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CHAPTER

The importance of sleep

We know that everything we do during our daily routine influences our health and wellbeing; however, we often forget that our sleeping habits are just as crucial to our health. Yes, exercising, eating right, and finding a healthy way to deal with emotions and stress are all important parts of our day, but allowing our minds and bodies to rest and recuperate at night is equally important. While some may think that the only consequences of poor sleep are feeling groggy or sluggish the next day, sleep deprivation has actually been linked to a number of health risks that can impact the body.

What do our brains and bodies do while we are asleep?

Sleeping is much more than just a way to pass the time, or a means of getting rid of the bags under our eyes. As we sleep, our brains and bodies go through important processes that are necessary for growth, learning and memory, and recuperation of the body's systems.

While we sleep, our brain processes information, stimuli, and memories from throughout the day. As the brain sorts through important information and memories, it clears away waste and excess information in order to refresh the mind—allowing the brain to start fresh in the morning.

Relaxed, deep sleep allows the body to rest and recuperate by rejuvenating the body's cells while relaxing the muscles and taking slow, deep breaths. Just as our minds must process information while we sleep, giving the body a break will help major systems function properly.

During the night, we experience several levels of sleep that allow the brain and the body to rest and recover. When we cut those processes short, our minds and bodies haven't had time to properly process and recuperate, which can cause problems in the long run.



The consequences of poor sleeping patterns

Experts suggest that adults get at least seven to eight hours of sleep per night. While the amount of sleep required may vary slightly from person to person, it is important for everyone to allow their body to rest for a substantial amount of time every night in order to maintain proper function of the brain and the body's major systems. Unfortunately, many adults do not receive the proper amount of sleep each night due to a number of circumstances, including frequent interruption during the night by children or newborns, inadequate bedding or an unfavorable sleeping environment, consumption of stimulating substances like caffeine, a demanding work schedule, and distractions like technology or entertainment. In addition to these factors that often keep adults from getting proper rest, some people deal with more serious health conditions associated with sleep that can cause interruptions throughout the night.

Because regular quality sleep is vital to the body's restorative processes, missing out on proper rest can pose health risks. For example, inadequate sleep can impact our ability to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight. Loss of sleep can also influence our emotions, behavior, and decision-making abilities, which can have



Experts suggest that adults sleep between seven and eight hours every night to function properly; however, this can vary from person to person. Some people can function well after only six hours per night, while other adults need 10 hours of sleep for peak brain and body performance.

negative effects on our daily life. For both adults and children, sleep deprivation can influence learning ability and motivation, making it difficult to complete tasks or learn properly. Depriving the body of sleep can negatively impact nearly any organ system in the body, which can seriously affect our overall health.

While some think that the impact of poor sleep is minimal, it is important to note that lack of sleep influences reaction time, which can seriously affect your ability to drive safely. Thousands of accidents and deaths are caused by drowsy drivers every year, making quality sleep a matter of life and death.

In addition to the consequences and risks listed above, the lack of proper sleep can have a variety of effects that may differ from person to person. The negative impact of sleep deprivation may manifest itself in the body by causing changes in mood, influencing cardiovascular health, or affecting the immune system. When you deprive your body of proper sleep and your brain of adequate rest, any number of negative consequences may follow.



While you are asleep...

The brain

- Processes information, stimuli, and memories
- Sorts through information and gets rid of waste
- Undergoes processes essential for learning and memory

The body

- Rejuvenates the body's cells
- Rests and recuperates through relaxing muscles and slowing the breathing
- Undergoes processes essential for growth and regulating hormones



Sleep deprivation can influence:

- Our ability to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight
- Emotions, behaviors, and ability to make decisions
- Learning and motivation levels (in both children and adults)
- The body's organ systems and overall health
- Reaction time; ability to drive safely

Good sleeping habits can improve quality of life and overall health

Just as sleep deprivation can lead to health risks and other negative impacts on the body and brain, getting good sleep helps the body recuperate and prepare for another day. With proper sleep, you'll have the mental alertness and control over your emotions needed to tackle the challenges of each day. Rather than jeopardizing or attacking the systems of the body, you can help rejuvenate the body and promote overall wellness by getting quality, consistent sleep.

