Optimal Health University™

Presented by Dr. Smith

The Healing Powers of Peppermint



Since long before the development of synthetic drugs, humanity has respected and taken advantage of the health-promoting properties of many plants. One of the most well-known of these is peppermint. This fragrant herb not only enhances candies, beverages and cosmetic products — it can soothe gastrointestinal distress, ease headaches, increase mental acumen and perhaps even protect the body during chemotherapy.

Peppermint essential oil, high in the powerful organic compound menthol, is the subject of ongoing research into safe, natural therapies for many health problems. Dr. Smith reviews some of the latest studies on this potent plant.

Headache Relief

Dr. Smith is excited about the pain-relieving potential of peppermint oil because it presents a viable yet safe alternative to pain medications. Many people turn to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) — such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen — for headache relief. These overused drugs are associated with stomach upset, gastrointestinal bleeding and ulcers.

Menthol, the component of peppermint oil that creates its familiar cooling sensation, can relieve pain when applied topically. The coolness occurs when menthol reacts with nerves to inhibit certain signals, simultaneously blocking the sensation of pain (*Neurosci Lett* 2002;322:145-8).

Menthol is common in creams and ointments for muscle pain, and it can also effectively relieve headaches. In one investigation, researchers treated 164 tension-type headaches in 41 patients with 1,000 milligrams of acetaminophen, a placebo pill, 10 percent topical preparation of peppermint oil, or a placebo oil solution. The topical solutions were applied to the temples and forehead three times, at 15-minute intervals.

The peppermint oil application significantly reduced pain intensity compared with the placebo, both immediately and up to an hour later. In fact, peppermint oil was just as effective as acetaminophen (*Nervenarzt* 1996;67: 672-81).

Complement natural remedies with chiropractic care
From Dr. Smith

Our chiropractic office offers patients drug-free solutions for recovering from illness and injury as well as maintaining optimal health. Natural preparations like peppermint oil work well alongside regular ***chiropractic adjustments*** to support the body's self-healing abilities.

Chiropractic adjustments are gentle maneuvers that correct misalignments in the spinal column, called ***vertebral subluxations***. These problem areas affect the nervous system and may lead to a variety of maladies from back pain to headaches to digestive disorders.

Many people suffering from digestive problems seek chiropractic care when conventional medicine fails them. Chiropractic also has a long history of relieving migraines and other types of headaches.

If you suffer from either of these concerns, call today to schedule a consultation with Dr. Smith who can perform a complete chiropractic evaluation, correct vertebral subluxations and advise you on peppermint oil use and other effective, drug-free approaches to health.

Dr. Smith, Smith Chiropractic Clinic
123 Third Avenue, City, State 12345 (123) 456-7890
www.YourWebsite.com - info@your-e-mail.com

Migraine sufferers may also find relief thanks to peppermint oil. A study following 35 patients over 118 migraine attacks revealed that a 10 percent solution of peppermint oil definitively outperformed a placebo in reducing and eliminating pain (*Int J Clin Pract* 2010;64:451-6).

Ease Gastrointestinal Problems

The latest investigations into the physiological properties of peppermint oil give credence to peppermint's historic reputation for relieving stomach pain. Specifically, much research focuses on irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), a common disorder marked by abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea and/or constipation.

The causes of IBS are varied and there is no cure. Fortunately, peppermint oil shows great promise for managing symptoms. A just-published Australian study reveals that components of peppermint oil activate an "anti-pain" channel in the nerve fibers of the colon, reducing discomfort in patients with IBS (*Pain* 2011;152: 1459-68).

These findings explain the success scientists have had in treating IBS with peppermint oil in several earlier studies. For example, in a 2007 trial, 57 IBS patients received peppermint oil capsules or placebo capsules twice daily for four weeks. (The capsules were coated in enteric, a barrier that dissolves only when the capsule reaches the small intestine.)

At the end of four weeks, 75 percent of the patients taking the peppermint oil reported that their symptoms had decreased by more than half (*Digest Liver Dis* 2007;39:530-6).

A review of similar studies found an average success rate of 59 percent for peppermint oil in significantly reducing IBS symptoms (*Phytomedicine* 2005;12:601-5).

Peppermint oil can also be effective against indigestion — a peppermint-caraway oil combination appears to relax the muscles at the bottom of the esophagus, helping equalize the pressure in the digestive tract and thus reduce abdominal bloating and pressure (*Am Fam Physician* 2007;75: 1027-30).



Other Uses for Peppermint

Peppermint has a long history as a folk remedy for nausea and vomiting. And studies back this use of peppermint oil as more effective than a placebo (*Int J Clin Pract* 2010;64:451).

Investigations of peppermint as used in aromatherapy show that its distinct fragrance can enhance cognitive abilities. When subjects were exposed to peppermint, ylang-ylang, or no aroma, the peppermint group showed more alertness and enhanced memory powers (*Int J Neurosci* 2008;118:59).

Finally, new information suggests that a solution of peppermint may protect the body during medical radiation treatments. In tests on mice, peppermint appears to have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and antimutagenic traits. It also seems to support DNA repair during therapeutic radiation (*J Can Res Ther* 2010;6:255-62).

Use Peppermint With Care

Though peppermint doesn't carry the risks of many modern drugs, the doctor advises patients to use it with caution. Some sensitive individuals may experience heartburn, nausea, vomiting, or bleeding when taking peppermint oil orally. In lab tests on rats, high dosages caused liver damage. Some people experience allergic contact dermatitis when they apply peppermint oil to their skin.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women should be aware that there is limited information about the safety of peppermint during pregnancy and lactation.

As with any nutritional supplement, talk to the doctor before beginning to take peppermint oil.

Optimal Health University™ is a professional service of ChiroHDTV.com®. The information in this newsletter is for general educational purposes and is not a substitute for advice, diagnosis or treatment from a qualified health care provider. Licensed subscribers may personalize this newsletter with their name, clinic name, address and logo, and may photocopy, print, email and post it on their own clinic website and social media. It may NOT be resold, shared with other practices, or reprinted in any other print or electronic publication, including third-party newsletters, newspapers, magazines or websites. All other uses require written approval from ChiroHDTV®. © 2017–2026 ChiroHDTV.com® · www.ChiroHDTV.com · 800-644-1055