

## Consider Aromatherapy to Help Combat the Flu

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Imagine, you are reading the morning paper with a headline that says, "Flu pandemic hits Colorado, thousands dead." This doesn't seem possible. Or is it? Are you prepared?

Last century, three pandemics swept the globe. In 1918, the first pandemic, sometimes called the "Spanish Flu," killed over 500,000 Americans and more than 20 million people worldwide. One-third of the U.S. population was infected, and average life expectancy was reduced by 13 years. In 1957 and 1968 the flu killed tens of thousands of Americans and millions across the world. Scientists believe that viruses from birds played a role in each of those outbreaks.

In 2005 a new influenza strain – influenza A (H5N1) – was spreading through bird populations across Asia, Africa, and Europe, infecting domesticated birds, including ducks, and chickens, and long-range migratory birds. The first recorded appearance of H5N1 in humans occurred in Hong Kong in 1997. Since then, the virus has infected over 200 people in the Eastern Hemisphere, with a mortality rate of over 50 percent.

Today, the news of swine flu (H1N1) becoming a pandemic is in all the news. It is a combination bird flu and swine flu. I've heard that it is starting out like the 1918 pandemic. In 1918 the flu appeared in the springtime, was not very threatening then became full blown by the fall.

We don't know the future, but we can be prepared. Here are some suggestions for you.

### Pathogen destroyers:

- Oregano, *Origanum vulgare* – effectively kill pathogenic bacteria, viruses, fungi, and protozoa; antioxidant and anti-inflammatory. Anti-infectious for respiratory tract.
- Ravensara, *Ravensara aromatica sonn* – excellent antiviral agent, particularly for flu and colds; applied neat to feet, particularly helpful in cases of pneumonia
- Tea Tree, *Melaleuca alternifolia* – powerful antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal that is perfectly safe.
- Eucalyptus globulus – when diffused disinfects the air, effective on flu. Not recommended for children.
- Eucalyptus radiata – combine with Tea Tree and Lavender, 5 drops each into 1 ounce of Grapeseed oil and massage over the lung area. Non-toxic, safe for children.

Note: Since the immune system of some victims will over react to the bird flu and cause the body to attack itself, consider using oils that will act like white blood cells and attack the virus directly. Lemon oil stimulates WBC production. Cinnamon kills A & B bacteria and is therefore acting like WBC. Once the virus has had its way, which it does within hours, it has laid the foundation for bacteria to grow.

**1. Hand Cleanser:** Wash your hands frequently with disinfectant soap and water. Do not use commercial antibacterial soaps as they only kill the weak germs and thus are helping to create the strong resistant germs.

To your liquid hand soap you can add essential oils to make it antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal. Blend of Sage, Pine, Lemongrass, Juniper, Cypress and Frankincense.

Carry a smaller size of this soap in your purse or in your pocket so you can so you can use it in public restrooms. Keep in mind this is a place where you are very likely to come in contact with germs.

**2. Antibacterial, antiviral disinfectant spray:** use on toilet seats, door knobs, shopping carts and other areas where you touch items that other people have touched.

Add essential oils to 4 oz of distilled water in a blue glass bottle with a fine sprayer. Shake well and spray onto items you want to disinfect. You may want to make up a 2 oz size blue plastic bottle to carry with you or for travel. It is important to start with distilled water if possible, as most waters have various contaminants. Blend of Sage, Pine, Lemongrass, Juniper, Cypress and Frankincense.

**3. Disinfectant hand lotion** (unscented if possible).

Add a mixture of 10 drops Eucalyptus globulus, 10 drops Tea Tree and 5 drops Peppermint to 4 oz of hand lotion. This is a good anti-infection hand lotion and is cooling and pleasant smelling and can be used in place of the waterless antibacterial hand cleaners that are sold in stores.

**4. Put essential oils in your washing machine and dishwasher** to prevent germs from being passed between family members. Use the blend mentioned above or even straight lemon.

To your washing machine add 10 to 12 drops when you start the water. To the dishwasher put 5 to 6 drops in with the soap before starting.

5. Use **Eucalyptus globulus as an addition to your household cleansers** to disinfect garbage pails, clean floors and other household cleaning projects.

For a mop bucket add 10 to 12 drops when adding the water. For other cleaning projects add 10 to 12 drops per gallon of water used.

6. To kill germs that are in the air, **Lemon oil diffused** has been proven to be the most effective for airborne pathogens. Diffuse into the air with a good diffuser (electric) for 15 minutes 2 or 3 times a day. Make sure to keep your Lemon oil in a cool place away from heat. Do not leave the lid off for extended periods of time. If your Lemon oil oxidizes it will not be as effective as you expect.

**7. Build your immune system.** Use oils on your feet when you are getting dressed in the morning and again when you are preparing for bed. 3 to 4 drops of one or more oils on the bottoms of each foot for adults and 1 drop (1 year olds) 2 drops (2 year olds) or 3 drops (3 years old to age 10) on each foot for children, the elderly or those with liver conditions.

For adults: Eucalyptus radiata, Tea Tree, Thyme ct. linalool, Ravensara, Oregano, and Cinnamon Bark.

For children: Ravensara, Eucalyptus radiata, Thyme ct. linalool and Tea Tree.

8. To help prevent a virus from thriving in your nose, moisten a Q-tip with a carrier oil like Jojoba oil, place a drop of Tea Tree oil on the Q-tip and swab in your nose. Use a fresh Q-tip for each nostril. Do this whenever you go out, or are around an ill person.

