

Essential oils work by directly making contact with bacteria that reside on the mucous membranes of the nose and sinuses and by absorption through those mucous linings directly into the system. In this way the active principles of the plant bypass the gastrointestinal tract, and go directly into the bloodstream. Because it takes so much of a plant to make an essential oil, these oils are very strong in their actions. To get an idea of their strength: by taking a whole ounce of essential oil into the body (a bad idea, by the way), you would essentially be consuming 6 pounds (2¾ kg) of a plant in a form that would go to work in the body nearly instantly. That is why essential oils are greatly diluted, used in diffusers, or taken internally in minute doses (from 1 to 5 drops at a time). They can be extremely toxic when taken internally.

### *Common Applications*

One of the best ways to use essential oils is in a diffuser, which diffuses the essential oil into the room air of homes or offices so that the healing properties of the plant can be breathed in throughout the day. Diffusers come in many styles; the best are electric, with a small air compressor that breaks up the essential oil into tiny droplets and spreads them out into the air. Follow the instructions that come with the diffuser.

## Essential Oil Mix for Airborne Infections

- 1 ounce (30 ml) bergamot essential oil
- 1 ounce (30 ml) lavender essential oil
- 1 ounce (30 ml) eucalyptus essential oil
- 1 ounce (30 ml) distilled water

Combine all essential oils in a glass bottle. Add 10 to 12 drops of the essential oil blend to 1 ounce (30 ml) distilled water, and shake well.

**To Use:** Add oil blend to a diffuser.