



Aging Gracefully with Essential Oils

by Dr. Eric Zielinski

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Biblical Health Publishing

2774 N. Cobb Pkwy

Suite 109-389

Kennesaw, GA 30152

www.BiblicalHealthPublishing.com

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Introduction

In our years of teaching classes, hosting summits, and publishing online we've had many people ask, "Dr. Z (or Mama Z), what oils do YOU use and how do YOU use them?" When it comes to aging, I'd like to think that Mama Z has this figured out! Her skin glows, she's constantly asked if she's 10-15 years younger than she really is, and everyone wants to know her secrets.

As a gift to you, we have put together a compilation of our favorite 4 essential oils for aging gracefully. This book has been constructed around these oils, and we also share how they have other healing effects in addition to helping enhance your skin health. We trust that you will enjoy the journey to ageless, glowing skin by following the practical steps in this guide!

As always, our hope and prayer is that you and your family truly experience the Abundant Life!

~ Dr. Z & Mama Z

The Price of Beauty: What You Put On Your Body Goes INTO Your Body!

In this chapter, you will learn about:

1. Is your lotion doing your body good?
2. Stay away from antibacterial products!
3. Eliminate toxic body care products
4. Healthy alternatives

While Americans are incessantly enticed by the intoxicating aromas, flashy packaging, and false promises of sustained youth and beauty from health care products, the global beauty market is expected to reach \$265 billion in 2017! Now, there is nothing wrong with making a buck, but one question we all should be asking is what is the *real cost* of using these products to our health?

“Well, nothing.” You may be thinking to yourself. *“I don’t eat them, I just put them on my skin!”*

True, but did you know that your skin is the largest organ in your body and EVERYTHING you put ON your skin goes INTO your body! Just think about the price of beauty when you consider the long-term effects of putting chemicals on your body every day!

If this weren’t enough reason to think twice about the personal care products you use:

- Hair sprays, perfumes and powders are oftentimes inhaled.
- Laundry detergent is rarely completely rinsed off and rubs against your skin when you wear clothes.
- Lipstick is oftentimes licked off and swallowed.
- Makeup is regularly absorbed by sensitive mucous membranes.

- Shampoos and conditions run down your face into your eyes and mouth.

Can you see now how vital it is to be an avid label reader and to make sure that you are not (innocently) poisoning yourself and your family!

Is Your Lotion Doing Your Body Good?

Most people think that they're "doing their bodies good" by moisturizing their skin. Why not? It feels good, makes your skin feel smooth and attractive and you're bombarded with advertisements telling you that "Dermatologists recommend" that you should hydrate your skin. The inquisitive mind should be asking:

- But are you really hydrating your skin?
- What if you were told that you were just clogging up your pores with dangerous chemicals?
- Wouldn't it make more sense to use natural oil that our ancestors used for your hands and legs than a mixture of chemicals in a plastic bottle?

Here's a safe rule of thumb: If you won't eat it, you shouldn't put it on your skin!

Keep in mind that the price of beauty goes well beyond what you pay for skin products at the store...

Stay Away From Antibacterial Products!

Whether you're at a bank or doctor's office, a big jug of hand sanitizer greets you at the counter. Antibacterial soaps are in every public bathroom you'll go into, and Yoga Moms in grocery stores across the nation have little bottles of scented antibacterial lotion clipped onto their strollers. They're everywhere!

Why should you stay away from them?

Simply put: they kill ALL the bacteria on your hands; including the GOOD bacteria you need for healthy skin and a properly functioning immune system. In fact, they have been shown to weaken your immune system!

Eliminate Toxic Body Care Products

If lotions and hand sanitizers can be bad, then what are you to do? First of all, the Environmental Working Group has evaluated over 72,000 products and rank them in an easy-to-understand guide to make sure you have a resource to keep your family safe. Check out [EWG's Skin Deep Cosmetic Database](#) and see if your favorite products pass the test. Secondly, be an avid label reader and stay clear from the harmful chemicals that are killing you and your family!

Although NOT an exhaustive list, be sure to stay away from these ingredients:

- ***Coal Tar*** – Banned in Europe because it's a known cancer-causing agent, coal tar is a primary ingredient in anti-dandruff/anti-lice shampoos. Be careful because it can also be listed as a color additive like FD&C Red No. 6.
- ***DEA (Diethanolamine)*** – Primary foaming and wetting agent that is highly reactive to other ingredients. Can form nitrosodiethanolamine (NDEA) and has been linked with bladder, esophagus, liver and stomach cancers.
- ***Formaldehyde*** – Deadly neurotoxin and carcinogen in most nail products.
- ***Fragrance/Parfum*** – Blanket term for hidden chemicals that should be avoided. Up to 50% of the products listed in ***Skin Deep*** contain the ingredient "fragrance."

- **Mineral oil** – Petroleum byproduct that causes [allergies](#), impairs brain function and can lead to birth defects.
- **Lauryl sulfates** – Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS), Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES), and Ammonium Laurel Sulfate (ALS) are in most [body care products](#). According to the EWG review, research has shown that they put you at risk for cancer, skin irritation, and organ toxicity.
- **Parabens** – Synthetic preservative that include methylparaben, ethylparaben, propylparaben and butylparaben. Linked to breast cancer, decreased sperm counts and precocious puberty (early onset of puberty).
- **Propylene glycol (PEG)** – Form of mineral oil that is used in everything from brake fluid to e-cigarettes to snack foods! Has been linked to respiratory problems, indigestion, skin irritation, allergies and eye irritation.
- **Talc** – Made from the purified mineral bearing the same name. Is poisonous when inhaled or swallowed. Chronic exposure been shown to cause a slew of disorders including: cancer, comas, convulsions, drowsiness, fevers, low blood pressure, muscle twitching, respiratory problems, and decreased urine output.

Keep in mind that you can't trust everything in Whole Foods, Trader Joes or your local Co-Op. And don't be fooled by companies claiming that their products are "all natural" or even "organic." Be a voracious label reader and make sure that you're not putting dangerous chemicals onto your skin!

Healthy Alternatives

So what are your alternatives?

Do it yourself and make products that you and your family can use without having to worry about getting poisoned!

- **[Coconut oil](#)** – Quite possibly the most versatile fruit in the world, oil made from the coconut has been touted as one of the healthiest foods you can eat. Additionally, it is a fantastic moisturizer, anti-fungal agent and is great for [oil pulling](#). It absorbs into your skin quickly and leaves a pleasant aroma.
- ***Essential oils*** – Add essential oils to a base lotion for added health benefits. Studies have proven that oil of [oregano](#) is more potent than antibiotics, [rosemary](#) helps balance blood pressure and [tea tree](#) is a wound healer. To make a therapeutic blend simply add 10 drops of essential oil per ounce of the [carrier oil](#) of your choosing.
- ***Olive oil*** – Used for over 3,000 years, olive is a fantastic [carrier](#) for essential oils. Because it is thicker than [coconut oil](#) and doesn't absorb as quickly, you can use it for excessively dry skin and as a sunscreen.
- ***Shea butter*** – The fat extracted from the nut of the African sheaf tree, pure shea butter is a fantastic source of Vitamin A that has exception health properties. For centuries, people have used it to treat a number of skin issues including: sunburn, insect bites, frostbite, skin allergies, wrinkles, dermatitis and eczema.

Sources:

- [Environmental Working Group](#)

DIY Essential Oil Guide for Body Care Products

In this chapter, you will learn about:

1. *Whether Body Care Companies Actually Care*
2. *Body Care Ingredients to Avoid*
3. *Demystifying Body Care DIY with Essential Oils*
4. *6 Body Care Categories You Can Make at Home*

Buying organic produce and making DIY cleaners are often at the top of the priority list when cleaning up chemicals in the home. But an entire section of toxins is often overlooked in spite of being arguably one of the most dangerous sources of toxins: *body care*. Take the time to learn which toxins should absolutely be avoided and just how easy it can be to replace them.

Do Body Care Companies Actually Care?

The irony of the term “body care” is not lost on the person looking to make better choices for their [skin](#). With so many skin, cosmetic, and hygiene companies out there touting *body care* products, **we want to believe they actually do care** and have [our skin's best interests](#) at heart.

A quick **look at an ingredients list with an informed eye** reveals the truth: convenience often overshadows quality.

