

August 2016

Asset HealthTalk

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

WAKE UP With Essential Oil Shower Tablets

Starting your day with a shower can be an invigorating way to wake up. But if that isn't enough to get you up, try adding aromatherapy to your morning routine. You can create homemade shower tablets using natural ingredients like essential oils. Citrus scents, such as lemon, orange and grapefruit can help boost your body's production of

serotonin, a hormone that makes you feel happy. These shower tablets are perfect for energizing your morning while aiding in rejuvenation. When selecting a scent, consider the following essential oils you can add to your homemade shower tablets: cedarwood, rosemary, lemon, peppermint, lavender and eucalyptus.



Recipe for Essential Oil Shower Tablets

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups baking soda
- 2 tablespoons dried chamomile leaves or chamomile tea (optional)
- 1 tablespoon dried lavender buds (optional)
- ½ cup water, plus a little more if needed
- 10 to 20 drops of the essential oil(s) of your choice

*If you choose to use chamomile and lavender, use a spice grinder or mortar and pestle to finely grind the herbs. Then combine the herbs with the baking soda.

INSTRUCTIONS

Baking Method

1. Add all ingredients plus just enough water to make a paste that holds together without being soupy. Pack the paste into small baking molds, such as a mini-muffin tin.
2. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and bake for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove the molds from the oven and let them cool completely. The tablets will continue drying as they cool.
3. Sprinkle the shower tablets with drops of essential oils and allow them to soak in.

4. Transfer your freshly made tablets to a jar and store until ready to use. (Tip: If you are using silicone molds, the tablets will be easier to pop out.)

Non-Baking Method

Alternatively, combine the lavender, chamomile and baking soda. Stir in 10 to 20 drops each of the essential oils. Do not add water. Transfer the dry mix to an airtight jar. Sprinkle 1 to 2 tablespoons of the powder on the bottom of the shower. Turn on the water before stepping in. The mixture can also be added to bath water.

Three Simple & Healthy Frozen Summer TREATS



Every time you eat, it's an opportunity to refuel your body with the nutrients it craves and needs for everyday functioning. And just because you're eating healthy, doesn't mean you can't have a little fun with it, too. For instance, have you ever included a vegetable in your dessert? See if any of these healthy, frozen treats tickle your fancy!

AVOCADO-LIME POPS

Makes 10 frozen treats.

- 2 large avocados, peeled and diced
- 4 tablespoons of lime juice
- 1 teaspoon of lime zest
- 1 ½ cups of water

Blend all the ingredients in a blender and transfer to a frozen treat mold or container of choice to freeze for at least seven hours before serving.

BLUEBERRY-SPINACH FROZEN YOGURT POPS

Makes six frozen treats.

- 1 cup of plain yogurt
- ½ cup of fresh spinach
- ¾ cup of mixed berries, such as strawberries and blueberries
- 1 banana

Blend all the ingredients in a blender and transfer to a frozen treat mold or container of choice to freeze for two to three hours before serving.

STRAWBERRY-WATERMELON POPS

Makes 10 frozen treats.

- 3 large cups of cubed watermelon
- 1 large cup of fresh or frozen strawberries
- Zest of one lime

Blend all the ingredients in a blender until smooth and pour into a frozen treat mold or container of choice to freeze for at least three hours before serving.

"Avocado, Lime and Coconut Popsicles," portandfin.com, July 31, 2015.

"Three Hidden Veggie 'Go-Gurt' Recipes," makethebestofeverything.com, accessed on July 14, 2015.

"Strawberry-Watermelon Popsicles," onelovelylife.com, accessed on July 18, 2016.



Make the Great Outdoors Even Greater With *Mindfulness*

Spending time in nature provides countless physical and mental benefits. Here's a mindfulness exercise you can do during your next adventure in nature to tune into your environment:

- 1. Start by drawing in the fresh air with a deep breathing exercise.** Take slow deep breaths through our nose (your stomach should expand farther than your chest), then slowly exhale through your mouth releasing all the air you took in.
- 2. Take a moment to stand still before your adventure.** Close your eyes and focus on the subtle movements your body requires to maintain your balance. Let this represent the balance you're seeking by escaping to nature.
- 3. Begin walking, being mindful of your feet coming into contact with the ground and tuning into the sound of your strides – the rustling of leaves or gravel below.** Start synchronizing your breaths with your steps, inhaling as you step forward and exhaling when you take your next step with that same foot.
- 4. Be present to the presence of everything around you.** There's a lot of wildlife you're sharing this habitat with that you're unaware of.
- 5. Summon your senses; pay attention to the sights and sounds around you.** Focus on the details that can be easily missed.
- 6. Look up** at a tree and take in its grandeur, then zero in on a single leaf to examine its intricate features.
- 7. Check out a flower close up.** Appreciate its delicacies, beauty and vibrant colors.
- 8. Bend down to the ground; do you see any living creatures?** What's going on underfoot as you walk?
- 9. Take in textures – touch the earth or the bark of a tree.** This is another approach for comprehending the complex details of your surroundings.
- 10. Watch birds and butterflies fluttering by.** Revel in what's involved in them taking flight and observe their flight patterns. Let your cares float away like these creatures.
- 11. Look at the sky.** Are clouds forming interesting shapes or patterns? Is the sun shining through these formations or casting beautiful hues across the horizon?
- 12. Keep scanning your surroundings –** is there a mountain range, rock formation or forest? Enjoy the landscape from a distance for the feelings it elicits, then get closer to discover the details that contribute to its magnificence.

As with life, it's all about perspective and what you bring to it. A nature walk can be a simple excursion to fit in some exercise or a transformative experience that evokes awe.