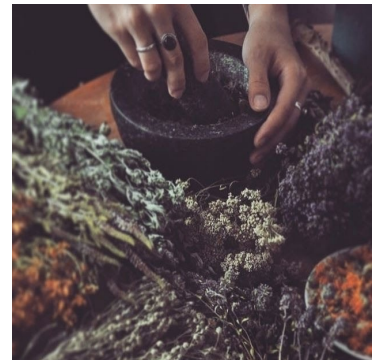




Penny Price  
Academy of Aromatherapy



**Welcome to...**

Penny Price Academy  
of Aromatherapy

**Saturday Club**

Essential oils for  
Terminal Illness



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February 2025

# Terminal Illness

A terminal illness is a health condition that cannot be cured and will likely end in death.

People with a terminal diagnosis will be offered **palliative care** which aims to make the patient feel supported and comfortable, rather than cure the illness. It will focus on

- Managing any symptoms
- Offering emotional, spiritual and practical support
- Helping to give a good quality of life.





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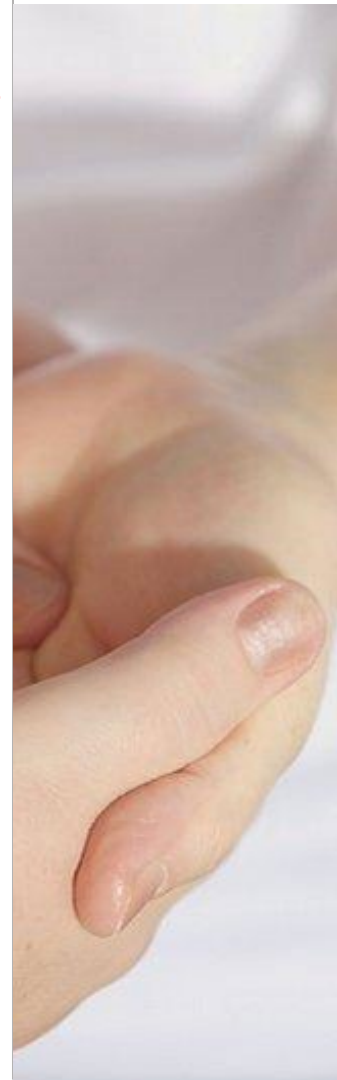
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# Can Aromatherapy help when someone has a terminal diagnosis?

**Trials and studies cite benefits that include:**

- A decrease in stress
- A lowering in levels of anxiety
- A reduction in depression
- A reduction in levels of pain and inflammation
- Increasing appetite
- A reduction in constipation
- An improvement in sleep patterns
- Helping with skin issues

**As a therapist or friend, you can offer support, a listening ear, comfort and care.**





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# Ways in which you can use aromatherapy

- A relaxing or pain-relieving massage.
- Diffusing essential oils into the air which can create a relaxing atmosphere or mask unpleasant smells.
- Making up roller balls or nasal inhalers with appropriate oils.
- Using warmed aromatic cloths to bathe the hands, arms, feet and legs.
- Creating a warm, safe place which perhaps reminds the patient of a happy place.





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## Study on massage in palliative care

This study assessed the effects of massage and aromatherapy massage on cancer patients in a palliative care setting. They studied 103 patients, who were randomly allocated to receive massage using a carrier oil or massage using a carrier oil plus Roman chamomile essential oil.

Massage with or without essential oils appeared to reduce levels of anxiety. The addition of an essential oil seems to enhance the effect of massage and to improve physical and psychological symptoms, as well as overall quality of life.

An evaluation of aromatherapy massage in palliative care. S Wilkinson 1, J Aldridge, I Salmon, E Cain, B Wilson. *Palliative Medicine*, 1999 Sep;13(5):409-17







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# Essential oils for pain, inflammation and oedema





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# Plai

(*Zingiber Cassumunar*)

Plai is one of the best essential oils for treating, aches, pains and inflammation as it has powerful analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties.

The oil has been tested for post-operative pain and inflammation, significantly reducing both. It is reported to ease pain for up to 16-20 hours.

When plai is applied topically it is reported to be more effective than diclofenac but with no side effects

In New Zealand a therapist who works with patients with terminal illnesses, helping them with issues such as pain relief, reported the effectiveness of Plai (even in low concentrations, in a carrier oil) for the relief of bone cancer in the spine.