You might need a little extra help

For many people, getting better sleep isn't simply a matter of going to bed earlier or rearranging their schedule. Many adults have the best intentions of getting good sleep, but their plans are thwarted when they can't get their brain or their body to settle down. If you've tried your best to improve your sleeping habits but can't seem to get better sleep, try a few of the suggestions below:

- Maintain a healthy diet
- Create a good sleeping environment: make sure it is dark, not too hot or cold, and quiet
- Avoid stimulants: alcohol, nicotine, caffeine
- Make sure you have adequate bedding: consider buying new pillows or a new mattress
- Exercise regularly (but not too close to bedtime)
- Remove distractions: remove the temptation of technology, and try to avoid screens before bed
- Relax the body: try a warm bath, or chamomile tea (non-stimulating)
- Reset your internal clock: go to bed and wake up at the same time every night and morning

Essential oils can help with sleep and relaxation

In addition to the methods above, there are dozens of remedies, products, and approaches that claim to help promote sleep. However, each person is different, and what works for one person might not work for another. Essential oils have been used for thousands of years for their calming and soothing properties that can help relax the body and mind. The unique chemical properties found in certain essential oils make them useful for promoting an environment that is conducive for sleep. Because there is such a wide variety of essential oils, and because each oil has its own set of benefits, users can find an oil that works best for them. No two people will have the exact same reaction to a single oil, which means that the user can experiment to find the best essential oil for their needs.

Each person's needs and rituals are a little bit different when it comes to sleeping, which makes essential oils a useful agent for creating a quality sleeping environment. The user can tailor each oil to fit their needs, and hopefully find their way to better sleep.

CHAPTER

2

The science behind essential oils and sleep

For many years, essential oils have been used to help calm and relax the body in an effort to promote a good night of sleep. You might be wondering, “How does it work? How do essential oils help the body with sleep?” With any essential oil, the specific benefits of the oil will depend on its chemical makeup. Every essential oil has a completely unique chemical profile, because each oil comes from a different plant part. Some chemical constituents can give an oil soothing or calming properties, while other constituents can make an oil cleansing, cooling, or invigorating. Because each essential oil contains a different combination of several chemical properties, each oil holds unique benefits. To use essential oils for their sleep benefits, the user simply needs to select oils with chemical components that are soothing, calming, relaxing, and promote a suitable environment for sleep.



Which chemical components contain properties that are useful for sleep?

Because each essential has a different chemical makeup, some essential oils are more useful for sleep than others. So which chemical components make an essential oil particularly useful for sleep? Let’s discuss a few chemical groups that are known to have benefits for promoting healthy sleep by relaxing, soothing, and calming the body and mind.

Alcohol

Commonly found in essential oils, alcohols are chemical groups that are composed of a hydrogen and an oxygen atom. Essential oils that contain alcohols can have a number of possible benefits including cleansing properties, protection against environmental threats, supporting a healthy cardiovascular system*, helping to uplift the mood, and, of course, supporting restful sleep. Alcohols that have the potential to promote restful sleep typically include the chemicals santalol and linalool.



Essential oils containing alcohols that support restful sleep

- Oil: Clary Sage
Chemical constituent: linalool
- Oil: Sandalwood
Chemical constituent: santalol
- Oil: Lavender
Chemical constituent: linalool

Ketones

Characterized as a chemical group that features an oxygen with a double bond that always occurs somewhere in the middle of a carbon chain, Ketones are frequently found in essential oils. Oils that contain ketones may help improve the appearance of the skin, can support healthy respiratory function*, sometimes promote healthy digestion*, or provide calming properties that are useful for supporting sleep. Ketones with calming properties include the chemicals carvone, camphor, fenchone, and octanone.

