

Eucalyptus Essential Oil

There's an old legend that says the first time Eucalyptus was used medicinally was when a man accidentally cut his thumb with an axe. His father told him to make a bandage from eucalyptus leaves and apply it to the stitched cut – a trick he had learned from old Aboriginal folk medicine. A surgeon examined the wound days later and noted that it had healed faster than expected and there was no infection.

In modern times, Eucalyptus is a very popular essential oil that's used in commercial products like vapor rubs and rash creams, as well as inhaled, used as a skin preparation and even in dental products.

Eucalyptus oil properties

Eucalyptus essential oil can be used as part of a soothing aromatherapy massage, where it works to relieve mental exhaustion and boost circulation to the brain.

One of the best-known uses for eucalyptus oil is to help relieve sinus congestion and clear nasal passages. Inhaling and/or diffusing the oil has an [anti-microbial effect](#) and can also help remove airborne bacteria that cause infection. It can also help eradicate mold and may have uses in asthma although research is so far limited.

Eucalyptus essential oil is a natural insecticide and can be used to get rid of head lice and other pests – [a 2018 study](#) used a solution of eucalyptus oil mixed with lemon-scented tea tree oil and found it to be a 'viable alternative' to pesticides in treating headlice. It has antiseptic properties that make it a useful addition to a first aid kit; minor injuries, burns, bites, stings, and sores can all be treated. It works to resist infection as well as soothing the soreness. In the same way, it can help relieve muscle stiffness and soreness if added to a warm bath.

What to use Eucalyptus essential oil for

Use a few drops while showering to wake yourself up in the morning; just sprinkle in the shower or onto your hand and inhale.

For relief from sinus congestion, add a few drops of eucalyptus oil to a bowl of hot water, put a towel over your head to trap the vapor and lean over the bowl, taking deep breaths of the steam. This method works well on headaches, colds, sinusitis, congestion, muscle aches and pains, and asthma too.

For relief from minor burns, sores, bites, and cuts, add some eucalyptus essential oil to a warm bath.

Eucalyptus essential oil can make a natural non-toxic air freshener. Dilute the oil with water, add to a spray bottle to help remove mold and bacteria. It can also be used to eliminate the odors from shoes and sports gear.

Safety and precautions

- Ingestion of Eucalyptus essential oil isn't recommended.
- Pregnant and nursing women and those taking prescription drugs should not use Eucalyptus essential oil without seeking medical advice first.
- When applied topically, Eucalyptus Oil should be diluted to skin irritation. A skin test is recommended before using on the skin, and Eucalyptus oil should never be used near the eyes, inner ears, or on any other sensitive areas of skin.
- The oil is generally thought to be safe for use on adult skin, should not applied to the face of a child under two years old.

Did you know?

- There are around 500 varieties of Eucalyptus currently used to make Eucalyptus essential oils. They all share the same healing benefits and the characteristic fresh scent.
- In 1858 the town of Kyneton, Victoria was lit by a gas made from the leaves of the eucalyptus tree, which had been converted into a gas – there was enough to light up the town's shops, hotels and homes!