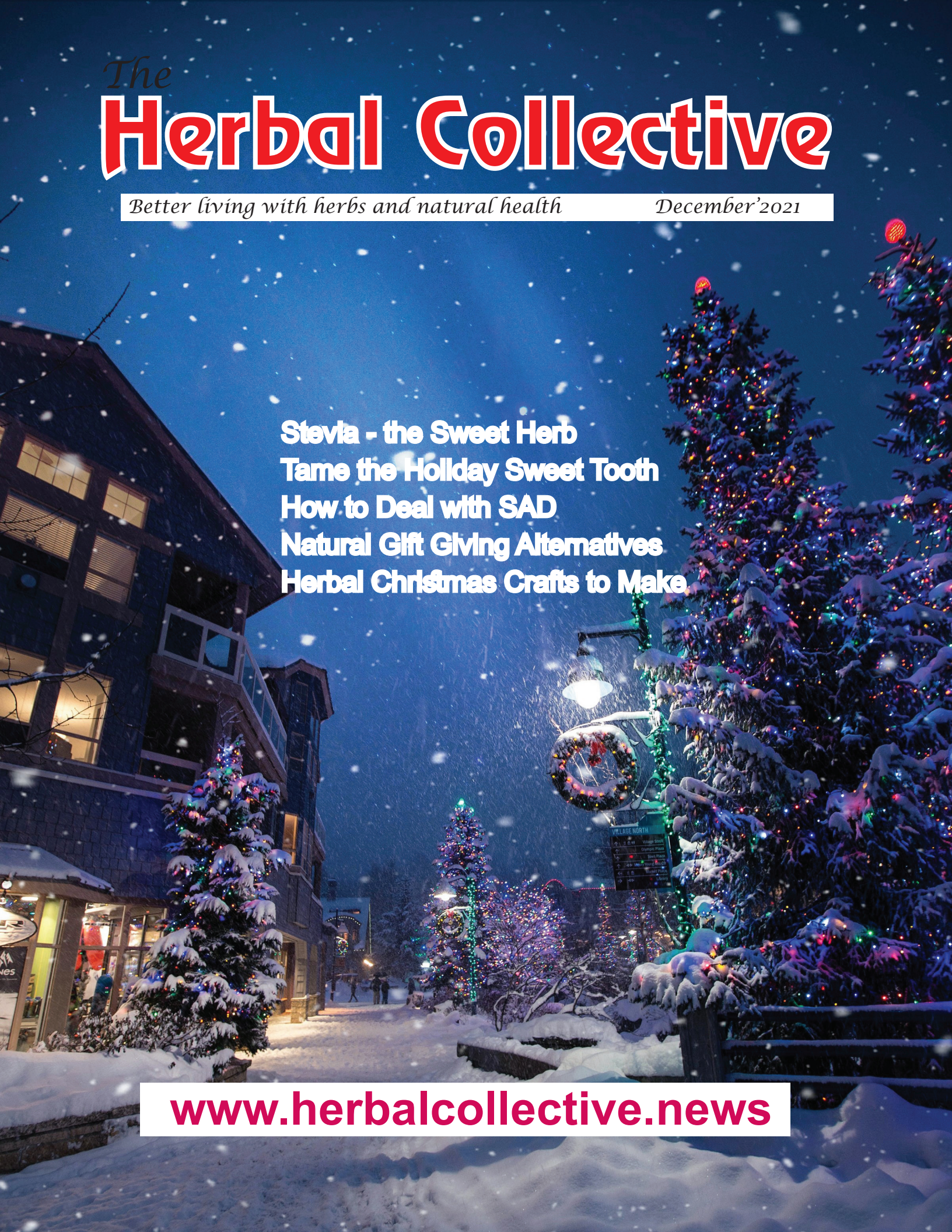
The Herbal Collective

Better living with herbs and natural health *December'2021*



Stevia - the Sweet Herb
Tame the Holiday Sweet Tooth
How to Deal with SAD
Natural Gift Giving Alternatives
Herbal Christmas Crafts to Make

www.herbalcollective.news

Stay Healthy for Festive Season

Publisher's Note

It's December and we're coming to the end of another year – a tumultuous year.

