

# Manuka tree

## *Leptospermum scoparium*



Manuka tree, also called *Leptospermum scoparium*, belongs to the Myrtaceae family is native to New Zealand. The indigenous people (Maori) of New Zealand have been using Manuka oil, its bark, sap, teas and poultice made with its leaves for centuries in the treatment of many health conditions. Manuka is a small shrub which bears beautiful small, white flowers.

Manuka essential oil is extracted from the steam distillation of the leaves and twigs of Manuka Plant. The main components of this oil are caryophyllene, geraniol, pinene, humulene, linalol and leptospermone. There is another strange thing about this oil. The concentration of the components in this oil varies with the height on the tree where the leaves were extracted. The extracted oil is amber-colored and has pungent, spicy, camphoraceous and herbaceous smell, with a clear appearance. IT commonly blends with Clary Sage, Clove, Geranium, Lavandin, Lavender, Marjoram, Nutmeg, Oakmoss, Pine, Rosemary, Ylang-Ylang, Bay leaf, Bergamot, Black pepper, Cajuput, Cedarwood atlas, Cinnamon, Elemi, Ginger, Juniper, Peppermint, Rose, Sandalwood, Thyme, Vetiver, Basil, Chamomile, Cypress, Eucalyptus, Grapefruit, Lemon, Litsea cubeba, Orange, Patchouli, Petitgrain, Ravensara and Tea Tree essential oil.

Because of its higher anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-septic and anti-viral activity this oil is often used in modern skin care products, body oils, creams, antibacterial lotions, and soaps and shampoos. Manuka is one of the youngest entries in the book of aromatherapy, as its uses in aromatherapy were discovered quite recently. However, its medicinal uses have been known for a long time among the original inhabitants of New Zealand, the country to which this tree is native.

## **Origin of Manuka Essential Oil**

Manuka essential oil comes from the manuka tree (*Leptospermum scoparium*). The tree is considered of high value in its native country New Zealand. For generations, the Maoris, New Zealand's indigenous people, have used the tree for many purposes but mainly for herbal medicine. They would make a poultice out of the bark or sap of the tree to treat wounds, cuts and sores. They would make a decoction from the leaves to ease urinary problems. To cure the common colds and flu, steam from leaves boiled in water were inhaled, while the warm water is massaged on aching joints and muscles. They would even chew the bark to help them relax and induce sleep.

Today, the essential oil is widely used in herbal and traditional medicine in resolving health problems. It has gained much recognition in the herbal industry for its ability to heal almost everything, may it be internal or external health disorders. It is commonly found in skin and hair care products such as creams, lotions, soaps and shampoos. It is also frequently used as massage oil that eases muscle tension, soothe the skin and relax the mind.

## **Health Benefits of Manuka Essential Oil**

The health benefits of Manuka Essential Oil can be attributed to its properties as an anti-dandruff, antidote to insect bites and stings, antibacterial, anti-fungal, anti-inflammatory, anti-histaminic, anti-allergenic, cicatrisant, cytophylactic, deodorant and relaxant substance. Listed below are few of the popular medicinal

properties of the Manuka essential oil. Just have a look at the list given below instead.



### **1. Anti-dandruff**

Lack of moisture and oil in the scalp, degeneration of the scalp skin, and infections are the main cause behind itchy dandruff. Manuka oil can help you with all three of these causes. It help to maintain the moisture and oil balance in the scalp, it will stop degeneration of the scalp skin, and will also fight any kind of infection on the scalp. You can access these benefits by mixing it with the bathing water or massaged on the head when blended with some other oil.

### **2. Bite and Sting Antidote**

In case of an insect bite or a venomous sting, quickly apply this oil to the affected spot and you will find that it will reduce pain and swelling in the spot and the situation will not get any worse.

### **3. Antibacterial**

As we have mentioned before this oil prevents bacterial growth in the body, such as those giving rise to bacterial infections in the colon, urinary system, respiratory tracts and other vulnerable areas,

while also helping to control the bacterial attacks if they don't prevent the actual growth.

#### **4. Anti-fungal**

It is equally effective in eliminating fungal infections. A very common fungal infection is running ears. A drop or two and you will see the condition heal quickly, without spending excessive amounts of money.

#### **5. Athlete's foot and toenail fungus**

Research performed at the Cawthron Institute of New Zealand recommend using Manuka Oil to eliminate a variety of bacteria, yeasts and fungi which can cause Athlete's foot, Toenail Fungus as well as other foot infections. Thus, an excellent home remedy for foot infections is to apply Manuka oil directly onto the affected feet twice daily and cover them with fine cotton fabric or cotton socks. Also soaking the feet in a Manuka Oil soak may help inhibit the progression and development of any fungal infection. To make a Manuka Oil soak, simply add 10 drops of Manuka Oil in 2 quarts of lukewarm water and soak the infected feet for about 15 minutes. Repeat this four to five times a week.

