

# Peppermint Essential Oil Health and Beauty Benefits

Peppermint is an herb that is a crossbreed of watermint and spearmint. It has been used in therapeutic applications for hundreds of years. The primary chemical compound found in peppermint is *menthol*, a source of vitamins A, C, and B<sup>2</sup>. Peppermint also contains minerals like magnesium, calcium and iron. In oil form, peppermint features a distinct minty aroma and pale yellow color. Peppermint essential oil has numerous health benefits, including enhancing digestion, reducing pain and aiding in respiratory conditions.

A most common use of this essential oil is as a digestive aid. Ingesting a glass of water mixed with a few drops of peppermint essential oil can alleviate *dyspepsia* and colon spasms. Peppermint essential oil may also relieve heartburn and motion sickness. The compound *menthol* present in peppermint helps relax stomach muscles and can boost the production of bile, promoting the process of digestion and reducing the possibility of indigestion.

Ingesting peppermint essential oil in capsules appears to reduce the symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). These include diarrhea, bloating and gas. Some research studies indicate that peppermint essential oil can act as a natural *analgesic* much like acetaminophen, offering pain relief, especially for headaches. Massaging a couple of drops of this oil directly on one's forehead and temples can decrease headache pain.

In the case of upper respiratory ailments such as sinusitis, congestion and bronchitis, the *menthol* in peppermint essential oil can be beneficial in clearing the respiratory system. *Menthol* promotes the creation of a substance in the body known as *prostacyclin*. Prostacyclin inhibits blood clots and dilates blood vessels. *Menthol* is a very common ingredient in "over-the-counter" (OTC) cold medicines and vapor rubs. But these OTC medicines also contain artificial colors, flavors, preservatives, fillers and other unhealthy ingredients. So, rather than reaching for something mass-manufactured that contains all manner of chemicals during a time of illness when one's immune system is already compromised, an individual can simply just rub peppermint essential oil directly on their chest to obtain comparable relief from symptoms.

Peppermint essential oil may also act as an anti-cancer agent. Peppermint contains a chemical compound known as *perillyl alcohol* which is naturally found in certain plants. In animal research, *perillyl alcohol* has successfully deterred the development of certain cancers, and destroyed cancerous cells without affecting healthy cells. However, so far, the results of these studies have not been duplicated in human studies.

The content of chemical compounds such as *menthol*, *menthone* and *menthyl esters* in peppermint and peppermint essential oil give these broad applications in the manufacturing of soap, shampoo, cigarettes, toothpaste, chewing gum, tea and even ice cream.

## THE HISTORY OF PEPPERMINT ESSENTIAL OIL

The origin of the name of the peppermint herb is thought to come from Greek mythology. A story in which Hades, the God of the Underworld, fell deeply in love with an attractive young *Naiad* (water nymph) called Menthe. Out of jealousy, Hades' wife, Persephone transformed her into a small weedy plant in the hopes that she would be trod upon often. But Hades, out of pity, gave her a sweet, pleasant and everlasting scent, and thus *Mint* (peppermint, spearmint) was born.

The Ancient Egyptians as well as the Ancient Romans used the herb for medicinal applications. In fact, dried peppermint leaves were discovered in a pyramid in Egypt, which were carbon dated to 1,000 BC.

Although it is native to Europe, peppermint began to be grown in the U.S. in the late 1700s in Massachusetts, and it now grows freely and is cultivated in many parts of the country.

## HEALTH BENEFITS OF PEPPERMINT ESSENTIAL OIL

The health benefits of peppermint essential oil consist of its capacity to aid in indigestion, upper respiratory ailments, pain relief, headache, nausea, fever, and stomach and bowel spasms. These health advantages are discussed below in more detail:

### INDIGESTION

Peppermint essential oil is beneficial as an aid for digestion. The most common method of use is to put a few drops of this oil in a glass of water and drink the mixture right after a meal. It has *carminative* properties and so it works well at eliminating excess gas. Peppermint essential oil can be a great tonic for people with low appetite. It also helps alleviate motion sickness, nausea and upset stomach. There is some research that supports that the use of peppermint essential oil, combined with caraway essential oil may be used to treat heartburn.

