Essential Oils as Part of a Healthy Pregnancy

While there are some oils you’ll want to avoid during pregnancy (more on this in a bit) for the most part (and when using the right kind of oils) essential oil can be an important part of a healthy pregnancy. Essential oils can help balance the body’s systems. They help keep the immune system strong while keeping bacteria and other bugs away. Essential oil can also help with morning sickness, mood, and emotional health.

Remember that essential oil are potent. A little goes a long way.  Many practitioners will recommend not ingesting any oils (except citrus oils, and only in small quantities) as during pregnancy your body is very efficient at metabolizing things. (Note: I am NOT a practitioner, just passing on what I’ve learned. It’s always best to talk to *your* healthcare practitioner first.)

Please note: The following is not intended to cure anything… essential oils are not drugs. Rather, they support your body’s natural ability for health.

**The following is a list of *some* of the Young Living essential oils that are recognized as safe to use during pregnancy along with some uses for them.**

* **Lavender:**For blood pressure, skin conditions, swelling, fever, headaches, itching, early labor, calming, anxiety, insomnia, stretch mark prevention, and burns.
* **Frankincense:**For depression, anxiety, headaches, and respiratory infections.
* **Valor:**For back pain, fear, anxiety, alignment, stress, GBS, self-esteem, insomnia, and stretch mark prevention.
* **Joy:**For depression, fear, anxiety, trauma, bonding, and grief
* **Gentle Baby:**For calming, insomnia, healthy skin, and stretch mark prevetion.
* **Peppermint:**For breach babies, gas, bloating, energy, fever, headaches, heartburn, hemorrhoids, nausea, and respiratory issues.
* **Lemon:**For coughs, swelling, energy, heartburn, nausea, and itching.
* **PanAway:**For muscle or back pain.
* **Lime:**For energy, uplifting, and nausea.
* **Orange:**For uplifting, depression, energy, and nausea.
* **Grapefruit:**For energy, headaches, and nausea.
* **Peace & Calming:**For coughs, early labor, insomnia, and anxiety.
* **Myrrh:**For breech baby
* **Tangerine:**For circulation, swelling, itching, and stretch mark prevention.
* **Eucalyptus or RC:**For congestion and respiratory infection.
* **Roman Chamomile:**For headaches, coughing, respiratory, and aches.
* **Helichrysum:**For internal bleeding, circulation, and hemorrhoids.
* **Ylang ylang:**For depression and anxiety.
* **Geranium:**For external bleeding, swelling, hemorrhoids, and itching
* **Melaleuca:**For fungus, cuts/scrapers, antiseptic, and viruses.

Oils to avoid or use with caution in pregnancy:

**The oils to absolutely avoid during pregnancy are:**

Clary Sage, Jasmine, and Fennel

**Other oils that are generally listed to avoid or use with caution:**

Basil, Calamus, Cassia, Clary Sage, Cinnamon Bark, Fennel, Hyssop, Jasmine, Juniper, Myrrh\*, Nutmeg, Rosemary, Sage, Idaho tansy, Tarragon

**Some Common Blends containing the above singles:**

 Theives, DiGize\*, Exodus II, Immupower, Endoflex, Sclaressence, Purification, Melrose, Aroma Siez, Abundance, Into the Future, Lady Sclerol, Dragon Time, M-Grain, Energee, Clarity

\* These oils the Essential Oil Desk Reference are actually recommends during pregnancy.

Be Smart

Many of the cautions regarding essential oils stem from a lack of research on supplementation during pregnancy. Some of the concern with some of the oils is that they could impact blood flow or the hormones. Obviously pregnancy is a time to use care in all things, including using essential oils. Stick to oils that have stood the test of time and avoid using large quantities of cautionary essential oils. There have been no reported problems from overuse of Young Living oils, but it’s wise to be safe nonetheless. During the first trimester especially, I would avoid any of the cautionary oils.

In her book [Clinical Aromatherapy: Essential oils in Practice](http://amzn.to/QaWNgr), Jane Buckle, Ph.D, R.N., states:

“There are no records of abnormal fetuses or [miscarriages] due to the normal use of essential oils, either by inhalation or topical application. There are no records of a few drops of essential oils taken by mouth causing any problem either.”

Use common sense (and common usage) when pregnant. Many woman have specifically used some of the cautionary oils during their pregnancy with wonderful results. If you are unsure always check with your healthcare practitioner first.

Essential Oils and Nursing

I found it really interesting that the majority of essential oils that are put on the “caution” list in pregnancy are there because of their hormonal or blood influences, or because they could have uterine stimulating effects. None of these particular things cause a problem during nursing as hormonal regulation, circulation, and uterine contractions post delivery are all normal and necessary parts of postpartum.

Your main concern with nursing and essential oils will be regarding milk supply and quality. Two essential oils are known to have *potential* negative effects on milk supply: Peppermint and Clary sage. Peppermint is the more noticeable of these, but I have found that using it in normal to small doses that I have had no effect on my milk supply. This seems to be the case with many women. And some women have said that  they have seen a milk supply increase with Clary Sage!

You will also want to consider how essential oils *might* flavor your milk. Some oils have very strong flavors that could make the baby refuse to eat. This is generally true when ingesting oils. Again, something to think about.

One last consideration during nursing is possible detox effect. Some report that any sort of detox can result in toxins leaving via the breastmilk and into the baby. Keep in mind that your body is always in a constant state of cycling out toxins. So while I wouldn’t recommend doing any intense detox or cleanses, or starting on half a bottle of lemon oil, I personally don’t worry about continuing on with normal essential oil usage while nursing. (And my baby is still nursing, growing, and thriving… as am I!)

Bottom line: Be smart. Listen to your body (and your gut), and when in doubt do without.

To increase milk supply:

Fennel essential oil used topically over breast (not on nipples) or bottom of feet, and internally (in your water or under tongue) is reported to help substantially. If you don’t have Fennel, DiGize contains it as well. Possibly Geranium may help as well.

**References:**[Gentle Babies](http://amzn.to/1i2Ofm3) by Debra Raybern  
Pregnancy and Nursing with Young Living Essential Oils by Jolin Housewright

(Pssst... if you have questions about essential oils, don't hesitate to contact me. I'm very active in supporting my Young Living down-line and would love to help you in whatever way I can.)   
  
DISCLOSURE: The information on this site is not intended for the treatment or prevention of disease, nor as a substitute for medical treatment, nor as an alternative to medical advice. Use of recommendations is at the choice and risk of the reader.