



PREGNANCY

There should be no more satisfying and special time in a woman's life than the nine months of pregnancy but women are often beset by anxiety and discomfort. This is a time to take the ultimate care of yourself to help to ensure that you and your baby are as healthy as it is possible to be. The use of essential oils during pregnancy, labour and after delivery can help immeasurably, both physically and emotionally. The essential oils will pass through the skin and be experienced by your baby, so don't be tempted to either increase or change the recommended oils. There are some oils which should never be used during pregnancy and some that should be avoided for the first three months. The recipes here are for external use.

OILS FOR USE DURING PREGNANCY:

Benzoin, chamomile (but not during the first 4 months), cypress, geranium (see caution following), ginger, grapefruit, lavender (see caution following), lemon, mandarin, palmarosa, patchouli, rose (see caution following), ylang ylang.

CAUTION - OILS TO AVOID DURING THE FIRST 4 MONTHS OF PREGNANCY:

German and Roman chamomile, geranium, lavender, rose.

OILS WHICH MAY BE UNSAFE TO USE DURING TOTAL PREGNANCY:

Basil, cedarwood, celery seed, cinnamon, clary sage, fennel, galbanum, hyssop, jasmine, juniper, marjoram, melissa, myrrh, nutmeg, parsley, pennyroyal, peppermint, rosemary, thyme.

Morning sickness

The following suggestions should work very quickly to dispel morning sickness. The scent of the spearmint or ginger oil will calm your tummy during the night and you should wake up with no nasty queasiness. Use any or all of the following ideas. Put 1 drop of spearmint or ginger essential oil on the light globe before switching on the bedside light at night. Put another 2 drops on cotton wool and tuck under your pillow. Place a small bowl of lukewarm water in the bedroom before going to bed and sprinkle with 1 drop of spearmint and 2 drops of lavender essential oils.

Perineum massage

Massaging the perineum (the area between the vaginal opening and the anus) has been shown to lessen the risk of tearing. Massage twice daily with a mixture of olive and wheat germ oils for the last 2 months before the birth.

Nipples

It's a good idea to begin to massage the nipples for a couple of months before the birth. Massaging will help to avoid the painfully cracked nipples from which so many mothers suffer, and which change the joyful time of breast feeding into a miserable experience. Make the following oil or ointment and begin to use several weeks before the baby is due. If you prefer, calendula ointment and calendula infused oil are available in health food stores. Be sure to wash the nipple clean of cream or oil before feeding the baby.



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6/138 Radium Street
Welshpool WA 6106

Telephone: **08 9358 4448**
Facsimile: 08 9358 4449
Email: sales@rangeproducts.com.au

NIPPLE OIL

2 tablespoons calendula infused oil or sweet

10 drops carrot essential oil

15 drops chamomile essential oil almond oil

1 teaspoon wheat germ oil

Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Leave for 4 days before using so the oils have time to synergise or combine well.

TREATMENT

Massage the oil well into the nipples and surrounding area in a firm but gentle squeezing motion. Wash all traces of oil away thoroughly before breast-feeding your baby.

Stretch marks

As soon as pregnancy is confirmed, it's time to start taking extra care of the skin on the tummy, thighs, bottom and breasts. Stretch marks can be largely avoided but not easily cured and the use of these oils morning and night will certainly help to keep the constantly and rapidly stretching skin supple and pliable.

TUMMY OIL

1 teaspoon wheat germ oil

10 drops mandarin essential oil

7 tablespoons sweet almond oil

3 teaspoons olive oil

2 teaspoons avocado oil

4 X 250IU vitamin E capsules

10 drops palmarosa essential oil

20 drops lavender essential oil

Pierce the vitamin E capsules and squeeze the oil into a 200 ml bottle. Add the remaining oils and shake to blend. If possible, leave for 4 days to synergise. Shake the bottle well before use.

TREATMENT

Massage the oil thoroughly into the skin of the breasts and from the waist down to the knees. Use twice daily if possible.

Aching backs

Towards the end of pregnancy can be a trying time as the body gets heavier and backaches more frequent. This oil is very gentle and will help to alleviate the depressing dragging feeling. If used regularly it may help to prevent the backache.

CAUTION:

Use this blend only after the first 4 months.