#### **6. Allergies**

For anybody that suffers from allergic reaction to dust, pollen or pet hair, then manuka essential oil can be used to calm down and soothe those hyper reactions. Just apply manuka essential oil to any area of skin that reacts to an allergen or diffuse it around your home for allergy relief.

#### **7. Anti-inflammatory**

The Essential Oil of Manuka is anti-inflammatory in nature. It can proficiently handle inflammation of nearly any type; be it of nasal or respiratory tracts resulting from common colds or if it is of the digestive system caused by overeating of spicy food or even if it is of the circulatory system caused by any toxin (venom, narcotics etc.) getting into the blood stream. This essential oil heals

inflammation for any other reason as well, including fevers and infections.



## **8. Anti-histaminic**

Histamine worsens coughs and gives bad and exhausting coughs. People often try very strange combinations of medicines to control histamine. However, this oil quickly and easily reduces the production of histamine and thus gives relief from these continuous coughs in a safe way.

## **9. Anti-allergenic**

Allergic reactions are actually a hyper reactions of the body towards certain foreign elements, including pollens, dust, pets, and many others. Manuka oil calms down or sedates these hyper reactions, thus giving relief from allergy issues.

## **10. Back Ache and Rheumatic Conditions**

Manuka Oil is one of the best options for aching and stiff joints, strained and painful muscles, back aches, and arthritic pain.

Massaging lukewarm Manuka Oil onto the stiff, inflamed and painful muscles, joints or bones may help relieve the symptoms. Also taking a bath in Manuka Oil mixed water may soothe and alleviate the pain and stiffness. Simply add 10-15 drops of Manuka oil into the bath water and soak in it for 15-20 minutes three to four times a week.

## **11. Antispasmodic actions**

With regard to its antimicrobial ability, the study found that manuka essential oil displayed the strongest antifungal effect as well as having the best antioxidant activity. Manuka also showed excellent antispasmodic abilities by decreasing tension and contractions in the diaphragm.

Manuka essential oil also caused a reduction in the force of contractions in the uterus. The authors suggested that this meant caution should be exercised during childbirth as a reduction in labor contractions could put the mother and child at risk.

## **12. Skin Conditions**

As we have mentioned before that Manuka Oil have great antimicrobial activity against a wide range of micro-organisms. Thus, researchers believe that Manuka oil may be beneficial for a number of skin conditions such as acne, blemishes, pimples, skin rash and itchiness, small cuts, chafing, eczema, psoriasis, ring worm, cuts, abrasions, sunburn, insect bites, boils, and sores including bed sores and canker sores. One of the best remedy is to apply a small amount of mild Manuka oil directly onto the affected skin three to four times daily. For acne treatment, 1 or 2 drops of Manuka oil can be added to regular face-wash and moisturizer.

## **13. Beneficial for insect bites**

Manuka Oil also possesses insecticidal properties which may prevent the diffusion of toxins and reduce the infectious reactions of stings and insect bites. Its analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties may also soothe the irritation and inflammation caused by insect bites and other infections. For insect bites, just apply

Manuka Oil immediately onto the affected area. If you are using Manuka Essential Oil, dilute it in almond oil or water because undiluted essential oils are highly concentrated and can be harsh on the skin.

#### **14. Nasal Congestion and Respiratory Conditions**

Several research have concluded that inhaling the vapors from Manuka tea may help with respiratory conditions such as nasal congestion, asthma, cold and flu, and cough and bronchitis. Using a wide pot, simply add two tablespoons of Manuka leaves to one quart of boiling water and let it boil for 4-5 minutes. You can then turn off the stove, and then cover your head with a towel and inhale the steam for about 5 minutes. If you prefer to use Manuka oil instead of the leaves, simply add 1 tbs of Manuka oil into one quart of boiling water to achieve the same effect.



#### **15. Mucositis**

Manuka essential oil is quite effective in relieving mucositis, a painful inflammatory condition caused by radiation treatment.

Nineteen patients suffering from the condition were included in the experiment and were given either the essential oil mix or a placebo to gargle. The study found that those in the essential oil group experienced a reduced level of pain and a delayed onset of the

disease compared to the control group. They also found that those who gargled with the essential oil mouthwash lost significantly less weight than the other group.

## **16. Cytophylactic**

Manuka oil helps to promote new cell growth and thus promotes overall growth and the healing of wounds. It can also be given to patients that have suffered heavy wounds after an accident or surgery.

## **17. Body odor and Foot odor**

Manuka Oil is supposed to be beneficial for foot and body odor. For body odor, adding 3 to 4 drops of Manuka oil into your body wash or 10 drops into the bath water can decrease strong body odor. For foot odor, washing the feet with Manuka Oil soap and soaking them in about 2 quarts of lukewarm water mixed with 6-8 drops of Manuka Oil daily may reduce the foot odor. Also applying mild Manuka Oil thoroughly on the feet and in between the toes every day can eliminate the odor as well as any possible fungal infection which may be the cause of foot odor.

## **18. Relaxant**

Manuka oil gives a relaxed feeling by fighting depression, anxiety, anger, stress, nervous afflictions, and disturbances. This is also good for hypertensive people whose blood pressure shoots up at the least anxiety or tension, thus helping to protect the heart.