Peppermint essential oil can help relax the inner wall muscles of the *gastrointestinal* (GI) tract, which is why it's often an ingredient in OTC medications. Multiple research studies have shown it to reduce the symptoms of IBS, a condition that affects large numbers of people each year, and is seen as having no specific illness diagnosis. While these clinical studies support these findings, further research is needed to understand the exact mechanism through which this cause-and-effect result occurs.

### NON-ULCER DYSPEPSIA

A mix of enteric-coated peppermint and caraway essential oils has been confirmed in a number of clinical trials to lessen the signs of non-ulcer dyspepsia (e.g., fullness, bloating, gastrointestinal cramps), however, the specific preparation used in these trials has not yet been made available in the U.S. A meta-analysis of countless trials of the preparation that contains this peppermint and caraway essential oil mix plus other herbal extracts (*Iberogast*) found it consistently managed functional *dyspepsia*.

This benefit could be the outcome of the preparation's relaxing effect on the lower esophageal sphincter together with concomitant equalization of pressure between stomach and esophagus, as well as reduced bloating and abdominal pressure. However, in theory this effect could also cause reflux symptoms in patients predisposed to gastroesophageal acid reflux. Since these trials included mixtures of peppermint essential oil with multiple herbs, no definitive conclusions regarding the specific effect of peppermint can be drawn.

### TREATMENT FOR IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME (IBS)

Peppermint essential oil taken orally in capsule form has been shown to be effective at naturally treating IBS. One research discovered a 50% decrease in IBS symptoms in 75% of test subjects.

### IMPROVE BLOATING AND INDIGESTION

Peppermint essential oil is a natural alternative to drugs like *Buscopan* to lessen spasms of the colon. It functions by relaxing the muscles of the intestines, which could also decrease bloating and gas. Try out peppermint tea or even including 1 drop of peppermint essential oil in your water before you eat.

### ANTISPASMODIC

Peppermint essential oil is useful in gastroscopy, colonoscopy and through a double-contrast barium enema, where it is used *intraluminally*. Further benefits of peppermint essential oil as an *antispasmodic* are now being explored.

## HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE HOME REMEDY

Peppermint essential oil can increase circulation and relax tense muscles. These symptoms can cause tension headaches and migraines. Which makes peppermint essential oil is a great home remedy. [Research from the Neurological Clinic](#) at the [University Hospital Schleswig-Holstein](#) (UKSH) at the [University of Kiel](#) campus in Germany, discovered that a mix of peppermint and eucalyptus essential oils had “significant analgesic effect with a decrease in sensitivity to headaches,” in 32 healthy subjects in a double-blind, placebo-controlled study.

According to a survey done in 2007, its anti-inflammatory properties were credited with reducing migraine symptoms in patients within 15 minutes of topical application. To quickly alleviate headache pain, apply peppermint essential oil in diluted form (in a carrier oil) directly on the forehead and temples.

## REDUCE NAUSEA

Breathing in the scent of peppermint essential oil can easily remove the effects of nausea and motion sickness. One medical study discovered that peppermint essential oil decreased chemotherapy induced nausea much better than traditional medical treatments. Simply drinking a glass of water mixed with a small amount of peppermint essential oil, or rubbing 1–2 drops behind your ears, or just diffusing it can help lessen nausea.

## COLIC TREATMENT ALTERNATIVE

Some scientific research has found that using peppermint essential oil is as effective as the drug *Simethione* for the treatment of infantile colic, without the negative side effects. **Caution:** *whenever using any essential oil on infants or children, never use in its pure form and always consult with their pediatrician first.*

## REDUCE HUNGER CRAVINGS

Breathing in peppermint essential oil can curb appetite and cravings, and make you feel satiated. If a diffuser is not available, try applying a couple drops on your temples or chest, or apply to wrists and take a couple of deep inhales.