Essential oils containing ketones with calming properties

- Oil: Dill
Chemical constituent: carvone
- Oil: Lavender
Chemical constituent: fenchone

Esters

Formed when a reaction occurs between an alcohol and a carboxylic acid, esters are known as a chemical group that provides essential oils with a variety of benefits. The main benefits of esters include calming, relaxing, and soothing effects on mood, helping to reduce the appearance of skin blemishes, and a soothing, warming sensation when applied topically. The calming and relaxing properties of esters can make essential oils with this chemical group helpful for promoting sleep.

Essential oils containing esters with calming, relaxing, and soothing effects on mood

- Oil: Roman Chamomile
Chemical constituent: isobutyl acetate, isoamyl angelate
 - Oil: Lavender
Chemical constituent: linalyl acetate
 - Oil: Bergamot
Chemical constituent: linalyl acetate
- * Oil: Clary Sage
Chemical constituent: linalyl acetate

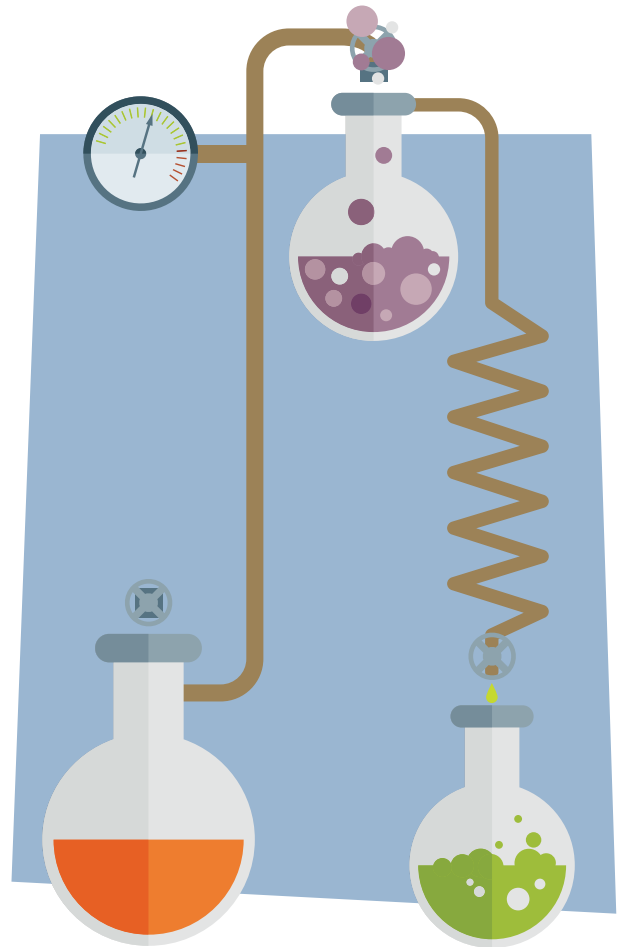


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How do chemical components make essential oils useful for sleep?

Now that you have learned about a few chemical constituents commonly found in essential oils, you might still be wondering, “How will these chemical properties help me sleep?” When an essential oil contains the chemical properties discussed above, or any chemical properties with a soothing, calming, or relaxing nature, it will cause a positive response within the brain and the body.

Upon inhaling an essential oil with calming properties, the brain will process the aroma, and an effect will follow. Once you experience a restful night of sleep after using the calming oil, the brain will make what is called a positive association with that aroma, so the next time you smell that particular oil, your brain will have a similar reaction. After successfully using an essential oil to promote a good night of sleep, that oil can be continually used as part of healthy sleep regimen because of the positive connection your brain has made between the smell of the oil and a good night’s rest.



Inhale. Inhaling an essential oil can induce a response within the body for relaxation

Sleep. This internal response can encourage a restful night of sleep

Positive association. After a restful night of sleep, the aroma has now created a positive association within the brain

Repeat. Positive association promotes further use of this particular oil as part of a healthy sleeping routine

As discussed, each individual has different sleep patterns, preferences, and needs, and every person will react to an essential oil a little bit differently. This is what makes essential oils so useful for promoting an environment conducive to sleep—you can find an oil that works for you and your sleeping needs. If you find that one essential oil doesn’t promote quality sleep like you hoped it would, you can try another oil that contains chemical components that are known to support sleep, and see if that particular oil is a better fit for your needs.

