



## Essential Volatile Oils in Combination

### A Therapeutic Evaluation

ON A RECENT visit to Switzerland my attention was called to a combination of essential volatile oils which has proved effective for palliative relief of a number of minor ailments. The active ingredients are menthol, peppermint oil, eucalyptus, cajuput, juniper, clove and wintergreen.\*

The essential oils, applied locally, produce deep counterirritation and exert a favorable influence on chronic inflammations, partly by their mild antiseptic and stimulating actions and partly by chemotactic attraction of leukocytes.<sup>1</sup> The therapeutic action of each of the seven ingredients will be considered separately.

#### Therapeutic Action

The use of seven essential oils together, instead of a single oil, provides an example of combination therapy. Synergism is utilized to secure the summation of the desirable effects of several drugs, while the side actions are not increased in proportion, or may even be neutralized.<sup>2</sup>

Menthol is used extensively as an ingredient in preparations for the nose and throat, in ointments to relieve local irritations or for counterirritant purposes, and for the relief of nasal congestion, headache, and neuralgia.<sup>3</sup>

Peppermint oil possesses the physiological actions and therapeutic effects of menthol.<sup>4</sup>

Eucalyptus is one of the strongest antiseptics in the volatile oil group. Its chief use is as an inhalant in respiratory diseases, coryza, whooping cough, and bronchitis.<sup>5</sup>

Cajuput has high germicidal activity against *Staphylococcus aureus* and has recently been shown to be effective in the local treatment of furunculosis.<sup>6</sup>

Juniper has been used for its stimulant effect in chronic urinary tract infections.<sup>7</sup>

Clove is one of the most stimulant of the aromatics. It acts more on the part to which it is immediately applied than upon the system at large.<sup>8</sup>

Wintergreen, containing methyl salicylate, has long been used for the treatment of various forms of rheumatism.<sup>9</sup>

Clinical studies in Switzerland indicate that the combination of seven essential oils in one medication (menthol, peppermint oil, eucalyptus, cajuput, juniper, clove, and wintergreen) produces a synergistic potentiation of therapeutic action; a reduction of undesirable irritating effects; and an overlapping of results in different time periods, with both prompt and prolonged response. Some of the ingredients have bacteriostatic properties.

\*Available as Olbas, produced by Olbas Co. in Basle, Switzerland, and distributed in the United States by

**PENN HERB CO. LTD.**

603 NORTH 2ND STREET,  
PHILA., PA. 19123

*Each drop means relief*

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FREDERICK DAMRAU, M.D.  
New York, N. Y.

### Clinical Trials

Clinical trials of the medication were conducted in Switzerland by Dr. H. Keller of Cademario, Dr. L. Rutimeyer of Basle, Dr. Paul Cattani of Zurich, and Dr. A. Amrein of Lucerne.

In these studies the medication was found to be of therapeutic value in the following conditions:

1. Catarrhal diseases of the respiratory tract, including the nose, throat and bronchial passages.
2. Headaches, neuralgia, sciatica, and minor forms of chronic rheumatism and arthritis.
3. As a carminative, for dyspepsia, flatulence, and nervous gastric disturbances.
4. As a massage for muscular aches and pains.
5. As an inhalant for colds, catarrh and nasal congestion.
6. As a sudorific for colds and influenza.

### Method of Use

As a counterirritant, apply a few drops to the affected area and massage the skin.

As an inhalant, put a few drops on a handkerchief and inhale.

As a carminative, 1-20 drops in lukewarm water three times daily, according to the severity of symptoms.

As a sudorific, 8 drops in hot tea.

### Summary

A combination of seven essential oils (menthol, peppermint oil, eucalyptus, cajuput, juniper, clove, and wintergreen) has been shown by clinical trials to relieve a number of minor ailments. Apparently there is a synergistic association of the ingredients.

As a counterirritant, the combination is useful for headaches, neuralgia, muscular aches and pains, and minor forms of arthritis and rheumatism. An embrocation of 5-10 cc. is recommended in influenza.

As an inhalant, it is useful for colds, influenza, nasal congestion, and catarrhal affections of the upper respiratory passages.

As a carminative, it is useful for dyspepsia, flatulence and nervous indigestion.

As a sudorific, it is recommended for use in hot tea for colds and influenza.

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