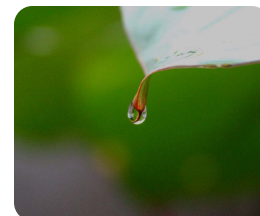


Essential Oils Then & Now Newsletter

- By Joanna Barrett, RN, CNHP, FCCI



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FENNEL - OPEN MY EYES, LORD

By God's grace we managed to come through 2006 unscathed. It was unquestionably the most demanding and transitional time we have ever gone through. Amid this hectic time was an on-going problem with my eyesight that my optometrist-prescribed glasses weren't helping. I went to an ophthalmologist. He was surprised to see fast growing cataracts in one so young. I would need surgery in a couple of years. Distressed, then mutinous, I determined to pray and take the herbs and oils that help with vision. However, with our overfull schedule, supplement taking became sporadic. In November fennel repeatedly called to me, but busy, I shelved it. In January I looked up fennel. Historically it was known to strengthen eyesight!!!

The culinary and medicinal arts of fennel trace its roots to the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Indians and Chinese. It's mentioned in the Egyptian 16th century BC medical and recipe records of Ebers Papyrus. Because of its reputation for promoting strength, courage, and longevity, athletes ate the seeds while training for the Olympic Games. It was a symbol of success to the Greeks and recommended by Hypocrites for promoting milk production in nursing mothers. The Greeks were the first to recognize fennel as a gently diuretic slimming aid, naming it *Marathon* meaning, "to grow thin." In the Middle Ages it was used to ward off evil spirits, neutralize poisons, a remedy for snakebites, and to strengthen eyesight. Hildegard found it particularly helpful for blue-eyed people and recommended it for clear sight. Fennel in any form she said "makes us happy, gives healthy skin color, produces a pleasant body odor and supports good digestion. Fennel seeds are 100% good for your health" Early colonists staved off hunger by chewing on sugar coated fennel seed during church services. British herbalist Culpeper taught that Fennel helped to break up kidney stones and was effective for "those who have grown fat."

Fennel is an antitoxic tonic particularly good for digestive and intestinal problems, for expelling parasites, for obesity, eyesight (rich source of vitamin A), increasing the flow of milk in nursing mothers, and for female reproductive stress both pre and post menopausal. After menopause, fennel stimulates the production of estrogen (needed by both men and women) by the adrenal glands helping to maintain muscle tone, elasticity of the skin and connective tissue, healthy circulation and strong bones thus postponing some of the degenerative effects of ageing. Its ability to remove uric acid from the tissues eliminates protein waste and gout, aids protein digestion, and helps clear mucus from the liver and lungs. Very effective for cancer patients after radiation and chemotherapy. Beneficial for the urinary tract for both infections and retention.

Emotionally, fennel oil assists those who find self-expression difficult, and helps free feelings that have become stagnated, clearing away a congested mind. Fennel oil encourages feelings of balance, motivation, clarity, perseverance, courage, confidence, and assertiveness and counteracts mental and emotional blockages, fear of failure and lack of creativity.

Be Thou my vision,

Joanna