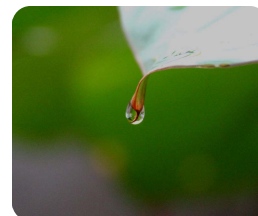


Essential Oils Than & Now Newsletter

- By Joanna Barrett, RN, CNHP, FCCI



March 2007

SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING?

A new study in the New England Journal of Medicine states that lavender and tea tree oils can cause gynecomastia in pre-pubescent teen boys. Gynecomastia, an abnormal enlargement of one or both breasts in males, is usually temporary and benign. It may be caused by hormonal imbalance, tumor of the testes or pituitary, use of medication containing estrogen or steroidal compounds, or failure of the liver to inactivate circulating estrogen as in alcoholic cirrhosis. Could ingesting hormonally treated meats, poultry and the resulting eggs also be a factor? Why hasn't this condition with lavender and tea tree usage been documented in the centuries historically? This study, according to many noted scientists, is highly flawed.

1. It only looked at 3 cases in pre-pubescent teen boys.
2. All 3 cases came through the same MD.
3. The research was funded by pharmaceutical, genetic engineering, and chemical companies.

Tony Burfield, a PhD chemist, who has been working in the essential oil industry for over 30 years, (no connection to Young Living), stated that this is bad science and that the study does not tell us:

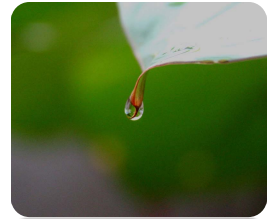
1. Were they using synthetics, adulterated, or standardized oils, or isolates from essential oils?
2. Which species of Lavender or Tea Tree oils were used?
3. What other endocrine disrupters in the home or school environment were present? (Medications and home cleaning products contain many chemicals that are known endocrine disrupters.)
4. The conclusion is not supported by previous scientific studies of larger proportion, or in the historical and anecdotal evidence.
5. There is nothing in known scientific studies on essential oils to support the bioaccumulation of the components of the oils.

“My conclusion is that if this is not a case of pseudo-gynecomastia - which can also affect beer drinkers of the excessively thirsty type - other factors (diet, other components of applied cosmetics, hormone-disruptor intake from home/environment, etc.) have to be eliminated before this study can be taken seriously.” Tony Burfield - www.cropwatch.org

Ed Close (PhD in Environmental Engineering) says there are probably other endocrine-disruptive chemicals in the very same products that contained the “essential oils” and if they did not determine whether these were present or account for their impact, then the study is a useless piece of paper. Dr Close also stated the reason flawed studies get published is because they support the New England Journal of Medicine's editor's beliefs that essential oils are harmful. There are now numerous scientific studies that prove that editors of scientific journals print what they believe is true even when the science is either flawed or lacks the support of the majority of the peer reviewers who juried or reviewed the paper.

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"I'd rather have a single drop of genuine essential oil than a 55-gallon drum of junk product."
-- Daniel Penoel, MD

Despite the politics of the scientific community, and the powerful AMA.... And because of the experiences personally and from our own clients and students,

I'd have to agree with Dr Penoel,

Joanna