

Prevention

6 Essential Oils That Will Soothe Your Sunburn

Plus, the best way you should use them to ease the pain fast.

By Christina Heiser | May 17, 2018

Warmer, sunnier weather is finally here, which means it's time to break out the sunscreen and slather it all over your body before heading outside for the day. But even the most diligent SPF users among us can miss a spot or forget to reapply every two hours—hello, sunburn!

Ultraviolet light from the sun damages the DNA of your skin cells, just as rust accumulates on metal, explains Will Richardson, MD, board-certified dermatologist in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. “Some of these cells get so damaged that they are appropriately called ‘sunburn cells,’” he says.

When a bad sunburn appears, you'll experience pain and inflammation—and the best way to manage that pain is to curb the inflammation ASAP, says Dr. Richardson.

If you're looking for a natural way to relieve your burn, turn your attention to essential oils. “They provide anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and anti-microbial treatment to the skin,” says **Ava Shamban**, MD, board-certified dermatologist in Beverly Hills. Only a few drops are necessary and must be mixed with another carrier oil (like coconut oil), aloe gel, or diluted in some way, she adds, since they are potent and can cause irritation when used alone.

Now, ready to soothe your skin? Here are the six best essential oils for your sunburn—and three DIY treatments you can make at home to ease the pain fast.

7. The Best Way to Use Essential Oils for Sunburn



Once you've chosen your essential oil, DIY a sunburn-soothing concoction. Here are three ideas from Dr. Shamban:

- Mix 1 to 3 drops essential oil with 1 teaspoon aloe gel and 1 cup water. Toss it into a spray bottle.
- Combine 1 to 2 drops essential oil into 2 tablespoons coconut oil to make an ointment. (We like Shea Moisture's 100% Extra Virgin Coconut Oil.)
- Add 2 to 3 drops essential oil and 2 teaspoons aloe into 1 cup of oatmeal, then throw it into a warm bath. "Less is more with essential oils," says Dr. Shamban.

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