

# Aloe Oil: Same Plant Benefits, Longer Shelf Life

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## What Is Aloe Oil?

By itself, aloe oil is not a true, pure oil. It is prepared by mixing the aloe vera plant with a fatty oil.<sup>1</sup> This plant oil basically contains the properties of aloe, from which it is extracted. However, since it is combined with a carrier oil, its nutritional properties may be enhanced or reduced.

Most of the health benefits provided by aloe vera come from its water-retaining, fleshy leaves<sup>2</sup> -- specifically the nutrient-rich gel extracted from them. It is usually the leaves or gel that is used to create the oil.

Aloe vera is a perennial plant and thrives in hot, arid environments. More specifically, it is commonly found in North Africa, the Canary Islands, the Mediterranean region, Australia, and some areas in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

Historical records show that aloe vera was an important component in herbal medicine. For instance, the *Ebers Papyrus* from Ancient Egypt and *De Materia Medica* by Dioscorides mention the use of aloe vera. The Ancient Egyptians valued the plant as a treatment for infections, rashes, and [burns](#), and referred to it as the “plant of immortality.”

Other civilizations, such as the Arabs, Greeks, and Spaniards, used aloe vera to help reduce perspiration and eliminate [body odor](#). Spanish missionaries often carried aloe vera with them to help treat the sick.<sup>4</sup>

## Uses of Aloe Vera Oil

Aloe vera is commonly used by the cosmetic, food, and beverage industry. It is widely used in personal care products, such as lip balms, lotions, and other [skincare](#) treatments. Of course, the aloe vera plant by itself is also a popular skincare agent. Some people use its gel to relieve itching, accelerate the healing of wounds, and as a moisturizing agent.

Other uses of aloe vera oil include:<sup>5</sup>

- **Massage oil**, due to its ability to relieve pain and inflammation.
- **Aromatherapy oil**. Aromatherapists often mix aloe vera oil with other carrier oils in order to make use of its healing and rejuvenating activities.
- **Haircare product**. It can be used as a conditioner to treat dry scalp and dandruff.
- **Treatment for insect bites**. This plant oil can also be used to treat swelling and inflammation caused by insect bites from bees and wasps.
- **Dental care product**. Nutrients in aloe vera have been found to aid in the [treatment of periodontal disease](#). Used as a massage oil for the gums and teeth, this oil can help reduce the risk of caries, plaque, and even gingivitis.

## Composition of Aloe Oil

Many of the beneficial compounds of aloe vera gel are transferred to the oil during its production stage. Nutrients you can obtain from the gel and oil include:<sup>6</sup>

- **Vitamins C, A (beta-carotene), E (alpha-tocopherol), B1, B2, and B6 (choline and folic acid)**
- **Minerals.** The aloe vera plant is known to absorb nutrients from the soil. It can provide iron, copper, [magnesium](#), calcium, manganese, sodium, and potassium
- **Amino acids.** There are 20 amino acids in aloe oil, as well as 7 out of 8 essential amino acids
- **Anthraquinones**, such as aloe emodin, aloin, and cinnamic acid ester. These have been shown to have antiviral effects
- **Lipid compounds**, such as arachidonic acid, gamma-linoleic acid, and other phytosterols
- **Polysaccharides**, which are carbohydrate molecules with beneficial properties. They have been associated with the treatment of tumors and cancer, [diabetes](#), and immune function

## Benefits of Aloe Oil

Because aloe oil contains the health properties of the original aloe vera plant, it possesses anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, antifungal, [antioxidant](#), and astringent activity.

Like aloe vera gel, aloe oil is also known for its ability to promote skin health.<sup>7</sup> It helps the skin heal from [sunburn](#) quickly due to its antioxidant properties. Using aloe vera to treat small cuts and wounds is also recommended.

Aloe oil is a good replacement for chemical moisturizers. The plant's long list of antioxidants, including beta-carotene and vitamins C and E, can keep your skin supple and firm. It may help prevent the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, and stretch marks.

Aloe vera is known to fight acne because of its ability to reduce skin inflammations, blistering, and itching. Today, aloe vera is used to address common skin problems like psoriasis, eczema, and rashes.<sup>8</sup> Its soothing nature makes it suitable to treat and relieve pain caused by herpes and [shingles](#).

Aloe vera is also an effective haircare agent. Aside from treating dandruff and dry scalp, the plant can also promote hair growth and keep your locks strong. When added to tea tree oil, aloe oil can be useful against fungal scalp infections.