## UPPER RESPIRATORY BENEFITS

*Menthol*, the most concentrated chemical compound found in peppermint essential oil, helps clear the respiratory tract. It is a common ingredient in OTC chest rubs. It is an effective expectorant that offers instantaneous, although temporary, relief of a variety of respiratory ailments. These include nasal congestion, sinusitis, asthma, bronchitis, cough and cold symptoms. In a single research study, using peppermint essential oil turned out to be a natural *antispasmodic*, expectorant and anti-inflammatory, and considerably soothed the coughing and trachea inflammation in laboratory rats. Combine it with coconut oil and eucalyptus essential oil to help make a homemade vapor rub.

## SINUS RELIEF

Breathing in diffused peppermint essential oil can quickly clear sinuses as well as provide relief for sore throats.

## ALLERGY RELIEF

Peppermint essential oil is effective at relaxing the muscles inside the nasal passages and may help clear out pollen throughout allergy season. Diffusing peppermint, eucalyptus and clove essential oils may also decrease adverse reactions.

## PAIN RELIEF

Peppermint essential oil may be used topically as an aid for pain relief. It is thought that the presence of *calcium antagonism* in peppermint essential oil assists in reducing pain from affected areas. It is known as a “refrigerant”, which just means that it has a natural cooling effect. In case of injury or to aid the healing process, use peppermint essential oil topically to decrease swelling, reduce pain and reduce inflammation.

## INFANT TEETHING PAIN RELIEF

Peppermint essential oil is a natural remedy to reduce the pain related to infant teething. Just mix peppermint essential oil with coconut oil at a 1:1 ratio and rub around the gum area.

## NEUROMUSCULAR PAIN RELIEF

Peppermint essential oil is an effective natural painkiller and muscle relaxant. It is particularly useful in soothing an aching back, sore muscles and a tension headache. A study found that peppermint and eucalyptus essential oils, menthol, capsaicin together with other herbal preparations, when used topically, might be beneficial for pain relief from Fibromyalgia and Myofascial Pain Syndrome.

## MINIMIZES STRESS & MENTAL FATIGUE

Like many other essential oils, peppermint has stress relief and mood enhancement capabilities, and clearing mental exhaustion with energizing properties. It’s also effective at calming anxiety and restlessness. Furthermore, it encourages mental activity and clarity, and boosts focus on cognitive tasks.

One group of researchers analyzed the strength of peppermint essential oil against stress and mental fatigue in 14 participants. Each participant was handed a personal inhaler with either rose water or a mix of essential oils (peppermint, helichrysum and basil). Then they were asked to make use of the inhaler 3 times a day, 5 days a week for three weeks.

## BOOST ENDURANCE

Peppermint essential oil may be used aromatically to improve alertness and endurance. This particular oil’s aroma might help restore those who have fainted. Simply hold the peppermint essential oil bottle under the nose.

## FEVER REDUCER

Peppermint essential oil’s cooling effects make it a natural fever reducer, especially in children. Just mix peppermint essential oil with coconut oil and rub it on the child’s neck and bottom of their feet to stabilize their temperature instead of aspirin or any other synthetic OTC drugs. **Caution:** *whenever using any essential oil on infants or children, never use in its pure form and always consult with their pediatrician first.*

## BOOST THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Peppermint essential oil can boost a healthy person’s immunity, as well as the immunity of a person who is frequently ill or whose immune system is compromised. Peppermint essential oil is known to have effective antiviral, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties. The oil contains chemical compounds such as *camphor*, *menthol* and *carvacrol*, all of which are resistant against harmful bacterial strains like E. coli, salmonella and staphylococcal.

## TREAT URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS

Peppermint essential oil features anti-bacterial properties, which is why it's been found to decrease the effects and frequency of urinary tract infections (UTI). Even though it is not typically used in this application, formal scientific research is ongoing to investigate the details of this specific attribute.

## TREAT HERPES INFECTIONS

Peppermint essential oil was found to have a therapeutic effect on drug-resistant herpes simplex virus when applied topically. Its *lipophilicity* allows it to permeate the skin, making it an exceptional treatment for recurrent herpes infections. Using peppermint essential oil on shingles rash can also enhance disease induced pain.

