

# Essential Oil of the Month: Geranium

By Kathy Padecky, Aromatherapist, HHP, CBS

## Geranium

Geraniums adorn our window boxes, driveways and gardens. Geraniums provide a splash of vibrant colors and they are a hardy drought resistant favorite of many gardeners. The flowers come in a variety of brilliant colors such as lavender, white, pink and red. Geraniums are easily recognized by many non-gardeners. I have a patch of geraniums that are a large mound five feet tall. They are always in bloom and eyes naturally gravitate to observe their beauty.

In cold climates gardeners bring their potted geraniums indoors in the fall and let them hibernate through the winter. The dormant plants again come to life in the spring to again grace us with their color. Geraniums have a wide variety of scents. Geranium may be also called Rose geranium or Egyptian geranium.

Geraniums are originally native to southern Africa. The Reunion Islands off the coast of Madagascar, specialized in the cultivation of this plant. Many believe the finest quality geraniums come from this island in the southwestern Indian Ocean. Dutch soldiers transported geraniums to Europe in the 1600's.

In 1819, a French chemist, Recluz was the first person to distill the leaves of this aromatic plant. Geraniums are an important ingredient in perfumes. It is often substituted for rose oil in perfume blends. Colonial American women often lined baking pans with the Rose geranium flowers to impart a rose flavor to their cakes.

There are over 700 varieties of the geranium plant. The most widely cultivated geranium is the Pelargonium graveolens. Pelargonium comes from the Greek word palargos, or stork, since it resembles a stork's bill. The leaves, stalks and flowers are steamed distilled to produce a pale green essential oil which has a sweet aroma. Its aroma is rose-like and sometimes it has a minty scent.

Geranium is one of my favorite essential oils. You have heard me say this in previous newsletters about rose, frankincense, peppermint and lavender. In future newsletters I will write about my other favorite plants which



create amazing essential oils. I often use organic therapeutic grade geranium as an underarm deodorant. I receive many comments during the day about the lovely fragrance. It is a calming essential oil that helps me remain balanced in stressful environments. As with all therapeutic grade essential oils, they not only affect the body and spirit but especially the emotions.

Geranium has adaptogenic qualities which either calm or uplift an individual. In a previous newsletter I mentioned Dr. Jean Valnet who burned his arm and applied lavender to the burn. He recommended geranium for individuals with adrenal exhaustion. Geranium regulates the hormone system. It alleviates pre-menstrual tension and hot flashes. One of my client's husband told me that he "loved me" after giving his wife a recipe with geranium to rid her of premenstrual issues. I was touched by the phone call since they were vacationing in New Orleans at the time. I included this geranium recipe in this newsletter.

Geranium is truly an amazing essential oil. This essential oil stimulates adrenal cortex deficiency from tiredness or chronic stress. It is a mood elevator and an excellent anti-depressant. It can be found in many body and facial care products. It balances the function of oil glands therefore it is useful for dry and oily skin. It can be used as a facial toner or aftershave lotion.

Geranium is a tonic to the liver and kidneys. It assists the body to eliminate toxins. If anyone is going through a cleansing process, I highly recommend applying geranium to ease the clearing discomfort. Geranium is effective on the lymphatic system. It prevents fluid retention in the ankles therefore helps improve the flow of blood.

Geranium has been documented in relieving painful herpes and eczema. If you know anyone suffering from the painful affects of shingles please relay this information to them. I wish I knew of geranium when my mother suffered with shingles on her torso and on her scalp.

Geranium is considered by some to be an aphrodisiac. It helps promote harmony in a relationship. It balances the aggressive and passive tendencies in people. It can help stimulate intimate conversation and creativity. Geranium is a delightful essential oil and one of our personal favorites.

**Contraindications and Precautions:** Geranium is to be avoided in early pregnancy. For some people with sensitive skin, it may irritate the skin.

**Geranium Blends With:** Angelica, basil, bay, bergamot, carrot seed, cedarwood, citronella, clary sage, grapefruit, jasmine, lavender, lime, myrrh, neroli, orange, petitgrain, Roman chamomile, rose, rosemary, sandalwood.

### Essential Oil Recipes:

#### *Cold sores, herpes, shingles recipe*

Distilled water	3 oz.
Geranium	18 drops
Eucalyptus radiata	6 drops
Lavender	6 drops

Mix the oil and water in a dark glass mister bottle. Shake well and bathe or mist the area frequently.

#### *Anti-cellulite body oil*

Almond oil	1 oz.
Cypress	5 drops
Geranium	2 drops
Rosemary	5 drops

Blend the ingredients together and massage the area. Use three times a week. Apply the mixture in conjunction and after a dry skin brushing of the area.

#### *Invigorating massage blend*

Almond oil	1 oz.
Ginger	1 drop
Lemongrass	1 drop
Rosemary	1 drop
Geranium	2 drops
Lavender	2 drops

Pour the almond oil into a dark bottle. Add the essential oils and shake well. Massage areas in need of attention with your loving touch.

#### *Geranium yogurt facial*

Plain or goat yogurt	1 teaspoon
Geranium	1-2 drops

Mix the ingredients and apply to the face and neck. Avoid the eyes and eyelids. Let mixture set for 20 minutes. You will smell heavenly. Rinse your face. Your face and you will feel invigorated. You can mist your face with the Geranium facial toner recipe, listed below.

#### *De-stressing Geranium bath*

Epsom salt or Dead Sea salt	2 cups
Geranium	4 drops
Helichyrsum	1 drop

Add the Epsom salt or Dead Sea salt while the water is running. Once the bath is filled add the essential oils. Swish around to disperse the essential oils. Enjoy!

#### *PMS tension formula (also known as taming the dragon)*

Geranium	1 drop
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Place one drop of geranium in the palm of your hand. Rub your finger in the oil in a clockwise circular motion 3-4 times and set an intention for what you want the oil to do. Apply on the inside of your shin bone (about 4 closed fingers width). For those of you familiar with acupressure points, it will be Spleen 6 point. Gently massage the geranium into your skin. This area is usually tender on everyone. Apply the geranium to your shins twice a day, morning and evening, one week before the start of your menstrual period.

#### *Geranium Facial Toner*

Distilled water	4 oz.
Geranium	3 drops
Lavender	3 drops
Rose	3 drops
Roman chamomile	3 drops

Mix the ingredients into a dark glass mister bottle. Shake before spraying and cover your eyes when misting. Your skin will feel delicious.

**Disclaimer:** These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. Products and/or techniques mentioned are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information provided is for educational purposes only and is not intended as diagnosis, treatment, or prescription for any disease. The decision to use, or not use, any of this information is the sole responsibility of the reader.

**Helpful hint:** A potted geranium plant helps to repel insects and bugs in the house.

#### **Resources:**

- *Aroma Remedies* by Chrissy Wildwood
- *Australasian College of Herbal Studies: Lesson Manual*

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**About the Author:** Kathy Padecky is an Aromatherapist and a Holistic Health Practitioner (HHP). She began working in the holistic health field in 1981 and teaches various massage modalities, aromatherapy, and hydrotherapy at the International Professional School of Bodywork (IPSB). Ms. Padecky is also publisher of the "Sacred Scents" Newsletter.