Many people in the natural health industry believe in holistic health and body autonomy.

So for this issue of the Herbal Collective, we're looking at ways to help you stay healthy over the holidays while enjoying time with friends and family.

There's a plethora of sweet treats to enjoy during this time so we look at how you can do that but not overdo it. Overdoing it not only adds pounds and inches to the waist-line but can also have damaging effects on your overall health. One way to help is with Stevia, which you can read about on page 13.

Dark winter days can affect many people who suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder, SAD, which can cause a tendency to indulge in more higher carb foods.

There is often a tendency to exercise less and along with holiday eating, it becomes a three-fold effect.

When January comes, Bam! You realize you gained extra weight and put in a big effort to get back into the health and fitness track.

The effects of this are detailed in the article on 'Insulin Resistance Behind Many Illnesses' found on page 14 of this issue.

This issue isn't only about health. We're celebrating the festive season with an article on natural gift giving, festive recipes, how to decorate with herbal crafts, the origins of Christmas cactus and poinsettia, and the origins of oranges in stockings and clove-studded oranges.

Clove-studded oranges not only smell great but they have origins in being good for our health. We now have essential oil of orange that can be used for health and festive reasons during Christmas.

Finally, we have 4 tips on surviving the holidays with family members. Perhaps you enjoy all your relatives at Christmas, but for those who find putting up with a pesky aunt or uncle, you may want to use the tips to have peace and enjoy yourself more.

We wish you all the best of the season and thanks for reading!

Merry Christmas to you and yours

Sincerely

Marilyn Zink

Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapist

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Please note: The articles in this issue are not considered medical advice or treatment so please see your medical provider for proper evaluation and treatment.

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Tips to Tame the Holiday Sweet Tooth

It's hard to avoid sweet treats during the festive season.

It's everywhere you turn – office parties, holiday baking, chocolates, classic bundt cake at a relative's home and fudge.

It can be difficult to know what to do, and how to avoid the extra pounds come January.

First step, eat a balanced breakfast and lunch with protein and fiber.

Stay hydrated by drinking lemon water during the day. When you're hydrated you're less likely to consume sweet snacks and it's also an easy way to remind yourself to stay healthy.

Registered Dietician Rachel McBryan says going to holiday events where there are plenty of sweet treats is a good time to practice a couple of options.

"It's a good opportunity to express boundaries by saying no thank you. Ask for healthier options."

McBryan says it helps to have smaller portions of the sweet treats.

"You don't have to have a piece of every dessert, have a half portion or a spoonful. I like the mantra, this is another day to eat normally."

For people who have food restrictions, contact the host ahead of time and offer alternative suggestions, which McBryan says people appreciate and find helpful.

Having a holiday get together this year is fraught

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with navigating relationships between those who are vaxxed and those who are unvaxxed.

"Just getting the party started is the main concern," says McBryan.

"Shorter events might be better," she says. "We got out of the habit of being social."

McBryan says she is seeing the impact on mental health from the pandemic and how that is affecting people around holiday time.

"You can choose how you participate in it," she says.

Smaller events held within a shorter time period with a definite ending is a good approach.

An open house where people can come and go, while partaking in the delicious food, is another option to consider.

So you can have the sugar cookie but enjoy something protein based and enjoy some veggies from the tray as well.

This prevents the sugar from going directly into the bloodstream and slows absorption. Plus the body benefits from the protein and vitamins in the vegetables. The sugar doesn't result in a direct hit prevents blood sugar levels from being spiked.

Treats with healthy fats are good to enjoy, but keep to a minimum as these are high in calories. Cheese balls and dips are popular, and are better enjoyed with healthy vegetables.

Keep up the exercise or go for a long walk after indulging to keep your metabolism burning those calories.

