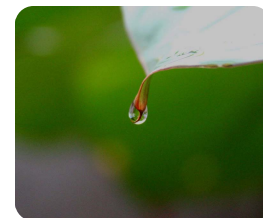


Essential Oils Then & Now Newsletter

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BERGAMOT - FOR A SUNNY DISPOSITION

Sizzling cookouts, swimming, sailing, baseball games, reunions, and vacations - the last hurrah before "normal" life begins again when children go back to school, and relatives go home. In the Northern Hemisphere, these are the Dog Days of Summer named for the Dog Star, Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. In the summer Sirius travels with the sun from before dawn to sunset. The early Greeks mistakenly believed it brought the extra heat.

But sweet virginal Bergamot oil loves the sun, not the star. It contains a pentagon-shaped molecule (a furan) that acts like a prism or magnifying glass and favors the frequencies and wavelengths of ultraviolet light. If you apply Bergamot to your skin and go out in the sunlight or lie in a tanning booth, you could experience severe sunburn, dermal discoloration, or other skin disorders. Some other phototoxic citrus oils are Bitter Orange, Grapefruit, Lemon, Lime, and Petitgrain. It is safe to drink citrus oils in your water or wear them under clothing or at night.

Christopher Columbus is credited with discovering Bergamot in the Canary Islands and transporting it to Bergamo in Northern Italy where it was originally cultivated and where it got its name. Bergamot oil is not distilled but cold expressed from the rind. Though it has been used in Italian folk medicine for centuries primarily for fever, intestinal parasites, and skin conditions; it has only been exported relatively recently. Bergamot is responsible for the distinctive flavor of Earl Grey Tea and was used in the original Eau de Cologne. Its strong antiseptic properties make it useful for a wide variety of conditions. It's effective against staphylococcus, gonococcus, meningococcus, diphtheria and other infectious bacteria. It inhibits certain viruses especially herpes simplex I which causes cold sores, and herpes zoster which causes chicken pox and shingles. It is particularly effective in treating bladder infections. As a local wash, it's valuable for vaginal itching and mild discharges. Bergamot oil acts as an adaptogen regulating appetite, for the compulsive eater and for anorexia nervosa. Inhale it for respiratory conditions such as tonsillitis, bronchitis, and tuberculosis. Good for hormonal support. Sprinkle on your bed for a peaceful sleep.

But the sweetest attributes of Bergamot oil are what it can do for the mind and spirit. Use Bergamot oil as a cologne or in a diffuser to dispel feelings of melancholy, depression, frustration, anxiety, helplessness, apathy, burnout, emptiness, hopelessness, or loneliness. If the depression is due to repressed anger, it helps relax, and let go, and free the flow of energy to help the person rediscover spontaneity and optimism. It soothes the anxious and stressed. It's a comfort to the grieving. Its antidepressant qualities help the person feel uplifted, refreshed, calm, and euphoric. It encourages confidence, balance, strength and joy.

The oil of Bergamot is like a good friend whose influence brings a smile, and sunshine to the heart.

I hope you are like Bergamot to those around you - and if you need a little help, stop on by.

Joanna