CHAPTER

Which essential oils are best for sleep?

With a basic understanding of the science behind essential oils and sleep, it is time to learn about what kinds of oils can be useful for supporting proper sleeping habits. As discussed, it is best to choose essential oils with chemical constituents that provide soothing, calming, and relaxing benefits for the body, mind, and mood. With these types of benefits at your disposal, you can then experiment to see which specific oils best fit your needs and preferences when it comes to sleeping.

Choose essential oils that can help you sleep.

Learning about the specific nature and benefits of each essential oil will help you narrow your search when you want to use an essential oil for sleep. You will want to choose essential oils that can help you create an ideal sleeping environment by promoting deep feelings of calmness and relaxation.

Each of the essential oils listed below have different characteristics that are helpful for promoting quality sleep, but each oil has a unique chemical makeup and interacts with the brain and body a little differently—making it easy for you to find an oil that works for you.

- A** Use aromatically to help with sleep
- T** Use topically to help with sleep
- I** Use internally to help with sleep



A With an aroma that is calming and soothing, Bergamot oil can help promote a sense of calm and harmony when used before bedtime.

A Cilantro oil can be used to create a peaceful feeling that will support a restful night of sleep.

A The warm, woody scent of Cedarwood oil promotes a peaceful feeling that can help the mind and body unwind before bed.

A The relaxing, balancing nature of Clary Sage oil can help you prepare for bed by creating a restful environment.

A When used aromatically, Dill oil can help lessen stress or anxious feelings. This oil can also be used internally before bed to help promote a restful sleep.*
I

A The soothing characteristics of Frankincense oil can help induce feelings of peace and satisfaction, while promoting feelings of relaxation.
T

A Commonly used for its calming properties, the light, floral aroma of Lavender oil makes it useful for creating an environment conducive for peaceful sleep.
T
I

A Marjoram oil holds significant calming properties that can help lessen feelings of stress.
T

A Useful for calming tension or nerves, Melissa oil can be used at nighttime to promote feelings of relaxation.
T

A Known for promoting feelings of calmness, Petitgrain oil may help promote restful sleep and ease feelings of tension.*
T
I

A Thought to have a calming effect on the mind and body, Roman Chamomile oil can be applied aromatically, topically, or internally for soothing benefits.*
T
I

A The grounding nature of Sandalwood oil makes it useful during your bedtime routine, as it promotes relaxation.
T

A During the middle ages, Thyme was often used to help promote a peaceful sleep or to ward off nightmares.

A Often used to create a soothing massage, Vetiver oil can help promote feelings of calm.
T

A The rich, floral aroma of Ylang Ylang oil can help reduce the effects of daily stress while promoting a calming
T

Tailoring your essential oil experience to fit your sleeping needs

As discussed, the same two people might have a different reaction to a single oil. When it comes to choosing essential oils to promote sleep, you might have to experiment to see which oils work best for you. Yes, you will want to choose an essential oil that is generally known for its relaxing properties if you intend to promote quality sleep; however, there are many types of oils that fall into different categories that can still be considered “relaxing.”

Calming

Consisting mostly of esters, calming oils are known for their ability to help promote calming feelings for the body and mind. While the specific aromas of these oils are vastly different, each oil has the ability to provide feelings of comfort.

Lavender

Clary Sage

Petitgrain

Roman Chamomile

Bergamot (simultaneously calms and uplifts)



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Soothing

Oils in the soothing category hold many benefits and can be used to soothe the skin, body, and mind. To help promote proper sleep, soothing essential oils can be used aromatically or topically at bedtime to gently ease the body and mind to sleep.

Melissa
Ylang Ylang
Dill



Harmonizing

Promoting feelings of harmony before bed can help prepare the body and mind for a night of tranquil sleep. These oils are mainly composed of alcohols and can help promote the composure and serenity needed for proper rest.

