

Safely Using Essential Oils with Your Family

Using Essential Oils Safely with Children

Many parents wonder whether it's safe to use essential oils with their children. The answer is yes! However, because children are smaller and more sensitive than adults, it's important to understand that the rules of essential oils usage are different for children than they are for adults. Once you educate yourself on the safety guidelines required for using essential oils with children, it's easy to help your kids reap the benefits they have to offer. If your children have specific health conditions or concerns, consult with their healthcare provider first.

Parents can confidently use most essential oils with children safely if they keep the following in mind.

- Adjust application methods. Always use less essential oil with children than you would with an adult.

- Dilute. As children have sensitive, delicate skin and developing bodies, always dilute before applying an essential oil to a child's skin. Start with one drop in 10 drops of a carrier oil, like Fractionated Coconut Oil. When trying a new essential oil with your child, apply it to the bottoms of his or her feet. The feet are a nonintrusive, less sensitive area, providing the perfect place to apply essential oils on young, delicate skin.
- Discuss essential oil safety with your children. It's often difficult for children to grasp how potent and powerful essential oils are. Make sure your younger children know it's not appropriate to drink essential oils or apply them without adult supervision. Remember, caps can come off and bottles can break, so keep essential oils out of reach of children. Educating your children about essential oil safety guidelines will promote safe usage within the home.

Not all essential oils are recommended to use with children.



Using Essential Oils Safely during Pregnancy

Another common question is whether essential oils safe to use during pregnancy. Essential oils can help maintain a healthy body, support the immune system, soothe feelings of discomfort, and more.* Because of these powerful benefits, essential oils may be useful and effective in any phase of life—even pregnancy.

Your healthcare professional is your best resource when it comes to making a personal healthcare plan and can give you a good idea of what to avoid during pregnancy, as well as other safety measures you should take, based on your personal health and the health of your growing child. Together, you can determine which essential oils may be beneficial and which ones may be better to avoid. By following proper safety guidelines, you can confidently use essential oils during pregnancy. Because of the ethical issue of testing expecting mothers and fetuses, limited clinical studies address the safety of essential oils during pregnancy. However, we can rely on the history of safe usage to determine which essential oils to use during pregnancy.

When pregnant, the body goes through a wide breadth of changes. These changes often bring feelings of discomfort and sensitivity. While every pregnancy is different, the goal is the same: to support the healthy, proper function of the body. Along with proper nutrition and regular exercise, essential oils can be used during pregnancy for needed support. You can also use essential oils during labor and delivery to make it a more pleasant or positive experience.

During pregnancy, it's fairly common for a woman to be sensitive to essential oils. Diffusing is a great way to use essential oils during pregnancy because if you find that you don't like or feel sensitive to an essential oil's aroma, you can simply turn off the diffuser. For topical application, extra dilution is advisable.

Even if you've used essential oils before without incident, you should still inform your healthcare professional of any you plan to use during pregnancy. Your healthcare professional knows you and your specific health concerns, as well as the status of your pregnancy; therefore, he or she should be aware of all essential oil products you plan to make a part of your pregnancy.

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.





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Breastfeeding

Along with concerns about essential oils and pregnancy, many people ask, "Is it safe to use essential oils while breastfeeding?" The answer is yes, but keep in mind many of the same guidelines for using essential oils during pregnancy. While the body changes significantly during pregnancy, these changes don't end with the birth of the baby. Your body continues to change as you adapt to postpartum life. You'll likely want to continue using higher dilution and watching for any sensitivity to essential oils that you notice in and on your body. Just as you should discuss using essential oils during pregnancy with your healthcare professional, you should also consult with your physician if you choose to nurse and want to use essential oils. This partnership can help you identify any products that might require more caution while breastfeeding.

Your healthcare professional is the best resource you have for advice when it comes to your body, baby, and any concerns you might have. Just as you would check with your healthcare professional before using other new products when breastfeeding, it's important to discuss your essential oil usage with him or her when you become a nursing mother.

Like pregnancy, breastfeeding places a lot of demands on a mother's body. When nursing, the goal is to maintain a strong, healthy body and assist a growing newborn. With the help of a healthcare professional, you can safely use essential oils and essential oil-infused products to support the body and your overall wellness.





Using Essential Oils Safely with Animals

While some controversy surrounds using essential oils on animals, when they're used properly, essential oils can be part of a well-rounded program to help your pets live happy, healthy lives. Just as it's important to use pure essential oils on yourself and your family, you should use products of the with your pets.

Essential oils offer numerous benefits for your pets. They can help provide calming and relaxing aromas, soothe muscles, deodorize unpleasant odors, and maintain overall wellness. As with any new product you introduce to your pet, begin slowly.

Current research on using essential oils with pets, from dogs and cats to horses, is limited. This is why consulting with your veterinarian, regardless of what you read online, is vital. Your veterinarian is a trained professional in the unique physiology of animals. He or she knows your specific pet's medical history and understands how its body works differently. In every case, your veterinarian should be your first point of contact before using any essential oil with your furry friend.

However, we do know a few things when it comes to companion animals:

- When diffusing, only use three to four drops of a single essential oil or blend in a water-based diffuser on a low setting. Be sure the diffuser is in an area where your pet can't knock it over or access it. Diffuse in an open or well-ventilated area, with the door open so your pet can leave the room if desired.
- Cats lack the enzyme glucuronidase and thus metabolize essential oils differently. Use caution with Tea Tree, Birch, Wintergreen, Spearmint, or Peppermint, as well as hot oils like Cassia, Cinnamon Bark, Oregano, Cumin, or Thyme.
- An animal's weight and size play a role. Larger animals like some dogs and horses seem to respond well to topical application in the limited studies that have been done. Use caution with pregnant, nursing, or young animals.



- If you're going to use an essential oil topically after talking with your vet, keep to a small area, dilute heavily with a carrier oil, and do so rarely. Start with a small amount of a diluted essential oil, and then observe your pet's behavior. In general, dilute the essential oil you'll be using on your pet down to 1–2% (1 to 2 drops of essential oil per 5 mL of carrier oil) before topical application. Dilute even more for animals under 10 pounds.
- Consult a qualified veterinarian if you want to use essential oils orally with your pets. Some vets recommend adding essential oils to a pet's food, but it's best to work with him or her to determine the right ones and how much to use.
- Don't use essential oils on the nose, in the ears or eyes, or around other sensitive areas of an animal.