



Episode 30: Optimize Energy with Essential Oils

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 0:00

Hello and welcome to the fix your fatigue podcast. Whether you can't get out of bed in the morning, your energy crashes throughout the day, or you're a bio hacker looking to optimize your energy, productivity and focus. This podcast is for you. I am Dr. Evan Hirsch. And I will be your host on your journey to resolving fatigue and optimizing your energy. And we'll be interviewing some of the top leaders in the world on the T resolution. Welcome. Hello, and welcome to the fixer fatigue podcast. I'm so glad that you're joining me here today, because today we're going to be talking about essential oils with my good friend Jody Cohen, and how they relate to energy and fatigue. So let's learn a little bit about Jodi. So Jodi stern off Cohen is a best selling author, award winning journalist, functional practitioner, and founder of vibrant blue oils, where she has combined her training in nutritional therapy and aroma therapy to create unique proprietary blends of organic and wildcrafted essential oils. She has helped over 70,000 clients heal from brain related challenges including anxiety, insomnia, and autoimmunity. Her website vibrant blue oils calm is visited by over 500,000 Natural Health seekers every year, and she has rapidly become a top resource for essential oils education on the internet today. Her first book healing with essential oils is available on amazon.com. her new book essential oils to boost the brain and heal the body was recently released and made the best sellers list and Publishers Weekly, which is a huge goal. There it is. Jody, thanks so much for being with me today. Oh my god, thanks for having me is my favorite topic fatigue and energy. Awesome mind to let's dive in here. So let's start first about something you were mentioning off camera about the different layers of healing? Can you talk a little bit about that, and how essential oils kind of play a role?

Jodi Cohen 2:07

Yeah, if you really think about our currency, right is energy, and what drains our energy, it can be physical, you know, like moving around, it can be mental, like really having to concentrate and focus. It can be emotional, you know, getting angry, that takes a lot of energy, being anxious takes a lot of energy. And so what I love about oils is that they help on all levels, you know, they can help you have more physical energy and energy, they can enhance the oxygen flow to your brain so that you can think more clearly, or you know, the signaling of the nerves to your muscles so that you can move faster. It can

help like, rosemary, certain things that you can smell can help you to focus and concentrate or remember, but the biggest thing I think, is emotional things, you know, like someone I was talking to earlier was saying, stress isn't really stress, it's your body's reaction to emotion. You know, you feel something and you react. And one thing that I love about oils and all plants for that matter is I help I think they help kind of unpack that emotional trigger. So that if you're not spending your energy being angry, you have more energy to, you know, give to things that make you happy, like your family, you know, your work, your passion, whatever it is.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 3:24

Yeah, it makes sense. So let's back up then and talk about what is an essential oil for those who don't know.

Jodi Cohen 3:31

Yeah, essential oils are really the concentrated essences of plants. It's kind of a farm to table experience. You pick the plant, you put it in what's called the distiller, which is really a big pot of boiling water. And the water boils, the steam lifts up oil and water don't mix. So oil goes down one path and the water goes down another path and the oil is then the concentrated essences of the plant are the essential oil.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 3:56

Hmm. And so how does this differ from a tincture?

Jodi Cohen 4:01

A tincture meaning sometimes when tinctures would be you put the plant in the water and let it sit and it kind of pulls the essence out but stays in the water. It's similar, I think it's just more highly concentrated. And also, when it's oil, it's able, you know a lot of the cell membranes in your body or oil, it's smaller molecules so it's able able to pass through, you know, the blood brain barrier and tighter membranes, it just gives more access.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 4:32

And the and the oils aren't oral right? You take them topically. Is that correct?

Jodi Cohen 4:39

I've always had people take them topically and I'll explain why because most of the remedies that we get into our system we ingest right? And so digestion is a slightly complicated process to get from kind of the mouth into the bloodstream. You need to go through the stomach and make sure you have the right amount of acid and then through the intestines in the hole. digestive process and then have it processed through the liver before it gets into the bloodstream and goes systemic. When you smell it, our sense of smell actually is critical to survival, we smell food, we smell water, we smell predator odor, so that has a really direct access to the brain, also the nasal passageways, the capillaries are really close to the surface of the skin. So it gets into the bloodstream quickly that way. And then transdermally, you know, we know that hormone creams, nicotine patches, anything you put on your skin gets into your bloodstream. But the other interesting aspect of essential oils is they can be used kind of like acupuncture

needles to stimulate reflex points. And that has a very efficient way of getting into the system. So I just think that they're, they're more efficient, it's not that ingesting them is necessarily bad or wrong. It's just like taking the scenic route route that takes, you know, an hour as opposed to the direct web that takes two minutes.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 5:56

Mm hmm. I love that. And I like that idea about putting the oils on the acupuncture points. Yeah, that's, that's really, that sounds very powerful.

