

Lavender Lotions and Potions

by Sue Goetz, CPH

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The reputation of lavender for medicinal, healing and relaxing properties has been known for centuries. Its many attributes include; sedative, antiseptic, a headache analgesic and promotion of cell-renewal on damaged skin. The essential oil is used in most preparations, being the form of use with the easiest and most powerful way to capture the essence of lavender's healing qualities. Lavender's mild oil can usually be used straight on skin, rather than cut with another oil. As with any skin preparation use, test first for allergy. The rich purple flower buds are the fresh and dried from of the plant to use.

Lavender Healing Balm

3 tablespoons grated beeswax
4 tablespoons sweet almond oil
3 teaspoons grated cocoa butter
10 drops vitamin E oil
15 drops lavender essential oil

In a double boiler, slowly heat the beeswax, almond oil and cocoa butter until well combined. Remove from heat; allow to cool slightly then add the vitamin E and lavender, stir to mix well. Pour into jar and allow to cool down, the mix should harden upon cooling to a smooth balm texture. It will keep 6-12 months.

Excellent for soothing burns, chapped and scarred skin.

Lavender Bath Salt

1 cup sea salt
½ cup baking soda
½ cup lavender buds

Combine ingredients well and bruise buds to release the oils into the salt/soda mix. Place in muslin bags.

To use: place in warm bath and allow to dissolve.

Bathe for at least 15 minutes to capture to full benefits of the herb.

Lavender Massage Oil

Place 1 to 2 ounces of fresh Lavender buds in a pint glass jar. Cover with Sweet Almond or Jojoba oil. Make sure the lavender is completely covered by the oil.

Cover and let sit in a warm place for about two weeks.

Strain out the lavender buds; use fine weave cheesecloth to make sure no remnants of the herb are left behind. To enhance add a few drops of Lavender essential oil if you would like and mix well.

Lavender Spa Salt Glow

1 cup sea salt, fine grind
2 cups coconut oil
2 tablespoons fresh or dried lavender buds
10 drops lavender essential oil

Place all ingredients in a wide mouth jar and mix well.

To use: Dampen skin. Vigorously, but gently, massage the salt/oil mixture onto the skin with a massaging (not scrubbing) circular motion. Use caution around scratched or cut areas. Rinse off with warm water. Also use as a really nice massage for rough hands or tired feet to smooth and soften them.

Sunburn Skin Soother

In 4 ounces of purified water, simmer ½ cup fresh lavender buds. Allow to cool, strain and add 10 drops of lavender essential oil. Place in a sterilized glass mister bottle.

Shake well before use. Mist on sunburned or irritated skin to bring relief and promote healing. For added benefits on warm days, refrigerate and use the mist chilled.

Lavender Hot Pack

Combine 1 part dried lavender blossoms to 4 parts rice. Stitch a washcloth in half. Leaving one end open, fill with lavender/rice mix and stitch closed.

To use: Heat in microwave for approximately a minute or until warm to the touch but not burning to skin. Use as a hot pack on sore muscles and a headache soother across the back of the neck. The rice stays warm and the lavender will release its aromatic healing fragrances. Can be re-used repeatedly.

Lavender Tub Tea

Place dried or fresh lavender buds in large press and seal tea bags. Float in a warm tub of water as a bathing infusion. Mix with blends of other herbs to create custom mixes.

Lavender Scented Body Powder

1 cup cornstarch
½ teaspoon sweet almond oil or jojoba oil
2 to 3 drops of lavender essential oil

Place all ingredients in a small zip-close bag or jar and shake well until ingredients are combined.

To use: Pour into a jar with a shaker lid and sprinkle on dry skin. Soothing enough for babies

Cooling Herbal Foot Powder

1 tablespoon finely ground dried lavender buds
1 tsp. finely ground dried peppermint leaves
1/3 cup cornstarch

2 tablespoons baking soda
(optional) 1 or 2 drops of peppermint essential oil

Mix all of the dry ingredients well and then drop on the oil. Place in a zip-close bag or jar and shake well.

