

# YOUR HEALING KNEADS

AUGUST 2018

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

## Enchanting Aromas

Angela England and Linda Bertaut

Nature heals in many ways. Most of us have felt the sense of renewal that comes from walking through a garden filled with fragrant flowers, or sitting under a massive tree, shaded from the burning rays of the sun. Indigenous peoples worldwide believe that each plant has a spirit we can communicate with, to ask for their help in healing.

You can tap into "plant spirit" by keeping aromatic plants around your home or wherever you spend time. Whether fresh or dried, herbs and plants can delight the senses and offer varied health benefits.

aids digestion, and improves appetite. Good for circulation to the surface of the skin. Induces perspiration. Good as an overall tonic.

Jasmine: Magical--Helps menopause symptoms. Antibacterial, antioxidant, and aphrodisiac. May lower bad cholesterol when used in teas.

Lavender: Healing--Calming and sedative. Relieves anxiety, depression, and exhaustion. Helps with digestion, headaches, and skin problems. Antiseptic, antibiotic, and a natural detoxifier.

Lemon Balm: Joyful--A member of the mint family, it was used for centuries to

*In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.*

-John Muir



Enhance any area with aromatic plants.

### Choosing Favorites

Here are some popular herbs, as well as their purported health benefits. When choosing your favorites, take a few minutes to breathe in the scents and try to identify what the aroma does for you. Caution: If you have plant allergies, some herbs may cause a reaction.

Chamomile: Euphoric--Soothes nerves,

treat melancholy. Soothes the nerves and helps with indigestion. May be used topically to reduce redness and swelling.

Peppermint: Uplifting--Calms the stomach and helps with digestion. Increases secretion of bile. Antifungal, highly nutritive, and can alleviate

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### Office Hours and Contact

**Knead For Healing Therapeutic Massage**  
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symptoms of allergies and asthma.

**Red Clover:** Cleansing--Blood purifier, sedative, and good for the nerves. May be used topically to help acne, psoriasis, and skin sores.

**Rose Hips:** Fortitude--High in vitamin C and bioflavonoids. Antioxidant. Also contains vitamins A and B, essential fatty acids, and lycopene.

**Rose Petals:** Beautiful--Antibacterial, antidepressant, and aphrodisiac. Rose water is beneficial to the skin.

**Rosemary:** Awakening--Highly nutritive, with vitamins A, C, and B complex. Boosts the immune system. Antifungal, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antiseptic.

**Sage:** Wisdom--Grounding. Antibacterial and astringent. Helps with digestion; good as a gargle for sore throats; relieves sore gums; helps reduce hot flashes. Can be used as a rinse to darken grey hair.

## Growing Your Own Herbs

In addition to having these wonderful herbs surround you, there can be an additional cost-saving benefit with growing them yourself. Fresh basil can cost more than \$4 for a small sprig, while a \$1 packet of seeds will provide fresh basil for the summer months, as well as enough basil to dry and use in the autumn and winter. Plus, you can find varieties of basil via seed you simply can't purchase otherwise (think lemon and even chocolate basil), creating a one-of-a-kind experience for pennies on the dollar.

Other herbs that grow easily from seed include chamomile, lemon balm, sage, and thyme. Some herbs, however, do not grow well from seeds, including lavender, lemon verbena, and mint. Lavender, though, is an economical plant in another way--it is a perennial plant that will come back year after year, such as rose, sage, and thyme. Here are some growing tips that are especially helpful if you're working with a small space:

### Choose containers carefully

Plants that enjoy quick-draining soil,

like lavender and chamomile, grow well in traditional containers. Plants like basil, roses, and strawberries that need more consistent watering will benefit from a self-watering container.

### Grow up!

Use plant stands, ladders, or shelves to elevate containers to different levels if you don't have a lot of space for your garden. Trellises or fences can be used to grow climbing plants vertically as well. Cucumbers and climbing roses grow vertically and can become useful and beautiful backdrops in otherwise wasted spaces.