## BOOST BLOOD CIRCULATION

The stimulating effects of peppermint essential oil have been shown to boost blood flow. Research has shown that once the oil vapor touches the end of the olfactory nerve endings, there is an almost instantaneous boost in pulse rate and blood circulation. Increased blood circulation helps to oxygenate the body's organs while increasing metabolism. Increased oxygen to the brain leads to greater cognitive function as well as lower risk of degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and dementia. Furthermore, increased blood circulation can lower the risk of complications from frequent glucose level imbalances, in diabetic patients.

## ORAL HYGIENE

Peppermint essential oil is highly beneficial in oral hygiene because of its anti-bacterial properties, keeping gums and teeth healthy. Tried and true for well over 1,000 years peppermint has been utilized to naturally freshen breath. Not surprisingly, peppermint essential oil is a common ingredient in toothpaste, mouthwash and various other dental hygiene products. According to some research, peppermint essential oil performed better at decreasing cavities than the mouthwash chemicals *chlorhexidine*. Peppermint essential oil has been proven to reduce pain caused by toothaches.

## SKIN CARE

Adding a few drops of peppermint essential oil to your daily beauty regimen will enhance healthy skin. It contains *menthol* that can have a cooling sensation on the skin. It nourishes dull skin and clears the texture of oily skin.

## ACNE TREATMENT

Based on some medical research, one of the best peppermint essential oil uses is as an ingredient in natural treatments for facial acne due to its anti-microbial properties.

## SUNBURN RELIEF

Peppermint essential oil can moisturize sunburnt skin and relieve the pain and itch from sunburns. You can mix peppermint essential oil with some coconut oil and apply it directly to the affected area, or make a natural homemade sunburn spray to relieve pain and support healthy skin renewal.

## POISON IVY AND POISON OAK RELIEF

To relieve the itching caused by exposure to poison ivy or poison oak, you can either apply peppermint essential oil directly to your skin, or dilute it using a carrier oil, like coconut or sesame.

## HAIR CARE

Peppermint essential oil can be useful in hair care since it can treat dandruff and lice. This essential oil has antibacterial and stimulating effects, meaning that it can reduce scalp irritation and dry skin and

encourage hair growth. Peppermint essential oil can be found in hair products as well as treatments for hair loss and dandruff. Increasing blood flow to the scalp will promote healthy hair growth.

#### SUITS ALL HAIR AND SCALP TYPES

Peppermint essential oil has astringent properties that can help stabilize sebum secretion. Frequent use of this essential oil will prevent oily scalp and hair. While simultaneously balancing the pH, peppermint essential oil is effective at moisturizing a dry scalp and treating dandruff. It soothes the scalp and helps prevent itch.

#### MOISTURIZE HAIR

Peppermint essential oil has great moisturizing qualities, it can be combined with favorite carrier oil of choice like almond or olive and used as a hair mask. Wrap your hair in a shower cap and leave for at least 30 minutes. Alternatively, you can use peppermint essential oil in conjunction with other essential oils like jasmine or lavender to nourish and moisturize hair.

#### NAIL CARE

Peppermint essential oil has great anti-fungal properties. There is considerable research to support the topical application of peppermint essential oil as a treatment for fungal nail infections.

#### BALANCE HORMONES

Peppermint essential oil may be able to balance hormones and relieve symptoms of *polycystic ovarian syndrome* (PCOS).

#### TREAT INSOMNIA

Peppermint essential oil helps stimulate cold-sensitive receptors in the skin and mucosal tissues. When used this way, it may help with insomnia.

#### REDUCE SIDE EFFECTS OF CANCER RELATED TREATMENTS

Peppermint essential oil can be a natural alternative in the treatment of chemotherapy-induced nausea. It may also aid in resolving hot flashes in women undergoing treatment for breast cancer.

#### INHIBIT CANCER GROWTH

Clinical studies have shown that the compound *menthol* found in peppermint essential oil can inhibit prostate cancer growth.

#### AUTISM

Using peppermint essential oil might help children with autism better cope with their strong emotions as well as boost their positive feelings. Dilute a drop of peppermint essential oil in 1–2 Tbsp. of a mild carrier oil and massage on the child's chest. Avoid using the oil close to the eyes, mouth, nose and ears.