### **Time to go into action.**

**At the first sign of throat infection or sore throat,** use Dr. Penoel's Tea Tree Lick. Place one drop of Tea Tree on your little finger lick it off, swish around to mix with saliva and swallow. Can repeat as necessary every 5 minutes up to 5 times. Most people get results by 3 to 4 times and usually the sore throat does not return. For children 3 years and younger apply to the throat and gland area topically, dilute 3 to 4 drops in a teaspoon of grapeseed oil.

### **What to do if you or someone you know comes down with the flu**

The first consideration with a viral infection is to realize the rapid rate at which it multiplies and takes over the body. The best treatment is the "French Intensive" method of applying essential oils as recommended by Dr. Penoel. That is to apply essential oils frequently and intensively until you

see results. As this particular flu seems to target the lungs and cause death through a kind of pneumonia we will look at that area first.

You will need a good **nebulizer type of diffuser** for inhalation therapy that can deliver a medicinal dose of essential oils into the air in very close proximity to the person infected (approximately 1 to 2 feet being careful not to get in the eyes). At the first indication of the flu begin diffusing 10 drops Ravensara, 5 drops Lemon and 5 drops Lavender mixed together in the diffuser. Diffuse until oil is gone or up to 15 minutes. Repeat this application 3 to 4 times a day. Ravensara oil is specific for pneumonia, Lemon kills germs and Lavender helps to heal the lung tissue.

Alternate the above application with 15 to 20 drops of a blend of Eucalyptus globulus, Eucalyptus radiata, Peppermint, Ravensara and Niaouli to a quart of **water** in a **cold-water vaporizer**. Use between applications of the nebulizer diffuser. May also vaporize these oils at night while the person is sleeping.

**Ravensara can also be applied to the soles of the feet** 3 to 6 drops on each foot for adults can reapply every hour until you see results then 4 times a day until symptoms are gone. 1 drop on children 1 year or less (Ravensara is safe at this application amount for newborns), 2 drops for 2 year olds and 3 drops for children 3 to 10 years old. For children apply 3 to 4 times a day. Ravensara is very effective and has an affinity for pneumonia type conditions and has been very effective with application through the feet.

A blend of Eucalyptus globulus, Eucalyptus radiata, Peppermint, Ravensara, and Niaouli can be diluted 6 to 10 drops in a tablespoon of grapeseed and used **as a rub on the chest and back over the lung area** and then apply a warm towel or other warmth holding fabric to the area. For children under the age of 6 use 3 to 6 drops in a tablespoon of grapeseed. Children under 3 years of age use 1 drop of Ravensara and 1 drop of Eucalyptus radiata to 1 tablespoon of grapeseed.

A blend of Eucalyptus radiata, Tea Tree, Thyme ct. linalool, Ravensara, Oregano, and Cinnamon Bark **applied to the soles of the feet to boost the immune response**, for adults applying 3 to 4 drops on the sole of each foot every hour during the time you are awake for up to 8 to 10 applications when you first begin to come down with the flu. May use this application directly after the Ravensara foot application.

**For children use** a blend of Ravensara, Eucalyptus radiata, Thyme ct. linalool, and Tea Tree applied to the soles of the feet to boost immune response. 1 drop on sole of each foot ages 1year, 2 drops ages 2 years and 3 drops ages 3 to 10 years, every hour for up to 5 hours then every 4 hours if they are still awake. Children under the age of 6 months use 1 drop

Ravensara instead. This recommendation is slightly different than what we had for prevention, as it is to be used more intensely which delivers more essential oil to the blood stream.

Eucalyptus radiata can be added to water and used as a sponge bath **to help control fever**. You can add 10 to 12 drops of Eucalyptus radiata to a quart jar of room temperature to slightly cool but not cold distilled water, shake it up well and pour into a bowl. Soak a washcloth and wipe down the body of the person with the fever to reduce their temperature. The content of 1.8 cineole will help the body not to exceed a safe temperature. Make sure to monitor the person as Eucalyptus can cool a person very quickly and make them chill.

Along with the above protocol, you may need to **address depression and anxiety** caused when people experience severe traumatic situations and loss. To help sleep and physical relaxation you can apply Lavender, Orange, Tangerine and/or Pink Grapefruit to a tissue and slip inside the pillowcase of the person when they are in bed. It can also be diffused when you are not diffusing something else.

Geranium is a good balancing and anti-depressive essential oil and could also be diffused or applied to a tissue. The same with Lavender, which is known to be a natural relaxer.

Avoid close contact with obviously ill persons – within a radius of at least 6 feet. Hugging, kissing, and other intimate contact should be deferred until the period of contagion is over. If it is necessary to care for a family member with the flu, a face mask and eye protection (such as Johnson and Johnson Barrier Protective Goggles or Centurion Splash Goggles) will certainly reduce the risk of infection.

The most infectious particles are those that remain suspended in the air for long periods of time. These particles are usually in the range of 20 microns in diameter, and if inhaled by a healthy person can reach the lower depths of the lung. Many people like to use humidifiers, however, by adding small water droplets in the air, these may provide aerosol carriers for more efficient spreading of the influenza virus. Generally speaking, humidifiers are not recommended.

Instead you can use a diffuser, run for 15 minutes every 2 to 4 hours. Some come with a 24-hour timer that will make this much easier to accomplish.

When you have the flu, one of the most dangerous things you can do is go to work and spread the infection. In a pandemic situation it is imperative that you do not leave home for 5 to 6 days after you get sick. If you must leave home for a doctor's visit, a facemask is particularly helpful in reducing the risk to those around you.

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**Resource References:**

- I sincerely thank Alexandria Brighton for letting me reference and use portions of her Article, *The Avian "Bird" Flu: What Are The Threats And What Can You Do About It*, in preparation of this paper.
- *Rocky Mountain News*, March 25, 2006
- *National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan*, Homeland Security Council, May 2006