



# DAVID DOUGLAS WELLNESS

David Douglas School District  
— WELLNESS —

HAPPY Newsletter

April 2018

## Aromatically Using Essential Oils

Essential oils are renowned for their variety of uses and benefits, and for providing versatile solutions for everyday needs. Among the many methods for enjoying essential oils, aromatic use has long been revered for its ability to help the user experience the potent, uplifting, relaxing, or purifying nature of essential oils.

When we peel an orange, walk through a rose garden or rub a sprig of lavender between our fingers, we are aware of the special scent of that plant. It is essential oils that give spices and herbs their specific scent and flavor, flowers and fruit their perfume. The essential oil in the orange peel is not difficult to identify; it is found in such profusion that it actually squirts out when we peel it. The minute droplets of oil, which are contained in tiny pockets or glandular cells in the outer peel, are easily evaporated infusing the air with their characteristic aroma.

Aromatic oils can be found in all the various parts of a plant, including the seeds, bark, root, leaves, flowers, wood, balsam and resin.

Not only is the aromatic use of essential oils extremely convenient and simple, but it also offers immediate benefits such as promoting a calm, stable environment, purifying the air, managing mood and emotions, and more. A simple way to experience the power of essential oils with very little skill or knowledge, aromatic use continues to be a popular application method in the essential oil world today.

Yielding the benefits of essential oils through aromatic use is not a new concept, but rather an idea that has been in practice for centuries. The practice of aromatherapy, or the use of essential oils and plant extracts, has been around for hundreds of thousands of years. In ancient Rome, China, Greece, and India, essential oils were used frequently in rituals or religious practices, as these ancient people discovered that essential oils had the ability to influence feelings and uplift mood.

While this effect was somewhat unexplained in ancient times, significant research in the 1990s helped biologists understand how inhaling the scent of an essential oil could cause specific chemical sensors in the body to react. This research helped prove the notions of ancient civilizations—that breathing in essential oils can have a significant effect on emotion, mood, and atmosphere.

Research has shown that the scent of essential oils can cause reactions in chemical sensors in the brain. Because of this, aromatic use allows the essential oil user to achieve a desired effect, depending on the chemical structure of the essential oil. Many essential oils contain chemical properties that have been shown to promote relaxing feelings, a calming atmosphere, and the ability to soothe anxious feelings when used aromatically. Because each essential oil has a different chemical makeup and each person has different emotions, memories, and reactions within the brain when inhaling an essential oil, each person will experience something a little bit different. However, certain essential oils have specific chemical elements that help promote calming, relaxing, grounding, energizing, or soothing feelings.

Lemon – uplifting

Lavender – calming

Frankincense – renewing

Peppermint – energizing

Myrrh – soothing

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# Healthy Eating

It's breakfast for dinner! This breakfast casserole is a go to at my house!

## Tex-Mex Hash Breakfast Casserole

Prep Time 15 mins

Cook Time 25 mins

Total Time 0:40

Serves 4-6

### Ingredients

- 1lb grass fed ground beef
- 2 sweet potatoes, shredded
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 6 eggs, whisked
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon bacon fat (or other fat)
- 1 (14oz) can of El Pato Enchilada Sauce or homemade
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- salt and pepper, to taste

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Pull out a large skillet or oven proof cooking dish. (aka cast iron skillet, etc)
3. Place skillet over medium heat, add a tablespoon of fat then add your minced garlic and diced onion.
4. When onion just begins to soften, add your ground beef and use a spoon or spatula to break it up and combine with onion.
5. Now use your shredding attachment on your food processor to shred you sweet potatoes. If you don't have a food processor, just use a grater then go to the store and buy a food processor for next time. Life will be better with one.
6. When your meat is almost cook through, add all your spices to the meat and onions and mix to combine the flavors.
7. Now pour your shredded sweet potatoes on top of the meat and pat down then add your enchilada sauce on top.
8. Cover and let simmer for around 8-10 minutes.
9. Once sweet potato begins to soften, remove from heat, add your whisked eggs and stir to combine it all together.
10. Place in oven and bake for 25-30 minutes or until eggs are cooked through.

Let cool, it will be hot!! The enjoy!  
For breakfast, lunch or dinner!!

<http://paleomg.com/tex-mex-hash-breakfast-casserole/>



## App of the Month

### Wunderlist

Contributed by Naomi Schneider

One of my favorite apps for mental wellness is Wunderlist. It's a free app that allows you to make custom to-do lists. I use mine to have reminders for weekly chores and monthly chores but it's especially helpful for less frequent things like oil changes or changing filters in appliances or replacing the batteries in smoke detectors. I also have a list for my personal care that reminds me to replace my razor blade every 2 weeks (instead of waiting til it's cutting me), replace my eye makeup every 3 months, and do a monthly breast self exam. It's a helpful little reminder to do simple forgettable things to take care of my health.

Free , available for iOS, Android and desktop



## Essential Oils cont.

Aromatic usage has traditionally been used to help improve mood. Whether you need to stabilize your emotions, calm anxious feelings, promote feelings of motivation, or encourage relaxation, there is an essential oil with the perfect chemical components to help you manage your mood and achieve a desired result. As the aroma of an essential oil interacts with the chemical sensors in the brain, it will elicit a reaction—allowing the user to choose specific oils to help produce a specific effect.