One of my favorite resources for keeping chemical-slinging companies in check is the Environmental Working Group, and they have this to say about **the priorities that body care companies hold**:

*As EWG has long known — and as leading medical specialists recently underscored — many cosmetics and personal care products contain potentially toxic ingredients. **Major cosmetics companies have not publicly committed themselves to removing harmful ingredients.*** ([1](#))

As long as production is simple and consumers are happy, business will continue as usual. Even some companies that pride themselves as organic or all-natural are not always reliably safe. ([2](#)) **It's up to us** to learn the ropes and “vote with our dollars,” choosing (or making!) only safe, natural, [truly non-toxic body care products](#).

Body Care Ingredients to Avoid

Cosmetics and beauty products are poured on, rubbed in, left to sit, and sometimes soaked **onto and into our skin** — the largest organ of the body!

If you've ever made natural topical remedies or if you are familiar with essential oils, you know that the skin is not only a **living and complex organ**, but that it is also our ally in **absorbing and transporting** substances. In the case of a good anti-inflammatory oil dilution, this is great! In the case of toxic, hormone-disrupting chemicals, this is horrible! There's so much to learn about the chemicals used in commercial body care products — the pronunciation alone could take a full article. Knowing that [toxic ingredients are both dangerous and common](#) can spark fear and anxiety — not Abundant Life giving traits!

Instead of trying to become a full-blown chemist to weed through label nightmares, we can **learn some basics to watch out for** and resources to turn to when in doubt. Some quick ingredients to learn and avoid include (but are certainly not limited to):

- **Parabens** – spotted as a suffix (e.g., ethylparaben) and can indicate hormone disrupting effects linked with cancer and a shift in natural puberty patterns, among other issues. (3)
- **Phthalates** – used pervasively in body care ingredients and packaging, phthalates are a concern for [allergies](#), asthma, reproductive health, and more. (4)
- **Formaldehyde** – used as a preservative but is a known carcinogen and neurotoxin. (5)
- **Triclosan** – an antibacterial staple, triclosan can affect the liver and thyroid, among other concerns. (6)
- **Fragrance** – a catch-all term that can hide dangerous toxins. (7)

If you'll take a peek at the resource list at the bottom of this article, you'll see the Environmental Working Group as a reference point multiple times. Their [Skin Deep Database](#) is an easily searchable index for both products and ingredients. If you're ever in doubt about a product or want to systematically educate yourself on **the dangers of toxic additives**, absolutely start there!

To really boil this down to the simplest of safety rules, remember that what goes on your skin often makes it into the body, especially if it's a leave-on product. So, **if you wouldn't eat it, don't apply it!**

You might not want to chug a batch of a fully natural and safe massage oil, but this “rule” is still a good way to remember that **skin care is far more than skin deep**. If you are feeling adventurous – or simply distrustful of marketing tactics – give some DIY products a shot.

Demystifying Body Care DIY with Essential Oils

Don't click away just yet – you can do this! DIY body care products aren't just for the Pinterest-inclined among us. You don't have to be a fancy

blogger or experienced aromatherapist to make your own toiletries, sans nasty toxins!

Essential oils make the process even easier, preserving familiar scents and flavors with just a few drops added. As a bonus, they are **loaded with health and beauty benefits** that can change the way we look at hygiene and basic cosmetics.

Tips and tricks when working with essential oils to make body care products:

- [Dilute appropriately](#), usually to around 3% of the total volume, in drops
- **Keep blends to a few oils**, usually sharing similar or complementary benefits
- **Disperse essential oils** into alcohol or a lipid before adding water (oil and water don't mix!)
- **Store all products** in sterilized glass containers
- **Make small batches** to tweak your formulas and use them before they go bad

5 Body Care Categories You Can Make at Home

Making your own body care products can be rewarding, empowering, and, dare I say, addictive. Try a few of these basic formulas first to get your feet wet and confidence built.

1. Soap

Hand washing was one of the first great improvements in the shift toward modern medicine. Imagine your doctor moving from a surgery to a birth to dressing your wound **without ever washing their hands!**

Unfortunately, we quickly [took things a tinge too far](#), with antibacterial soaps and hand sanitizers coming on the scene in full force.

In normal life, when we aren't surgeons or chefs, trying to sterilize our hands and bodies can actually be counterproductive. Our hands come in contact with the widest range of microbes, **giving the immune system opportunity to [stay “fit” and practiced against the threats](#)** in our environment.

Not only do we want to **avoid stripping beneficial bacteria** or removing the immune system's proving ground, we also need to **avoid the chemicals added to antibacterial soaps**.

Triclosan is found in most commercial antibacterial soaps, an ingredient once glossed over by the FDA but now carrying mounting evidence that it's a risk. What's more, triclosan-laden and other antibacterial soaps are **not likely any more effective than simple soap and water washes**. [\(8\)](#) Use essential oils in a DIY soap to fight dangerous microbes while preserving the balance that the body needs.

Find our favorite soap recipe at the end of this book!

2. Toothpaste

Oral health is much more than cosmetic. While whitening products are best-sellers in the commercial market, **gingivitis remains a dangerous and widespread health risk**. Varying levels of mouth disease are [linked with diabetes, heart disease, and more](#). Cavities aren't all we have to worry about!

What's worse, is that [conventional oral health treatments](#) aren't much better. Again, loaded with triclosan and other chemicals, antiseptic mouthwashes introduce chemicals while **posing health risks of their own**. One study, published in in 2012, connected certain kinds of mouthwash with heart disease and blood pressure increases. [\(9\)](#) Doesn't that defeat some of the purpose?

Check your toothpaste and mouthwash for questionable ingredients like triclosan and controversial fluoride. Especially with children who will likely swallow some of the paste, it's important to **avoid toxins and potential risks** as much as possible.

We've included our favorite bentonite clay toothpaste recipe in the last chapter of this book.

3. Shampoo

While products that go in our bodies or soak onto the skin are more often the priority for shifting to natural ingredients, **shampoo can't be overlooked** – especially since it's so easy to make.

Hair care products are manufactured en masse, and so often that means corners are cut. The quickest, easiest chemical concoction to strip hair “clean” do the trick, not to mention **all of that ambiguous *fragrance*** added to it.

If toxic additives aren't enough, most shampoos strip all of the oils from your hair and scalp, which then **conveniently** “requires” a conditioner. Meanwhile, your scalp compensates for the loss by creating even more oil, so you need to wash more frequently, **which means you buy more shampoo!** Tricky!

Ready to make your own? Head to the recipes chapter at the end of this book for our DIY shampoo recipe!

4. Lotion

We all could stand a little more moisturization to take care of the skin that works so hard for us. But lotions are not just applied to the skin and left on – we rub it in and make sure it's all absorbed well!

Your first clue that your lotion needs an update will be **the length of the ingredient list**. Lotion is a very basic product, actually, and a mile-long list of chemicals can only spell danger.

Look for all of the basic warning ingredients (**parabens, fragrance, etc.**) when replacing your standard lotion, but take a stab at making your own lotion, as well. Not only can you keep the ingredients reliably safe, but you can also **choose essential oils for their health benefits** as well.

It's pretty easy to make your own healing lotion. To get your started we've included a recipe in the last chapter of this book.

5. Cosmetics

Women around the world apply toxic, synthetic ingredients to their face, including around mucous-membrane eyes and mouths, daily. The **chemicals are blinked into eyes, seeped into pores, and accidentally licked** into mouths daily, accumulating over a woman's lifespan.

Don't you want to know those ingredients are safe?

The first stop is the EWG database to identify products that are made without toxic chemicals, fragrances, and preservatives. Often, this is the only step someone will consider because it's hard to believe **cosmetics can be replicated at home**. This simply isn't the case – you can DIY cosmetics just like any other topical formulation! Check the last chapter in this book for my wife's DIY lipstick recipe to get you started!

Note (as a word of caution about [citrus oils](#)): most reports state that citrus oils are phototoxic (can cause excessive burning when exposed to the sun) to varying degrees. If you choose to use citrus in your lipstick, be

careful to only use 1 drop and stick with the list that's considered safe according to the classic text, Essential Oil Safety:

- Bergamot Oil (FCF) – Bergaptene/Furanocoumarins is removed
- Blood Orange Oil
- Lemon Oil (Steam Distilled)
- Lime Oil (Steam Distilled)
- Mandarin Oil
- Sweet Orange Oil
- Orange Leaf Oil
- Satsuma Oil (Cold/Expeller Pressed)
- Tangelo Oil
- Tangerine Oil
- Yuzu Oil

6. Deodorant

Last but not least, we cannot forget the daily topical product that we rub thoroughly into the skin, right near lymph nodes! **Deodorant is often made with the heavy metal aluminum**, among other notable and questionable ingredients – fragrance is a given, right?

