



**A REVIEW ON IMPORTANCE OF MEDICINAL PLANTS IN AROMA THERAPY WITH  
REFERENCE TO BHAVPRAKASH NIGHANTU**

Priyanka Khantwal\*<sup>1</sup> and D. C. Singh<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Post Graduate Scholar, Department of Dravya Guna, Uttarakhand Ayurved University, Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand India.

<sup>2</sup>Professor and HOD, Department of Dravya guna, Uttarakhand Ayurved University, Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand India.

**\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Priyanka Khantwal**

Post Graduate Scholar, Department of Dravya Guna, Uttarakhand Ayurved University, Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand India.

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**ABSTRACT**

Among, ancient civilisations, India has been known to be rich repository of medicinal plants. The forest in India is the principal repository of large number of medicinal and aromatic plants., which are largely collected as raw materials for manufacture of drugs and perfumery products. Recently, WHO (World Health Organization) estimated that 80% of people world wide rely on herbal medicines for some aspect of their primary health care needs. According to WHO (World Health Organization around 21000 plant species have the potential for being used as medicinal plants. Aromatherapy is one of the complementary therapies to treat several diseases, and to get relief from numerous ailments like depression, indigestion, headache, insomnia, respiratory problems, etc. The essential or volatile oils are extracted from the flowers, barks, stem, leaves, fruits and other parts of the plant by various methods. *Bhavaprakash nighantu* is an important landmark in their history of Indian medicine as its period stands at the juncture of the medieval and modern periods which is the turning point for its future course and also because of the fact that it revived the style of samhitas and contributed a good deal to various aspect of Ayurveda by adding new ideas and drugs. This study concludes medicinal plants among *Bhavaprakash nighantu* which may help in day to day clinical practices.

**KEYWORDS:** Medicinal plants, Aromas, Aromatherapy, *Bhavaprakash nighantu*.

**INTRODUCTION**

Aromatherapy derived its name from the word Aroma, which means fragrance or smell and therapy which means treatment. This therapy is a natural way of healing a person's mind, body and soul.

**Aromas<sup>[1]</sup>:** Pure fragrances are used for healing. Aromas are commonly used in the forms of incense, flower essences, and essential oils. Other method of aromatherapy include pure scented candles, soaps and sachets. Aromas are most effective when pure (i.e. not diluted with chemical substances). They are used externally, and unless mixed with a diluting or base oil. They should not be placed too close to the eyes or any bodily orifice.

A suggested base oil for each dosha is provided in the table below:<sup>[2]</sup>

Dosha	Base oil
Vayu	Sesame
Pitta	Cocunut or sunflower
Kapha	Canola or mustard

A generally accepted ratio of essential oil to base oil is the following:

25 ml (12-13) drops: 1 fluid ounce base oil

It is especially useful to place drops of oil on various body sites:

- The crown
- Temples - **for headaches**
- At the root of the nose – **for sinus problems**
- At the heart.

**(a) Steam / Sweat Therapy<sup>[3]</sup>**

Aromatic oils are used in these therapies as well, being directed at specific sites – arthritis in the hands.

Aromas balance the 3 humors and prana, ojas and tejas. Below is a list of commonly uses as essential oils:

**Primary oils**

**1. Basil (Tulsi)**

**Dosha:- VK-P +**

**Uses-** Cleanses mind, purifies air, reduces fever and viruses, remove Apana Vayu (downward air), increase devotion.

**2. Camphor (Karpur)**

VK-P +

Uses- Opens the mind, senses, increases meditation and perception

Alleviates headaches and arthritis can be used for puja (devotional ritual)

- Insect repellent.
- Externally- sprains, inflammations, rheumatism

Precaution – large doses are toxic

**3. Cedar (Devadaru)**

VK-P +

According to Bhavprakash Nighantu

प्रमेह पीनसस्लेस्म कासकंडूसमीरनुत्<sup>[4]</sup> II (भा. नि. २/ २७)

Uses- Diabetes, arthritis, edema, air cleanser.

**4. Eucalytus**

- Uses- Opens the mind, senses, lungs,
- Removes phlegm and alleviates depression, cleanses negative psychotic thoughts.

**5. Frankincense (Kapithaparni)**

- Uses- Heart, head, blood and nerve cleanser
- Pain reliever, calms mind, increases faith,

**6. Gardenia**

P- VK + in excess

- Uses- Cleanses the blood, kidneys, heart
- Fevers and infections (including uterine)

**7. Jasmine (Mallika)**

- Uses:- Heals breast and uterine infections
- Strengthen a women;s reproductive system

**8. Lavender**

Calms emotions and nerves (good for hyperactive children)<sup>[5]</sup>

**9. Rose: (Rudhrapushpa, Japa) (flower of the heart)**

Uses :- Eye tonic (as rose water),

Acts as female reproductive tonic, urogenital tract, fevers, cough.

**10. Sandal wood (Chandan) (best aroma for the mind)**

According to bhavprakash Nighantu

चन्दनं शीतलं रुक्षं तिक्तमाहालादनं लघु<sup>[6]</sup> I (भा. नि. २/ १३)

- Reduces irritability, anxiety and promotes meditation
- Heart and lung tonic
- Cleanses kidneys

**11. Musk: (Kasturi)**

Uses : Revives those who are comatose or near collapse, Awakeness senses is the **most rajasic oil**

Strengthens heart and reproductive system

**12. Patachouli: (Pacholi)**

Actions : Stimulant, expectorant, carminative

Uses :- Cleanses digestive system

Stimulate senses, gives joy (removes depression) **is especially good for Kapha.**

Externally – insecticide

**13. Rosemary**

Uses: Blood, heart, circulatory system, tonic, helps headaches and emotional tension, promotes menstruation.