To use: Sprinkle the powder on clean, dry feet with a gentle massage motion

Also shake inside shoes to freshen them.

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Recipes compiled by Sue Goetz.

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Skin Care Preparation

Tips and Terms to Know:

- ~Choose plants that have the skin healing qualities that you want, do research in a reliable herb reference and Use caution for sensitive and allergic prone people.
- ~Use only materials that you've grown organically or from a source that does so, what is in the herb goes in your body
- ~Sterilize all bottles and jars before use.
- ~Use caution with essential oils. Many can be volatile and harmful if used improperly.
- ~Make only quantities that can be used in within a short time or one-time use. Fresh herbal concoctions do not have preservatives and little to no shelf life.

Recipe Measurement guidelines:

- 1 ounce equals
 - ½ cup powdered (like cinnamon)
 - ¾ cup fine dried (like lavender buds)
 - 1 cup bulky dried (calendula buds, lemon verbena)

Terms to know:

Emulsifier~ natural ingredient that allows oil to disperse in water

Astringent~ tighten or tingling to skin a natural protection from outside elements.

Humectants~ prevents water loss on skin

Emollient~ maintains a smooth soft pliable appearance on skin

Exfoliant~ abrasive, removes waste from skin

Infusion~ basically a tea. Pour boiling water over herbs, cover and let stand for up to 30 minutes to release the properties of the herb into the water. 1 ounce to 2 ½ cups of water.

Decoction~ for tougher herbs that use the bark, roots and seeds. Bring to a boil in water and simmer for 30 minutes. Simmer to reduce liquid by half. 1 ounce herb to 2 ½ cups of water.

Tinctures~ a method of putting herbs into another base ingredient. Common carriers are oil or alcohol. The ingredient will pick up the qualities of the herb. Pack a glass jar with herb, cover with oil, vinegar or alcohol. Seal and allow to steep for 2 weeks or more. Shake occasionally and repeat until the mixture smells strongly herbal.

Ingredients to know:

Essential oils~ an extraction of essential oils from plant tissues

Cocoa Butter: Emollient, hard wax-like at room temperature, but melts on skin. Slight chocolate fragrance.

Grapeseed Oil: Base oil. Emollient, non-allergenic. Good oil for massage and bathing. Light, non-greasy, non-fragrant

Jojoba Oil: Base oil. Good conditioner for skin, scalp and hair. Good all purpose oil with a good shelf life.

Lanolin, anhydrous: Holds water on the skin. It can absorb water and acts as an emulsifier in creams and lotions. Check for allergies.

Sweet Almond oil: Base Oil

Common Household Ingredients~

Baking Soda: balances skin PH, Acid Neutralizer, and good for itchy, irritated skin

Borax: emulsifier for lotions

Cornstarch: absorbent powder material

Cornmeal: exfoliates; for skin scrubs

Lemon Juice: Restores PH, mildly bleaching to skin

Sea Salt: natural water softener. Exfoliate to skin

Yogurt: plain, skin softener, mildly astringent

Oatmeal: whole, natural oats exfoliate to skin

Honey: raw organic, natural high potassium, healing. Emulsifier and humectants

Vinegar: dilute 1 cup to 8 cups of water, removes alkalinity, astringent

Vodka: plant derived alcohol base to preserve herbs. Use as a tincture carrier

Epsom Salt: draws toxins out of the skin

Beeswax: natural wax, emulsifier

Glycerin: vegetable based. Humectant, emollient

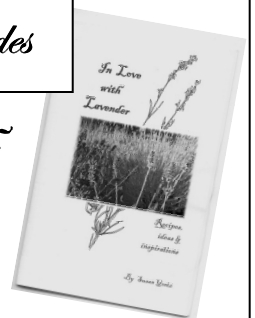
Some other herbs to add that blend well with Lavender

- Chamomile~gentle and soothing
- Rose Petals~soothing and fragrant
- Lemon Balm~stimulating and fragrant
- Lemon Verbena~refreshing
- Calendula Petals~ healing and gentle.

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by Sue Goetz



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