

**IAAMA**  
National Aromatherapy Awareness Week

**FACTS SHEET 4**

**OILS AIN'T OILS - SELECTING QUALITY ESSENTIAL OILS**

Aromatherapy is an ancient therapy which involves the use of essential oils to improve one's health and wellbeing. Essential oils are liquids generally distilled (usually by steam or water) from the leaves, stems, flowers, bark, roots, or other elements of a plant that contain the true essence of the plant it was derived from.

Essential oils are far more than just nice smelling oils. While many have wonderful aromas and fragrances, they also have powerful and concentrated chemical properties - for example, some essential oils have relaxing and sedative properties, while others may be stimulating, anti-spasmodic, decongestant, anti-fungal, diuretic, balsamic or anti-depressant.

Essential oils can be used for such a wide range of conditions - to ease a headache, soothe tired and sore muscles, relax an overworked mind, reduce stress-related symptoms, soothe a skin rash, ease coughs and colds, improve circulation, stimulate one's metabolism or boost one's immune system.

When using essential oils, quality is of utmost importance. Sometimes, synthetic man-made oils may be sold under the guise of being pure essential oils. Synthetic oils have no therapeutic properties and may even be harmful or irritating to the skin.

When selecting essential oils, there are a few important rules to ensure you select the best possible, high quality essential oils.

1. Always purchase 100% pure essential oils. Quality essential oils will have this on the labels.
2. Quality essential oils will have the botanical name on the bottle as well as the common name. For example, peppermint essential oil is known by its botanical name, *Mentha piperita*.
3. Quality essential oils are always sold in dark glass bottles - either blue or amber. This is because essential oils are volatile and will evaporate when exposed over time to light or heat.
4. Ensure the safety precautions are listed on the bottle. However, if you are pregnant, or suffer from a condition such as epilepsy, please consult a qualified Aromatherapist for safe application guidelines.
5. Use by date - Essential oils do not last forever and quality essential oil suppliers will list the use by date

Your local Aromatherapist can provide you with more information

For more information contact your local Aromatherapist:

To find a qualified Aromatherapist in your area or for more information contact the International Association of Aromatic Medicine and Aromatherapy (IAAMA) - Phone 02 9715 6622.