#### EXPOSURE TO GAMMA RADIATION

A research study published in the [International Journal of Radiation Research](#) in 2015, "[Evaluation of  \$\gamma\$ -irradiation treatment on the antibacterial activities of \*Mentha piperita\* L. essential oils in vitro and in vivo systems \(CLP inflammatory model\)](#)," discovered peppermint essential oil safeguards against radiation-induced DNA damage and sepsis.

## ORGANIC CLEANING AGENT

Lemon is a preferred cleaning agent among natural organic cleaners. However, peppermint essential oil is an equally effective cleaning agent, due to its anti-fungal and antibacterial properties. Combine it with either water, vinegar or both, and then use it to clean any part of your home.

## STOP UNPLEASANT ODORS

The kitchen and bathrooms can be sources of pretty pungent odors in every home. In the kitchen, you can eliminate smells coming from the garbage bin by placing a few drops of peppermint essential oil at the bottom of the bin. I like to wash my compost bin with castile soap scented with peppermint essential oil because the scent deters bugs.

## ORGANIC BUG, SPIDER AND PEST REPELLANT

Mosquitos aren't the only bugs that are put off by peppermint essential oil. Ants, spiders, cockroaches, ticks, mice, and lice are repelled by the powerful scent of peppermint. Read the therapeutic benefits of peppermint essential oil below for ideas on how to use this oil at home as a natural bug repellent.

## ORGANIC PESTICIDE

If you're an avid gardener, then you've probably encountered the problem of aphids and snails eating your plants. There are commercially available pesticide sprays to eliminate them, but they are filled with toxic chemicals which are not only harmful to people and pets, but also the environment. Instead, use peppermint essential oil. Add some drops to a spray bottle filled with water, shake well before each use and spray away!

## THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF PEPPERMINT ESSENTIAL OIL

1. Massage several drops directly on your abdomen, place a drop directly on your wrists, or even inhale to soothe motion sickness and nausea. And for an antispasmodic effect, inhale after vomiting to calm the inner lining muscles of the stomach.
2. Add 4–6 drops to your palm and massage round the abdomen in clockwise fashion to ease indigestion, flatulence and diarrhea.
3. Place 1–2 drops on your tongue and swallow to relieve indigestion and heartburn.
4. Drink a few drops of peppermint essential oil added to a glass of water in the morning to help with digestion throughout the day. In case your GI tract is overly sensitive to direct contact with the oil, you can purchase empty capsules to place the drops in, so the oil is not released until it reaches the stomach.
5. Inhaling peppermint essential oil is believed to help curb hunger pangs and sweet cravings by provoking a feeling of satiation. Or, ingest 2–4 drops in a capsule in between meals to help curb appetite.
6. In the case of a cold, relieve a stuffy nose or a persistent cough with a peppermint essential oil steam. Pour boiling water in a metal or glass bowl, and add a few drops of the oil (eucalyptus and rosemary make great combinations with peppermint). Drape a towel above your head and position the face 10–12 inches over the bowl and inhale the steam in slow even breaths.
7. To soothe mucous membranes inflamed by infection or allergies, add a couple drops of peppermint essential oil to a handkerchief or facial tissue and inhale. Or, add a few drops to hot water and breathe in the steam.
8. In case of a headache, mix a small amount of almond or any other carrier oil with a drop of peppermint essential oil, rub the mixture on your temples, forehead, sinuses (avoid contact with eyes), and on the back of the neck to relieve pain as well as pressure. When used topically, peppermint essential oil has a calming, cooling sensation.