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# Lavender

*(Lavandula angustifolia)*

Alpha-pinene and alpha-terpineol, and 1,8-cineole found in Lavender have demonstrated the ability to lower the production of pro-inflammatory compounds.

Researchers in a 2015 study found that lavender essential oil can be an effective pain reliever and anti-inflammatory. When diluted, lavender essential oil was applied topically during one test, it provided pain relief comparable to that of the prescription medication tramadol. This suggests that lavender could be used to help treat pain and any associated inflammation.

In addition, Lavender has similar actions to Diazepam as it promotes the release of GABA, a neurotransmitter which produces a calming effect and helps anxiety, stress and fear







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# Lavender

(*Lavandula angustifolia*)

Rhind also describes a study by Kim et al in 2007 where lavender was administered through an oxygen face mask post surgery. This reduced the application of analgesic opioids immediately after the operation.

Lavender's many other benefits include relaxation, help with depression, anxiety, and lack of sleep.





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# Marjoram

(*Origanum majorana*)

The outstanding property of marjoram oil is its warming quality, whether inhaled or applied to the skin. It improves circulation and warms up the body, it is also very comforting.

Rhind points out that many of its key major and minor constituents are known to have analgesic and anti-inflammatory actions and several studies support this.

Marjoram is helpful with all types of spasms and resultant problems. It efficiently relieves spasms in the respiratory system, intestines and muscular spasms in limbs. It would also be my number one choice for constipation.

Holmes suggests that this oil is a restorative of the central nervous system and therefore is indicated for fatigue, anxiety and agitation.





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# Comfrey Carrier Oil

Many of the beneficial properties of comfrey are attributed to its high content of allantoin, a substance that helps promote new skin cell growth, along with other substances that may work in reducing inflammation.

It has been used to help heal bruises and pulled muscles and ligaments.

Comfrey oil has traditionally been applied to fractured bones or torn ligaments in areas of the body where it is not possible to place a cast, such as a rib.

It is also said to help reconstruct torn muscles that might have been injured





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# A blend for pain

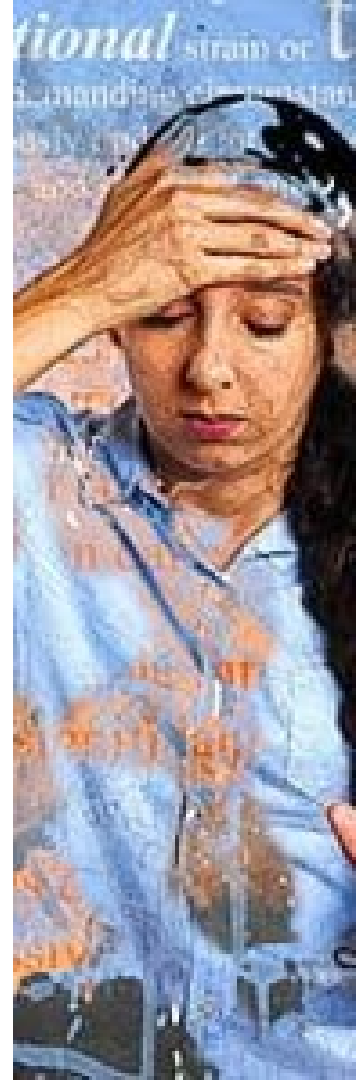
For pain you can add a total of three drops of the essential oils to 10 mls of **comfrey** carrier oil or any other carrier oil.

You could also make up a warm compress - apply the above blend to the painful area, wrap the area in cling film then cover with a hot pack (hot water bottle or hot pad).

**Plai** - pain relieving and anti-inflammatory

**Lavender** - anti-inflammatory, analgesic and calming

**Marjoram** - warming and relieves spasms





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# Spike Lavender

(*Lavandula Latifolia*)

Spike Lavender is high in camphor, linalool and 1,8 cineole which are analgesic, antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory and local anaesthetics.

It has been found to be useful in the treatment of nerve pain particularly peripheral neuropathy.

In common with *Lavandula officinalis* spike lavender is also excellent for calming anxiety and stress which is useful when someone is suffering from chronic pain. It is more of a stimulant than sedative so use *Lavandula officinalis* to help sleep.