Jodi Cohen 6:09

It is really powerful. And it's kind of, I think, you know, especially in this recent time period, we're kind of in our homes with, you know, going places felt hard. And the more we could simplify self care, the easier it was, there is a point that I really love from listeners, if you feel behind your ear lobe, you'll feel a bone that's your mastoid bone. That is the point where your Vegas nerve cranial nerve number 10, is the most accessible to the surface. And there, there was some interesting research that I detail in the book, New York neuroscientist named Kevin Tracy was using pacemaker like electrical implant there to stimulate this nerve to kind of turn on the branch of the nervous system that helps you feel calm and relaxed so that you're not wasting energy, you know, in survival mode. And when I was reading this research, I realized oh, he's he's stimulating that nerve and oils, we can talk about a bit more, but they can be hot or stimulatory. And what that typically means like peppermint, rosemary, oregano time, clove, some of the spices, if you were to put a drop on your arm, it might turn red, the skin might turn red, or it might feel a little hot to the touch. If this happens, remember oil and water don't mix. So you would just take any oil, anything in your kitchen, olive oil, coconut oil, and dilute it with that second oil and then it would feel less hot, less warm, but it's really effective. If you want kind of a high impact stimulatory reaction, you can use a stimulatory oil, I like clove, which you know, it's chemistry, it takes like 20 minutes on its own to get through the skin. But if you combine it with a citrus oil like lime, it gets in much more quickly and it works much more like an acupuncture needle. You know, we can talk more about different points. But sometimes when digestion is compromised, you know you have people that are super sensitive to everything. It's sometimes easier to use oils on acupuncture points to kind of gently start the process of healing.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 8:16

Mm hmm. Yeah, I love that option. It's really great. So let's talk about how essential oils can help improve sleep and boost energy.

Jodi Cohen 8:26

Yeah, it's interesting. There's tons of research on certain oils like lavender and Kameelah and their sedative properties, right? So because when you inhale an oil, it's going it's causing chemical reactions within the olfactory system and helping to calm the brain and calm kind of the chemical messengers in the brain. So just inhaling something before sleep is great, you can add it to one thing that I like that seems to work well for most people is Epsom salt boughs, two cups of Epsom salt, one cup of baking soda, and then a couple drops of an oil like lavender but mix the oil into the salt before you add the hot water and it provides this kind of full body relaxation experience because the hot

water opens the pores you know the Epson salt has magnesium and helps to carry things into your body. So it carries this sedentary property into the body. And there are also ways that you can use oils for different kind of sleep disruptions like challenges falling asleep or staying asleep.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 9:34

Gotcha. So then in terms of the so we How are your products named? Are they named like lavender kameel? Or do you have something that's an actual sleep formula?

Jodi Cohen 9:46

Have two sleep formulas I have one called circadian rhythm that helps to trigger the pineal gland to release melatonin and one called sleep that's more relaxing. The best tools for sleep are valerian root instead. ignored, they both smell badly, like stinky feet. So, valerian root is the worst. So spikenard, when mixed with some other oils, like a lot of citrus and lavender and camera bills are far more tolerable, and it is really kind of relaxing, it's great. You know, especially I bring it on red eyes all the time, it just helps you kind of it pushes you over the edge into sleep. But one thing that I do that's different, I know there are tons of great oil companies out there and great oils, most of them are singles, they offer the single oil, the peppermint, the frankincense, the lemon. And what I've done is recognize that in research, a lot of times the benefit comes from combining the oils. It's not just one oil and isolation. It's the synergy. But the synergies that are made are kind of chasing symptoms. And you and I both like to address the underlying root cause. So what I really tried to do was formulate oils to help, you know, balance the adrenals, put the adrenals in balance, you know, we both know, it's not just the organ in isolation, it's whatever they're reacting to, that's causing it to constantly be releasing cortisol. But the more you can kind of line everything up to harmonize and balance, the easier it is to stay in balance. So that's what I've tried to do with oils, especially for anyone who is sensitive to supplements or you know, compromised in their ingestion capacity. If you can apply it topically and put it in balance and then maybe take something internally, you're kind of hitting it from all angles.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 11:33

Mm hmm. Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. And so then, you know, stay at step two of my process is about boosting hormones, adrenals, thyroid mitochondria, some other things. Let's look at hormones for a second and how essential oils can help to boost the adrenals the thyroid sex hormones.