9. For stress relief, the mixture of peppermint, lavender and geranium essential oils added to a warm bath will help reduce stiffness when absorbed into the skin. Or, diffuse a few drops of peppermint essential oil in a room to improve alertness and to relieve stress.
10. Create an invigorating bath with the addition of a few drops of peppermint essential oil to hot bath water.
11. Rubbing a tiny drop of oil underneath the nose will enhance alertness and concentration. The same effect can be achieved by diffusing peppermint essential oil in the room.
12. Inhale peppermint essential oil, or suck on peppermint candy right before a test to boost mental accuracy and memory.
13. Dabbing a drop or two to the back of the shoulders and neck occasionally can help keep levels of energy up throughout the day.
14. Inhaling before a workout to enhance mood and lower fatigue.
15. Add up to 4 drops to your favorite carrier oil and rub into sore muscles post-workout.
16. [Olba's Oil](#) is as a massage oil (a mix of essential oils that includes peppermint) that has the remarkable ability to encourage circulation, and promote blood flow to the surface of the skin by opening up the pores and a feeling of warmth to tired joints and muscles. This oil can also be used as a spot treatment for faster relief.
17. Mix peppermint essential oil with a carrier oil to relieve cramps.
18. Massage approximately 6 drops on any area of recent or long-term inflammation to lessen swelling.
19. Rub a few drops instantly to a bruised or injured area to decrease bruising and pain.
20. Rub peppermint essential oil on joints to relieve arthritis or tendonitis pain.
21. Add some peppermint essential oil to shampoo to help with dandruff.
22. For a natural ant deterrent inside the house, soak cotton balls with peppermint essential oil and leave at any of their pathways. Bugs find the scent overpowering and on the plus side, you'll have the fragrance of mint lingering in your house.
23. Mix with water in a spray bottle and spray on door jambs to repel bugs, spiders and pests.
24. Deodorize your rubbish bin by dropping a few drops on the bottom for a more pleasant minty fragrance.
25. For tired aching feet, add a few drops to a foot bath with Epsom salts for relief of sore, swollen and overworked feet.
26. Add a few drops of peppermint essential oil to your favorite lotion and rub on sore feet.
27. Can be used as a *cardiotonic*, add a few drops of peppermint essential oil to a bath or massage directly on the chest to ease cardiac arrhythmia.
28. Create an all-natural chest rub by melting equal amounts of Shea butter, coconut oil and beeswax, adding in a few drops of peppermint essential oil, allow to cool, then place in airtight container. To assist with chest congestion, rub a small amount of peppermint chest rub mixture directly on chest, inhale deeply.
29. Drink a tea made from hot water and a drop of peppermint essential oil to reduce fever. It functions by naturally inducing sweat.
30. Peppermint essential oil can help with hot flashes. Simply add a few drops into a spray bottle of cold water and spritz in your body when needed. Or drink a tea made from hot water and a drop of peppermint essential oil.
31. For a facial scrub, mix 3 teaspoons table salt with 2 teaspoons olive oil, add 4 drops of peppermint essential oil. To exfoliate, gently rub the mixture on your face and neck in circular motion.
32. Steam face with a mix of peppermint and lavender essential oils to cleanse skin and improve acne.

33. For a sunburn where skin is a little warm and itchy, use a mix of one drop of each lavender and peppermint essential oils to cool, soothe and stop skin itch.
34. Add a few drops of peppermint and lavender essential oils to a carrier oil to alleviate itchy bug bites.
35. To help relieve a rash, mix a few drops of peppermint essential oil with coconut oil and rub on the affected area.
36. Place 1–2 drops on your tongue, drink a sip of water, then swish the mixture as you would mouthwash to kill bacteria and freshen breath.
37. Add to foods as a flavoring or preservative.

## POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS

### HEARTBURN

Peppermint essential oil can have a numbing effect. When taken orally it may help aid digestion by relaxing the inner muscular wall of the stomach. Peppermint essential oil can also cause the *lower esophageal sphincter*—a ring muscle at the point where the esophagus connects to the stomach—to relax. Its job is to stop stomach contents from leaking into the esophagus and mouth. If the *lower esophageal sphincter* doesn't work properly, stomach acid can flow back up and irritate the esophagus, resulting in heartburn and indigestion. Frequent heartburn and indigestion caused by stomach acid in the esophagus can develop into gastroesophageal reflux disease, also referred to as GERD. People diagnosed with GERD shouldn't take peppermint essential oil as it can exacerbate their symptoms.

### SKIN REACTIONS

The U.S. [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH) advises that in rare cases in individuals with very sensitive skin, applying peppermint essential oil directly to one's skin could cause an allergic reaction and the affected area will develop a rash.