ACHING BACK MASSAGE BLEND

2 tablespoons grape seed oil

20 drops chamomile essential oil

1 tablespoon sweet almond oil

20 drops lavender essential oil



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Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Leave for 4 days before using so the oils have time to synergise or combine well.

TREATMENT

Ask a friend or partner to massage your lower back very gently with the blend after you have had a bath or shower.

Varicose veins

Varicose veins are largely hereditary so if members of your family suffer from them, take precautionary measures as early as possible. Stroke the following oil on your legs twice daily starting at the ankle, stroking firmly but gently upwards. In the later stages of pregnancy it will be difficult and you may need a partner or friend to do this for you.

CAUTION:

If you already have varicose veins, avoid massaging over the veins.

VARICOSE MASSAGE BLEND

1 tablespoon grape seed oil

10 drops lemon essential oil

1 tablespoon sweet almond oil

5 drops cypress essential oil

10 drops geranium essential oil

Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Leave for 4 days before using so the oils have time to synergise or combine well.

Nerves and depression

It's very natural for you to feel conflicting emotions during pregnancy. Your body is undergoing immense changes and this, combined with tiredness, can result in tearfulness and the miseries. When this happens, stop what you are doing and have a bath! During my five pregnancies I often relied on a bath to see me through the day. The water supports your tummy and removes the heavy feeling, while the warm water (not hot) with essential oils takes away the gloominess.

CAUTION: This bath only to be taken after the fourth month.

RELAXING BATH BLEND

1 teaspoon grape seed oil

2 drops grapefruit or geranium essential oil

2 drops mandarin or lavender essential oil

1 drop sandalwood or ylang ylang essential oil

Mix the oils together in a small bowl.

TREATMENT

Choose a time when the other children are at school or ask a friend or relative to mind young children for half an hour or so. If you don't own a bath pillow, fill a hot water bottle with warm water and tuck under your neck, the warmth will help you to relax. Add the oils after running the bath and swoosh the water to disperse the drops. Massage the floating drops of oil into your tummy and breasts, relax, talk to your baby and enjoy!



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These three Essential Oils have not been mentioned as unsafe in any references, so presume they are appropriate. Still not advised to use the below blend until after the four month mark of pregnancy & no more often than once a day.

MASSAGE BLEND FOR SWOLLEN FEET AND ANKLES

1 teaspoon grape seed oil

1 drop eucalyptus essential oil

1 drops cypress essential oil

1 drop lavender essential oil Mix the oils together well.

TREATMENT

Float the oil blend on a little warm water in a bowl. Massage gently into the feet, ankles and calves of the legs using sweeping movements. Draw the knuckles of the hand firmly across the soles of the feet from the big toe to the heel, repeat several times. Elevating the feet, avoiding sitting or standing without movement for lengthy periods and addressing the problem of constipation can all help to avoid or cure this condition. Ice-cold compresses containing lavender, cypress and lavender essential oils laid on the ankles and feet will reduce the swelling while the above massage blend will reduce the feeling of 'fullness' and discomfort.

PREGNANCY MASSAGE INFORMATION

BASIC STROKES

The following strokes are probably the best techniques for beginners to use. They are therapeutic, pleasurable and, if the above cautions are observed, safe to use. I would suggest that before giving a massage you treat yourself to a professional massage and this will give you some idea of what various strokes feel like.

Effleurage

Effleurage involves stroking—either gently or firmly—in long, uninterrupted movements in an upward direction towards the heart. The hands should just brush the flesh as they move downwards. Keep hands in contact with the body at all times. Avoid pressure over the spine. It's good to begin and end a massage with effleurage and finishing with the lightest possible movement.

Kneading

This is usually performed on the fleshy areas of the body like the buttocks, calves of the legs, thighs, and shoulder muscles. Put your hands next to each other on the muscle you are going to work on. Pick up the flesh with one whole hand including the palm. Squeeze and press firmly but gently with the fingers, while sliding the thumb over the area and alternate the action between thumb and fingers. As you are finishing with one hand, begin the same movement with the other hand and perform the same action. Begin using the second hand simultaneously with finishing the first so that it becomes one continuous, rhythmic and fluid movement. There should never be a time when both hands are out of contact with the body.