## **19. Urinary Tract Infections**

Manuka tea has been reported to be effective for bladder infection and Urinary Tract Infection. For UTI, drink Manuka tea 2 to 3 times daily. Manuka tea can be prepared by steeping Manuka leaves for 5-7 minutes into one cup of boiling water

## **20. Acne**

The root cause of acne is overproduction of sebum, it's important to get the bacteria that feast on the sebum in blocked pores under



control to reduce inflammation and improve the appearance and health of the skin. As the bacteria infect each hair follicle (pore) they produce enzymes which weaken the wall of the pore and cause the pore to burst and spread the bacteria to surrounding tissue. Killing the bacteria is an important part of any acne treatment regimen.

## **21. Scar Reduction**

The oil is a wonderful cicatrisant that promotes faster wound healing and reduces the appearance of scars. It is often used by women who underwent caesarian operation to prevent scarring.

## **22. Painkiller**

Massage the aching muscles and joints with manuka oil. This will help alleviate the pain. The oil works great for backache, and rheumatic conditions like painful and stiffened joints.

## **23. Soothe Sunburn**

As we all know that Manuka oil is anti-inflammatory and pain relieving which is a great combination for sore sunburnt skin. If skin is too sore to accept oil being smoothed over its surface, you can mix manuka oil with water and spray it onto the affected skin, or mix manuka with soothing aloe Vera gel. The gel is an effective remedy itself that cools and heals sunburn and the addition of manuka essential oil will provide even more relief and effective healing. Aloe Vera gel slides over severely sunburned skin without causing pain and it's even more soothing if you keep it in the fridge.

## **Dosage of Manuka Essential Oil**

No suitable dosage has been determined for the use of manuka essential oil due to lack of clinical data. Being an essential oil, it must be diluted in carrier oil before use to decrease its concentration. It blends well with the essential oils of lavender, lavender, nutmeg, rosemary, ylang-ylang, clove, clary sage, pine and geranium.

## **Traditional uses and benefits of Manuka Essential oil**

- Treat your joint and muscle pain by diluting manuka oil with suitable carrier oil and make nice, soothing massage oil.
- Apply manuka essential oil to any area of skin that reacts to an allergen or diffuse it around your home for allergy relief.
- Its leaves were boiled in water and the steam inhaled for head colds, blocked sinuses, hay fever, bronchitis and asthma.
- Its leaves and bark were boiled and the warm liquid was rubbed on stiff backs and rheumatic joints.
- Leaves and young branches were used in hot baths.
- Crushed leaves were applied as a poultice to treat skin diseases and were also used on wounds to speed healing and reduce the risk of infection.
- Young shoots of the Manuka tree were ingested for dysentery.
- Decoction of Manuka leaves was used to treat urinary infections and to reduce fever.
- Manuka has also been used to treat fungal infections like ringworm, and to treat sores and eczema.
- It can be used as an antidote for insect bites and poisonous stings.
- Its antifungal properties make it an excellent remedy for ear infections.
- Its anti-bacterial properties help ward off infections in the urinary system, respiratory tracts, and colon.
- It is effective in curing recurrent coughs caused by excess histamine.
- It is used in aromatherapy to beat body odor.
- It can also be effective in treating muscle and joint problems such as arthritis and back pain.
- Add a few drops in your homemade mouth wash, toothpaste or oil pulling to prevent many mouth infections.
- Diffuse a few drops in your working room or home to ward off colds and flu viruses in the cold season.
- Add a few drops of Manuka Essential Oil to your shampoo and conditioner to give your scalp a healthy boost.
- Manuka Essential Oil can help to reduce the swelling and pain, keeping the itching and scratching at bay.

- Massage diluted Manuka Essential Oil directly onto the feet to treat athlete's foot or toe fungus.
- Massage warmed manuka oil into the painful back to relieve the symptoms.
- Pour 4-5 drops of manuka oil into a cup of tepid water and then gargle with this water 2 to 3 times daily to treat sore throat.
- Mix this oil with the carrier oil to create a soothing balm.
- Add some drops of manuka oil to carrier oils such as coconut oil, olive oil, sunflower oil, etc. and then massaged this oil mixture into the lower abdomen to treat irritable bowel syndrome.
- Take a cotton bud and pour 1 drop of manuka oil on it. Now, apply it to warts 2 times daily.

### **Side Effects of Manuka Essential Oil**

Manuka essential oil is generally safe for most people, but it may cause allergic reactions to people who have sensitive skin. It is advised to conduct a skin patch test before use to check for any adverse reactions. There is not enough clinical data that shows the effect of the oil on the fetus or baby. Pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers are recommended to consult with their doctors before using the oil.

Now you know the many ways that manuka essential oil can help you get rid of skin problems. With regular use, you will be amazed at the remarkable transformation. However, beware of essential oils that may contain harmful chemical additives. Buy only 100% pure and natural manuka essential oil so that you can reap its many skin-enhancing rewards.