Deodorant is also a product we're not easily convinced to eliminate. **No one wants body odor** to be the first thing that signals a natural lifestyle! Instead of spending a fortune on safe products or foregoing the use of deodorant and losing friends, simply make your own using the recipe at the end of this book.

4 Essential Oils for Ageless Skin

In this article, you will learn about:

1. *The Process of Aging*
2. *4 Essential Oils that Reverse Time*
3. *How to Take Care of Aging Skin*
4. *Anti-Aging Essential Oil DIY*

Go to a drugstore skincare aisle and count the number of anti-aging products on the shelves. There's no doubt that consumers are looking for [anti-aging tips](#) – a way to **turn back the clock**. The more we uncover natural health and Abundant Life “secrets,” though, the more we know that a simple product isn't all that we really need or even want.

[Essential oils](#) and other whole-body-health techniques can **actually erase the damage** that time inflicts, leaving you looking as young as you feel.

The Process of Aging

Aging is not just how you look – there's **a whole aging process** occurring in your body. On the one hand, it's an important process that everyone is going to undergo. On the other hand, outside factors can significantly **speed the process of aging**, especially on your skin.

As the skin ages, the layers of tissue and cells that form that firm, clear, youthful skin begin to thin. This contributes to the **sagging, wrinkled, more translucent skin** of old age. It can also affect healing and display other kinds of damage, like age spots. ([1](#))

While this process is going to occur to some extent in every person, there are factors that will speed it up, including:

- **Sun damage**
- **[Toxic products](#)**
- **Dry skin**

You may also find that heavy **[stress](#) levels make you age prematurely**, as well. By changing the way we take care of our skin, we can actually affect the aging process itself.

4 Essential Oils that Reverse Time

While good DIY body care products make a major difference in nourishing and protecting your skin from the effects of aging, there are a few very **specific essential oils that work well in skin treatments** and anti-aging formulations.

Use these essential oils in your normal body care products or as specific anti-aging oils to complement efforts to improve skin health and **[slow the aging process](#)**.

Helichrysum

Though helichrysum is also named *immortelle* for its long-lasting blooms, the name bodes well for **its ability to combat aging and turn back time**. True to expectations, **[helichrysum essential oil](#)** is widely used in skincare preparations, usually for anti-aging purposes.

The benefits of helichrysum essential oil are said to occur at a cellular level, restoring the cell structures that spread and thin with age. It's a precious and usually pricey oil, but worth it to **find and enjoy genuine helichrysum**.

Application: Because of the price, helichrysum is best added as an ingredient within a cream or formula, usually for small applications like the face or a small scar.

Rosemary

We know rosemary to be a good choice for skincare and hair health, but for anti-aging ability we can sneak some extra benefits from rosemary essential oil.

A study in 2007 took [rosemary](#) and lavender oils and tested its effects via inhalation. After simply breathing in the oil, participants were found to have **lowered cortisol levels** and better free radical scavenging antioxidant levels. ([2](#))

What does that mean for skin? Free radical damage is a big part of the appearance of aging, and stress – manifested in high cortisol levels – can exacerbate it.

Application: It seems that simply smelling the oil can have anti-aging effects! Diffuse, use via [personal inhalers](#), or add to topical treatments.

Geranium

The delicacy of floral oils can be misleading – they are strong and effective in so many different situations! [Geranium essential oil](#), specifically rose geranium, is another that finds its way into skincare to combat aging. One good indication of **geranium's anti-aging abilities** is that it's anti-inflammatory. Tested in the lab for its efficacy against swelling, rose geranium was confirmed as a strong enough anti-inflammatory compound that pharmaceutical companies are digging to be able to exploit. ([3](#)) Keeping inflammation at bay helps to **keep skin strong and resilient** even while moving into the golden years.

Application: Include geranium essential oil in daily use DIY [skin care products](#).

Lavender

Another anti-inflammatory oil, [lavender essential oil](#) is a go-to for safe and restorative skin treatments. In fact, **lavender is an excellent example of whole body health**, affecting the aging process from direct skin treatments to indirect calming benefits that ultimately impact skin health. Whether topical for healing and rejuvenation, ingested and [diffused](#) for anxiety and stress (that ultimately damages health and skin), or [inhaled](#) with rosemary for stress and antioxidants, lavender is always a good choice.

Application: Keep lavender on hand as an addition to most DIY applications and uses. Its versatility is hardly matched – you'll be glad you invested in a good lavender oil!

How to Take Care of Aging Skin

Since time can't be avoided entirely, we'll all deal with aging skin at some point. Caring for our skin well is an important part of aging gracefully. Remember to:

- Avoid excessive sun exposure
- Use a non-toxic sunscreen
- Use [natural body care products](#)
- Stay hydrated
- Moisturize regularly
- Minimize stress
- Minimize external toxin exposure

It's also important to **manage other health conditions** that may contribute to problems with the skin. Diabetes, obesity, circulatory issues, inflammatory illness, and stress are all major contributors to skin damage and poor aging.

Take care of yourself – [mind](#) and [body](#) – to make the most of your DIY skin care products!

Anti-Aging Essential Oil DIY

You can add skin-healing essential oils to any DIY skincare product, maximizing the antioxidant and rejuvenating effects. But for a simple essential oil blend to moisturize the skin, **start with a [healing carrier oil](#)**.

Jojoba is one of the most renowned oils for anti-aging, restorative effects. In a 2013 review, researchers summarized that *“jojoba has anti-inflammatory effect[s] and it can be used on a variety of skin conditions including skin infections, skin aging, as well as wound healing.”* ([4](#))

Combine about 3-5% essential oil ratio with your carrier oil of choice. Try any combination of oils like:

- [Helichrysum](#)
- [Neroli](#)
- [Lavender](#)
- [Rosemary](#)
- **Yarrow**
- **Ylang Ylang**
- [Frankincense](#)
- [Melissa](#)
- [Geranium](#)

Experiment with your favorite fragrances and blends to create a one of a kind essential oil application with an anti-aging, pampering result.

Helichrysum Essential Oil

the Fountain of Youth

A beautiful annual flower, helichrysum is from the daisy family, named for its appearance – not unlike a burst of sunshine! *Helichrysum* is actually a whole species, with many varieties beneath it. Many are cultivated in the US for their ornamental beauty, but they are native to the Mediterranean region. Other helichrysum are from as far south as South Africa, and as well-established as to be part of traditional medicine in that region, as well. [\(1\)](#)

In historical terms, helichrysum has been selected for centuries, sometimes indicated as a gift to the Greek gods in the form of dried flowerheads. Now, it is more aptly considered a gift to us, with age-reversing capabilities and healing factors packaged in a delightful, bright flower.

All About Helichrysum

When it wasn't being offered to the residents of Mount Olympus, helichrysum had traditional applications for a number of conditions. Respiratory ailments, skin trouble, liver and gall bladder issues, inflammation, insomnia, and infections all came with a "prescription" for helichrysum. Not all of these uses have been confirmed yet, but one by one the scientific community is discovering that the ancients were wise when it came to their choice in remedy.

Helichrysum italicum and *H. angustifolia* are the interchangeable names for the commonly used essential oil, though we can look at the whole species when gaining an understanding of the general components it carries. Within the essential oil, flavonoids, ketones, and terpenes exhibit strong

effects, and while these components are typically indicators that caution should be used, helichrysum is an incredibly safe and versatile oil in terms of application. (2)

The effects that have been researched are convincing, and it's no wonder that helichrysum is also called "immortelle" – the fountain of youth was an antioxidant-rich, essential-oil filled flower all along!

Benefits of Helichrysum Oil

The older the herb and essential oil, the more we have to discover. From generation to generation, ancient wisdom was passed along and honed, creating a cultural understanding of medicinal properties of local plants. Many factors have changed that dynamic, simultaneously leading us to information in other regions and losing some of the wisdom we might have had in our own culture. As scientists dig into the effects and benefits of these substances of old, one by one, we are finding confirmation time and again that traditional remedies are often traceable in science.