MASSAGE AND PREGNANCY



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Massage during the pregnancy helps to promote circulation, thus reducing the incidence of varicose veins, fluid retention and muscle cramps. A gentle abdomen massage omitting the deeper frictions and strokes, can be performed. This helps to ease constipation and indigestion, and it also reduces stretch marks by promoting the circulation of blood to the skin while the oils make the skin soft and supple. By using gentle effleurage around the lower back area, the muscles will relax and this helps to relieve lower back pain. Further into the pregnancy, some firm effleurage and kneading of the lower back will be beneficial. During the labour, back massage and firm foot massage will help ease discomfort and provides a source of relief.

The first three months of pregnancy are when the most care must be taken with essential oils and massage.

- Never use the tapotement strokes (cupping, hacking and pounding) during pregnancy.
- Do not use deep frictions or deep strokes of any kind around the lower back or abdomen during the early months.
- Use a smaller percentage of safe essential oils in the massage oil blend.
- Avoid any firm massage on the feet, as there are acupressure points on the feet which are used to induce labour. See below blend.

Giving the massage:

To massage the back, it may be more comfortable for the person to lie on her side or sit on a backward facing chair, with a soft pillow between her abdomen and the back of the chair.

When she is lying on her back at any stage during the massage, place a couple of pillows under her knees to provide support. Make sure she is comfortable before you begin.

Follow the full body massage routine, omitting any frictions or deep strokes on the feet, abdomen and lower back. Omit any cupping, pounding and hacking. It is quite sage to use gentle frictions around the upper back, legs, arms and head.

MESSAGE FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN

Babies respond to touch naturally: they have not had time to develop any inhibitions or particular feelings against touching. Massaging will help to create a bond between the mother and father and the baby. If the baby is restless and colicky, massage will soothe and comfort, and create a more peaceful baby. Children can be massaged in the same manner as adults, except with less pressure and not such deep strokes. Remember to be; gentler with the tapotement strokes of cupping, hacking and pounding too. Children also have muscle tension from sports, bad posture or studying and doing homework for school. Teach your children the correct posture for sitting at a desk and: Also while watching television Bad posture overtaxes the muscles, creating spasms and aches. Make sure if the child is doing exercise or sports, that their instructor or coach teaches them to stretch their muscles before and after the activity to reduce muscle pain.



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BIRTH

This is it! Soon you will see the baby who has been your constant companion for nine months. There are a few oils which are going to help you to welcome your baby into the world. You are going to be working very hard for the time the journey takes from the womb to the world. Your needs and desires are paramount at this time so make the most of it. Don't hesitate to say what you want. The first stages of labour can really drag on if you sit around waiting for the next contraction. It's a good idea to go for a walk (near to home and accompanied of course) as this will help to speed things up. If you feel nervous about leaving the house you can occupy yourself with household jobs. When the contractions begin to get stronger and closer together you may enjoy a warm bath to which you have added 6 drops of lavender essential oil. A few comforting things may be soft music, a hot water bottle for a sore lower back, lip salve for dry lips, frozen fruit juice or water cubes to suck, and diluted apple juice to keep the blood sugar level up. The following massage blend will help to lessen the discomfort of contractions, gently speed up contractions, create a calm and tranquil atmosphere and help to keep you and the surrounding air free of bacteria.

OILS FOR USE DURING LABOUR:

Clary sage, geranium, jasmine, lavender, neroli.

OILS FOR POSTNATAL CARE:

Chamomile, clary sage, fennel, frankincense, geranium, grapefruit, lavender, patchouli.

WAITING FOR BABY MASSAGE BLEND

2 teaspoons grape seed oil

3 drops geranium essential oil

2 teaspoons sweet almond oil

3 drops jasmine or rose essential oil

5 drops clary sage essential oil

5 drops lavender essential oil

Do invest in jasmine or rose oils for this very special occasion if you possibly can!

Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Leave for 4 days before using so the oils have time to synergise or combine well.

TREATMENT

Massage the lower back with the blend, as often and as firmly as liked during the labour. If it can be tolerated, the abdomen can be massaged once during the first stage using only the lightest strokes. Guide the person conducting the massage as to the movements and areas that are most comfortable and helpful.

After the birth

Now you have your baby and will be having a wonderful time getting to know each other. This time can be stressful and demanding however, and the essential oils can help you to avoid or banish some of the annoying problems which occasionally arise. The choice of oils is still limited as breast-fed babies will receive these oils in the breast milk.



