

## JUNIPER



**Plant/Part:** Bush/Berries (Source: Hungary, France, Italy, Yugoslavia and Canada)

**Latin Name:** Juniperus Communis Family : Cupressaceae

**Extraction:** Steam Distillation

**AROMA:** Clear, refreshing and slightly woody.

**PROPERTIES:** An oil with astringent, antiseptic, and detoxifying properties, Juniper is said to exert a cleansing effect on the mental and spiritual planes as well as on the physical. Has a cleansing effect on the body, used in many masculine perfumes, after shaves and colognes, and has a calming effect on the emotions. Reputed to strengthen the immune system. Well known for its detoxifying character, driving out toxins particularly when too much alcohol and rich food has been imbibed. Clears mucous from the intestines and

could be effective against piles. Generally beneficial to the digestive system, regulating appetite and may be helpful for obesity. A tonic to the liver, has been known to help cirrhosis.

**CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS:** Pinene, Myrcene, Borneol, Camphene, Thujene, Terpenic alcohol.

**PRECAUTIONS:** Flammable, prolonged use may overstimulate the kidneys. Warning: Juniper should not be used when pregnant.

**BLENDS:** Benzoin, Bergamot, Cypress, Frankincense, Geranium, Grapefruit, Orange, Lemongrass, Lime, Melissa, Rosemary, Sandalwood.

**Digestive:** stimulates the production of gastric juices (carminative), tones the stomach and digestive tract, improves appetite. used for colic, flatulence, dyspepsia.

**Genito-Urinary:** stimulates the flow of menstrual blood (emmenagogue) and urine (diuretic), used for scanty and irregular periods, cramps, cystitis, leucorrhoea, infections of the urinary tract.

**Circulatory:** stimulates circulation, cleanses the blood, used for varicose veins.

**Respiratory:** antiseptic, antispasmodic, used for convulsive coughs, colds, flu, bronchitis.

**Muscles/Joints:** mild analgesic, antispasmodic, rubefacient, used for gout, rheumatism, arthritis.

**Skin/Hair:** antiseptic, astringent, stimulates circulation and enlivens dull skin, regulates the oiliness of oily skin, encourages the elimination of cellular wastes, helps wounds and scars to heal; used for acne, dermatitis, psoriasis, eczema, wounds, and cellulite. in hair care, used for oily hair and hair loss.



**Emotions/Mind:** sedative, strengthening, tonic, used for anxiety, nervous tension, nervous exhaustion, and stress-related conditions. it is said to help those suffering from low self-esteem.

**Other:** causes sweating. aphrodisiac. caution: not to be used in pregnancy and by those suffering from kidney diseases

Juniper (*Juniperus Communis*) is a small tree of the cupressus family, with needle-like leaves, and berries which are at first blue, but turn black after two years, when they are considered ripe. The essential oil is obtained by steam distillation from these berries and its active principles include alphaspinene, cadinene, camphene, terpineol, borneol and camphor of juniper. The essential oil is very fluid, and may vary from colourless to yellowy or a pale green. The odour is reminiscent of turpentine or like very high quality artist's oil paints, but is surprisingly pleasing in dilution and especially in blends, to which it gives a characteristic smokey note. The taste is very bitter - not surprising when we consider that Juniper berries are an important ingredient of gin, which takes its name from the French name for the tree: Genevrier or Genievre.

Juniper has been known since antiquity as an antiseptic and diuretic, and these two properties are important ones in aromatherapy; but it is considered the most important action of Juniper to be detoxification. It is one of the most valuable oils in all situations where the body needs to throw off toxic wastes. Very often, the diuretic action of Juniper will be useful in such situations, too.

Juniper has a special affinity with the urino-genital tract, being tonic, purifying, antiseptic and stimulant. It is one of the best oils to choose for treating cystitis, pyelitis and urinary stones - though it is vital to ensure that a doctor or medically qualified homoeopath is consulted in any kidney infections. Cystitis often responds very well to aromatherapy treatments, but if there is blood or pus in the urine, or fever, do not delay in getting medical help. The same remarks apply to all cases of pyelitis, though you can very valuably continue with aromatic baths and massage at the same time.



Juniper will dramatically relieve retention of urine, which often occurs in men when the prostate is enlarged. Again, it is obviously important to ensure that treatment for the prostate condition is undertaken. Larger amounts of Juniper oil can actually cause retention of urine - another example of the principle discovered by Samuel Hahnemann, the 'father' of homoeopathy: that a symptom which can be produced by a large amount of a certain substance will be relieved by very small amounts of the same substance. While, in aromatherapy, we are not talking about the infinitely tiny quantities used in homoeopathy, the same principle applies in many instances.

Juniper is sometimes used to treat leucorrhoea, but again it must be emphasised that no discharge should be treated without investigating the cause. Scanty or missing periods can be treated with Juniper in baths or in a massage oil used over the abdomen. It is as effective as Sage,

with none of the side-effects associated with that oil.

It is a very good astringent, and is used (sometimes combined with Frankincense) in the external treatment of haemorrhoids (piles) either in the bath or as a local wash. The astringent, antiseptic and detoxifying properties all combine to make this a good treatment for acne.

Juniper is another of the many aromatics which has been used for hundreds, if not thousands, of years to protect from infection. It is known for this in lands as distant, geographically and culturally,

as France and Tibet, and sprigs of Juniper were burnt with Rosemary in French hospital wards until relatively recently for this purpose. The essential oil makes a very good household disinfectant - simply use a few drops in water for washing paintwork, floors, etc. - and can be used in sprays, on a light bulb or in one of the various types of essential oil burners, particularly during epidemics.

Juniper has been traditionally used in France as a tonic, especially in convalescence, and where a generally sluggish condition is due to poor elimination. It stimulates appetite -hence the use of gin and tonic as an aperitive. Poor elimination is one of the root causes of rheumatism, gout and arthritis, and Juniper should be considered as a means of improving elimination. It is a very helpful treatment for cellulitis, because here accumulated toxins are associated with fluid retention, so the detoxifying and diuretic actions of Juniper work hand in hand.

It can be a valuable oil in several skin conditions, such as eczema (particularly if it is weepy), dermatitis and possibly psoriasis. Juniper should be considered if any skin condition is very slow to heal, but you should bear in mind that, because it will stimulate the body into throwing off toxic residues, the skin may first appear to get much worse before it begins to improve. This is a classic example of a 'healing crisis' - a phenomenon which is common to many forms of natural medicine.

Juniper has several veterinary uses, including the treatment of canker in the ears of dogs and cats, mange in dogs, and the removal and prevention of fleas and tics.

The cleansing properties of Juniper work on the mental/ emotional plane as well as the physical. It is a psychically purifying oil, especially for individuals who are exposed to contact with a large number of people in the course of their work, or with few, but emotionally draining people. A bath containing a little Juniper oil is probably the most effective, treatment (it combines beautifully with Bergamot if you don't like the smell very much on its own) but in a crisis, putting one or two drops of Juniper on your hands and stroking them over your arms, or even just inhaling the oil, will help enormously. Juniper seems to clear 'waste' from the mind just as it does from the body.