Here are some of the traditionally-held uses of helichrysum, and the helichrysum essential oil preparation in particular, that are finding traction in modern research:

1. Antibiotic Resistance Solution

Antimicrobial substances have been used for centuries, but the rise of modern antibiotics and subsequent overuse has created drug-resistant superbugs. Now, natural products are regaining the spotlight as effective treatments. In 2009, French scientists evaluated helichrysum essential oil as a potential natural antibiotic, and they were not disappointed. They noted that helichrysum essential oil (*H. italicum*, to be specific), "significantly reduces the multidrug resistance" of multiple bacteria. (3) This is a potentially lifesaving ability, potentiating antibiotic treatments when they are needed most!

2. Antimicrobial Activity

In its native regions, helichrysum is known as anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial. To begin to explore the validity of these claims, Iranian researchers tested the composition of helichrysum essential oil on both Gram negative and Gram positive bacteria, as well as fungal contaminants. The team concluded not only a moderate effect on both kinds of bacteria, but that helichrysum essential oil “had a substantial fungicidal effect on the fungi under study.” (4)

3. Stress & Burnout Relief

As part of a 2013 article in the *Journal for Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, helichrysum essential oil was blended with [peppermint](#) and [basil](#) oils to form a potentially relaxing blend. Individuals participated in a double blind, randomized, placebo study to determine whether aromatherapy actually exhibits relaxing effects. The individuals in the study described themselves as dealing with burnout and mental exhaustion. Since taking the time to take care of ourselves is a big part of reducing fatigue and stress, both the placebo and oils reduced the fatigue somewhat. However, the essential oil blend was much greater, confirming their ability to truly affect our brain and body systems, beyond placebo or general self-care effects. (5)

4. Anti-Inflammatory

When the immune system’s normal functions go into overdrive, painful and sometimes life threatening inflammation can set in anywhere from skin conditions to [arthritis](#) to heart disease. That places anti-inflammatory substances as one of the most important remedies and health boosters we can get our hands on. Helichrysum essential oil falls into that category, displaying anti-inflammatory effects in a 2004 article in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*. (6)

Where Helichrysum Shines

As exciting as these remedies and benefits are, helichrysum's near legendary effects are found in its anti-aging capabilities. As I mentioned, it is sometimes known as ***immortelle or everlasting***, demonstrating the folk knowledge that it may be a secret to aging well – or perhaps reversing the toll that age has already taken!

Anti-aging is more than another candle added to the cake – it's a whole process, and any process can be slowed or reversed, regardless of what the calendar says. The key, almost undoubtedly, lies in the combination of anti-inflammatory and antioxidant capabilities of the plant and oil, with helichrysum being found as one of seventeen essential oils that remain highly active antioxidants even at lower concentrations. (7)

Oxidative stress is a major component of aging, which is a primary risk factor for heart disease. The very definition of oxidative stress is cellular breakdown, with free radicals wreaking havoc on tissues – hence the loss of collagen, stiffness and aches and pains, and so on. When the body can produce enough antioxidants and is supported via dietary and supplemental antioxidants, not only is the breakdown stopped in its tracks, but the cells themselves can actually be repaired and restored. Helichrysum as a whole herb remedy is one such antioxidant, and the essential oil blends stress relieving ability with antioxidant capability and anti-inflammatory strength to provide just what the [skin needs](#) to begin to repair years of damage, and promote heart health!

Recommendation:

Include helichrysum essential oil in topical blends as well as with Epsom salt for relaxing aromatic baths that address all stress, aging, and skincare all at once.

4 Rosemary Essential Oil

Benefits and Uses

As for Rosmarine, I let it runne all over my garden walls, not onlie because my bees love it, but because it is the herb sacred to remembrance, and, therefore, to friendship; whence a sprig of it hath a dumb language that maketh it the chosen emblem of our funeral wakes and in our burial grounds.”

~ Sir Thomas More (1478-1535)

We love rosemary on potatoes and chicken, but it's so much more than a culinary treat. *Rosmarinus officinalis* was a sacred substance for nearly all ancient peoples, including Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. As an evergreen Mediterranean native, rosemary would have been readily available, so its presence in folk medicine over the centuries is unsurprising.

Ancient peoples used rosemary for many purposes, including:

- Mental clarity
- Digestive soothing
- Muscle pain relief

In recent uses, rosemary is frequently used in skincare and hair products thanks to known antiseptic ability. As with many ancient remedies, rosemary is the subject of modern research as we begin to unlock the medicinal wisdom of generations past.

Can Rosemary Treat Cancer?

Although we only have *in vitro* (cells in a petri dish) studies, researchers suggest that rosemary essential oil can help prevent and treat a variety of cancer cells lines. Of the 30 compounds in the essential oil, there are a few main players: α -pinene, borneol, (–) camphene, camphor, verbenone, and bornyl-acetate. Interestingly, it doesn't seem that any one of these chemicals is responsible for rosemary's anti-tumor prowess. The research actually suggests that it's the synergy of them interacting together, which gives rosemary essential oil the true medicinal effect.

The study suggesting this was published in the journal *Molecules* after evaluating *in vitro* antibacterial activities and toxicology properties. of *R. officinalis* L. essential oil compared to α -pinene, β -pinene, and 1,8-cineole. According to the study,

“*R. officinalis* L. essential oil possessed similar antibacterial activities to α -pinene, and a little bit better than β -pinene, while 1,8-cineole possessed the lowest antibacterial activities. *R. officinalis* L. essential oil exhibited the strongest cytotoxicity towards three human cancer cells. Its inhibition concentration 50% (IC₅₀) values on SK-OV-3, HO-8910 and Bel-7402 were 0.025%, 0.076% and 0.13% (v/v), respectively. The cytotoxicity of all the test samples on SK-OV-3 was significantly stronger than on HO-8910 and Bel-7402. In general, *R. officinalis* L. essential oil showed greater activity than its components in both antibacterial and anticancer test systems, and the activities were mostly related to their concentrations.” [\(1\)](#)

Four Favorite Benefits of Rosemary Oil

Alongside the exciting prospect of slowed cancer growth and inflammation spread, rosemary has effects that are useful for our more common needs as well. Here are four of the ways rosemary exhibits its strengths in our everyday lives.

1. Hair Growth

Stimulating for the scalp, rosemary is a dandruff and dry scalp treatment that may facilitate hair growth. Some even go as far as to say that it can prevent hair loss and graying.

Years ago, Francesc Casadó Galcerá patented a lotion for scalp and hair (*US 6447762 B1*), including a mixture of rosemary, hops, and swertia. He found that his blend was able to stimulate (2):

- New hair growth, by as much as 22%
- Stimulated “rapid” hair growth
- Improved scalp health via microcirculation
- Smoother hair
- Retained hair, with fewer incidences of loss after shampooing

Include rosemary essential oil in simple vinegar hair rinses or DIY shampoo and conditioner formulas for improved scalp health and hair growth.

2. Memory Retention

*“There’s rosemary, that’s for remembrance, pray you love, remember.
~ Ophelia (Shakespeare’s “Hamlet”)*

Rosemary has been known as the “herb of remembrance” for centuries. Greek scholars used it when taking exams to help recall important information, and allusions to its memory improvement have been peppered into poetry throughout the ages. The *International Journal of Neuroscience* published one study that confirmed these effects in recent science.

Over 140 participants were gathered for the study conducted by University of Northumbria, Newcastle. Aromatherapy including rosemary and

[lavender](#), as well as a control group were utilized to affect cognitive performance.

- Regarding [lavender](#) and its calming abilities, “*[lavender](#) produced a significant decrement in performance of working memory, and impaired reaction times for both memory and attention based tasks.*”
- On the other hand, as a memory stimulant, “*rosemary produced a significant enhancement of performance for overall quality of memory and secondary memory factors.*”

In other words, [lavender](#) made participants feel relaxed and complacent, while rosemary increased alertness and provoked memory retention. (3) Test taking and alert feelings pale in comparison to the studies conducted on rosemary in relation to Alzheimer’s disease. One such study, published in *Psychogeriatrics*, evaluated the effects of aromatherapy on 28 elderly people suffering from dementia, with the majority also diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. They were given rosemary and [lemon](#) inhalations in the morning, then [lavender](#) and orange in the evening. Through multiple tests and forms of analysis, the “patients showed significant improvement in personal orientation” without any deleterious side effects. (4)

3. Liver and Gallbladder Support

The primary function of the liver is to detoxify the body, and with such heavy levels of toxins exposed to us on a daily basis, sometimes it can use a little help.

