin, while also softening wrinkles and stretch marks. Along with its astringent properties, frankincense is also an antiseptic oil, useful for strengthening immune function, as well as treating both male and female genito-urinary infections. Frankincense oil is particularly beneficial as a respiratory inhalant for various lung ailments such as asthma, bronchitis and laryngitis. Furthermore, frankincense oil has long been employed in Ayurvedic medicine for inflammatory conditions, including arthritis and related rheumatic musculoskeletal problems, as well as various inflammatory skin diseases (i.e. boils, sores, ulcers, etc.).¹⁻³

Frankincense essential oil elicits a calming psychological effect, relieving anxiety and nervous tension. It also has a solid reputation as an antidepressant for clearing melancholia and morbidity. Frankincense oil's ability to regulate and deepen breathing makes it an ideal instrument for facilitating meditation and other spiritual exercises.^{1,3}

Essential oils have been utilized in cough medicines for years; although, some researchers believe that the expectorant ability of such medicines is due to the local action of essential oils on the respiratory tract lining during exhalation (after the cough medicine has been swallowed). In one randomized trial of 182 institutionalized patients, a mixture of the essential oils of clove, cinnamon, lavender, thyme and mint appeared to decrease the frequency of bouts of chronic bronchitis. One advantage of inhaling vaporized essential oils is that in many cases, infections linger in the sinuses between bouts. Essential oils regarded as beneficial for the treatment of chest infections and other respiratory problems include eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), frankincense (*Boswellia carteri*), lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), and thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*).⁴

Frankincense essential oil contains the chemical paracymene, which possesses analgesic (pain-relieving) properties that are especially beneficial for treating osteoarthritic pain. In addition, research published in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* has identified a peripheral analgesic effect from the terpene myrcene, which is found in the essential oils of frankincense, rose and rosemary. Not surprisingly, these oils have a long history of analgesic use.^{4,5}

Frankincense essential oil may also prove to be an effective alternative to drugs for preventing nausea and vomiting. The area of the brain associated with vomiting is stimulated by the neurotransmitter acetylcholine; thus, many anti-emetic drugs work by inhibiting the action of acetylcholine. Frankincense has been found to contain two substances with anti-acetylcholine activity, myrcene and the alcohol borneol.⁴

Frankincense oil should not be used during the first trimester of pregnancy, due to its properties as an emmenagogue—a substance which promotes menstruation.³

References

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- 2 Schnaubelt PhD, K. *Advanced Aromatherapy*. Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1995.
- 3 Wildwood, C. *The Encyclopedia of Aromatherapy*. Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1996.
- 4 Buckle RGN, J. *Clinical Aromatherapy in Nursing*. San Diego, CA: Singular Publish., 1997.
- 5 Lorenzetti, B.B., et. al. "Myrcene mimics the peripheral analgesic activity of lemongrass tea." *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*; 1991, 34(1): 43-48.