

NAHA



The National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy

Essential Oils & CAM:

- Functional Categories of Disease and Essential Oils
 - Essential Oil Therapy in Infection Control
 - Anti-Microbial Effects of Essential Oils
 - Aromatherapy and the SARS Virus
 - Saro Essential Oil Profile

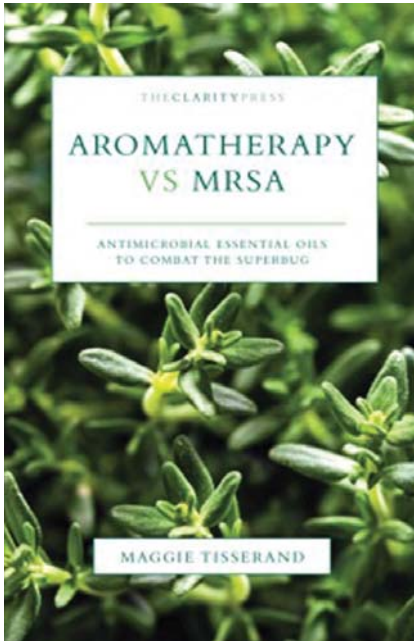


NAHA Book Review: Aromatherapy VS MRSA

Reviewed by: Shellie Enteen, RA, BA, LMT

Aromatherapy VS MRSA

By Maggie Tisserand



English Aromatherapist Maggie Tisserand has certainly come a long way from her wonderful Aromatherapy for Women (1985, Healing Arts Press). One the first books in my aromatic library, it focused on health and beauty for a youthful female audience. I admit I was surprised when told that she had recently produced a

serious study of, of all things, the antibiotic resistant strains of the *staphylococcus aureus* bacteria, labeled MRSA. Maggie confides in her Introduction that she had an interest in this growing problem because her

grandmother had passed away when Maggie was just a toddler from a case of post surgical septicemia. But it was not until she contacted commercial microbiology labs with the idea of studying the effects of essential oils on antibiotic resistant bacteria and became involved with a MRSA support group that her research and subsequent book evolved.

I'll admit, this was not an easy book for me to read. This was only because of the scholarly depth of information presented on a problem that is much more common than we may like to think. Still, in these pages I discovered very useful advice about transmission and how to prevent infection or cope with a diagnosis. But, most importantly as aromatherapists, this book demonstrates why it has clearly not been as important to have a proper arsenal of essential oils on hand since the outbreak of Bubonic Plague in 1347 destroyed a third of the population of Europe. Once a 'friendly' bacteria that helped keep harmful bacteria at bay, thanks to overuse of pharmaceutical antibiotics, this resistant strain mutated for self defense and is now easily transmitted and potentially disfiguring and even lethal.

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Apart from information on the current incidence in various parts of the world, there is information on the common occurrence in cats and dogs and how the disease is carried. Even the agricultural animals regularly treated with antibiotics in their feed, have fallen victim to the resistant strain. As part of a chapter on Microbiology, the way essential oils are able to overcome bacteria is explained. Part Two contains information on the antimicrobial essential oils with a specific focus on Tea Tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*), Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* and *Thymus zygis*), Manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) and Manuka Honey, and a couple of lesser known oils; Lelechwa (*Tarchonanthus camphorates*) from Africa and Agonis, (*Agonis fragrans*) from Australia. The result of research with these and various antimicrobial oils is presented. Chapter 10 contains a very informative discussion of Other Ways to Combat MRSA, including Phage Therapy and Colloidal Silver.

There are some very useful appendices, including one listing Risk Factors and another on what to do before going to the hospital. Appendix V includes all aspects of working with essential oils, and a list of specific oils

for different circumstances, such as wound care, general bathing, nose and throat application. Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*), Clary Sage (*Salvia sclarea*) and Geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens*) are added to the list of antimicrobials for use on the skin and Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*), Orange (*Citrus sinensis*), Lemon (*Citrus limonum*), Grapefruit (*Citrus paradisi*) and Lemongrass (*Cymbopogon citratus*), for atomizer and diffusion. Suggestions for extra reading, lists of relevant organizations and resources for products, services, and pages of specific references for all the information contained in this book are also included.

In all, this book is a fine resource for all aromatherapists and health care workers or facilities to have in their library for comprehensive information and treatment suggestions for dealing with the ever growing issue of MRSA. And certainly Maggie Tisserand has made her mark as a serious research aromatherapist with this complete and competent book.

[Check out the NAHA Online Bookstore to purchase a copy of 'Aromatherapy VS MRSA'.](#)