Traditional use of rosemary includes digestive and gastrointestinal relief. (5) Coupled with liver support, rosemary becomes a fantastic detoxifier. This has been confirmed in studies conducted in India, where it was observed helping the body increase its bile production and improve plasma

liver enzyme levels. When these processes are inhibited, fat metabolism and detoxification are inhibited, and risks for type II [diabetes](#) increase. With a properly functioning liver, gallbladder, and gastrointestinal system, nutrients are more readily absorbed and toxins released, bringing balance and wellness to the whole body.

4. Reduced Cortisol Levels

The Meikai University School of Dentistry in Japan conducted a study that monitored cortisol levels in saliva after just five minutes of rosemary and [lavender](#) inhalation. Twenty-two volunteers participated, and both essential oils had excellent results. Not only was the “stress hormone” cortisol reduced significantly, but free radical scavenging activities were increased as well. (6) So the oils help to prevent added stress, then go a step further to help erase effects of previous stressful exertion.

Implementing Rosemary Uses

Clearly a safe and effective oil, rosemary's benefits can be implemented in many ways. Here are just some of my favorite DIY recipes for application:

- **Aromatherapy Use** – Add 5 drops to your favorite [diffuser](#), which typically contains four ounces of fluid.
- **Dietary Supplementation** – Dilute 1 drop in a teaspoon of honey, maple syrup or [coconut oil](#).
- **Culinary Use** – Next time your recipe calls for rosemary, add a drop or two and experience a Heavenly burst of flavor!
- **Topical Application** – Enjoy its antioxidant and antiseptic properties on the skin, but be sure to heavily dilute with [coconut](#), almond, or jojoba oil before applying to skin.

5 Healing Properties of Geranium Essential Oil

In this chapter, you will learn about:

1. *The Essential Oil Profile for Geranium*
2. *How to Use Geranium to Heal*
3. *Geranium Blends to DIY*

Floral essential oils are most familiar to us when we think of essential oils and [aromatherapy](#). It's not surprising, since the aromatherapy and perfumery industries – arts, really – are so closely intertwined.

Aromatherapy, of course, extends well beyond floral scents, and the **floral oils are more than just a pretty smell**. Geranium essential oil is no exception, carrying many incredible benefits as well as a floral scent to soften blends or stand on its own.

Essential Oil Profile for Geranium

While the scent of geranium essential oil is floral, the oil itself is distilled from the leaves of the *Pelargonium graveolens* plant. It is native to South Africa and has since been cultivated further north into Middle Eastern and Asian countries.

While the Latin name usually gives us clarity as to what kind of oil we have, geranium is a bit trickier. The strains of *Pelargonium graveolens* aren't necessarily indicated by those two names; the **strain and location of growth can make a huge impact** on the chemical composition of the oil in spite of sharing the name *P. graveolens*. ([1](#))

For the most part, with trusted suppliers, we can tell based on the common name – this is *not* the norm for other oils. Geranium Bourbon is grown in a specific region and is mostly used for fragrances rather than therapeutic purposes. Rose Geranium has a touch of [rose](#) fragrance.

If your supplier provides the GC/MS evaluation for their oils, look for something with at least the compounds **geraniol, linalool, and citronella** – again, remembering that a trusted supplier is important. Any of these compounds can be synthesized for affordability in spite of lessened quality!

How to Use Geranium to Heal

Geranium essential oil is a powerful therapeutic oil that is also relatively gentle and safe, used primarily in inhaled and topical application methods. Add geranium to your [diffuser](#) or topical blend to enjoy the following [healing benefits](#).

1. Anti-Anxiety

There is something incredible about the way the brain responds to scents. Think about scent-memory and the way **a familiar smell can transport you** back to another time and place. Similar reactions work together to make aromatherapy well-suited to relaxation, and some oils are specifically beneficial in [relieving anxiety](#).

Geranium is one such oil, and its anxiolytic (anti-anxiety) actions are demonstrated well in the 2015 study published in *Journal of Caring Sciences*, analyzing geranium essential oil used in labor.

The researchers used a rose geranium variety **diluted and dropped onto some of the participants' collar** as a personal inhalation method. During the heavy work and high anxiety of active labor, those with rose

geranium had improved in not only reported anxiety levels but in blood pressure, too. (2)

Indications: Diffuse for a calming effect in the whole room; use personal inhalation methods for relief of acute anxiety. Blend with other calming oils like [lavender](#) and sweet orange.

2. Antibacterial

The discovery of antibiotics saved lives, but the modern [overuse of antibiotics](#) risks them. As bacteria become more and more **resistant to traditional treatments**, the varied abilities of antibacterial essential oils become vital.

Geranium is an excellent choice for antibacterial use in wound healing, thanks to its gentle nature that's not likely to cause sensitization. A 2014 study demonstrated this benefit, declaring geranium essential oil to be “*an effective component of therapy*” **especially when infections were recurrent and resistant**. (3)

Of course, you'll want to **beat your wounds to the punch** and treat them before becoming infected or in need of a physician's attention. Including geranium in your wound-healing salves and sprays can help!
Indications: Wound healing sprays, topical balms, creams, and salves.

3. Antioxidant

Environmental toxins, [stress](#), and other disrupting factors leave their mark on the body by way of oxidative damage or oxidative stress. This is a cellular problem that can manifest in **anything from visible signs of aging to the development of cancer**. Antioxidant substances work against that damage by seeking it out, eliminating the source, and repairing the cell structure.

Geranium's antioxidant capacity contributes to its traditional uses, demonstrated in a 2013 study. The oxidative damage targeted in this study was infertility, and mice were used as an observational platform.

After administration of geranium essential oil, the oxidative damage was healed enough that sperm motility improved. (4) While this tells us little in terms of how to use geranium for infertility, it gives us a picture of how **far-reaching antioxidant benefits extend** and, yet again, how traditional uses are so frequently validated by science.

Indications: Topical applications for antioxidant absorption.

4. Antifungal

Fungal infestations can manifest in both topical and systemic ways, as well as in our homes. Geranium is named among antifungal essential oils that can be active as both a vapor or a direct contact application.

Among ten essential oils chosen for evaluation as potential antifungal properties, geranium was listed in the group that **inhibited all of the strains of fungi** the researchers checked. (5) Geranium essential oil is clearly a versatile oil that can inhibit microbes in all areas of our lives.

Indications: [Cleaners](#), diffusion, and topical preparations to inhibit the growth of fungi in its various forms.

5. Anti-Inflammatory

To add to the wound healing benefits geranium exhibits, it is also an anti-inflammatory agent. Inflammation itself is a normal and even beneficial process of the [immune system](#), but in excess it can be painful and problematic.

The researchers used a mouse model to test their application, using geranium essential oil topically for swelling. As suspected, parts that were in contact with the oil preparation saw **significant reduction of**

swelling. (6) Geranium's combination of actions gives you a multifaceted approach to wound care.

Indications: Healing sprays and salves, massage oils.

Geranium Blends to DIY

Geranium blends well with oils that share its properties, so keep that in mind when playing with combinations and scents.

- **Antianxiety:** [lavender](#), bergamot, [rose](#), chamomile
- **Antimicrobial:** [citrus](#), [thyme](#), [clove](#)
- **Healing:** [lavender](#), [lemongrass](#), [tea tree](#)

Geranium has a heavy scent, so lightening it up with [citrus](#) and herbaceous oils can make an enjoyable and effective combination.

5 Healing Benefits of Lavender Oil

“Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.”

~ John 12:3

For over 2,500 years, lavender has been documented in medicinal and religious uses, from ancient texts through modern movements. Beginning with Egyptian mummification, lavender moved to Roman bathhouses, fragrance, and cooking. Later, it's possible that Mary anointed Jesus' feet with it, given the Greek name *naardus*, listed Biblically as nard or spikenard.

In modern times, lavender oil is credited as the essential oil that Gattefosse instinctively covered his burned arm with, igniting a renewed interest in essential oils and inspiring the term *aromatherapy*. That lavender has stood the test of time, inspiring interest in so many eras, cultures, and generations, is a testament to the varied and effective capabilities it carries.

