



by Marilyn Reid

The Goodness of Peppermint

Peppermint oil is used in aromatherapy for a broad spectrum of physical ailments and conditions. *Mentha piperita* being its Latin name, this pure essence of the plant has a refreshing, mint-like fragrance. Apart from its refreshing qualities, peppermint essential oil also has anti-viral, antiseptic and astringent properties.

Being a natural aid in decreasing pulmonary congestion, this oil when inhaled is a wonderful remedy for alleviating the symptoms of colds and coughs. Chest infections can also be eased if it is diluted with a base oil and massaged on the chest.

Peppermint essential oil has been in use since ancient times. Its presence has been detected in Egyptian tombs dating as far back as 1000 BC. The Romans too are reputed to have used it as a digestive aid. Peppermint leaves would have been traditionally eaten or brewed as a tea in order to treat various nerve and gastric problems.

According to ancient lore, the Egyptians dedicated this fragrant mint to Horus, one of their gods. The Romans, on the other hand, personified it as *Mentha* or *Minthe*, the lovely water nymph whom Pluto loved. It is said that when Prosperine, Pluto's queen, discovered this, out of jealousy she trampled *Mentha* into the ground, turning her into the humble mint plant. However, Pluto issued a decree that the more the mint was trampled upon, the sweeter would be the aroma that would emanate from it.

In use since ancient times, the presence of peppermint essential oil has been detected in Egyptian tombs dating as far back as 1000 BC.



By the 17th century the peppermint plant hybridized naturally into about 20 varieties of perennials that are found today, which have the ability of spreading easily by their root systems. Now, it grows in the wild all over North America, Europe and Australia. It is also amongst the few essential oil plants that are cultivated in the US, where the conditions of the soil, the temperature and the rainfall in central Oregon and Michigan are perfect for producing high quantities of the oil.

One of the most extensively used aromatic oils today, peppermint is found in all sorts of products, both inedible and edible, such as medicines, liqueurs, gums, candies, desserts, ice cream, beverages, jellies and sauces, dental and aromatherapy preparations, tobacco, cosmetics and cleaners.

Because of its antispasmodic properties, which alleviate the spasms of the smooth muscles in the stomach and the intestines, it is especially good for ailments including cholic, stomach ache, vomiting, indigestion, and diarrhea.

Peppermint also has a palliative effect on the liver. And it is highly effective in treating flu and cold, and helps to clear congested sinuses and other nasal orifices. Peppermint is an excellent remedy for headaches, especially when combined with lavender. The reason for this being that while peppermint is a stimulant, lavender has sedative properties. This blending of stimulant and sedative properties is used in many analgesics like aspirin, Anacin, etc.

Unlike other painkillers, peppermint does not merely suppress pain, but also acts on the ailment causing it. Another specialty of peppermint is its property of inducing cooling as well as sweating effects, which is used to treat both flu and colds. The essential oil of peppermint is also said to be a very good brain stimulant. It can induce a feeling of mental freshness, which results in positive effects like the ability to face any challenge. It is also used for treating the effects of shock. 

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About the Author: For the past 10 years Marilyn Reid has been active as an advocate for alternative health therapies. The author of a soon to be published book on Essential Oils and Aromatherapy, Marilyn has been delving into the upstate New York fields of therapeutic Essential Oils for over 7 years.

The Many Uses of Peppermint Essential Oil

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- ❖ INDIGESTION
- ❖ DIARRHEA
- ❖ HEADACHE
- ❖ COLD & FLU
- ❖ MENTAL CLARITY
- ❖ PAIN RELIEF
- ❖ ANTIVIRAL
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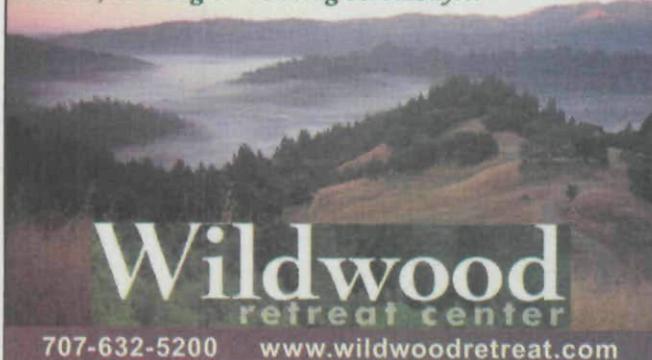
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