Feeling SAD? Ways to Deal with It

By Marilyn Zink

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) becomes a problem for many as soon as we set our clocks back and shorter, darker days become the norm every fall.

For many people setting clocks back, an hour can have seriously negative effects on their mental health.

With less exposure to sunlight, there are negative effects that bring on Seasonal Affective Disorder.

These effects include; disrupting circadian rhythms, causing both a drop in serotonin and spike in melatonin which can lead to feelings of drowsiness and depression, and even mood disorders.

SAD is much more prevalent in Canada and Northern states where there is much less natural light exposure in winter.

Natural light is proven to help our mood and can also affect energy levels.

A 2017 study showed how hospital admissions for depression, peaked directly after Daylight Savings Time ended.

Dr. Jana Beaudoin of Wellness-Doctors.com says there are steps a person can take to mitigate the lack of sunshine.

"There's a lot of lifestyle factors," she says. "We want to separate SAD from depression."

While many depressed people are more likely to suffer from SAD, Dr. Beaudoin says the occurrence of SAD in the general population is from .5 to 3%.

One easy step that sufferers can do is get up early so they can benefit from sunshine before starting their day.

"Even 10 minutes makes a difference," says Dr. Beaudoin.

She says to make sure the sun hits the retina of the eye, without glasses, to get the greatest benefit from the serotonin levels.

Serotonin is a 'feel good' hormone that does more than boost your mood – it might also help provide a more restful sleep. The sun also produces melatonin, a chemical in your brain that lulls you into sleep.

Melatonin works in tandem with serotonin, and both are boosted from sunshine.

Nutrition

Foods that boost serotonin levels include salmon, eggs, poultry, spinach, seeds, nuts, soy products and milk. Even pineapple is on the list.

Making sure to get out for some daily exercise in the sunshine can also boost serotonin.

"We know exercise boosts endorphins," says Dr. Beaudoin. "Twenty to 30 minutes a day boosts endorphins. It feels energizing when you go outside."

Vitamin D is also important for boosting immunity and mood. Researchers behind a 2013 meta-analysis noticed that study participants with depression also had low vitamin D levels. The same analysis found that, statistically, people with low vitamin D were at a much greater risk of depression*

Light therapy is another way to combat SAD.

"Light therapy for 30 minutes a day can boost serotonin," says Dr. Beaudoin.

A group of 13 Canadian specialists issued professional guidelines for treating light therapy in 1998.

Among them, the starting "dose" for light therapy using a fluorescent lightbox is 10,000 lux for 30 minutes per day. (Alternatively, lightboxes emitting 2,500 lux require two hours of exposure per day.)

It should be started early in the morning to maximize response.

The response to light therapy occurs within one week, but it may take up to four weeks.

Common side effects of light therapy include headache, eyestrain, nausea, and agitation, but these effects are generally mild and transient or disappear with reducing the dose of light.

Symptoms of SAD

Depression
Fatigue
Social withdrawal
Increased sleep
Increased appetite and carb cravings
Weight gain
Irritability
Interpersonal difficulties (especially rejection sensitivity)
A heavy, leaden feeling in the arms or legs

If you have these symptoms, take action now to deal with it. You'll feel so much better!

- https://www.healthline.com/health/

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- Essential Oil Blend – lavender, sweet orange and vetiver

This stuff is amazing!

I have been using this cream for a week now and I love it! I swear my skin looks younger and my wrinkles are much less noticeable. It goes on smoothly and smells lovely. This is a fantastic product! Thank you.

Elisabeth – Nov 22, 2018

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Natural Gift Giving Alternatives

Buying a holiday gifts is often complicated, especially if you give it to someone whose reaction matters.

Giving a natural health gift is always appreciated. Size doesn't matter, color doesn't matter.

You can find something for everyone.

There are many types of products available for gift giving for natural health enthusiasts.

One popular gift choice is supplements or perhaps a gift pack of supplements.