Cilantro
Marjoram

Warming

Oils in this category typically have a warm or spicy scent, and can help produce a warming sensation when applied to the skin. Warming oils can be used topically or aromatically before sleep to help promote calm, relaxed feelings. Make sure to always dilute warming oils and other strong oils before applying them topically.

Thyme



Keep in mind that the unique chemical makeup of each essential oil can give an oil several useful benefits. This means that an essential oil can be both warming and soothing, or both harmonizing and calming, depending on its specific combination of chemical constituents. As you experiment with different oils and various application methods, you will find that each essential oil creates a different reaction within the body or brain. These reactions will help you narrow your search as you select your favorite essential oils for promoting sleep and relaxation. Don't forget—you can always combine several essential oils together to help create the desired outcome of peaceful sleep.

4 CHAPTER

How to use essential oils to promote healthy sleep

With powerful and potent essential oils on your side, you can create an environment that will promote a good night's sleep. Once you've found an essential oil with relaxing, calming, or soothing properties, you can incorporate the oil into your bedtime routine to help you sleep better. You can experiment with different oils, and even blend oils together for effective results. After selecting your essential oils, there are dozens of applications that will allow you get the rest you need.

Diffusion

Diffusing essential oils is one of the simplest ways to enjoy the aromatic benefits of an oil—particularly at bedtime or when falling asleep. Placing an essential oil diffuser near your bed or in your bedroom will allow you to breathe in the relaxing aroma of the oil as you drift off to sleep. You can create your own bedtime diffuser blends by mixing a few essential oils together. Remember, not all of the oils you use in a diffuser blend have to fall within the “relaxing” or “calming” category. You can mix together a few calming oils with other essential oils you enjoy to make a unique aroma that will help you create an environment suitable for sleep.

Here are a few recipes for essential oil diffuser blends that are perfect for bedtime:

Sleepy Snuggles

3 drops Juniper Berry
2 drops Vetiver
2 drops



Relax, Rest, Rejuvenate

2 drops Lavender
1 drop Lime
1 drop Peppermint

Sweet Dreams

2 drops Cedarwood
2 drops Wild Orange
1 drop Ylang Ylang



Sleepy Thyme

1 drop Marjoram
1 drop Thyme

Bedtime Stories

1 drop Fennel
3 drops Lemon
2 drops Wild Orange
1 drop Cedarwood

Sweet Slumber

3 drops Bergamot
2 drops Cedarwood
1 drop Marjoram



Sleeping Beauty

2 drops Vetiver
2 drops Lavender
1 drop Frankincense

Rock-a-bye Baby

3 drops Patchouli
2 drops Sandalwood
1 drop Jasmine

If it takes you a while to fall asleep, turn the essential oil diffuser on during your nightly routine—allowing you to breathe in the calming aroma before going to bed. If you want to have a more restful night of sleep, place the diffuser on your bedside table, dresser, or in the corner of your bedroom, and set the timer. This will allow the aroma to remain in the room over an extended period of time, helping you to enjoy relaxed, peaceful sleep.

Bedtime and Bath time

If you want a relaxing essential oil experience for the entire body, adding essential oils to a warm bath can help calm and comfort the body and mind before bed. Not only will a warm bath help soothe the body after a long day, but essential oils will provide several aromatic benefits that will prepare you for bed. You can simply add a few drops of an essential oil (or several oils) to a warm bath, or combine the oils with Epsom salts and place in the bottom of the bathtub.

Pillows and bedding

Another simple way to enjoy the aromatic benefits of essential oils and promote quality sleep is by applying oils to your pillows and bedding. Combine a few drops of an essential oil (or oils) and a few ounces of water in a spray bottle and spritz the combination over your pillows and bedding. As you lay down to go to sleep, you will be surrounded by the relaxing, comforting aroma of essential oils.