People with [arthritis](#) can also enjoy pain relief with aloe vera. Applying it topically on painful joints can help reduce inflammation. Ingesting aloe vera juice can also provide this benefit, as well as lower blood sugar and cholesterol. This can be particularly helpful for diabetics.

There is also a growing number of studies linking aloe vera to skin cancer treatment and prevention.<sup>9</sup> In one animal research, it was shown that the application of aloe vera gel onto the skin significantly slowed the progression of [skin cancer](#). Additional findings also showed that aloe vera helped trigger the production of melanins and other protective substances that could help protect the skin from radiation and the growth of tumor cells.

## How to Make Aloe Oil

Aloe vera oil is produced through the process of maceration extraction.<sup>10</sup> The plant is soaked in a carrier oil heated to high temperatures. Once the plant's cell membranes have been ruptured, the hot oil then absorbs the nutrients and essence of the plant. After a while, the mixture is filtered in order to remove the plant components. In the case of aloe vera, its stems and leaves containing the aloe gel are macerated. The product is similar to infused oil and is not 100 percent aloe vera. Even so, this essential oil is just as useful as its gel counterpart. One advantage the oil has over aloe vera gel is its longer shelf life – about 8 to 10 months.

Fortunately, you can create aloe oil at home. Here's a guide on how to make an aloe vera massage oil infusion from We Love Aloe:<sup>11</sup>

### What You Need:

- ½ cup of aloe vera gel (either straight from the plant or from a health food store)
- ½ cup of coconut oil
- 2 to 3 drops of essential oil of your choice
- 1 bowl
- A pot
- Stove burner

### Procedure:

1. Mix the aloe vera gel (extract it properly if you use a fresh leaf) with the coconut oil in a bowl. The ratio of aloe vera gel to the coconut oil should be 1:1.
2. Add 2 to 3 drops of an essential oil of your choice to the aloe vera and coconut oil mixture and mix well. Adding an essential oil will give your aloe massage oil an appealing aroma, which will help calm the mind and give your aloe oil more health benefits (which may vary depending on what oil you pick). Suggested oils include rose, jasmine, peppermint, or even a citrus essential oil. The essential oil (or two) will help supplement and maximize the medicinal properties of Aloe Vera.
3. Heat the mixture in a pot on the stove burner on low heat for approximately 10 minutes.
4. Leave the aloe oil to cool before moving forward.
5. Once the aloe vera oil has cooled, you can start using the oil. Rub it on your body, arms, legs, back, or chest as a moisturizing agent or to

relax.

6. Store the oil in a cool, dry place for approximately 2 weeks. You can also refrigerate the oil to preserve its ingredients, making their health benefits stay stronger for a longer period.

## How Does Aloe Oil Work?

As mentioned, aloe vera oil contains most of the nutritional properties as aloe vera gel. It's safe for topical application as a skin moisturizer or a massage oil. Maximize its benefits by using the product right after you shower or bathe. Your damp skin will absorb the oil more effectively.

You may also add aloe vera oil to personal care products, such as soaps, shampoos, lip balms, toothpastes, and skin products. Experiment with different products, but it's advisable to first seek the help of a professional aromatherapist.

## Is Aloe Oil Safe?

If you are to use aloe oil on your skin, it's best to be meticulous when choosing a product. Remember, your skin is very absorbent and will absorb everything applied unto it – including chemicals and artificial ingredients. Always check if the product is organic or not. This will give you an idea if the product contains dangerous substances and additives, which are likely added during the extraction process.

Some people recommend taking [aloe vera juice](#), gel, and oil orally for their digestive benefits. Even if these products are proven safe for consumption, you should be cautious when ingesting them or seek professional advice. They can induce diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting in some people. In rare cases, consumption can lead to kidney failure.

To be on the safe side, don't ingest aloe vera oil, as it is not a pure oil. It is mixed with a carrier oil that may not be safe for consumption. This may increase the amounts of certain compounds, which may become toxic in large concentrations.

## Side Effects of Aloe Oil

Always err on the side of caution when using aloe oil as it can cause allergic reactions on some people. To check for an allergic reaction to aloe, you may do a skin test, or apply a drop of oil on a small area of your skin.

Aloe vera compounds can react with certain drugs, such as laxatives, diabetes medication, and diuretics. Diarrhea induced by the plant can reduce your body's potassium levels, which can affect the potency of certain medications.

As with any herbal oil, consult an experienced aromatherapy practitioner or physician before using aloe vera oil, especially when you're using any medication, and are pregnant or nursing.