



Tea Tree Oil (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) Stock #1777-1 (0.5 fl. oz.)

The *Australian Medical Journal* describes the essential oil of tea tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) as “the finest antiseptic known to man.” Tea tree oil has shown incredible effectiveness against all three main infectious groups—bacteria, fungi and viruses. Such diverse application makes tea tree oil an excellent remedy for treating cold sores and herpes; sinus/throat infections and respiratory ailments; yeast and fungal infections, including athlete’s foot, ringworm, thrush and *Candida albicans*; genito-urinary disorders such as bladder and *Trichomonas vaginalis* infections; skin and scalp problems; and nearly any other condition involving infection or infestation of bacterial, fungal or viral origin.¹⁻⁴

Unlike conventional antibiotics, tea tree oil’s remarkable, broad-spectrum activity is the result of the interaction (synergism) of approximately 100 components, thus making it difficult, if not practically impossible, for an infectious organism to develop resistance to it. In addition, tea tree oil is classified as virtually nontoxic and hypoallergenic, and can thus be used in baths, gargles and mouthwashes, diffusers and vaporizers, and in conjunction with massage.^{1,2}

Tea tree essential oil has been shown to be an effective anti-fungal agent in vitro against most forms of fungus that cause infections of the skin and mucous membranes, including 32 strains of *Candida albicans* and other candida species. In addition, a randomized, double-blind trial involving 104 patients with athlete’s foot, showed that a tea tree oil preparation was as effective as the anti-fungal drug tolnaftate, for reducing clinical symptoms. Still another randomized, double-blind controlled trial of 117 individuals with toenail onychomycosis—toenail fungal infection—compared the effects of pure tea tree oil (*Melaleuca alternifolia*) against clotrimazole (a leading medication for toenail fungus). Following 6 months of topical application twice-daily, tea tree oil was determined to be a comparable, safe and inexpensive treatment.⁵⁻⁸

Researchers studying the effect of several essential oils on enteropathogenic—microorganisms that cause disease primarily in the intestinal tract—and spoilage bacteria strains found that tea tree oil demonstrated a high inhibitory effect on Gram positive bacteria. Another study, reported in *Obstetrics and Gynecology*, confirmed tea tree oil’s effectiveness against anaerobic and trichomonal vaginitis. In addition, tea tree oil was found to be among the most potent of botanical oils tested against anaerobic oral bacterial. Furthermore, a tea tree oil preparation has been proven to be a successful treatment in vitro against headlice (*Pediculus humanus capitis*).⁹⁻¹²

Recent research indicates tea tree oil is not only useful as an anti-microbial and disinfectant, but also may prove beneficial in the fight against “superbugs”—antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Previous studies have shown that tea tree oil acts as a broad-spectrum antibiotic, capable of killing a wide variety of microorganisms, including bacteria, fungi and yeast. Although tea tree oil studies to date have been conducted in vitro, scientists believe such preliminary research demonstrates promise for numerous uses, including external treatment of staph infections and skin diseases. A study published in the *Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy* showed that low concentrations of tea tree oil (*Melaleuca alternifolia* - 0.5%) killed over 60 strains of *Staphylococcus aureus*—a common bacteria responsible for numerous hospital-acquired infections—that had become resistant to the antibiotics methicillin and mupirocin.^{4,13}

According to scientists in Australia, tea tree oil appears to damage the structure of bacterial cell membranes. Therefore, unlike methicillin and many other antibiotics that interrupt bacterial production of cell walls and work best during stages of bacterial growth, tea tree oil destroys bacteria both during growth phases and while at rest.^{4,13-15}

Furthermore, extensive clinical data suggests that the essential oils of tea tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*), lemon (*Citrus limon*), lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), or sweet thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*), diluted in distilled water and applied as a compress, can facilitate the mending of broken skin and be used to irrigate sores and wounds.¹⁰

References:

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