

Geranium Oil: Aromatherapy from the “Poor Man’s Rose”

Anxiety is a common problem among Americans, and drugs like benzodiazepine are commonly used to treat it. Not only can these drugs cause withdrawal symptoms, but they also lead to a host of health problems that include memory loss, hip fractures, and impaired concentration, which further develop into unnecessary stress and expenses.

Instead, the underlying cause of anxiety can be dealt with using natural stress management methods, like the [Emotional Freedom Technique \(EFT\)](#). Another method worth trying is [aromatherapy](#). Research has shown that treating stress with essential oils is effective, plus has minimal risks involved. If you're interested in trying this out, you can start out by using geranium oil.

What Is Geranium Oil?

Geranium is a perennial shrub with small pink flowers and pointy leaves that is native to South Africa.¹ Out of the many varieties of the plant, *Pelargonium graveolens* is the source of the essential oil. The oil is widely used in aromatherapy and contains a number of beneficial compounds.

Geranium oil is often compared to the rose essential oil because they share almost the same therapeutic traits. In fact, geranium is considered the "poor man's rose" and its oil is often the alternative to the more expensive rose oil.²

There are several varieties of geranium oil, depending on where they are cultivated. The highest-quality and most expensive type is produced in French island Reunion, called the geranium bourbon essential oil.³

Uses of Geranium Oil

In aromatherapy, geranium oil is used to treat acne, sore throat, anxiety, depression, and insomnia. Its users are mainly for women due to its rosy smell and its beneficial effect on menstruation and menopause.⁴ The essential oil can also uplift mood, lessen fatigue, and promote emotional wellness:⁵

Geranium oil also functions to reduce pain and inflammation. Its antiseptic properties can help speed up the healing of wounds and treat a variety of skin problems, such as burns, frostbite, fungal infections, athlete's foot, and eczema. [Hemorrhoids](#) can also be treated with the use of geranium oil.⁶

Frequent travelers can use geranium oil as a natural insect repellent. Topical application can also help heal insect bites and stop itching. It may also be used as a massage oil to relieve aching muscles and stress.⁷

Other uses of geranium oil include:⁸

- **Food** – Geranium oil can be added to baked goods, frozen dairy, non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages, and candies. However, I strongly advise avoiding these processed treats to maintain your health.

- **Perfumery** – Geranium oil has been used to create an artificial rose scent in fragrances and cosmetics.

Composition of Geranium Oil

Geranium oil contains about 67 compounds. The main components of geranium oil are citronellol (26.7 percent) and geraniol (13.4 percent). Other major constituents include:⁹

- Nerol (8.7 percent)
- Citronellyl formate (7.1 percent)
- Isomenthone (6.3 percent)
- Linalool (5.2 percent)

Benefits of Geranium Oil

Geranium essential oil provides numerous health benefits due to its uses as an astringent, hemostatic, cicatrisant, diuretic, and many others. Below are just some of the ways this essential oil serves both your physical and emotional health:¹⁰⁻¹¹

- It causes your gums, muscles, intestines, skin, blood vessels, , and tissues to contract due to its astringent properties. It prevents skin problems like sagging and wrinkling, and helps give your muscles a toned appearance.
- It contains antibacterial, antifungal, and antioxidant properties. It can inhibit the bacterial strains *Brevibacterium linens* and *Yersinia enterocolitica*, as well as the fungal species *Aspergillus niger*. It can also prevent bacterial infections.
- It can help eliminate the appearance of scars and dark spots by improving blood circulation just below the surface of the skin and promoting an equal distribution of melanin.
- It can help speed up the healing of wounds by triggering blood clotting. This also stops toxins from reaching your bloodstream through open wounds.
- It assists in [detoxification](#) by increasing the rate of urination. This process of elimination does not only remove toxins from your body, but also aids in your digestive function and helps inhibit the excess gas in your intestines.
- It can serve as a deodorant due to its fragrant scent. It can also cure body odor due to its antibacterial action.

How to Make Geranium Oil

Geranium essential oil is extracted through steam distillation of the plant's stems and leaves. When made from young, green leaves, geranium oil appears with a lemon scent. However, if extracted from older leaves that have changed their color, the oil will have a strong rose fragrance.¹²

While geranium oil is available in stores, it is possible to create a homemade variety. There are several guides available on the Web, but here is one from eHow.com:[13](#)

What You Need:

- Geranium leaves
- Mortar and pestle
- Carrier oil like jojoba oil
- Large jar with lid
- Small jars or bottles with lids
- Strainer
- Cheesecloth

Procedure:

- Remove the leaves from a geranium plant (more leaves mean more oil produced).
- Remove pests, dirt, and other debris from the leaves by washing them in cold water.
- Dry the leaves by gently patting them with a cloth or paper towel.
- Using the mortar and pestle, ground the leaves until they are completely mashed and pulpy. Leave the crushed leaves for a few hours.
- Afterward, transfer the ground leaves to the large jar. Pour some of the carrier oil – just enough to cover the leaves. Then, seal the jar and place it in a cool, dry spot. Set aside for two weeks.
- Once the two weeks are up, check the scent of the oil. You may add more ground leaves to make the scent stronger and set aside for another week. If the fragrance is too strong, just add some oil to dilute the finished product.
- To store, pour the geranium oil into the small sterilized jars or bottles through a strainer lined with a cheesecloth. This will separate the crushed leaves from the oil. Once the oil has been transferred, seal the bottles/jars and store them in a cool, dry place.

How Does Geranium Oil Work?

There are several ways of using geranium oil. Inhaling it is one of the most common practices. Place a few drops onto a cloth or use an aromatherapy diffuser. This

sends messages to your limbic system, which is in charge of controlling emotions and affecting the nervous system. Inhaling geranium oil may also influence your heart rate, stress levels, breathing, blood pressure, and immune system.¹⁴ Apart from inhalation, here are some ways you can make use of geranium essential oil:

- It can work wonders on bruises and cuts if used as you would any antiseptic. Just make sure you cover it with gauze.
- Adding one drop of geranium oil to a small jar of cold cream or one teaspoon of wheat germ oil can also benefit hemorrhoids.¹⁵
- To treat athlete's foot, about five drops of the essential oil should be combined with a foot bath made of warm water and sea salt. The mixture should be set aside in a dark bottle. Massage the formula unto your feet in the morning and at night.¹⁶

Is Geranium Oil Safe?

Geranium oil should not be applied directly to your skin as a massage oil or added to baths.

It should first be diluted with a carrier oil like jojoba oil, [olive oil](#), or sweet almond oils.¹⁷

Geranium oil is relatively safe and works as a relaxant and stimulant for the brain. However, those with skin sensitivities may experience certain side effects.¹⁸

Pregnant and nursing women should exercise caution when using geranium oil and other essential oils, as there is currently a lack of research regarding the safety of geranium oil in pregnant women. Geranium oil should not be used on babies and young children due to the delicate nature of their skin. Parents are also warned to be careful in the administration of the essential oil near the nose of children, as there have been reports of toxicities and even death from doing so.¹⁹

Geranium Oil Side Effects

Because it's non-toxic, non-irritant, and non-sensitizing, geranium oil does not cause side effects. However, it may cause allergies and sensitivities in some people.²⁰ If you're looking for essential oils that offer the same therapeutic benefits as geranium oil does, your options include [lavender oil](#), orange oil, lemon oil, and jasmine oil. ²¹ To be on the safe side, consult your physician before using any essential oils for medicinal purposes.