Another major benefit of using essential oils aromatically is their ability to purify the air. Dispelling unwanted odors and replacing them with pure, pleasant scents is possible when you harness the power of potent, high quality essential oils. Today, many air-purifying agents contain harmful toxins and chemicals, which makes the aromatic use of essential oils even more desirable. Essential oils provide a safe, natural way to purify the air in any room, without inhaling harmful toxins.

If something is aromatic, it emits a distinct, potent, or pleasant smell. The aromatic use of essential oils consists of benefitting from the natural properties of the oils by way of breathing in the aroma. While topical and internal applications require the body to come in contact with the oil, aromatic application merely requires the essential oil to pass through the nose in order to offer the benefits. Diffusing or inhaling essential oils directly typically achieves aromatic use.

The human sense of smell is a powerful tool. Sense of smell can produce significant mental, emotional, and physiologic responses depending on the way that different aromas react with the brain. As volatile aromatic compounds, essential oils have the ability to disperse through the air quickly. The ability to change state quickly of essential oils allows the user to experience the aroma of an essential oil quickly and easily—even from the very second that a bottle is opened.

Essential oils interact with chemical sensors in the brain, thus creating a response. These chemical sensors are called olfactory sensors. They live in the olfactory system of the brain—the part of the brain that regulates our sense of smell. The olfactory system is connected to the limbic system where emotions and memories are stored. When using essential oils aromatically, the scent travels through the nose to the olfactory system where it is processed, and then travels through the olfactory nerve to the limbic system. In the limbic system, the scent triggers responses in the brain based on memories and experiences. Because of these reactions in the brain, essential oils have a particularly powerful effect when applied aromatically. Due to the volatility of essential oils, aromatic use of essential oils is the most effective application method—the oil user can experience the benefits of a scent quickly and conveniently. When using essential oils aromatically, they are easily inhaled and absorbed through the respiratory tract and lungs, and then circulated through the blood stream. As we breathe in the scent of an essential oil, it triggers specific reactions based on our own individual emotions, behaviors, memories, and experiences. This is why aromatic use is such a big part of mood management—reactions in the brain cause physiological reactions that can alter and improve mood.

Although diffusers offer a simple, safe way to use essential oils, there are countless other methods that will allow you to experience the aromatic benefits of essential oils through the air.

- ~Spray essential oils on clothing for a pleasant scent throughout the day.
- ~Add a drop of oil to a dryer sheet or wool dryer balls and place in the dryer with a batch of laundry for a clean scent
- ~ Add one to two drops of essential oils to a homemade surface cleaner
- ~Diffuse essential oils during a bubble bath to create a spa-like environment.
- ~Apply oil to a cotton ball or wool felt and place in the air vents of your car.
- ~Place a drop of oil in your hand, rub the palms together, cup the hands over your nose, and inhale.
- ~Diffusing jewelry will allow you to wear your essential oils to smell when desired.
- ~Mix oil and water in a spray bottle and spritz over furniture, carpet, and other linens.
- ~Place two or three drops of essential oil on the floor during a shower (keeping oil away from the water path) and breathe in.
- ~Stick a few drops of essential oil on a newspaper and place at the bottom of a garbage can to help with the smell.

There are many books, websites and apps to help with finding other ideas for aromatic uses for essential oils. You can also find lots of information and recipes for blending essential oils too.

Along with the wellness that essential oils provide they are lots of fun.

Most of the information I used for this was from DoTerra Essential Oils' website, social media, ebook and apps.

Contributed by Kim Fairbanks, MECP

# Nutrition and Your Brain

Below is an excerpt taken from Harvard Health Publishing, the link below will take you to the entire article.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/nutritional-psychiatry-your-brain-on-food-201511168626>

Think about it. Your brain is always “on.” It takes care of your thoughts and movements, your breathing and heartbeat, your senses — it works hard 24/7, even while you’re asleep. This means your brain requires a constant supply of fuel. That “fuel” comes from the foods you eat — and what’s in that fuel makes all the difference. Put simply, what you eat directly affects the structure and function of your brain and, ultimately, your mood.

Like an expensive car, your brain functions best when it gets only premium fuel. Eating high-quality foods that contain lots of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants nourishes the brain and protects it from oxidative stress — the “waste” (free radicals) produced when the body uses oxygen, which can damage cells.

Unfortunately, just like an expensive car, your brain can be damaged if you ingest anything other than premium fuel. If substances from “low-premium” fuel (such as what you get from processed or refined foods) get to the brain, it has little ability to get rid of them. Diets high in refined sugars, for example, are harmful to the brain. In addition to worsening your body’s regulation of insulin, they also promote inflammation and oxidative stress. Multiple studies have found a correlation between a diet high in refined sugars and impaired brain function — and even a worsening of symptoms of mood disorders, such as depression.

It makes sense. If your brain is deprived of good-quality nutrition, or if free radicals or damaging inflammatory cells are circulating within the brain’s enclosed space, further contributing to brain tissue injury, consequences are to be expected. What’s interesting is that for many years, the medical field did not fully acknowledge the connection between mood and food.

Today, fortunately, the burgeoning field of nutritional psychiatry is finding there are many consequences and correlations between not only what you eat, how you feel, and how you ultimately behave, but also the kinds of bacteria that live in your gut.

## Do you have ideas for an upcoming newsletter?

An app you use everyday? A favorite healthy recipe? A great relaxation technique to share with your co-workers?

Please submit ideas to  
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