

Essential oils at a glance – Frankincense

Dr Gillian Hale

Oil of the month – Frankincense

Name of oil:	Frankincense	Latin name:	<i>Boswellia carterii</i>
Description of plant:	A small tree/shrub native to north-east Africa and the Red Sea region. It produces an oleo gum resin, which is collected by making incisions into the bark. The substance is at first fluid and milky-white, solidifying into pea-sized amber 'tears'. Although the raw material is mainly produced in Somalia and Ethiopia, most of the oil is distilled in Europe	Nature of oil:	A colourless to pale yellow liquid. The fragrance is warm and balsamic with a hint of lemon and camphor. The aroma improves as the oil ages. The odour effect is warming, head clearing and calming. A popular oil for use during meditation
Method of oil extraction:	Steam distillation of the 'tears'	Blends well with:	Citrus oils, spice oils, basil, cedarwood, cypress, juniper berry, lavender, neroli, patchouli, rose, sandalwood and vetiver
Specific precautions required:	Avoid during the first trimester of pregnancy		
Aromatherapeutic properties:	Skin care (particularly ageing skin), acne, abscesses, scars, wounds, respiratory ailments such as asthma, bronchitis, coughs, catarrh, cystitis, painful menstruation, premenstrual tension, nervous tension and stress-related disorders		

Information from: Wildwood C. *Aromatherapy*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 1996.

For more information on essential oils and, specifically, their role in stress management, visit:

<http://www.aromatherapy-stress-relief.com/stressatwork.html>

Dr Gillian Hale is co-founder of [Aromatherapy-stress-relief.com](http://www.aromatherapy-stress-relief.com),

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