### DRUG INTERACTIONS

It is possible for peppermint essential oil to interact with some medications, so it is best to consult with your health care provider before using. Patients who receive an organ transplant generally take the medication *cyclosporine* to avoid their body rejecting the organ. Peppermint essential oil can interfere with the breakdown of *cyclosporine* and allows it to stay in the bloodstream for extended time periods.

According to the [University of Maryland Medical Center](#), one shouldn't take peppermint essential oil capsules simultaneously with antacid medications like *famotidine*, *ranitidine*, *esomeprazole* or *omeprazole*. Taking the two together will break down the peppermint capsule in the stomach, lessening the effects of the antacid.

Peppermint essential oil may also reduce blood glucose levels which can hinder the efficacy of diabetic medications (insulin).

While peppermint essential oil might lower blood pressure, taking it together with blood pressure medications is inadvisable as it can lead to blood pressure dropping too much or too quickly.

### ADVERSE EFFECTS IN CHILDREN

Despite the fact that peppermint essential oil may offer health benefits to adults, it may have adverse effects in children. The [American Academy of Family Physicians](#) (AAFP) advises that you should not give peppermint essential oil to infants or young children either internally or topically (on the face/neck). It may cause *bronchospasm*—a tightening of the muscles that line the airways (bronchi) in your lungs—or tongue spasms that may result in respiratory arrest.

## ADDITIONAL UNWANTED EFFECTS

Other side effects associated with peppermint essential oil, as reported by the NIH, include headache, dizziness, and slowed heartbeat and muscle tremors. Large dosages could potentially cause seizures and brain injury.

## PEPPERMINT SCIENTIFIC CLASSIFICATION

Rank	Scientific Name & Common Name
Scientific Name	<i>Mentha × piperita</i>
Kingdom	Plantae (Plants)
Subkingdom	Tracheobionta (Vascular plants)
Superdivision	Spermatophyta (Seed plants)
Division	Magnoliophyta (Flowering plants)
Class	Magnoliopsida (Dicotyledons)
Subclass	Asteridae
Order	Lamiales
Family	Lamiaceae/Labiatae (Mint family)
Genus	<i>Mentha</i> L. (Mint)
Species	<i>Mentha × piperita</i> L. (pro sp.) [ <i>aquatica × spicata</i> ] (Peppermint)
Synonyms	<p><i>Mentha napolitana</i> Ten.  <i>Mentha nigricans</i> Mill.  <i>Mentha odora</i> Salisb., nom. superfl.  <i>Mentha officinalis</i> Hull  <i>Mentha pimentum</i> Nees ex Bluff &amp; Fingerh.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> f. <i>puberula</i> Topitz  <i>Mentha piperita</i> f. <i>rotundella</i> Topitz  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>balsamea</i> (Willd.) Rouy  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>beckeri</i> Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>braousiana</i> (Pérard) Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>calophylla</i> Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>calvifolia</i> Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>crispula</i> (Wender.) Haw. ex Schult. &amp; Schult.f.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>durandoana</i> (Malinv. ex Batt.) Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>globosiceps</i> Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>hercynica</i> (Röhl.) Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>heuffelii</i> (Haw. ex Schult. &amp; Schult.f.) Topitz  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>hispidula</i> Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>hudsoniana</i> Haw. ex Schult. &amp; Schult.f.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>langii</i> W.D.J.Koch  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>officinalis</i> Sole  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>officinalis</i> W.D.J.Koch  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>ouweneelii</i> Lebeau &amp; Lambinon  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>pennsylvanica</i> Briq.  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>pimentum</i> (Nees ex Bluff &amp; Fingerh.) Nyman  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>piperoides</i> (Malinv.) Rouy  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>poicila</i> Topitz  <i>Mentha piperita</i> var. <i>subhirsuta</i> Benth.  <i>Mentha piperoides</i> Malinv.</p>

	<p>Mentha schultzii Boutigny ex F.W.Schultz Mentha suaveis var. schultzii (Boutigny ex F.W.Schultz) Briq. Mentha tenuis Frank ex Benth., nom. inval.</p>
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