

# LAVENDER

**Latin Name:** *Lavandula angustifolia*

**Botanical Family:** Lamiaceae syn. Labiatae

**Other Common Names:** Lavender, English Lavender, True Lavender

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## Extraction Information

**Country of Origin:** France, Bulgaria, England, USA

**Part of Plant Used:** Flowering tops

**Extraction Method:** Distillation

**Oil Content:** 0.5 – 3%

**Color of Oil:** Clear



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## Blending Information

**Odor Description:** Fresh, Floral, Sweet, Herbaceous

**Blending Factor:** 7

**Note:** Middle

**Energy:** Cool

**Blends Well With:** Most Essential Oils

**Indicated For:** Burns, Scrapes, abscesses, acne, athlete's foot, eczema, inflamed skin conditions, psoriasis (as an anti-inflammatory), sunburn, relieves itching, hives, open wounds or sores, poorly healing wounds.

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**Safety Information:** Non-Irritating, non-photosensitizing, non-sensitizing

**Contraindications:** None known

**GRAS status:**

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**Botany:** *Lavandula angustifolia* is a compact, bushy shrub with linear gray-green leaves. In mid- to late summer, long, unbranched stalks produce fragrant, pale to deep purple flowers in dense spikes. *Lavandula angustifolia* can reach a height of 2 – 3 ft. there are approximately 20

species of lavender with a number of varieties and cultivars as well. All species of lavender flourish in the Mediterranean regions.

## History + Myth

Lavender has been used since ancient times and appears in the writings of Greek naturalist, Dioscorides during the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The word Lavender is thought to be derived from the Medieval Latin 'Lavo' or 'Lavare' which means to wash or to bathe. Lavender was used to protect against the plague during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The Romans are considered responsible for the introduction of lavender into England. Lavender has some traditional use for being used for headaches, insomnia, and upset stomach due to nerves. Lavender has been traditionally used for scenting laundry. Extracts obtained from the leaves of *Lavandula angustifolia* are used in Iranian folk medicine as remedies for the treatment of various inflammatory diseases.

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## Therapeutic Actions

**Analgesic**, Antidepressant, **Anti-Inflammatory**, antirheumatic, antiseptic, **antispasmodic**, antiviral, **anxiolytic**, hypotensive, **nervine**, **sedative**, **vulnerary**

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### Chemical Feature:

Rich in the ester linalyl acetate and the sedative alcohol, linalol.

### Core Aromatic Applications:

**Digestive system:** stress-related digestive upsets, including IBS, abdominal cramps, nervous stomach.

**Musculoskeletal system:** muscular aches and pains, arthritis, sprains, strains, muscle spasms, growing pains, plantar fasciitis, tendonitis, shin splints, rheumatic conditions, joint pain and stiffness, bursitis.

**Nervous system:** restlessness, insomnia, stress, shock, headaches, migraines, neuralgia

**Reproductive/Endocrine system:** calms during delivery, can help reduce severity of contractions (use with clary sage), helps in relieving pain, cramps, PMS, perineal discomfort and pain following childbirth, postpartum perineal healing

**Skin:** burns, scrapes, abscesses, acne, athlete's foot, eczema, inflamed skin conditions, psoriasis (as an anti-inflammatory), sunburn, relieves itching, hives, open wounds or sores, poorly healing wounds.

**Psyche / Emotion:** calming, soothing, nurturing, balancing, personal renewal, useful in treating depression (including manic), anxiety, hyperactivity, alleviates fears and delusions, extreme emotions, panic attacks, hysteria, fainting, challenging behavior, limited communication skills, fear of touch, disturbed sleep patterns

**Subtle / Energetic aromatherapy:** Due to its ability to address a wide range of physical and emotional issues, lavender could be called the mother or grandmother of essential oils. Lavender is beneficial in working with individuals who suffer from or with anxiety, mental exhaustion, insecurity, trauma or emotional violence, conflict, psychosomatic illness, and a multitude of other issues. There is practically no health condition for which lavender would not provide some kind of relief.