Here are a few suggestions of oil combinations to spritz over your bedding before going to sleep:

Lavender + Cedarwood

Vetiver + Bergamot

Ylang Ylang + Sandalwood

Heating pad or neck wrap

Combining essential oils with a heating pad or neck wrap is an effective way to enjoy the aroma of calming essential oils, while simultaneously warming and relaxing the body. You can simply add a few drops of an essential oil to the outside fabric of a heating pad or neck wrap, and place on the neck or back for warming comfort. To make your own cordless heat pad that is perfect to use in conjunction with essential oils, follow the instructions below:



Materials Needed

Kitchen towel
6 cups flaxseed or rice
Sewing machine
dōTERRA® essential oil(s)

Directions:

1. Fold towel in half long-ways (hot-dog style).
2. Sew around the edges leaving a three-inch opening at the top. Turn right side out.
3. Loosely fill with flax seeds or rice.
4. Sew opening closed, and you're done!
5. To use, microwave for two to three minutes and add two drops of essential oil on the outer fabric.

Note: The heating pad will be very warm and can burn you if you heat it for too long. Start by putting your heating bag in the microwave for one minute, and then increase by 30 second increments until you have achieved your desired temperature.

Bottoms of the feet

For an easy way to promote a good night of rest, simply apply your favorite relaxing oil to the bottoms of your feet. This topical application will allow you to enjoy the aroma of the oil throughout the night— keeping you in a peaceful state of rest. This is also a useful application method for helping children to sleep. Simply rub the oil on the bottom of your children's feet during their nighttime routine to help them wind down before going to bed.

Remember, some essential oils will need to be diluted before topical application. When applying oils on children, remember to use less oil than you would for an adult, and always dilute oils that have a strong chemistry.

A warm shower before bed

If you prefer to take a warm shower before bed instead of a bath, you can still use essential oils to help relax the mind and body before sleep. Simply place a few drops of a calming essential oil on the floor of the shower, allowing the aroma of the oil to disperse throughout the room with the steam from the shower. Make sure to place the oil droplets away from the path of the water so that the oil doesn't get washed down the drain right away.

You can also add a few drops of a relaxing or soothing essential oil to your conditioner, and apply to your hair in the shower before going to bed. When you get out of the shower,



Massage

Essential oils have long been used to help enhance the art of massage. Using essential oils with calming, relaxing, and soothing properties during massage is a simple way to promote a good night of sleep. You can place a few drops of an essential oil in your hand, rub between the palms, and massage into the temples or neck. Massaging these areas with essential oils is an effective way to relax the mind and body, and can help calm you down before bedtime.

You can also use calming essential oils to massage the shoulders, arms, back, legs, or feet to help relax certain areas of the body, or even the body as a whole. Diluting essential oils with a carrier oil will help the oils to absorb into the skin, so that you can still enjoy the aroma of the oils as you sleep. Before applying any essential oils topically during a massage, please read all instructions to ensure that the oil is approved for topical use.



Cup of Tea

A common method for soothing the body before sleep is to drink a warm cup of tea. You can always add a drop or two of an essential oil to your nighttime tea to help soothe and relax the body for bed.* Make sure the tea you choose is not caffeinated, as stimulants tend to keep the body and mind awake. The addition of Bergamot oil can turn regular tea into Earl Grey, while oils with unique flavors, like Dill oil, make a wonderful addition to herbal tea. Many people drink chamomile tea before bed, so it is no surprise that adding a few drops of Roman Chamomile oil to tea can help soothe the body and mind.*

Before adding an essential oil to your tea, make sure that the oil has been approved for internal use and is safe to add to food and drink.

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It will take a little experimentation, but once you've discovered your favorite calming essential oils, you can develop a personalized bedtime routine that leads to quality, consistent sleep. Consider your specific needs when it comes to sleep, and use your favorite bedtime oils to help you create a restful sleeping environment. You will no longer lay awake at night counting sheep when you have the natural, potent power of essential oils at your disposal—ready to help you slip into the kind of peaceful sleep that your body and mind desperately need in order to tackle another day