Due to the camphor content it is safer not to use on babies and young children or pregnant women







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# Lemongrass

(*Cymbopogon citratus*)

Lemongrass is a relaxant to both smooth and striated muscles so can be used for a variety of conditions involving pain, spasm and inflammation.

It is high in citral and therefore is useful in the management of pain and also issues with the skin such as itching. A side effect of morphine can be intense itching.

It has also been found to be effective against neuropathic pain in conditions such as fibromyalgia, diabetes and migraines.

Holmes recommends it for reducing oedema as it has a 'stimulant-decongestant' effect. It is also a detoxicant which prevents oedema turning into an infection.





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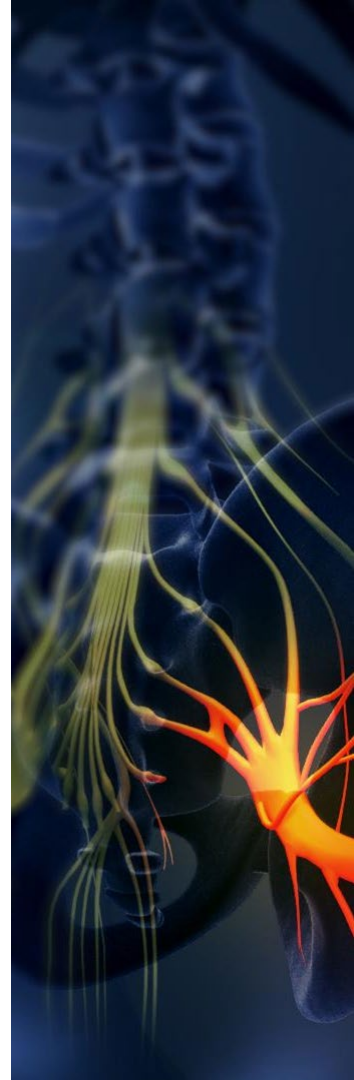
# A blend for nerve pain

For nerve pain you can add a total of three drops of the essential oils to 10 mls of **comfrey** or even **arnica** carrier oil.

A bath can also be very soothing as the hot water can relieve pain (to 10 mls of unperfumed foam bath add a total of 4-7 drops of essential oils).

**Spike Lavender**  
**Lemongrass**

To this blend you could also add geranium which is anti-inflammatory and good for nerve pain, helichrysum which is also good for peripheral nerve pain, peppermint, plai or copaiba balsam.





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# Juniperberry

*(Juniperus communis)*

Jennifer Peace Rhind notes that the dominant constituents of Juniperberry essential oil are noted for their analgesic and anti-inflammatory actions. Juniper has been found to actually block the detection of pain.

Juniper is cleansing and a diuretic making it a useful oil in the treatment of oedema. Its cleansing ability will prevent infections in areas that have become stagnant and acidic.

This oil is good for atonic conditions (low muscle tone sometimes leading to seizures). Holmes states that Juniper will treat pain and spasms caused by inertia in a body system and lack of blood flow.





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# A blend for oedema

Oedema is a condition where fluid builds up in the body, causing swelling in the affected tissues. It can be caused by sitting or lying in the same position for too long, certain medication, cancer, heart failure, or kidney failure.

Try making up your own bubble bath mix (to 10 mls of unperfumed foam bath add a total of 4-7 drops of essential oils). Or you can add a total of three - five drops of the essential oils to 10 mls of carrier oil and massage into the affected area.

**Juniperberry** - detoxicant and diuretic

**Lemongrass** - a stimulant and decongestant

To this blend I would either add cypress or a citrus oil like lemon or orange.





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# Essential oils for nausea and vomiting







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# Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea and vomiting are common symptoms in people living with a terminal illness.

There have been several studies into the effectiveness of **ginger** on nausea and their findings have suggested that inhaling the oil had a very powerful antiemetic effect. Try blending ginger with a citrus oil such as grapefruit.

**Peppermint and spearmint** essential oils are also indicated for nausea as both relieve spasm in the gut.

These oils can simply be placed in a nasal inhaler and used whenever needed.





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# Essential oils for irritated skin





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# Irritated skin

Itchy skin, also known as pruritus, can be a symptom of a terminal illness. It can be caused by a number of factors, including the illness itself, medications (particularly morphine), skin conditions, and other medical conditions.

