



## "Home Remedies, Part Six: Essential Oils"

This is from the ninth installment in a continuing series that aims to answer some frequently asked massage related questions.

Q: I really need a massage, but my budget and / or schedule prevent me from doing so right now. Are there some "home remedies" for muscular aches & pains that I can try until I am able to see my Massage Therapist?

A: We understand that sometimes it's not possible to see your Massage Therapist as soon as you'd like. Whether because of budgetary constraints, a hectic schedule, or a busy travel itinerary, there are times when you have to put off having a professional massage. As professional Massage Therapists, it's no surprise that we believe that there is no real substitute for a professional therapeutic massage.

However, we also believe in empowering our clients by providing them with a variety of tools & tricks to help them relieve their own pain in between their massage sessions.

Here is one of our favorite quick, affordable, and effective "coping mechanisms..."

Essential Oils: Adding just a few (say, 5-10) drops of certain essential oils to your bath water (or your Epsom salt-infused bath) can help provide a variety of therapeutic benefits.

(Refer to our Discussion topic titled, "Home Remedies, Part Five: Epsom Salts" for more on Epsom salt baths).

Essential oils that can be added to a bath for their analgesic effects include chamomile, lavender, marjoram and rosemary.

Oils that will make for a relaxing bath are chamomile, clary sage, jasmine and marjoram.

Chamomile, clary sage, lavender, marjoram and rosemary are also known to ease muscle spasms.

Here is a recipe you can try for a Relaxing Bath that will ease Stiff & Sore Muscles:

6 drops of Rosemary essential oil

5 drops of Juniper essential oil

3 drops of Lavender essential oil

2 cups of Epsom Salts

Mix the essential oils into the salts, add the mixture to a hot bath, and soak for about 25 minutes.

As an alternative to an essential oil bath, you may also choose to incorporate the use of certain essential oils into the use of a hot compress.

Simply add six to ten drops of your selected essential oil to some hot water. Soak a cloth in the hot water, wring it out and apply it to the affected area. Cover the hot wet cloth with a dry towel.

But, remember, that sustaining a heat application for more than 5 – 10 minutes will be counterproductive. (Refer to the episode of our Clinical Massage Therapy vlog titled “Show SORE the DOOR” for a reminder about why a prolonged heat application is not advantageous: <http://www.blip.tv/file/3763121/> ).

Most essential oils can also be applied to the skin directly, and massaged into the affected area, in a carrier oil (such as grapeseed oil, olive oil, jojoba oil, almond oil, etc.).

You can find essential oils at some grocery stores, and of course, there are lots of sources online.

For more information on which essential oils to use for various effects, and how to use them, we suggest this book: “The complete book of essential oils and aromatherapy” by Valerie Ann Worwood.

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