Lavender

url: https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/lavender  
  
  
Lavender  
Common Names: lavender, English lavender, common lavender, French lavender  
  
Latin Names: Lavandula angustifolia  
  
Background  
Lavender is native to countries in the Mediterranean region, including France, Spain, and Italy.  
The name lavender comes from the Latin verb lavare, meaning to wash. In ancient Rome, lavender was used as a bath additive.  
Lavender is used to flavor foods and beverages and as a fragrance ingredient in soaps and cosmetics. It is promoted as a dietary supplement for anxiety, depression, digestive symptoms, and other conditions. It is also promoted for topical use (application to the skin) and use in aromatherapy.  
How Much Do We Know?  
Studies have been done on the use of lavender for a variety of conditions, but there hasn t been enough high-quality research to allow definite conclusions to be reached about its effectiveness.  
What Have We Learned?  
Studies of a lavender oil product that is taken orally (by mouth) have suggested it might be beneficial for anxiety, but because of limitations of the research, including the small size of the studies, no definite conclusions can be reached about its effectiveness.  
It s uncertain whether lavender oil used as aromatherapy is helpful for anxiety or other conditions.  
What Do We Know About Safety?  
Consumption of lavender in the amounts typically used in foods is likely to be safe. Short-term oral use in the amounts tested in studies of lavender for anxiety or other conditions may also be safe.  
The topical use of products containing lavender may cause allergic skin reactions in some people.  
A few cases of swelling of breast tissue have been reported in children who used topical products containing lavender. However, it s unclear whether the lavender was responsible for the breast swelling, a condition that can have many causes.  
Little is known about whether it s safe to use lavender during pregnancy or while breastfeeding.  
Keep in Mind  
Take charge of your health talk with your health care providers about any complementary health approaches you use. Together, you can make shared, well-informed decisions.  
For More Information  
Using Dietary Supplements Wisely  
Know the Science: How Medications and Supplements Can Interact  
Know the Science: How To Make Sense of a Scientific Journal Article  
NCCIH Clearinghouse  
The NCCIH Clearinghouse provides information on NCCIH and complementary and integrative health approaches, including publications and searches of Federal databases of scientific and medical literature. The Clearinghouse does not provide medical advice, treatment recommendations, or referrals to practitioners.  
  
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Website: https://ods.od.nih.gov  
  
Email: ods@nih.gov(link sends email)  
  
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