

## Essential Oils and our Furry Friends

Do you ever worry about using essential oils on or around your pets? You should be!

There is lots of conversations about using or misusing essential oils around our pets and here is more information about safe use with our furry friends.

While aromatherapy can be just as beneficial for our pets as it is for us extra care must be followed to ensure safe use. It is important to remember there are key differences between us and our beloved animals. They can metabolize what they come in contact differently than we do. They tend to have a greater sense of smell as well as a tendency to be much smaller and therefore the adage that "less is more" is never truer when insuring safe use of aromatherapy around those furry and feathered additions to our families. Safe practices would always include diluting, never allow your pets to take internally and take care that you have proper ventilation.

For owners of cats it is important to know that your felines lack some of the liver enzymes that humans do and oils containing polyphenolic compounds should be avoided. Oils that need extra caution when used around cats would include but not limited to are; birch, cinnamon, clove, oregano, pennyroyal, tea tree, thyme and wintergreen. Dogs tend to have slightly less sensitivity issues but there are some oils that should not be used on or around them; anise, clove, garlic, horseradish, juniper, thyme, wintergreen and yarrow.

When using oils on your animals, you need to "get their permission". Just by passing the open bottle under their nose can give you information that they like the smell or don't.

All the following aromatherapy recipes and essential oils are very safe and gentle on dogs. However, to be on the safe side, before applying the oils topically, do a patch test to make sure that the essential oils do not irritate your dog. Take one drop of any of the blends and apply it to the sparsely coated area under your dog's "armpit". Check about 24 hours later for any signs of irritation such as redness.

With all of this said, used safely, many oils have great benefits and here are a few to consider.

**Carrot seed** (*Daucus carota*) – topical treatment for dryness

**Cedarwood** (*Cedrus atlantica*) – repels pests

**Chamomile** (*Anthemis nobilis*) – relaxation and sleep

**Clary Sage** (*Salvia sclarea*) – calms nervousness and excitability

**Geranium** (*Pelargonium graveolens*) – repels pests and as a treatment for ear infections. Boosts immune system.

**Ginger** (*Zingiber officinale*) – relieves pain from arthritis and hip dysplasia, supports healthy digestion

**Helicrysum** (*Helichrysum angustifolium*) – pain relief. It has antibacterial properties and aides in reducing wound bleeding

**Lavender** (*lavendula augustifolia*) – relieves anxiety

**Marjoram** (*Origanum marjorana*) – repels pests and helps treat skin infections and irritations. Good for calming the nervous system. It also has properties to aid in upper respiratory ailments including kennel cough.

**Myrrh** (*Commiphora myrrha*) – fights allergies



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**Peppermint** (*Mentha piperita*) – soothes pain from arthritis and hip dysplasia. A great tonic for low appetite and helps with motion sickness and upset stomach

The benefits of the use of essential oils are numerous for both humans and their pets. Always follow safe practices when using topically or diffusing and know who and what is in the space around you.

## Essential Oil Recipes for Dogs over 50 pounds.

For dogs less than 50 pounds, double the amount of carrier. These recipes are only for dogs.

Please do not use on other animals, especially cats or birds.

### Essential Oil Dog Shampoo (1 or 2 washings)

Ingredients:

- 1 TB castile soap
- 3 drops Lavender (*lavendula augustifolia*)
- 3 drops Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*)
- 3 drops Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*)
- 2 drops Cedarwood (*Cedrus atlantica*)
- 12 drops Vitamin E (1/4 tsp)
- 1 cup of water (carrier)

In a glass jar, mix all the essential oils in the castile soap, including the Vitamin E. Then add the water. Mix well. This shampoo will not have much suds but is very effective. Also helps in repelling ticks.

### Anti-Itch Essential Oil Recipe

Ingredients:

- 4 oz Jojoba or Olive oil (carrier)
- 3 drops Vitamin E
- 5 drops Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*)
- 5 drops Lavender (*lavendula augustifolia*)
- 3 drops Frankincense (*Boswellia carter*)

Mix all ingredients in a 4oz glass dropper bottle. Apply 2 – 4 drops directly to the itching/dry area, 2x a day, massage in.

### Deodorizing Spray

Ingredients:

- 6 drops Lavender (*lavendula augustifolia*)
- 2 drops Geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens*)
- 2 drops Cedarwood (*Cedrus atlantica*) (optional for tick spray)
- Pinch of salt (carrier)
- 5 oz warm water (carrier)

Mix lavender and geranium and Cedarwood in the salt, then add warm water. The salt helps the essential oils mix with the water, so they don't stay at the top of the bottle. This recipe is multi-purpose for deodorizing but also tick repellent.



Lightly spray on your dog, staying away from their eyes and genitals.

### Essential Oil Ear wash

#### Ingredients:

10 drops Lavender (*lavendula augustifolia*)  
10 drops Frankincense (*Boswellia carter*)  
10 drops Geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens*)  
8 drops White Cedar (*thuja occidentalis*)  
10 drops Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)  
2 cups Fractionated coconut oil or Olive oil (carrier)

Combine all ingredients in a glass mason jar, mix well. To apply, use a glass spray bottle and refill as necessary. Spray this to your dog's ears at least once a week for ear infections, or at least once a month to prevent infections, especial to breeds that are prone to ear infections. You can spray on a cotton ball to wipe clean the ear.

When mixing this mixture with White Cedar, caution should be used for people that are pregnant, breastfeeding, auto-immune disease, or a history of seizures.

### References & Disclaimer

#### Safety Considerations:

- Do not take essential oils internally.
- Do not apply to eyes, sensitive areas or mucous membranes.
- Do not apply undiluted to skin (for directions on proper dilution refer to an aromatherapy text).
- The information on this website is not intended to diagnose or prescribe.
- Pregnant women, nursing mothers and children should not use essential oils without first consulting a healthcare provider.
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