

Menstrual Cramp Relief Essential Oil Blend

Ingredients

Container

5 ml Amber Bottle

Essential Oils

2 drops Geranium Essential Oil – *Pelargonium graveolens*

2 drops Clary Sage Essential Oil – *Salvia sclarea*

2 drops Marjoram Essential Oil – *Origanum majorana*

2 drops Fennel Seed Essential Oil – *Foeniculum vulgare*

1 drop Lavender Essential Oil – *Lavandula angustifolia*

Base Oils

35 drops Sweet Almond Oil – *Prunus amygdalis var. Dulcis*

35 drops Camellia oil – *Camellia japonica*

Abstract

A 38 year old female half marathon runner experienced menstrual cycle fluxuations such as increase in cramping, menses beginning sooner then expected, and increase blood flow. Client was given a five ml bottle with geranium, lavender, clary sage, marjoram, and fennel seed essential oils. Almond oil and camellia oil were added to dilute the essential oil mixture. The client noticed a decrease in tension and a reduction in menstrual cramps within three to five minutes of using the oil.

Case Description

The client (C.L.) is a 38 year old Caucasian woman who is running a $\frac{1}{2}$ marathon in three days and experiencing moderate menstrual cramps and heavy bleeding. She would like an oil that can help balance her menstrual cycle and reduce the

cramping experience.

C.L. has been in an intense eight week $\frac{1}{2}$ marathon training program – running three to four times a week with an average of five to eight miles per workout. She has noticed her menstrual cycle fluxuating during this training – menses begins sooner than normal, increase blood flow, and cramps more intense than usual. She also stopped taking birth control over a year ago.

C.L. stretches two times daily ten to twenty minutes per session, eats nutritious meals three times a day and drinks six to eight 16oz glasses of water daily. She is currently not on any medication.

Literature Review

Clary Sage *Salvia sclarea* essential oil is extracted from the plants flowers. The main production of *Salvia sclarea* comes from Russia with smaller quantities from Morocco, the south of France, England, and the United States.

Salvia sclarea's essential oil is produced from solvent extraction and steam distillation. Solvent extraction is more common than steam distillation; however, solvent extraction will have different constituents than steam distillation and will contain some solvent residue, therefore, steam distilled essential oil is preferred in therapeutic aromatherapy.

(Ou, Hsu, Lai, Lin, and Lin 2012) conducted a double-blind clinical trial using an essential oil blend on menstrual cramping outpatients diagnosed with dysmenorrhea to determine the analgesic ingredients of the essential oils. The blend they used was lavender *Lavandula officinalis*, clary sage *Salvia sclarea* and marjoram *Origanum majorana* in a 2:1:1 ration diluted in unscented cream at 3% concentration. The study results are positive with a conclusion that “this blended formula can serve as a reference for alternative and complementary medicine on primary dysmenorrhea” (p. 822).

Fennel Seed *Foeniculum vulgare* essential oil is distilled from the plant's seed.

Modaress and Asadipour (2006) conducted a two month study on 120 high school girls suffering from dysmenorrhea. Half of the girls received a fennel extract and the other half received mefenamic acid – a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug used to treat or prevent pain, inflammation, and dysmenorrhea. The study have a very positive result and concluded that “there was no significant difference between the 2 groups in the level of pain relief” (p. 427).

Geranium *Pelargonium graveolens* essential oil is distilled from the leaves and flowers of the plant.

Several authors have recommended geranium for it's anti-inflammatory and emmenagogue characteristics. Keville and Green (2009) recognize geranium's oil as medically beneficial for treating PMS, menstrual cycle irregularities, and fluid retention. Cooksley (2002) stated geranium's physical benefits as menopause, heavy menstruation, excess fluids and psycho-emotional benefits as PMS (p. 348).

Lavender *Lavendula angustifolia* essential oil is steam distilled from the plant's flower and flower stalks. Higher quality oil will use only the lavender flower.

(Han, Hur, Buckle, Choi, and Lee 2006) conducted a randomized placebo-controlled clinical trial on 67 female college students who experienced intense to sever menstrual cramps. The experimental group received the essential oil blend: two drops of lavender *Lavandula officinalis*, one drop of clary sage *Salvia sclarea*, and one drop of rose *Rosa centifolia* in a five cc of almond oil. The placebo group only received almond oil and both groups were instructed to massage the oil over their abdomen. The control group received no treatment.

“The trial results concluded that this blend is effective in decreasing the severity of menstrual cramps” (p. 541).

Marjoram *Origanum majorana* is grown in Egypt, Hungary, France, and Tunisia. The essential oil is steam distilled from fresh and dried leaves, stalks, and flowering heads (American College of Healthcare Sciences, 2012, p. 137).

Jean Valnet, MD (1990) recognizes marjoram's external use properties as analgesic and tonic (p. 157). Cooksley (2002) mentions the physical benefits as painful menstruations and psycho-emotional benefits as PMS (p. 356-357).

Treatment Protocol/Methods

C.L. was given the following essential oil blend in a 5 ml amber bottle: two drops of Geranium *Pelargonium graveolens*, one drop of Lavender *Lavendula angustifolia*, two drops of Clary Sage *Salvia sclarea*, two drops of Marjoram *Origanum majorana*, two drops of Fennel Seed *Foeniculum vulgare*. To make the essential oil concentration 11%, Almond Oil *Prunus amygdalis* var. *Dulcis* and Camellia Oil *Camellia japonica* were added as base oils.

C.L. was instructed to massage the oil blend into her abdominal area and over her ovaries and uterus. She was also given and read the following cautions/contraindications:

- This blend contains oils with toxic rating II. A skin patch test is required.
- Do not use during pregnancy.
- Do not use for more than three weeks.
- Contraindicated if there is a history of low blood pressure, estrogen-dependent cancer, endometriosis, and epilepsy.

Client Response

Client stated she enjoyed the aromatic quality of the oil during application. She noticed a decreased tension and reduction in menstrual cramps within 3-5 minutes of using the oil. She looks forward to using this oil before and during

her monthly cycle.

Evaluation

The overall effectiveness of the essential oil blend was positive. This case study cannot conclude which essential oil or that the oils themselves helped C.L. reduce her menstrual cramp pain. The massage applying the oil and the act of paying attention to her body may also have helped reduce the pain levels. However, the client is happy with her results and feels more empowered to reduce her menstrual pain levels.

References

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