Jodi Cohen 11:55

Yeah, so I mean, the CEO of the endocrine system is the hypothalamus, right? Right in the middle of the brain pretty hard to get to. But what's cool is that when you smell something, it goes pretty much directly to the hypothalamus. And there are certain essential oils like pine that are kind of known to help balance the hypothalamus, we have a blend called hypothalamus that you can either smell or topically apply, we find this, it's interesting with reflex points, they're usually divots. So if you kind of feel up, you can feel that divot right in your forehead. That's a great application point. And a lot of times, I don't know if you find this, but sometimes people are switched, like you give them something that should relax them. And it makes them hyper know, or something

that should give them energy puts them to sleep. Oftentimes, it's because you know, the hypothalamus is the CEO of the endocrine system. So it's sending messages to the pituitary gland to send to the organs. And then it's monitoring, it's checking blood levels of glucose and other hormones, and it can get a little disrupted and out of balance. And so then that affects the outbound signals, I find that oils are really good reset button, either smelling them, topically applying them, and that can help. You know, we're so good at the obvious culprits, you know, we know how to balance hormone levels, with the you know, supplementing the adrenals or the thyroid, but sometimes it's harder to get the upstream aspect, especially because it's really hard to get remedies into the brain. Okay, some very few things can cross the blood brain barrier.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 13:24

So it sounds like that, that would end up helping everything downstream.

Jodi Cohen 13:29

Exactly, exactly. And they all play into each other, right, the thyroid plays into the DRI knows.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 13:36

Absolutely. So let's talk a bit about blood sugars. How do essential oils regulate blood sugars?

Jodi Cohen 13:43

You know, there's a lot of interesting research about especially insulin, you know, and one of the big challenges so there's, you know, blood sugar in your system, the pancreas releases insulin to carry the sugar out of the system into the cells that sometimes the cells get resistant to the insulin so they don't take it up. So that throws it off. Again, the hypothalamus helps to kind of modulate the blood sugar levels, but also smell, smell plays an interesting role in safety. There's some research that I quote in the book, this researcher by the name of Alan Hirsch, did research on just smelling peppermint, and kind of how that helps to reset the insulin receptors. And there's also interesting research into her nasal insulin, like there's an insulin signal in the brain. It's not just in the pancreas and the body, but there's one in the brain. So I was sure you find this. Sometimes when you reboot the brain, it helps the body like if you can do you know, like if someone says I want to lose weight, I'm thinking maybe I'll exercise or maybe I'll diet but if you combine both, you get better results. So the more angles you can hit things from I think the more effective the results and the faster.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 14:52

Uh huh, that makes a lot of sense. And then one of the things you talked about previously was the Vegas And I, I really love that formula. parasympathetic. Can you talk to us a little bit about that formula and its relationship to the vagus nerve?

Jodi Cohen 15:10

Yeah. So what's interesting that the vagus nerve is the longest nerve in the body, and it serves many functions and innervates many organs. But one thing that it's really helpful in is helping your body to switch into the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system

rest, digest and heal. sympathetic is, you know, our body's operating system is our autonomic nervous system that controls our automatic functions. And it's designed to keep us alive. So if we think we're unsafe, and in danger, it allocates resources differently. Blood is routed to the arms and legs away from the organs of digestion, detoxification, inflammation, it kind of runs a little bit rampant, the immune system isn't necessarily turned on. So it's incredibly hard to heal. When you're in that gear, you know, it's a little bit like if you're a biker, if you're trying to bike uphill on the highest gear, it's gonna be so much harder than if you just downshift. So hoping to activate stimulate that vagus nerve helps to shift your body into the healing gear, so that all of a sudden, you're trying to detoxify, like, let's talk about detoxification, it's, you know, toxins need to leave the cell, then go into the lymph, then be carried to the blood, then be processed by the liver, the gallbladder, the gut, and then leave the body. If you know you're in. If you're not in the parasympathetic state, your liver isn't going to be processing as efficiently because the Bloods not going to be routed there. So it's trying to do the same amount of work with less energy and vitality. So anything you can do to kind of help allocate resources there really helps everything else. So activating the parasympathetic state can be done at any point that the vagus nerve travels through the body, it starts at the back of the head splits is most accessible behind the earlobe, by the mastoid bone then at once through the throat, the layer next the heart, the lungs, the stomach, the pancreas, the gallbladder, the liver, the large and small intestine. And at any point that innervates you can activate it like you can do a coffee and a Moche stimulates the gallbladder that activates it. You can do breathing exercises, you can gag yourself with the tongue depressor, you can gargle all of that turns on the vagus nerve. But because those are not really things people like to do, compliance is very low. Taking an oil blend, and literally just flipping the bottle, putting it behind your ear, you can do this for your kids, that feels manageable for most people. So they actually do it. You know, it's like if the ambulance can't reach the accident, no one's going to survive. You need to make things easy, accessible, affordable, and that allows people to do it more quickly.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 18:02

So then let's talk about detoxification. You mentioned it briefly what sort of essential oils are good at helping to detoxify the liver, the kidney, the lymph, the neural lymph?