These could be vitamins, essential oils or a something to boost the immune system such as Wild Oil of Oregano from HeddWyn.

Wild oil of oregano is reputed for fighting viruses such as those from colds and flu, and it can also help in many other ways.

Perhaps you are looking for natural skin care or body care products to give to that special woman (or man). Ferlow Botanicals has a wide range of products made with ingredients such as Neem essential oil, Rose essential oil, carrot seed, chickweed, tea tree and wild yam.

Purchasing natural health gifts and wrapping them with items from nature gives an elegant touch for the holidays.

Choose from skin or body cream, hair care, soaps and toothpaste.

If you're looking for a wide range of natural health products, a health food store such as Edible Island may have just what you are looking for. There is body care, vitamins and supplements, cleaning products and food.

Perhaps the person on your list may appreciate a gift certificate for a service such as a massage?

These are the easiest gifts to wrap as well – just place them in with a Christmas card or nicely decorated envelope.

True Touch Therapy is offering a gift certificate for Craniosacral Therapy while Time Out Massage is offering certificates for Relaxation Massage or Trauma Recovery - Guided Body Meditation for Cellular Healing You may even want to book a treatment for yourself too. Natural gift giving for the holidays is a great time to boost our health. After you've purchased gifts, look for some thoughtful ways to wrap them using natural items like rosemary or pine.

The Tradition of Clove-Studded Oranges

How did oranges become part of Christmas?

How did the humble orange end up in Christmas stockings?

The orange became part of the Christmas tradition in the 19th century along with the rise of hanging stockings near the fire in Europe.

Placing an orange in the toe of a Christmas stockings may have had something to do with the legend of the three balls (or bags or bars or coins) of gold that the Bishop of Myra, the real Saint Nicholas, gave to three poor maidens to use as dowries.

Saint Nicholas, who was born at the end of the 3rd century, is believed to have saved the lives of the three poor maidens from being sold into slavery.

According to the legend, Saint Nicholas three the gold bags into their house through a window one night and one bag ever-so-conveniently landed in stocking drying by the fire.

From there, the custom grew for older members of the family to place little gifts in shoes or stocking.

But, you're probably wondering – that still doesn't explain the orange.

People started placing oranges because it was a much more budget friendly alternative. And, since this was well before world travel, there was still something exotic about receiving a citrus fruit in wintry Europe.

The oranges were considered a luxury item for families of moderate incomes, who gave them to children as a gift.

The tradition spread to North America and was seized with gusto by the citrus industry. In one January 1921, the California Citrograph, a publication dedicated to the interests of the citrus industry, ran the following opinion from the editor, "'A Christmas orange for the toe of every Christmas stocking' is a wish that the Exchange would like to see fulfilled this year."

The article went as far as to suggest that the "Christmas stocking is really not properly filled without an orange in it,"

Continued on page 15

Nutmeg Rolls

Roll Ingredients:
1 cup butter, softened
2 tsp vanilla
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tsp nutmeg
1 tsp. cinnamon, optional
1/4 tsp salt

Method

Cream butter with vanilla, gradually beat in sugar, then blend in egg. Mix together with flour, nutmeg & salt.

Add to butter mixture & mix well. Divide into 14 equal portions. On sugared board shape each piece in roll 12 inches long and 1/4 inch wide. Sprinkle cinnamon if desired.

Cut in 2 inch lengths and put on greased cookie sheet. Bake in preheated 350 farneheit oven for 12 minutes. Cool on rack. Spread with frosting, sprinkle with nutmeg.