**German Chamomile** has been found to be very soothing for inflamed and itchy skin.

**Copaiba Balsam** is used in the Royal Marsden Hospital to help patients with intense itching.

The menthol found in **peppermint** is very cooling to irritated skin.

**Lemongrass** is high in citral and therefore good for itchy skin

Place a total of 3 drops of essential oil into calendula, St John's Wort macerated oils or white lotion and apply to skin.



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# Essential oils for the emotions





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# Effects of a Terminal Diagnosis

A terminal diagnosis can trigger all types of emotions in individuals and their families:

Shock

Disbelief

Anger

Fear

Anxiety

Depression

Grief







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# What can we do to help

Be there

Listen

Be non-judgemental

Support

Give practical help

Give hugs if appropriate

Laugh with them on the good days





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# Neroli

*(Citrus aurantium var amara)*

Neroli is one of nature's most effective antidepressant essential oils, which together with its balancing and sedative properties makes it perfect for treating all types of negative emotional conditions.

Holmes says that this oil is highly effective for re-establishing emotional balance and stability.

'It provides relief and strength for long standing psychological tension, exhaustion and seemingly hopeless situations (Fischer-Rizzi)

Mojay states that Neroli installs both comfort and strength and assists in the release of repressed emotions.





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# Elemi

(*Canarium luzonicum*)

Elemi is used as an aid in mediation where it is strengthening, balancing and centring.

Felicity Warner states that this oil 'helps people let go of this life and surrender to the next.' Its arabic name translates as heaven and earth.

This oil will support anyone who has doubts and fears about the next stage.

Worwood says that Elemi can be used in emotional healing to encourage soothing, calm stillness, contentment, compassion and peace.





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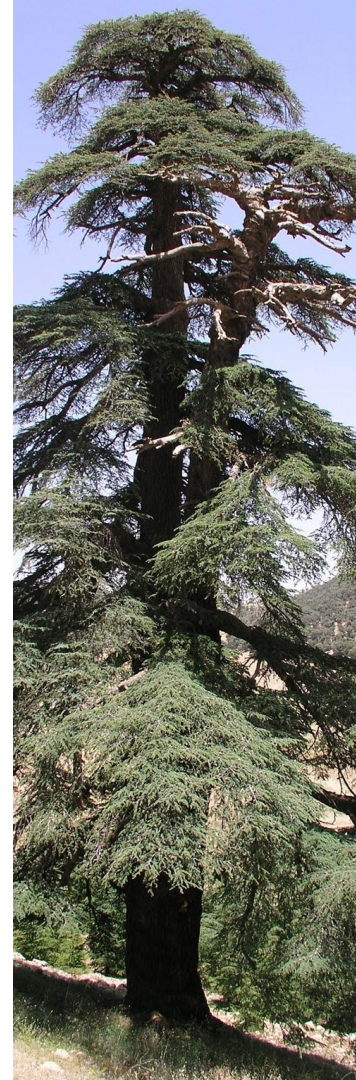
# Cedarwood Atlas

(*Cedrus atlantica*)

The word cedar comes from the semitic word for 'power' and interestingly Mojay suggests that "Cedarwood oil can give us immovable strength in times of crisis.'

Felicity Warner writes that cedarwood can help release negative thoughts and emotions and can foster optimism and hope.

Cedarwood is not only strengthening but also grounding and Warner suggests that it is helpful for 'facing up to and letting go of difficult situations.'





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# Frankincense

(*Boswellia carterii*)

Frankincense has been revered as a sacred oil by many civilisations for thousands of years. Many see it as a spiritual oil which connects us to a higher power.

Warner suggests that this oil can help clear away melancholy and is a marvellous aid when dealing with any type of spiritual crisis.

It is a valuable oil for its effect on the mind being both soothing and stimulating at once, it can help a depressed person to get moving again.

Mojay suggests it can "help cease mental chatter and still the mind ready for meditation or prayer."