Jodi Cohen 18:15

Yeah. Well, you know, if you think about the bottlenecks, and what we know, there are a lot of things that supplements are amazing for and there's, you know, there's no reason to reinvent the wheel because they're so good at it. And then if you think about things that are harder to access, like the length, you know, the length doesn't move on its own. This is one reason that moving your body exercise is really good is it helps to kind of push the limp along and then help drain down the side and carry the garbage out of the body. Like what most people don't realize, the neck is the biggest bottleneck in the body. while you're sleeping, your brain actually shrinks by as much as 60%. And the lymph is involved in brain cleanup. It's called the glymphatic system, the glial dependent lymphatic system, and it washes through the brain and clears out metabolic waste and any toxins and then ideally, it drains down the side of the neck. So you know as the eggs are out to leave the body. But one thing that can happen is the neck can be pretty

congested. There's a lot going on in the neck, you've got your your structure, your muscles, your nerves, your lymph, your vascular system, and it kind of if one part is congested, it can just send to another part, like think of maybe sitting in the near middle seat in the airplane between two linebackers. You know, are you going to be able to put your arms on the armrest? Probably not because they're probably congesting into your space. So imagine now your limbs trying to drain down the neck and you've got maybe the Vegas nervous congestion, maybe the vascular system is congested. So our friend Christine Schaffner kept bumping into this with her chronically ill patients. And she actually used a sonogram. You know what they use for ultrasounds to take some pictures of the neck and see how that lymph was congested and then they were trying airing it like putting different topical applications on the neck to see what helped move the limp and castor oil works. Essential Oils really seem to amplify that. Because if you think of the role that oil is playing plants, they really are helping to move fluid, you know, the water is down in the ground with the deep roots, the leaves might be hundreds of feet in the air. So they really help with movement with directionality. You know, most people don't realize that the limp drains primarily on the left side of the body 75%. So the congestion points are the neck so anything you can do, even just using your fingers, you know, or Castro the kind of stroke the neck and a downward motion, adding oil to that just amplifies it. And then another bottleneck point, you know you live in Olympia I'm in Seattle Tacoma is between us that's always a bottleneck, right? There's traffic, probably two in the morning, crazy traffic, your left avoca that's Tacoma. That is crazy traffic. So anything you can do even just with your hands, if you're kind of rubbing under your clavicle, and it feels a little tender, don't worry, you know, but that's just an indicator, hey, that might be congested. So oil, there is a great point. Under your, your arm is another congestion point of lymph nodes. So just it's a little bit like a you know, untangling the traffic and just helping everything giving it more access to shepherd the toxins out of your body. So they leave your body so that you don't have to repurpose them again. So that's where I think oils is I think lymph is one of the most underlooked elements of health. And I think oils are one of the best ways to move length.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 21:43

And what is the name of your lymph products? It's called limps, we're very creative. And what sort of essential oils do you have in there?

Jodi Cohen 21:53

We have a combination was actually high give the whole recipe in the book, which is one reason it's great to get the book. But one of the things that I try to do with oils, it's a little bit like cooking, right? So sometimes, you know, things are a combination of salty and sweet. What I'm doing with the limp is really trying to kind of like vytex Berry is in there. And so it's kind of this combination of opening up. So spearmint. And then bringing down so you know, one oil is more vasodilating and expansive. Another is kind of downward movement, and then some just kind of combine it and amplify it together.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 22:31

Excellent. Yeah. And so we talked about what I call Step three, which is opening up the detoxification pathways. And then in step four, we are we're big on removing the environmental toxins, so heavy metals, chemicals, molds, infections. And I know that

some people might be thinking that essential oils couldn't possibly help with getting rid of infections. But I also know you and I have spoken about how they they're definitely strong enough and they can even cause a hertz type reaction or a dioptr die off type reaction. Can you talk a little bit about what sort of oils can be helpful for getting rid of infections?

