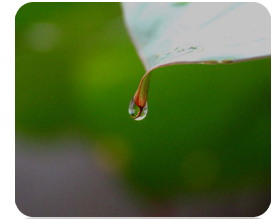


Essential Oils

Then & Now Newsletter

- By Joanna Barrett, RN, CNHP



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CYPRESS - Lives forever

Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*) Sempervirens means “lives forever.” Cypress as a basis of medicinal oil and incense was first recorded in the papyri of Ancient Egypt. The wood was used to make their sarcophagi. The Phoenicians and Cretans used the wood for building ships and houses and the Greeks used it for sculpting statues of their gods. In Ancient Greek and Roman mythology, Cypress was dedicated to Hades (or Pluto), god of the underworld, associating it with death and eternity. The tree gave its name to the island of Cypress where it was worshipped. For centuries Cypress trees were planted in cemeteries throughout the Mediterranean as a symbol of grief and the comfort of life after death. The Ancient Assyrians used the astringent properties of the leaves to cure hemorrhoids. The Greek physician Galen (165 A.D.) recommended Cypress for internal bleeding and diarrhea.

Cypress can be used for a wide range of problems. Its astringent properties make it excellent for use where there is excess fluid - edema, incontinence, diarrhea, heavy menstrual flow for women over 20, excessive perspiration, excessive sweating of the feet (it's a good deodorant too), bleeding gums and nosebleeds. Cypress is antispasmodic, acting especially on the bronchi - a drop or two inhaled on a tissue will help relieve an asthma attack and a couple drops in a saucer will act as a preventative during the night. Diffused, it is useful for asthma, emphysema, whooping cough, and bronchitis. Rub it on the chest for spasmodic coughs. It is also an expectorant. Cypress is the #1 tonic for the circulatory system, softening the walls of hardened arteries, relieving angina pain, and strengthening connective tissue. It is helpful for minimizing varicose veins, applied locally in gentle upward strokes (Never massage) after weekly cold compresses with German Chamomile. After about 4 weeks, veins will look better and the legs will feel lighter. This essential oil helps balance the female hormone system. Severe hot flashes during menopause may be reduced with Cypress combined with clary. It relieves menstrual pain, PMS, and taken orally and applied topically, it helps inhibit ovarian cysts. The French also use the oil for arthritis, insomnia, intestinal parasites, lymphatic congestion, pancreas insufficiencies, pleurisy, prostate decongestant, tuberculosis and throat problems.

For the mind and spirit, aromatically, Cypress influences, strengthens, and helps ease the feeling of loss. Cypress has been called the funeral oil. It creates a feeling of security, grounding, cohesion and stability. It provides mental structure and collection of thoughts for absent-mindedness, lack of concentration, squandering of energies, and uncontrollable sobbing. It has a calming, soothing effect on the irritable, angry and stressed-out person. Cypress is a spiritual oil particularly helpful in times of turmoil and transition. Cypress can assist us in giving courage for surrendering to God's will. It counteracts the negative emotions of grief, sorrow, jealousy, lethargy, fear, timidly, and frustration. It encourages the positive emotions of strength, comfort, change, understanding, balance, sensitivity, generosity, inner peace, purity of heart, patience and trust.

Know someone who could use some Cypress?

Blessings,

Joanna