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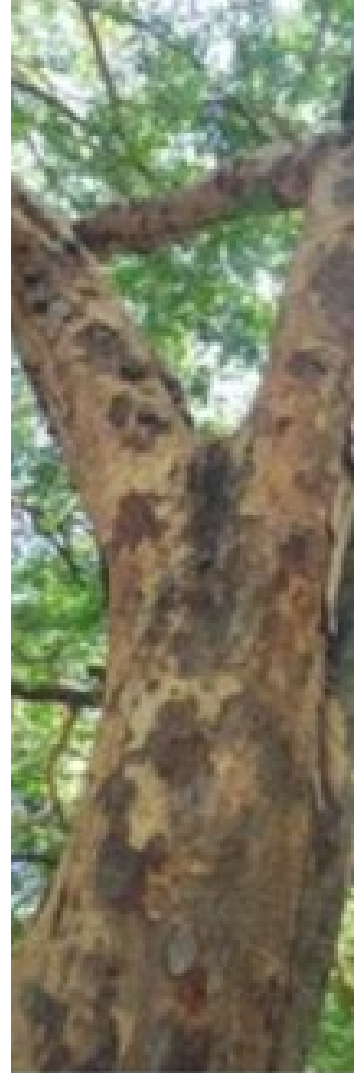
# Copaiba Balsam

(*Copaifera officinalis*)

Copaiba balsam contains large amounts of a natural compound called  $\beta$  - caryophyllene which is anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal, antispasmodic and an immunostimulant.

On his website Tisserand states that  $\beta$  - caryophyllene is a potent anti-inflammatory agent and can be very useful in healing and soothing irritated skin.

Copaiba Balsam is emotionally healing and supportive. It is said to help to quiet a restless mind and encourages a deep sense of tranquillity, calm and focus.





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# Copaiba Balsam

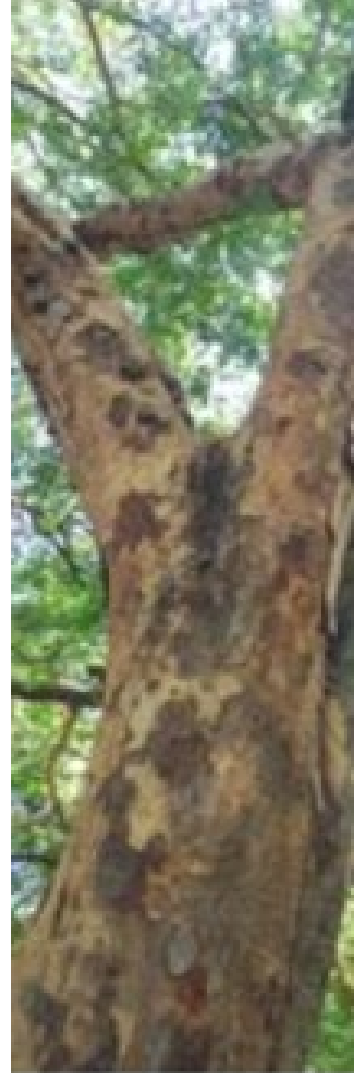
(*Copaifera officinalis*)

Copaiba is used at the Royal Marsden Hospital for a variety of conditions.

The  $\beta$  - caryophyllene found in copaiba is phenomenal for chest problems, dry coughs etc caused by radiotherapy.

$\beta$  - caryophyllene also binds with the cannabinoid receptors in the body which means it soothes physical discomfort and pain (particularly neurological pain).

Balsamic and healing, copaiba is also a very gentle oil and is unlikely to trigger chest or skin problems.





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# Recommended books

**Peter Holmes** - Aromatica: A Clinical Guide to Essential Oil Therapeutics. Principles and Profiles vols 1 and 2

**Jennifer Peace Rhind** - Aromatherapeutic Blending

**Salvatore Battaglia** - The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy

**Valerie Worwood** - The Fragrant Mind

**Felicity Warner** - Sacred Oils

**Gabriel Mojay** - Aromatherapy for Healing the Spirit: Restoring Emotional and Mental Balance with Essential Oils





**10% off for Saturday Clubbers!**

**Code:**

**SatClubFeb**

**Plai**

**Lavender**

**Marjoram**

**Spike Lavender**

**Lemongrass**

**Juniperberry**

**Neroli**

**Elemi**

**Cedarwood**

**Frankincense**

**Copaiba Balsam**

**Comfrey Carrier Oil**

**Thank you For Attending!**

