



Lavender essential oil is **one of the most popular and versatile essential oils used in aromatherapy**. Distilled from the plant *Lavandula angustifolia*, the oil promotes relaxation and believed to treat anxiety, fungal infections, allergies, depression, insomnia, eczema, nausea, and menstrual cramps. Jul 22, 2022

In essential oil practices, lavender is a multipurpose oil. It is purported to have anti-inflammatory, antifungal, antidepressant, antiseptic, antibacterial and antimicrobial properties, as well as antispasmodic, analgesic, detoxifying, hypotensive, and sedative effects.

## Health Benefits

Lavender essential oil and its properties have been widely studied. Here's a look at the research.

### Anxiety

While there's currently a lack of large-scale clinical trials [testing lavender's effects on people with anxiety](#), a number of studies show that the oil may offer some anti-anxiety benefits.

Several studies have tested lavender's anxiety-reducing effects in specific populations. For example, a study published in *Physiology & Behavior* in 2005 focused on 200 people awaiting dental treatment and found that breathing in the scent of lavender both lessened anxiety and improved mood.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, a pilot study published in *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice* in 2012 indicates that lavender-essential-oil-based aromatherapy may help soothe anxiety in high-risk postpartum women. In an experiment involving 28 women who had given birth in the previous 18 months,

researchers found that four weeks of twice-weekly, 15-minute-long aromatherapy sessions helped alleviate depression in addition to lowering anxiety levels.<sup>3</sup>

There's also some evidence that ingesting lavender oil may help relieve anxiety. In a report published in *Phytomedicine* in 2012, for instance, scientists analyzed 15 previously published clinical trials and concluded that dietary supplements containing lavender oil may have some therapeutic effects on patients struggling with anxiety and/or stress.<sup>4</sup>

A more recent review of the literature found 5 studies (2010, 2010, 2014, 2015 and 2016) showed benefits in participants with moderate to severe anxiety.

### Insomnia

Several studies have shown lavender essential oil may help promote sleep and fight insomnia.

A 2015 study published in the *Journal of Complementary and Alternative Medicine* found a combination of sleep hygiene techniques and lavender essential oil therapy helped college students get a better night's sleep than sleep hygiene alone. The study of 79 students with self-reported sleep problems also found inhaling lavender at bedtime improved daytime energy and vibrancy.<sup>5</sup>

A 2018 study published in *Holistic Nursing Practice* confirms lavender's effect on sleep. In this study of 30 residents of a nursing home, lavender aromatherapy was found to improve sleep onset, quality, and duration in an elderly population.<sup>6</sup> [Essential Oils That May Help With ADHD Symptoms](#) (verywellmind.com)

## Possible Side Effects

Lavender essential oil may cause skin irritation or an allergic reaction in some individuals. If you experience nausea, vomiting, or a headache after using lavender, discontinue use immediately.

Because consuming lavender essential oil can have toxic effects, this remedy should not be ingested unless under the supervision of a medical professional.

## Dosage and Preparation

There is no recommended daily allowance for lavender essential oil. According to the principles of aromatherapy, breathing in the scent of lavender essential oil or applying lavender essential oil to the skin transmits messages to the limbic system, a brain region known to influence the nervous system and help regulate emotion.

One popular approach involves combining lavender oil with a carrier oil (such as jojoba or sweet almond). Once blended with a carrier oil, lavender essential oil can be [massaged](#) into your skin or added to your bath.

You can also sprinkle a few drops of lavender essential oil onto a cloth or tissue and inhale its aroma, or add the oil to an aromatherapy diffuser or vaporizer.

## A Word From Verywell

While lavender may help soothe mild anxiety, it should not be used in place of professional mental health treatment for any type of anxiety disorder. If you're experiencing [symptoms of anxiety](#) such as constant worrying, fatigue, insomnia, and rapid heartbeat, make sure to consult your primary care provider rather than self-treating your anxiety with lavender.

## Research on the Benefits of Lavender

No scientific studies have specifically examined the benefits lavender use for [social anxiety disorder](#) (SAD).

## Usage

[Lavender](#) is usually used in the form of an essential oil as part of aromatherapy. You can inhale the scent, apply it to the skin, or perhaps the most effective way, is adding three to five drops of the essential oil to an ultrasonic aromatherapy diffuser. Dried lavender can also be used to make a tea or liquid extract. Lavender may also be taken in pill form.

Lavender tea can be made by steeping 1 to 2 teaspoons of dried leaves for 15 minutes in a cup of boiling water. In liquid extract form, no more than 60 drops of lavender should be taken in a day. Before ingesting lavender in liquid form, you should read the product label and discuss the dose with a qualified health care provider.

## Associated Risks

Caution should be used when driving or operating heavy machinery if lavender is combined with medications causing drowsiness. Lavender essential oil can be poisonous if taken by mouth.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration does not regulate the production of herbs and supplements. Most herbs and supplements are not thoroughly tested, and there is no guarantee regarding the ingredients or safety of the products.

Use of lavender over an extended period of time should be supervised by a qualified healthcare professional.