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Breastfeeding

It's beyond the scope of this book to talk in depth about this subject but I would urge you, even if you have decided not to breastfeed, to consider feeding for the first vital days when the baby will receive colostrum. This is a thin creamy coloured fluid, which contains constituents important for the baby's immunity to disease.

BLEND TO INCREASE MILK FLOW

2 tablespoons grape seed oil

10 drops clary sage essential oil

20 drops fennel essential oil

Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Leave for 4 days before using so the oils have time to synergise or combine well.

TREATMENT

Massage the oil blend gently into the breasts 2—3 times a day using a circular movement. Wash off thoroughly before breast feeding.

Breast abscess

A breast infection at this time can be very painful and distressing. Consult your health practitioner if there's a fever.

BREAST ABSCESS FOMENTATION BLEND

5 drops geranium essential oil

5 drops chamomile essential oil

Small bowl of hot water

Add the oils to the water. Fold a piece of soft cloth in four and soak in the water.

TREATMENT

Apply fomentation to the breast every 4 hours. Cover cloth with a piece of plastic and keep in place with a brassiere. Iron a cabbage leaf until very soft. When cool enough, slip the leaf over the breast under your brassiere. Alternate this treatment with the fomentation above.

BREAST ABSCESS OIL

2 tablespoons grape seed oil

15 drops chamomile essential oil

10 drops geranium essential oil

Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Leave for 4 days before using so the oils have time to synergise or combine well.

TREATMENT

Massage breasts very gently 4 times daily.



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Perineum

The perineum may be very sore after the birth. Even though you may not have had stitches, there are often tiny little tears or sore areas that can be very uncomfortable.

PERINEUM MASSAGE OIL

1 tablespoon olive oil

16 drops lavender essential oil

1 tablespoon wheat germ oil

Max together in a small bottle. Shake to blend.

TREATMENT

Massage the perineum for 2 minutes twice daily. If the area is too sore for massage, try a cool compress containing 5 drops lavender essential oil instead.

SITZ BATH

1 teaspoon vegetable oil

2 drops tea tree essential oil

2 drops lavender essential oil

2 tablespoons salt

Mix the oils together in a small bowl. Stir well to blend and add the salt. Add to the bath and stir to dissolve.

TREATMENT

Run enough warm water in the bath to cover the lower hips. Add the above mixture, agitate the water to dissolve the salt and soak in the bath for 10 minutes.

Postnatal depression

Few people can understand or sympathise with post-natal depression unless they have suffered themselves. The depression can range to mild (experienced by most women on the second or third day after the birth), to very severe. Plenty of rest and pampering yourself will help you feel relaxed. You will have more energy and enthusiasm to cope with the baby and household chores. Use the following oils to lift your spirits and give confidence.

ESSENTIAL OILS:

Bergamot, frankincense, geranium, grapefruit, lavender, lemon, mandarin, jasmine.

POSTNATAL BLUES BLEND

60 drops bergamot essential oil

40 drops grapefruit or mandarin essential oil

60 drops lavender essential oil

40 drops geranium or frankincense essential oil

Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Alternatively just blend the essential oils together to use as an air spray or in an oil burner.

TREATMENT

Add 10 drops to 1 teaspoon grape seed oil for a bath, agitate the water well to disperse.