**(b) AYURVEDIC AROMATHERAPY<sup>[7]</sup>**

As mentioned above, essential oils must be mixed with in base oils before application to the skin.

**Aches & Pains**

Oils : Cinnamon, mahanarayan

Base: Rubbing alcohol, beeswax (mahanarayan oil is mixed with sesame oil)

Use : Headaches, neuralgia, arthritis

**Antibacterial**

Oils : Sandalwood, jasmine, gardenia, iris

Uses : Cools blood, fevers, infections, build the immune system, removes thirst

**Congestion**

Oils : Eucalyptus, basil, mint

Base: alcohol, beeswax (mahanarayan oil is mixed with sesame oil)

Use: Near nose, or inhaling as steam

**Gynecological Disorders**

Oils : Rose, rosemary

Use: Regulates menstruation (apply to problem site or soak in an aroma bath)

**Digestive Stimulants**

Oils : Cardamom, cloves, fennel, ginger

Use: Promotes agni/ digestion

**Rejuvenatives (Rasayanas)****Oils & Use**

Plant oil	Use
Frankincense	Blood and brain
Guggul	Brain and bones
Myrrh	Blood, heart, uterus
Rose	Heart and uterus
Lily	Heart and brain
Lotus	Heart and reproductive system
Gardenia and sandalwood	Kidneys
Gardenia and iris	Liver

बोलं रक्तहरं शीतं मेध्यं दीपनपाचनं II

मधुरं कटु तिक्तं च दाहस्वेदत्रिदोषजित् I ज्वरापस्मार कुष्ठघनं गर्भाशयविशुद्धिकृत<sup>[8]</sup> II (भा. नि. ७/ १६०)

**Soothing**

Oils	Use
Sandalwood, rose, lotus, lily, lavender	Calming, prevent negative dreams, worry and agitation, insomnia

**(C) Aroma Therapy & The Three Doshas<sup>[9]</sup>****Dosha Oils**

Vayu	Pitta	Kaphaj
Mix musk, frankincense, basil, camphor cinnamon with sandalwood or rose	Sandalwood Rose Lotus Gardenia Lily Lavender	Cinnamon Musk Sage Cedar frankincense, myrrh

**(D) Aromatherapy & Specific uses****Acne**

Camphor, eucalyptus, lavender applied at night (12 drops cypress to 12 drops lemon in 2 fl oz. (50 ml). Coconut oil or brahmi oil.

**Air Purification**

Camphor  
Frankincense,  
Basil  
Sandalwood  
Lavender

**Burns**

Lavender

**Athletes foot**

Lavender 2 drops massaged into feet; tea tree oil also works but has less pleasant odor. For verruca (Wart like), Lavender, eucalyptus, rosemary or camphor is applied several times daily.

**Earache**

Lavender 1 drop placed on a cotton ball and applied to the outer ear.

**Gums**

दन्त्योऽल्पमूत्रकृद् याही वातघनोअग्निमतिप्रदः I (भा. नि. ८/ ६४)

Sesame oil

**Headache**

Lavender on muscles at back of neck, on temples, forehead etc.

Sick headaches- use of peppermint oil, sniffed frequently, may help also sandalwood, calamus, guggul, lily; sometimes just taking a nap or going to sleep early helps – a drop of oil may be put on the pillow.

**Hemorrhoids**

Cypress oil : 5 drops in a bowl of warm oil or bath, mix well as 'sitz'.

**Mouth ulcers**

Myrrh, drop of oil.

**Nausea**

Lavender, rose, geranium : a few drops in a bowl of hot water.

**Mastitis**

Mastitis (Breast inflammation) compress 1 drop geranium, 1 drop lavender, 2 drops rose in 11/2 pints (850 ml.) cold water.

**Sore throat/ Laryngitis**

2 to 3 drops in honey water every few hours.

**Toothache**

Clove, peppermint, prickly ash.

**CONCLUSION**

These above *bhavprakash nighantuokta* medicinal plants review suggests that these medicinal plants can be recommended for maintaining a healthy life and also to free from various health menaces and aromatherapy is natural and noninvasive gift of nature for humans. It's not only the disease symptoms which are eradicated but the whole body is rejuvenated by the use of aroma. Aromatherapy regulates the physiological, spiritual and psychological upliftment for the new phase of life. This therapy is not only preventive but also can be used in the acute and chronic stages of disease.

If properly studied, these volatile oils may have the synergistic effect with the drugs used in the treatment of central nervous system disorder. Moreover, the time at which the plant contains the maximum amount of volatile oil with various chemical constituents also is a matter of discussion. Essential oils can be a useful non-medicinal option or can also be combined with conventional care for some health conditions, provided safety and quality issues are considered. The tilt of the scientific community towards complementary and alternative medicine has given the new hope to reduce the unwanted effects of modern medicine by these essential oils and if properly explored to their full potential, this therapy can be a boon not only to the patients but also to a common man.

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