5 Special Health Properties of Lavender

While the millennia have used lavender based on tradition and ancient wisdom, modern science is only just now discovering the mechanisms of lavender's benefits and its rich health benefits. To scratch the surface of its capabilities, let's look at the top 5 properties that lavender essential oil brings to the table – a table riddled with health concerns.

1. Lavender is a Potent Antioxidant

A recurring theme in any natural health discussion, antioxidants are, in effect, the super healers that our culture needs. The free radicals created by

toxins, pollutants, chemicals, and even stress are the culprits for a cascade of cellular damage, immune inhibition, and limitless health risks – including chronic illness and cancer.

If free radicals are the villain, antioxidants are the hero.

The body itself creates antioxidants in the form of the enzymes glutathione peroxidase (GSH-Px), superoxide dismutase (SOD) and catalase (CAT), among others. But we expose our bodies to an onslaught of free radicals and drain our bodies in sedentary lifestyles, so our natural production is not always sufficient.

We've already seen some super antioxidants, like [clove](#) essential oil, and lavender joins the ranks as a powerful natural antioxidant support. Not long ago, Chinese researchers observed that lavender essential oil would attenuate all three major antioxidant enzyme levels in mice within the first day of treatment. [\(1\)](#) In Romania, researchers noted similar activity using inhaled lavender for an hour each day and, according to the study, "Taken together, our results suggest that antioxidant and antiapoptotic activities of the lavender essential oils are the major mechanisms for their potent neuroprotective effects against scopolamine-induced oxidative stress in the rat brain." [\(2\)](#)

2. Lavender Can Help Manage Diabetes

Tunisian traditional medicine utilizes lavender, grown in their region, as a remedy and health support. In 2014, local scientists released the results of a study they had conducted to determine how this traditional remedy actually works. Their findings were fascinating.

The researchers established a 15-day study of diabetic rats, during which lavender essential oil was used as a treatment. The lavender treatment

protected against all of the following, each one a hallmark of the diabetic illness:

- Blood glucose increases
- Metabolic illness
- Weight gain
- Depletion of antioxidants
- Liver and kidney disfunction and lipoperoxidation

The presence of unmitigated free radicals, the depletion of antioxidants and liver and kidney function, the descent into metabolic illness and weight gain – all are components of [diabetes](#) as an illness. Potent antioxidants like lavender essential oil are allies in the pursuit of long term health, and this study underscored its abilities. (3)

With more research and concrete answers, perhaps one day lavender essential oil and other natural treatments will be the standard for diabetic prevention and relief!

3. Lavender Protects Neurological Health

While Tunisian researchers were analyzing metabolic health, lavender was taking center stage in published neurological research, and for similar reasons – to confirm longstanding traditional use. Lavender essential oil has long been used for stress, headaches, depression and anxiety, which all fall under the umbrella of neurological conditions.

Just as confirmation of diabetic and metabolic support was uncovered in 2014, lavender's neuroprotective abilities were confirmed time and again in 2012 – the year of the lavender! In other words, science and history are slowly but surely meeting on common ground.

A full literature review made its way to the [*International Journal of Psychiatry in Clinical Practice*](#) in 2010, confirming lavender oil's efficacy over the breadth of seven separate trials. A lavender essential oil capsule under the name Silexan was shown to consistently relieve symptoms such as sleep disturbance, anxiety, and low quality of life. What's more, no one reported side effects, interactions, or withdrawal symptoms. If you've ever encountered pharmaceutical use for these conditions, you know how incredible that statement is!

Lavender's neuro-heroics don't stop with sleep. Research confirms time and again its incredible properties.

- A 2012 study conducted in Germany demonstrated the restorative benefits of inhaled lavender essential oil vapor. With 60 minutes a day inhaled by rats with **dementia**, lavender was shown to prevent scopolamine-induced oxidative stress. (4)
- The same study took Post Traumatic Stress Disorder into consideration, as well, finding significantly improved sleep, moods and health, as well as reduced depression in individuals who were plagued with PTSD.
- In the same year, *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practices* published a control study that highlighted the benefits of lavender for postpartum women. Twenty-eight women at high risk for postpartum depression found lessened **anxiety and depression** symptoms under a four week lavender aromatherapy treatment plan. (5)
- Finally, in 2012, *Molecules* took a different neurological route when they published the theory that lavender may be a treatment worth considering for **stroke**. Yes, you read that right! According to the study, "In comparison with the model group, treatment with lavender oil significantly decreased neurological deficit scores, infarct size, the levels of [free radical], and attenuated neuronal damage [and antioxidants]." (6)

4. Lavender as an Antimicrobial Agent

As much as lavender has been inhaled for neurological health, it has been utilized as an antimicrobial protectant against infections and disorders. Nearly one hundred studies have been conducted and published on this topic, confirming repeatedly what history has known to be true.

Generational wisdom has rarely used oils singly when treating infectious illness. The combination of oils creates a synergistic reaction, maximizing each oil's potential. This has been validated with science.

Scientists from the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa found that 75.6% of the forty-five blends they attempted produced favorable results. Of the blends used, the *lavender-cinnamon* and *lavender-orange* mixtures were the most powerful. *Candida albicans* and *Staph aureus* were susceptible to a 1:1 ratio of these oils, both frequent causes of topical and respiratory illness. (7)

5. Lavender Soothes and Heals the Skin

Those antimicrobial and antioxidant components come full circle in this last – and certainly not least – major benefit of lavender essential oil. Particularly when mixed with a soothing [carrier oil](#) like aloe or [coconut](#) – 10 drops per 1 ounce – lavender essential oil is highly effective against sunburns, dry skin, minor scrapes and cuts, and canker sores. Even some immediate-type allergic reactions may be mitigated with lavender! (8, 9) As part of a calming, soothing salve for daily use, lavender oil blends well with [sandalwood](#) essential oil.

Using Carrier Oils for Double Benefits

In this chapter, you'll learn all about:

1. *When to Use Carrier Oils*
2. *4 Categories of Carrier Oils to Know*
3. *How to Use a Carrier Oil*

When reading about essential oils – whether you are [brand new to essential oils](#) or digging for new recipe blends – you'll often see a *carrier* or *base* oil included in the discussion, or see mention of dilution. So **what is a carrier oil**, and how do you know which one to get?

The carrier oil is a fatty extract, usually cold pressed from its source. Individual [allergies](#) aside, a carrier oil is not likely to cause sensitization and therefore makes an excellent medium to disperse the more concentrated essential oil across your skin.

Carrier oils are nutritive and have healing properties of their own, so in your discovery of essential oils, don't forget to **take some time to learn about your options** for carrier oils, as well.

When to Use Carrier Oils

Before you ask – yes, **carrier oils are necessary!** Once you get the hang of it, adding your essential oils to a carrier first is hardly any extra work, and in return you are actually amplifying the efficacy of your [healing application](#).

It might seem backwards to say that **diluting a substance makes it more effective**, but in this case it is true. Essential oil applications without a carrier (called “neat” applications) put the oil directly onto your skin. A few things of note are happening here:

1. The **skin may be sensitive** to the concentrated oil, distracting the body from the healing benefits that should be taking place.
2. The essential oil may just **sit on the surface of the skin**, whereas the lipids in a carrier can drive it into the pores.
3. You **can’t massage it in** or disperse it across wider spaces.
4. An ingested neat oil may **cling to the mucous membranes** and never make it to the intended site of application.

While there are instances when neat is acceptable – gentle oils, or oils under the supervision of a trained aromatherapist – your best bet is to **dilute essential oils into a carrier** every time.

Without essential oils, you will also use carriers as the base of most DIY herbal preparations, from lotion bars to chapstick to salves. Start with the most accessible carrier oils, then work through others as you learn their benefits and ideal uses.

4 Categories of Carrier Oils to Know

Herbal supply stores, health food stores, and online supply shops will offer you dozens of carrier oils to choose from. Don’t get overwhelmed at your options! Carrier oils are relatively simple to understand, and for most preparations, you can’t really go wrong.

We’ll walk through the more common of the carrier oils here, but if you run into one you aren’t sure about that isn’t covered here, take the time to look it up and learn what it is and does. Self-education may not teach us everything, but it can take us a long way if we pursue it.

