



AROMATHERAPY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA
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3rd September 2020

Health Products Association of South Africa
Email: hpasa@hpasa.co.za

To whom it may concern,

AROMATHERAPY ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils are well known in the health and wellness industry for their therapeutic effect and have, over recent times, become a natural home-remedy choice for many lay people. The therapeutic value of an essential oil is directly due to the perfectly balanced synergistic effect of the chemical constituents of each plant species. It must therefore be borne in mind that an essential oil is basically a chemical compound, and, like any such compound, should be used with respect and due caution.

The Aromatherapy Association of South Africa (AromaSA), which represents professional aromatherapy practitioners in South Africa, is concerned about essential oil recommendations that are potentially harmful to the public. Many 'wellness advocates' are advising unsafe use of essential oils, advocating daily ingestion of a single, or a combination, of essential oils. Such recommendation includes adding drops of essential oils into a glass of water in order to ingest same. A general principle of physics demonstrates that oil and water do not mix. Therefore, the ingestion of essential oils in this manner is likely to cause a disruption to the mucous membrane of the digestive tract and, dependent upon the essential oil, can result in erosion of this membrane resulting in ulceration.

Another recommended method of use is the topical application of neat, undiluted essential oil directly onto the skin. Again, dependent upon the essential oil, such application can result in an allergic reaction, sensitization, or cause blistering on the skin. We would therefore request that your staff be made aware of these dangerous methods of use of essential oils, in order that they may advise the public accordingly.

Registered Therapeutic Aromatherapists have undergone intensive training on the safe use of essential oils, based on the chemical composition of each oil, as well as botany, anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology. Such qualified practitioners are required by law, to register with the Allied Health Professions Council of South Africa (AHPCSA). Many aromatherapy practitioners are, in addition, members of AromaSA, which is an organization that is accredited by the AHPCSA as a CPD provider. The Association offers regular CPD activities to members in order that they are able to update with current trends and practice and maintain their annual licence to practice.

The Association welcomes enquiries regarding safe and appropriate essential oil usage from retailers and members of the public. Both AromaSA and the AHPCSA are able to direct members of the public to seek advice from a well trained and registered practitioner.

These bodies can be contacted at:

info@aromasa.org.za and www.aromasa.org.za
info@ahpcsa.co.za and Tel 012 349 2331.

In the interest of protection of the public, we thank you, in advance, for bringing our concerns to the notice of sales personnel.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zuleikha Ismail', written in a cursive style.

Zuleikha Ismail
National Chairperson: AromaSA