

LAVENDER OIL: HELP FOR ANXIETY?

As stress continues to mount in our rapidly changing world more folks than ever before are dealing with increased levels of anxiety. With all the news surrounding addiction to prescription drugs some are leery to investigate these medication options. Interest in alternative, natural approaches to address medical conditions and ailments has grown in popularity over recent times as our society seeks to move away from what has become our take a pill culture.

In the United States alone it is estimated that nearly 7 million people suffer from generalized anxiety disorder. With women being more likely to be affected than men. Anxiety usually occurs first during adolescence with an escalation of symptoms over time. Below are common symptoms in women:

- Unrealistic perception of problems Worrying about simple, everyday tasks,
- Muscle tension, aches and body pains
- Tension an or Fatigue, Stomach pains and nausea
- Inability to relax, Difficulty concentrating
- Frequent urges to go to the bathroom
- Irritability and mood swings, Depression symptoms
- Difficulty swallowing, Sweating
- Restlessness and being “on edge” or easily startled
- lightheadedness or short of breath
- Frequent headaches, Trembling or twitching
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep

In most cases, anxiety is treated with sedative hypnotic drugs such as the benzodiazepines class: Xanax, Valium, Klonopin and Ativan. However patients taking prescribed narcotic drugs are at risk of developing physical dependence which makes alternative approaches more desirable. At times prescribers recommend anti-depressants to treat anxiety and or panic attacks however these medications often fail to achieve the desired results and may compound the problem with adverse side effects.

Many leading researchers have found lavender oil to be an extremely effective herb in the treatment of anxiety. A study in the Journal Phytomedicine, showed that lavender oil was found to be as effective as Ativan, with no side-affects or risk for dependence. Other studies confirm the beneficial effects of lavender oil, including: treating depression symptoms, dementia-related agitation, restlessness and insomnia. It is extremely helpful with painful inflammatory conditions, joint pain and migraines

How to use Lavender Oil to Calm Nervousness and other Anxiety symptoms

In order to prepare lavender tea, just add 1- 2 tablespoons of whole, dried flowers to a cup of boiling water, and steep for 10- 15 minutes. You can easily find lavender leaves and flowers in a liquid form. Add 6 drops of lavender oil extract or 1/4 to 1/2 cup of dried lavender flowers to your bath water. This oil can also be taken orally by adults, but may be difficult to find in health food stores and might be easier to find online. Be sure to consult your medical provider before you start any new treatment, in order to rule out any potential contra-indications.