1. Beginner Oils: Olive and Coconut

The best place to start is at the beginning, and for DIY aromatic and herbal preparations, that's right in your own kitchen. Really, if we take it back to Hippocrates encouraging us to [find our medicine in our food](#), the kitchen has been the starting point for many generations!

Let's spend a bit of time on these two, as this is likely where you'll start with carrier oils and diluted topical preparations before branching out to other carrier oils.

- **Olive Oil** – Almost undoubtedly in your kitchen, as it is probably the most commonly used culinary and carrier oil out there. Because it is used so much, however, it may be adulterated with similarly-colored sunflower and corn oils. (1) Once again, we are reminded to check our product sources carefully! Extra virgin olive oil – which is cold pressed and minimally processed – is the ideal, and it will be a light green color with a thick scent. Sometimes, the scent can be off-putting, so you'll want to choose olive oil when making a highly aromatic blend or preparation. In 2015, a double-blind, randomized study took place in which olive oil was used on diabetic patients with ulcers on their feet. After four weeks of treatment, the patients who'd received olive oil topical treatments had smaller, less pronounced ulcers than those who received placebo or nothing. (2) The use of olive oil as a carrier can add to the soothing, healing effects of your dilutions and preparations.
- **Coconut Oil** – A saturated fat taken from coconuts, which are actually giant seeds. The oil drives into the [skin](#) easily with very little greasy residue, taking the oils you've blended in with it. Even without anything blended into it, coconut oil has been shown to enhance the wound healing process. (3) You probably already use coconut oil regularly; its popularity has recently sparked internet jokes about how much you can do with coconut oil: fix your hair, fix your budget,

fix your significant other...The jokes, of course are rooted in reality, poking good-natured fun at the almost comical range of [things you can do with coconut oil](#).

- The way [coconut oil](#) is processed will affect its uses. Cold pressed coconut oil (virgin, extra virgin) will retain the coconut scent and will become solid when room temperature or cooler. Heat processed coconut oil will not have the taste and smell of coconut, and fractionated coconut oil (the most processed of the options) will not become solid. The tendency to solidify can be good or bad for your preparations – for quick dilutions, it is sometimes nice to mix up the essential oil into a semi-solid coconut oil and then be able to rub on a quick-melting preparation as it warms to your skin.
- Fractionated Coconut Oil – Literally a fraction of the coconut oil – being that all of the long chain triglycerides have been removed – [fractionated coconut oil](#) is a lightweight emollient that is a must-have for dry or sensitive skin. Also referred to as FCO, It provides an effective barrier without clogging pores and leaves your skin feeling smooth and never greasy. It is considered to be the most cost-effective oil because it will never go rancid. In fact, some suppliers claim that it can be mixed with other (more expensive) carrier oils to extend their shelf life. It is colorless and odorless, and it incorporates perfectly with other oils without altering their scent, appearance or effectiveness.

Choose these when: Quick dilutions with what you have on hand; enhancing skin healing; use in a drink or culinary preparation.

2. Nut & Seed Oils: Almond and Jojoba

These oils are probably not in your kitchen for cooking, but they are still very commonly purchased, easy to work with, and rich sources of skin-health nutrients. If you are ready to take a step beyond your pantry, these make a good place to start.

- **Almond Oil** – Very mild in scent and flavor, [almond oil](#) is nutrient dense and versatile. Almond oil is a good topical source vitamins A & E, adding to the many nutritional benefits that almonds have simply as a food. Traditional uses indicate almond oil for dry skin conditions, like psoriasis and eczema, and its nutrient level and ability to penetrate the skin seems to support this use. As an emollient, almond oil can be soothing for sore skin. (4)
- **Jojoba Oil** – If you’ve not yet heard of jojoba (or heard it pronounced), it’s *ho-HO-ba* that you are looking for. Derived from the seeds, jojoba is actually classified as a liquid wax, which adds another layer to your carrier oil choice. It doesn’t solidify as quickly as [coconut oil](#) does, but the consistency is well suited to deep penetration and moisturization. Jojoba has an excellent shelf life, which is perfect for storing until you need it for small dilution preparations. It has been studied for anti-inflammatory properties, wound healing ability, and efficacy in face-mask treatments for [acne](#). (5, 6, 7)

Choose these when: Skin is dry or inflamed; nutrients are lacking; versatility and ease of use are desired.

3. Fruit Oils: Apricot, Avocado, and Grapeseed

Easy to remember thanks to kitchen staples, these oils typically come from the seeds of their respective fruits, as is the case with the other carrier oils. These choices are as affordable and accessible as they are versatile.

- **Apricot Oil** – Available as expeller pressed or cold pressed, the difference is simply texture and preference. Apricot oil’s nutrient profile includes vitamins E and A as well, or at least the carotenoid precursor to vitamin A. It is edible as well as beneficial topically. (8) Because it is so incredibly gentle as well as nourishing, apricot oil is a good choice for applications that will cover a good deal of skin or that will be applied on children heavily.

- **Avocado Oil** – Avocado as a fruit is one of the best sources of fat and nutrients (and dip!) you can find. The oil itself, as you might imagine, is an emollient, taken from the smooth flesh around the pit. An exception to the typical seed-derived oil, avocado oil is rich in nutrients and excellent at penetrating the skin. In another animal trial, this one occurring in 2008, avocado oil was also found to have good wound healing ability. Before elaborating on the study, the researchers noted that the oil is “*rich in nutrient waxes, proteins and minerals, as well as vitamins A, D and E...an excellent source of enrichment for dry, damaged or chapped skin.*” (9)
- **Grape Seed Oil** – Also a culinary oil, grape seed oil topically is used for its light texture and lack of residue. Once on and in the skin, grape seed is another oil verified for its contributions in wound care and healing. (10) The high levels of fatty acid content and antioxidants in grape seed oil contribute to much of its beneficial composition. (11) Without the heaviness of more saturated oils, grape seed makes a cleaner topical application with less of a greasy film.

Choose these when: Creating a massage oil; looking for deep hydration; creating chapsticks and balms.

4. Essential Fatty Acid Oils: Borage and Evening Primrose

While most of the carrier oils we’ve talked about and what is on the market are decent sources of essential fatty acids, some oils are considered good sources of these vital nutrients.

- **Borage Oil** – Taken from the seeds of a flowering perennial herb, borage oil is a potent source of omega-6 essential fatty acids. While we usually take omega-3 to counter the unhealthy balance of essential fatty acids that our diet affords, borage oil as a natural source is a different story. Omega-6, at its root, is actually as anti-inflammatory as omega-3, which likely aids in the topical benefits of borage oil. It’s in the overconsumption of junk-food-sources and lack of balance in

the omegas that we begin to see trouble. Borage oil has been used for dermatitis and other anti-inflammatory preparations. (12)

- **Evening Primrose Oil** – Named for the flowers that open only in the evenings, evening primrose oil is a more delicate oil that must be cold pressed, refrigerated, and should not be added to any heat preparations. Typically, evening primrose is consumed in supplement or culinary form, and of those uses it is highly researched and evaluated for its benefits as a source of essential fatty acids. For topical use, results seem to be similar to that of borage: anti-inflammatory effects that relieve flare ups such as dermatitis. (13)
- Although these are culinary oils, we already get large amounts of omega-6 in the diet. Be cautious with long-term culinary ingestion without professional guidance.

Choose these when: Resolving topical inflammation; essential fatty acid deficiency/imbalance is a problem.

How to Use a Carrier Oil

For simple dilution purposes, start with small amounts of your carrier oil and work up as you become comfortable and have sanitary ways of storing your blend. Always place blends into heat-sanitized containers, particularly if they will stay there for any amount of time.

Start with 1 tsp of carrier oil, which roughly translates to 60-100 drops. Since it's oil we are dealing with, the assumption is that it will be closer to 60 than 100. You can assume 100 for extra safety and simple dilutions (1% = 1 drop), or you can calculate based on the more generous (and likely more accurate) 60.

Dilution quick guide:

- **1%** = harsh essential oils, sensitive skin

- **2-4%** = typical dilution
- **5%+** = higher concentration, gentle oils, small surface area (i.e. acne spot treatment)

Stir the essential oil into the carrier, then apply as indicated. And that's that! You've successfully diluted your essential oil and enjoyed the added benefit of a nourishing carrier oil.