Glaze Ingredients
1/3 cup butter
1 tsp vanilla
2 tsp rum or rum extract
2 cups powdered sugar
2 tablespoons light cream

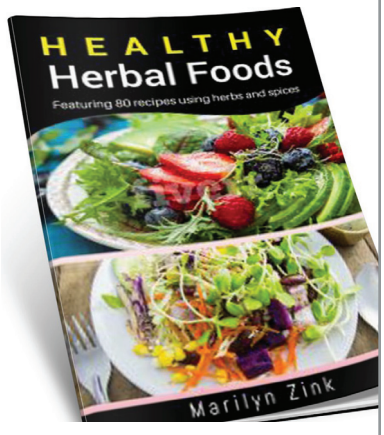
Nutmeg has become so attached to Christmas that the festive period without nutmeg is like Easter without an egg.

Nutmeg has found its way into all the holiday highlights: Plum pudding, eggnog, and turkey stuffing.

But if you're one of those people who like to go overboard at Christmas, a note of caution - take it easy on the nutmeg! In large doses it can cause dizziness, stomach pain and hallucinations.

Healthy Herbal Foods

Learn about everything with healthy herbal foods in this wonderful guide



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MENU

Traditional Christmas Pudding

(Also called Carrot Pudding)
1 cup Brown Sugar
1 cup Raisins
1 cup Dates
1 cup Currants
1 cup Margarine* (scant, just under 1 cup)
1 cup Shredded Carrot
1 cup Grated Potato
2-3 eggs, beaten
1 1/4 cups Flour
1 tsp Baking Soda
1 pinch Salt

Method

This recipe should be a little easier to make than many other recipes for Christmas pudding. Mix all the ingredients together in large bowl. Cover the bowl with tinfoil.

To steam the pudding, use a large pot with a small amount of water in the bottom. An inverted pyrex bowl in the bottom of the pot will keep the bowl with the pudding above the level of the water.

Cover the pot, and cook on medium heat (keep water to a low boil)

Make sure you continue to carefully add small amounts of water to the pot so that it doesn't boil dry over the 3 hours steaming time. Serve with custard.

Sweet Orange - the Uplifting Scent

Orange essential oil is a sweet, uplifting scent that can brighten moods, especially on dark, rainy fall days.

The oil is derived from the rind of Sweet Orange, Citrus sinensis, and has a multitude of benefits.

Anxiety and Depression

Orange essential oil appears to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. Plus it smells so good!

A study done in 2013* found that orange essential oil reduced the pulse rate and stress hormone levels in children undergoing a dental procedure.

Another study in 2015 found that women in labor reported less anxiety after inhaling orange essential oil than women in a control group who inhaled distilled water.

Interesting sidenote – wouldn't the women in the control group realize they were only inhaling distilled water?

Orange essential oil has a strong aroma that is hard to miss. Sniffing distilled water has no scent whatsoever.

Anti-Microbial

Orange essential oil is anti-microbial which can be a benefit for enhancing immunity.

The oil has the compounds limonene, B-Myrcene, a-Pinene, Citronellol, Geraniol, Linalool and Neral.

Orange Oil is a tonic that maintains metabolic health and function, while also increasing anti-oxidant activity that repairs damaged cells. For its diuretic properties, Orange Oil is reputed to eliminate bodily toxins including excess salts, fluids such as water, and uric acid.

The oil has many uses in the body: lifts the mood and reduces stress, treats skin conditions, reduces pain or inflammation, relieves stomach upset, gives flavour to foods and beverages and can be used as a natural household cleaner.

How to Use:

Like most essential oils, orange essential oil can be used in a number of ways to receive its benefits.

Diffusion is one of the simplest ways to enjoy it. A diffuser allows an essential oil to evaporate by using heat. The scent of the oil spreads through the room and its refreshing aroma can uplift the mood while trapping particles as an anti-microbial.

A spray is a quick way to add a boost of sweet orange scent to a room and inhale the benefits.

A massage is a great way to reduce pain and inflammation using the oil. The essential oil should be diluted before use, so use 10-20 drops in a carrier oil such as sweet almond oil for the massage.

Safety

Any essential oil can cause a skin rash if used directly on the skin without being diluted in a carrier oil or cream. The only exception is lavender essential oil, which can be applied 'neat' or directly on the skin.

•https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3732892/