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BABIES AND CHILDREN

THE ESSENTIAL BABY CHART

AGE	ESSENTIAL OIL & AMOUNT
Which Essential Oils to Use When:	
2 - 3 months	Chamomile and lavender (after the first 48 hours)
3 - 12 months	Add calendula, grapefruit & tea tree
1 - 5 years	Add geranium, lemon, palmarosa, spearmint & rose
5 - puberty	All the oils considered safe for adults may be used but in smaller amounts
The Baby and the Bath Water	
Use age-appropriate oils	
2 - 3 months	1 drop of either chamomile or lavender essential oil mixed thoroughly with 1 tablespoon olive oil and dispersed thoroughly into the bath water
3 - 12 months	2 drops of appropriate essential oil with 1 tablespoon olive oil and dispersed thoroughly into the bath water
1 - 5 years	3 - 5 drops of appropriate essential oil with 1 tablespoon olive oil and dispersed thoroughly into the bath water
5 years - puberty	5 - 8 drops of appropriate essential oil with 1 tablespoon olive oil and dispersed thoroughly into the bath water
Baby Massage	
Use age-appropriate oils	
2 - 3 months	10 drops (total) mixed or single essential oils in ½ cup mixed olive and almond oils. Shake well before use
3 - 12 months	10 - 16 drops (total) mixed or single essential oils in ½ cup mixed olive and almond oils. Shake well before use.
1 - 5 years	10 - 16 drops (total) mixed or single essential oils in ½ cup mixed olive and almond oils. Shake well before use
5 years - puberty	16 - 20 drops (total) mixed or single essential oils in ½ cup mixed olive and almond oils. Shake well before use.
Air Sprays for Babies' Rooms	
Use age-appropriate oils	
2 - 3 months	Not recommended.
3 - 12 months	Not recommended
1 - 5 years	Use one-quarter the adult amount
5 years - puberty	1 - 5 years gradually increasing (drop by drop) with child's age.

THE FIRST 48 HOURS

The best oils for newborn babies are extra virgin olive oil and sweet almond oil, these can be combined or used alone for the first 2 days.

3 DAYS TO 2 MONTHS

Chamomile and lavender oil may be introduced and used for babies after the first 48 hours.

These oils both calm the nervous system, boost the immune system and are antibacterial and mildly antiviral. You can use these oils in the bedroom to soothe babies who are restless, 'scratchy' or suffering from colds. A drop of either of these oils in a diffuser or floating in a bowl of warm water near the cot should help to ensure restful sleep.

2 MONTHS TO 12 MONTHS

This is a time when you can extend the range of essential oils you use for baby and carefully increase the amount.

However, do not exceed the quantity of essential oils given in the ingredients list of recipes.



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Babies deserve the best. By using pure, natural oils on their bodies we are giving them just that. Most of the recipes in• this book are calculated in adult doses. All will need to be adapted before using on babies, toddlers and children. The following chart gives the amounts of oils to use in preparations for babies and children. Most essential oils are too powerful to use on the skin of newborn babies and there are few that are safe to use until the baby is 2-3 months old.

CAUTION

Essential oils must never be used internally and must always be correctly diluted before use. This is particularly important for babies and children as undiluted essential oils rubbed from the hands into the eyes could cause permanent damage.

GENTLE BABY OIL

4 tablespoons sweet almond oil

5 drops chamomile essential oil

1 tablespoon olive oil

8 drops lavender essential oil

Mix all the oils together in a small bottle and shake to blend. Leave for 4 days before using so that the oils have time to synergise or combine well.

TREATMENT

All babies love to be massaged. It's good for bonding and has a calming effect on a baby who is suffering from colic, restlessness, or just 'the miseries'. Gentle Baby Oil can be used for any of these problems and for general skin care, to loosen cradle cap, or as an after bath oil.

Sprinkle Gentle Baby Oil on cotton wool and use to clean baby during a nappy change.

Massage baby after bathing with Gentle Baby Oil or if baby is restless and 'scratchy'. Avoid the genitals and eyes when massaging and pay particular attention to the feet.

CRADLE CAP

Use Gentle Baby Oil to lift cradle cap. The oil may be massaged gently on the scalp, left on overnight and washed off in the morning. Repeat for as long as necessary.

Nappy Rash

Essential Oils: Lavender, chamomile, tea tree

TREATMENT

Wash baby's bottom, using warm water to which you have added of tea tree, oil for every 2 cups of warm water Agitate the water well before using. Dry skin gently & use Gentle Baby Oil if needed.

MASSAGE FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN

Babies respond to touch naturally: they have not had time to develop any inhibitions or particular feelings against touching. Massaging will help to create a bond between the mother and father and the baby. If the baby is restless and colicky, massage will soothe and comfort, and create a more peaceful baby. Children can be massaged in the same manner as adults, except with less pressure and not such deep strokes. Remember to be; gentler with the tapotement strokes of cupping, hacking and pounding too. Children also have muscle tension from sports, bad posture or studying and doing homework for school. Teach your children the correct posture for sitting at a desk and:

Also while watching television Bad posture overtaxes the muscles, creating spasms and aches.

Make sure if the child is doing exercise or sports, that their instructor or coach teaches them to stretch their muscles before and after the activity to reduce muscle pain.