### Do double duty

Most businesses or homes have landscaping already. It is easy to replace existing ornamental-only plants with those that will serve a double duty. Rosemary is a semi-evergreen shrub that can take the place of dwarf conifers in

some landscapes and climates. Alpine strawberry can replace other small, flowering plants like coreopsis, phlox, or vinca. Thyme and mint make great ground covers and can serve as a living mulch, while fragrant roses in place of other large, ornamental shrubs provide additional plant material for you to use.

*Angela England is the author of Backyard Farming on an Acre (More or Less) and founder of [www.untrainedhousewife.com](http://www.untrainedhousewife.com), she stays busy empowering others to live more intentionally.*

*Linda Bertaut is an author, esthetician, Reiki Master, and award-winning beauty expert. She founded Bertaut Beauty and Chakralicious to help professionals add wellness therapies to their menu of services.*



Explore the health benefits of herbs and plants.

# De-stressing the Commute

## Turning Road Rage into Road Sage

The average American commuter spends an hour a day driving to and from work. During this stressful, stop-and-go time, it's likely that blood pressure increases, adrenaline begins pumping, and muscles constrict and tighten. By the time you get home, you're wiped out and grumpy, and you have less to offer to those you come home to. If this sounds familiar, recognize that you have the power to reduce commuter stress. Here are a few tips to make your commuter time contribute to -- rather than detract from -- your life.

- Employ adjustable back cushions, pillows, wedges, and lumbar supports for a more comfortable commute. For more information, check out [www.relaxtheback.com](http://www.relaxtheback.com).

- To successfully sidestep the late-afternoon slump often caused by the stress hormone cortisol, keep some healthy snacks within arms reach. Celery, string cheese, water, and nuts -- especially almonds -- are good options

for the drive home.

- Borrow books-on-tape/CD from the library. Consider purely entertaining novels to ease the intensity of your drive.

- Learn a foreign language. Libraries also loan out these types of tapes and CD, too.

- Use your commute as an opportunity for spiritual or emotional growth. When stressing about a traffic jam, remind yourself that it's completely out of your control. Remember, attitude is everything.

- Practice breathing. When stress occurs, breathing becomes shallow and constricted. Taking full, deep breaths gives the body more oxygen, helping to regulate physical and mental function. Exhaling fully releases tension and built up toxins.

For more ideas on achieving calm in a busy world, consider reading *Serenity* to

Go: *Calming Techniques for Your Hectic Life* (New Harbinger Publications, 2001) by Mina Hamilton.



**Creativity goes a long way on your commute.**

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# Hot or Cold for Injuries?

## How to Know Which is Best for You

*Art Riggs*

We all know that treating an injury immediately after it happens can help minimize the pain and damage as well as facilitate recovery. But after rolling your ankle in a soccer game, or hurting your back when lifting your toddler, or tweaking your knee when stepping out of your car, what's best? Should you ice it to try to control inflammation, or would heat be better to promote circulation?

While it's difficult to establish a fail-safe rule for when to apply ice or heat, the general directive is to use ice for the first forty-eight to seventy-two hours after an acute injury and then switch to heat.

### It Depends

The reality is that many conditions are not necessarily the result of a specific injury. I call these conditions "recurrent acute" and find them by far the most

common: sciatica that occurs when you drive a car; a back that flares up every time you garden; or tennis elbow from intense computer work. In these cases, consistent and frequent applications of ice may prove very helpful over long periods of time, particularly immediately after experiencing the event that causes problems.

Conversely, back or other muscle spasms caused by overexertion rather than injury may benefit greatly from heat immediately upon the onset of symptoms or immediately after exercise in order to relax the muscles and increase circulation. Also, muscle belly pain not resulting from acute and serious trauma generally responds well to heat, which can break the spasms and release the strain. On the other hand, nerve and tendon pain--regardless of

the duration of symptoms, even if you've been experiencing them for months--benefit from ice.

### What Works for You

The bottom line: different individuals will constitutionally vary greatly in their reactions. Some people are more prone to the types of inflammation exacerbated by heat, while others find their bodies contracting and tightening at the mere mention of ice. Try each option and pay close attention to how your body and mind respond, and let your gut be your guide. Ultimately, what works best for you is, well, what's best for you.



*Some people  
dream of  
success, while  
other people get  
up every  
morning and  
make it happen.*

-Wayne Huizenga

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