DIY Anti-Aging Skin Cream

My wife recently shared with our audience about a DIY skin cream she used as a teen that really helped to heal her face after experiencing some chemical burns from store bought facial cleansers and creams. It's one of the reasons her skin looks so young and healthy today. While it's not something she likes to brag about, people usually think she's in her 20s — even though she's 38 years old!

You'll find the recipe for this skin cream at the end of the book, in the DIY Recipes chapter, but first, we want to share my father in-law's story, as told by Mama Z...

My Dad's Story

My dad is a retired PhD agriscientist and farms as his life hobby. In addition to his full-time job, he has literally spent more than 40 hours per week in the garden since as long as I can remember. Basically, he lived outside during the growing season and sun time hours after getting home from work, and a lot of our family time was spent picking weeds and harvesting our produce. Now that he's been long retired from the ag business, he's still in the garden year round. I have him to thank for my work ethic, my green thumb and my sensitive skin!

You see, dad's been bald for years now and he's always had a problem developing cancerous lesions on his scalp. He goes through ball caps like my mom and I go through panty hose, but that still doesn't keep all the sun away from his pale, Irish/Scandinavian skin. For decades, my dad has battled melanoma on his head and has recently developed lesions on his arms and hands.

During my dad's most recent bout with skin cancer two years ago, he showed me the cream his doctor prescribed him and one of the side effects was cancer! Isn't that crazy! I still can't get over the insanity behind an anti-skin cancer cream causing cancer in other parts of the body. Blows my mind. Anyway...

Dad had pre-cancerous spots all over his arms and hands, and he was applying this cream on his skin for months after having several tumors removed. Unfortunately, this approach didn't really help at all. In fact, the skin began to scale and resembled a candida infection when I saw him during his annual trip with my mom to visit me, Eric and the kids.

I asked him if he wanted to be healed and he said, "Of course!" I asked him if he'd be willing to try my DIY cream and he said yes, but only if he could finish off the prescription stuff he was using. I said, "Fair enough," and we to work!

I ended up making my dad 2 varieties of my anti-aging cream for him to try: 1 with lavender oil and another with lavender, tea tree and frankincense. He used both my cream and the prescription stuff for a short time and ended up only using my concoctions alone. Within 6 weeks, his hands and arms were completely clear and now he's a believer in the power of DIY with [essential oils](#)!!

DIY Essential Oil Recipes

Mama Z's DIY Aloe and Coconut Oil Skin Cream

This super easy to make cream can be used as a carrier for any of your favorite essential oils. It is very good for the skin on it's own, but even better with EOs!

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon [aloe vera gelly](#) (not juice or gel)
- 1 tablespoon [organic coconut oil](#)
- 8 drops lavender essential oil

Instructions

1. Put the aloe jelly and coconut oil in a little jar with a lid and shake till well blended. You could use an [immersion blender](#) for this, but it is not needed. Once well mixed, add in the lavender essential oil and mix well.
2. Store in a glass jar or [glass salve container](#).

How to Use the Anti-Aging Skin Cream

If you have something like eczema or dry skin it can help to neutralize the PH of the skin and gently exfoliate before using the cream. My favorite way to do this is to put some [Bragg apple cider vinegar](#) on a cotton circle (like you'd use for cosmetics) and gently wipe the area.

Ready to Modify the Anti-Aging Skin Cream?

Dryness is the #1 cause of wrinkles, so we need to focus on hydrating our skin in a healthy way. This is why the recipe above works so well for anti-aging, but it also works wonders for sunburns and light eczema; which

are also related to dryness. You could use it for just about anything though because it's gentle and safe for any skin!

For bad eczema I like to cut back to 4 drops of lavender essential oil and add 2 drops each of frankincense and melaleuca (tea tree) essential oils. If you have other oils you're wanting to use, or you think you might like to make up multiple blends you can make a large batch of the cream by just mixing the [aloe gelly](#) and [coconut oil](#) in a 1:1 ratio, then for every one ounce (2 T) of the cream blend add up to 8 drops of essential oils of your choice. You can mix and match as desired!

DIY Essential Oil Deodorant Recipe

Another recipe formulated by my buddy [Jill at The Prairie Homestead](#), this will keep you clean and fresh without the toxic overload.

- 1/3 cup coconut oil
- 1/4 cup baking soda
- 1/4 cup arrowroot powder
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch
- Essential oils—try [tea tree](#), sweet orange, [lavender](#), [frankincense](#), etc.

Combine the dry ingredients first, then add [coconut oil](#) and up to 20-30 drops essential oils. Add more dry or wet ingredients as necessary for consistency; store in a jar or roll-up tube.

DIY Essential Oil Soap Recipe

From my good friend [Dr. Axe](#), a simple soap can be made by mixing these ingredients into a glass dispenser:

- 1/4 part castile soap
- 3/4 parts water

- 5 drops peppermint essential oil

Play with the oil blends, using [citrus](#), [tea tree](#), and other gently antimicrobial oils to a total for 5-10 drops.

DIY Essential Oil Toothpaste Recipe

Check out my article on [essential oils for oral health](#) if you are stumped on which oils to use, then add them to these ingredients:

- Equal parts baking soda and [coconut oil](#) (1/4 c each is good to start with)
- 1-2 tsp sea salt
- 5-7 drops essential oils
- optional: 1-2 tsp each stevia or bentonite clay

Mix and place in a small jar or a squeeze bottle. Use a spoon or disposable wooden scoop to get the paste out and avoid contamination.

DIY Essential Oil Shampoo Recipe

Another from [Dr. Axe](#), this recipe uses the gentle base of castile soap and adds nourishing natural ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups (1 can) coconut milk
- 1 1/2 cups liquid castile soap
- 40 drops [lavender](#) essential oil

Mix well and add to a BPA-free squeeze bottle. Shake before use.

DIY Essential Oil Hand Cream Lotion Recipe

Lotion-making techniques vary from simple to complex. Here's an excellent starter DIY recipe from my good friend Jill at [The Prairie Homestead](#).

Simply combine a few ingredients:

- 1/4 cup shea butter
- 1/8 cup sweet almond oil
- 1 tablespoon beeswax

Carefully melt, then add 20-30 drops [essential oils](#). Stir, then pour into sterilized jars. Adjust the amount of beeswax for a firmer or softer lotion. Try nourishing oils like lavender, chamomile, citrus, and myrrh.

DIY Essential Oil Lipstick Recipe

This DIY lipstick is nothing more complicated than a jazzed up lip balm.

Here are the main ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons sweet almond oil or coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon beeswax / beeswax beads
- 1 teaspoon cocoa or shea butter

Melted, then stir in optional coloring such as:

- beet powder
- cinnamon
- turmeric

Finally, remove from heat and stir in a drop or two of essential oil for fragrance and nourishment, like [cinnamon](#), [peppermint](#), [lavender](#), or [lemongrass](#).

Conclusion

What did you think? Are you ready to ditch the toxic body care products and make your own? If so, here are a few things to keep in mind:

Everyone's body is different. You may need to try a few different oils before you discover which one works best for your body. The same goes for carrier oils! These recipes are meant to be a baseline, so play with them! Don't be afraid to experiment with different carrier oils and blends of essential oils to get just the right scent or benefits.

We truly believe that essential oils are God's Medicine and, while they are amazing substances, they are also very strong and can cause harm if you're not careful. Remember to always dilute your oils, only purchase the purest oils you can find, and keep in mind that a drop or two is usually plenty for a single application. More isn't better when it comes to essential oils, and a little goes a long way!

Last of all, don't forget to check out my [Dr. Z's Essential Oils Database](#) to learn more about how to use essential oils safely and effectively. There's a wealth of information on my site so take it one step at a time and enjoy the journey!

Shalom my friend!

~ Dr. Z

About Dr. Z

Founder of DrEricZ.com, Dr. Eric Zielinski is a sought-after Biblical Health educator, author and motivational speaker. Inspired by the timeless principles in the Bible, Dr. Z's mission is to provide people with simple, evidenced-based tools that they need to experience the Abundant Life. By creating programs like Beat Cancer God's Way and hosting online events such as the Essential Oils Revolution and the Heal Your Gut Summit, Dr. Z educates people in natural remedies and empowering life strategies. He lives in Atlanta with his wife and three children.



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