Jodi Cohen 23:11

Yeah, I go into a lot of the detail in the book, but oregano and time are kind of the number one number two, carve a call and time all that are in those have the most antimicrobial antibacterial, antifungal, they're kind of amazing and everything but again, you know, they kill a lot. So you really want to make sure that your drainage pathways are open before you start killing and having die off. The other one that I really love is clove. Like that's part of the reason that I use it in the parasympathetic blend. And one thing that Dr. Schaffner taught me also, it's interesting is a lot of pathogens hang out in the neck because it's got the most oxygen rich blood, right? They have the best blood to go to the brain. So I guess her colleague used to say if I was a parasite, I would hang out where the blood was the best so kind of in the veins of the neck. And one thing that they noticed you we talked a bit about the vagus nerve, this idea of Vegas nerve toxicity, also known as the vagus nerve infection hypothesis, Michael Vanek clear from Tufts University talked about how sometimes there's a small infection in the vagus nerve that the whole body interprets is like sickness response. So danger response, and the reason that can happen. The biggest garbage site in your body is your mouth, right? You know, you're exposed to all the pathogens from your food, if you have any kind of dental work a root canal, metal amalgams, kind of cavitation you know, they pulled your wisdom tooth and there's an open socket, that's where things can kind of build up and the garbage from mouth is draining along the jaw line along the trigeminal nerve. So we're just gonna think of this as an intersection. The trigeminal nerve comes up behind the ear lobe intersects with the Vegas nerve. And if the length is congested, and so the toxins aren't draining, they just kind of sit too long. You know, just like food that sits too long can run sidify and petrify. toxins that sit too long can get uptaken by the nerves, nerves have a really high affinity for toxins. So now suddenly the toxin is hanging out in the nerve, it's causing a minor infection. This is where clove eugenol, actually, which is the chemical constituent and clove oil is really fabulous, because it's so antimicrobial antibacterial, antifungal, you put it behind your ear lobe. Now the clove is kind of getting into that infection. And I like to think of it like if you've ever net you may have to kind of take the ball of yarn and unravel it. And sometimes they're tangled, sometimes they're not, I think that what oils really do is they they get rid of stagnation and congestion. So they help kind of untangle things and just keep things moving. And because you can apply them in very specific topical application points, they're really great for that they just helped to kind of clean up the congestion, you know. And in terms of drainage, lymph is a big one, the liver is a big one. The gallbladder is a big one. These are all kind of bottleneck points, traffic jam points in the body, so to speak, where oils can just help to get things moving.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 26:14

Brilliant. Yeah. I think that that that infection viggie infection hypothesis is really interesting. And I think we're going to be learning a lot more about it and years to come.

So people are, I would imagine their interest is piqued on essential oils. Where can they go to learn more about you learn more about essential oils?

Jodi Cohen 26:35

Well, they can go to boost the brain book calm and get more information about the vagus nerve and essential oils. It's free. No commitment required. If it speaks to you, you can certainly head over to vibrant oils calm and you can buy the book, essential oils to boost the brain and heal the body anywhere books are sold.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 26:54

Excellent. There we have a free download for folks, right? Yes, I will put that link in the show notes and below this video. And that is a bonus chapter from the book, right?

Jodi Cohen 27:06

Yeah, it is its bonus chapter but it gets into more of the vagus nerve. Like honestly, if, if you do nothing else, if you can start to activate your vagus nerve more that will give you it will just improve your health it kind of has. It's one of those little pivots with a big impact.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD 27:24

Brilliant. So Jodi, thank you so much for hanging out with me today and talking about oils and energy. Thank you for having me. I hope you learned something on today's podcast. If you did, please share it with your friends and family and leave us a five star review on iTunes. It's really helpful for getting this information out to more fatigue people who desperately need it. Sharing all the experts I know in love, and the powerful tips I have on fatigue is one of my absolute favorite things to do. If you'd like more information, please sign up for my newsletter, where I share all important facts and information about the team from the foods and supplements to the programs and products that I use personally and recommend to others so that they can live their best lives. Just go to fix your fatigue comm forward slash newsletter to sign up and I will send you this great information. Thanks for being part of my community. Just a reminder, this podcast is for educational purposes only, and is not a substitute for professional care by a doctor or other qualified medical professional. It is provided with the understanding that it does not constitute medical or other professional advice or services. If you're looking for help with your fatigue, you can visit my website and work with us at fix your fatigue calm and remember, it's important that you have someone in your corner who is a credentialed healthcare professional to help you make changes. This is very important especially when it comes to your health. Thanks for listening and have an amazing day.