

## CHAPTER 10 AROMATHERAPY

### Knowledge review answers

1. Main methods are:

- Steam Distillation: Plant material which can be fresh or dried, is placed on a grid inside a distillation vat. Steam is then passed through the vat under pressure. The heat in the steam causes the cell walls in the plant material to break down releasing the essential oils as a vapour. This vapour is passed through cooling tanks and as the vapour cools it condenses and the essential oils float to the surface, as they are lighter than water. The oils are then separated from the water. Examples are
- Expression: The peel is separated from the fruit and squeezed under pressure to press out or '*express*' the essential oils. Examples are citrus oils.
- Solvent Extraction: The flower petals are placed in a sealed container on perforated racks. A liquid solvent (usually petroleum ether, hexane, liquid butane or liquid carbon dioxide) flows over the petals which must be kept continually immersed in the solvent. The solvent will dissolve the essential oils from the petals. The solvent is then distilled off and reused. A '*concrete*' is left which is a semi-solid liquid. This is shaken with alcohol, which is also distilled off. The coloured liquid that remains is called an *absolute*. It is not known as an essential oil because of the solvents used during the process. The essential oil of fine flowers such as rose, jasmine, are obtained by solvent extraction.

- When a resin is used, (the solid or semi-solid substance obtained from bark when cut) a ***resinoid*** is created.
  - **maceration**:- where by the plant material is placed in a vegetable base oil.
  - **enfleurage**:- with this method flower petals are placed on purified animal fats.
  - The material, in both methods is placed in trays with the oil or fat for several days. The material is changed regularly until the fat is saturated with plant extracts. These methods are still used for about 10% of today's extractions.
2. Mineral oils form an occlusive layer on the surface of the skin, i.e. they sit on the surface. This acts as a barrier and limits the therapeutic effect as the essential oils cannot effectively penetrate the through.
3. When purchasing essential oils consider the following points:
- Is it in a sealed bottle?
  - Is the bottle made of smoked glass or sold in a special prepared container. (Never buy or store in plastic containers).
  - Like a perfume try before you buy. Smell using a testing paper, (never on the skin). Never smell more than six oils at a time. Three is best to avoid a confused nose!
  - When testing an odour do so in an odour free area, clear the nose before smelling, waft below the nose and inhale, but not too deeply. Once you are sure of a smell clear your nose. (Breathe to clear the odour).

- Buy in smaller quantities unless you are sure you will use the oil regularly.

Oils deteriorate once opened (although special seals reduce this). Most oils have a shelf life of 2 years with the exception of citrus oils, which have a shelf life of between 6 to 12 months.

- A 10 ml bottle is equivalent to 200 drops of essential oil.
- Be familiar with botanical names so that you know the source of the product you are buying.

4. Storage:

- Store in dark bottles.
- bottles should have an inserted stopper (or a separate glass pipette rod (not rubber)).
- ensure the lids are tight and secure.
- store in a cool dark place away from light, heat, moisture and air.
- due to the implications of COSHH act oils should be stored away when not in use, in a secure place (see chapter 1 health and safety)
- label all bottles clearly if mixed or blended.
- keep out of the reach of children (and animals).

5.

6. The carrier makes application of the essential oils easier by:

- diluting the essential oils so that are more evenly distributed and therefore avoiding skin sensitivity.
- giving a medium to work with on the skin.

7. Creams, hydrolats, most skin care preparations can be a base for essentials oils.

8. 2.5%

9. contra actions:

- skin reaction – allergy to an oil remove oil with luke warm water or ask client to have a luke warm shower.
- fainting – blood pressure may have dropped, not eating before a treatment first aid (raise legs above heart if possible).
- nausea, sickness healing crises, adverse reaction to an aroma, treatment after a recent or big meal – big bowl!
- headache/migraine healing crises, toxic build up within the system drink lots of water to flush through the toxins and eliminate them through the kidneys.