



Colours and viscosity

The colours and viscosity of essential oils all vary so be wary if the oils you are offered all appear to be the same colour. Some oils, such as peppermint, are generally colourless water-like substances whilst others such as German Chamomile, will be thicker and vary in colour from a deep bluish-green to greenish-yellow.

Storage and Shelf Life

Being relatively volatile, essential oils will evaporate fairly quickly and should always be kept with the cap replaced tightly and stored in a cool dark place, away from direct sunlight and sources of heat. Where possible, check that essential oils have been stored in optimum conditions.

You should always endeavour to purchase your essential oils and aromatherapy products from an established, reputable supplier who is a member of a recognised trade association such as the ATC. Such companies are open to scrutiny by their peers and are aware of the optimum storage requirements needed to ensure the supply of quality products to the consumer.

Responsible Marketing

Although detailed information regarding the usage and dilution of essential oils may be explained fully in leaflets, the following information and warnings - some of which are a legal requirement - should be printed on the consumer product label: -

Instructions for use: e.g. add 5 drops of essential oil to 10 ml of carrier/6 drops in a bath etc.

Keep away from children and eyes. Do not take internally or apply undiluted to the skin. The quantity supplied e.g. 5 ml/10 ml. The company name and address or postcode. Batch code number. Botanical and common name of plants.

Where do I find quality essential oils and aromatherapy products?

From specialist suppliers such as ATC members, list available on the ATC web site or a hard copy from the ATC office. Buying from a specialist source is likely to ensure fresher products.

ATC members:

Are committed to:

Consumer safety and responsible marketing

Consistent high standards

Providing accurate up-to-date information

Are bound by ATC's voluntary code of practice for:

Safety, labelling and packaging

A random testing programme for essential oils

Scrutiny by their peers

They share:

Ethical concerns, e.g. animal testing and the conservation of medicinal plants and consequently are recognised by the regulatory authorities as responsible suppliers.

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