**Ayurveda:** In ayurvedic terms, the effect of lavender oil could be described as pacifying to vata (calms, relaxes, and restores the nervous system) and cooling to pitta (anti-inflammatory). It is a highly sattvic oil, meaning that it purifies aggravated emotional states and helps bring mental peace. Lavender Shirodhara showed potent anxiolytic and altered state of

## Chemical Composition

### Chemical composition of *Lavandula angustifolia*

Monoterpenes	$\alpha$ -thujene (0.108%), $\alpha$ -pinene (0.232%), camphene (0.151%), sabinene (0.043%), $\beta$ -pinene (0.113%), myrcene (0.55%), $\alpha$ -phellandrene (0.052%), delta-3-carene (0.156%), p-cymene (0.148%), limonene (0.297%), $\beta$ -phellandrene (0.201%), (z)-b-ocimene (4.327%), (e)- $\beta$ -ocimene (4.208%), gamma-terpinene (0.182%), terpinolene (0.083%)
Sesquiterpenes	$\alpha$ -santalene (0.559%), $\beta$ -caryophyllene (4.881%), $\alpha$ -trans-bergamotene (0.141%), (z)- $\beta$ -farnesene (1.964%), $\alpha$ -humulene (0.234%), Germacrene D (0.594%), d-cadinene (0.085%)
Monoterpene alcohols	linalool (30.1-39.1), lavandulol (0.865%), borneol (0.876%), terpinen-4-ol (3.957%), $\alpha$ -terpineol (0.402%), nerol (0.068%), geraniol (0.33-0.5%)
Esters	linalyl acetate (38.394%), lavandulyl acetate (4.185%), bornyl acetate (0.146%), neryl acetate (0.18%), geranyl acetate (0.347%), d-octene-3-yl acetate (1.165%), d-octane-3-yl acetate (0.086%)
Ketones	camphor (0.311%), cryptone (0.166%)
Oxides	caryophyllene oxide (0.445%), 1,8 cineole (0.756%)
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consciousness-inducing or promoting effects, and induced the largest increase in foot skin temperature.

**TCM:** In TCM, lavender works to regulate and cool an overheated liver and to soothe and support the Qi-energy of the heart.

**Keywords:** Balancing, Extreme changeable emotions, nervous exhaustion, anxiety, wound healing, CNS sedative.

## Research/ Additional Notes:

**Lavender exhibits anxiolytic and sedative activity (8,9)**

**Lavender relieves anxiety.** Lavender oil had similar effects to CDP on the paraventricular nucleus of the hypothalamus, the dorsomedial hypothalamic nucleus and the central nucleus of the amygdala. These results strengthen the suggestion that inhaling lavender oil has anxiolytic behavioral effects, but they are weaker than the effects of benzodiazepines, and there is limited evidence that they are mediated by the same neural processes. (10)

**Lavender inhalation exhibits anxiolytic activity. (11)**

**A combination of Lavender, Clary sage, and Marjoram provides relief for individuals with dysmenorrhea and reduces menstrual pain.** Essential oils blended with lavender (*Lavandula officinalis*), clary sage (*Salvia sclarea*) and marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*) in a 2:1:1 ratio was diluted in unscented cream at 3% concentration for the essential oil group. All outpatients used the cream daily to massage their lower abdomen from the end of the last menstruation continuing to the beginning of the next menstruation.

**Aromatic oil massage provided relief for outpatients with primary dysmenorrhea and reduced the duration of menstrual pain in the essential oil group.** The blended essential oils contain four key analgesic components that amount to as much as 79.29%; these analgesics constitute linalyl acetate, linalool, eucalyptol, and  $\beta$ -caryophyllene. This study suggests that this blended formula can serve as a reference for alternative and complementary medicine on primary dysmenorrhea. (12)

**A combination of Lavender, Clary sage, and Rose decreases menstrual cramps.** Aromatherapy was applied topically to the experimental group in the form of an abdominal massage using two drops of lavender (*lavandula officinalis*), one drop of clary sage (*Salvia sclarea*), and one drop of rose (*Rosa centifolia*) in 5 cc of almond oil. The menstrual cramps were significantly lowered in the aromatherapy group than in the other two groups. These findings suggest that aromatherapy using topically applied lavender, clary sage, and rose is effective in decreasing the severity of menstrual cramps. Aromatherapy can be offered as part of the nursing care to women experiencing menstrual cramps or dysmenorrhea. (13)

**Lavender inhalation exhibits relaxing activity.** The results revealed that lavender oil caused significant decreases of blood pressure, heart rate, and skin temperature, which indicated a decrease of autonomic arousal. In terms of mood responses, the subjects in the lavender oil group categorized themselves as more active, fresher relaxed than subjects just inhaling base oil. (14)

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