Bell’s Palsy and the use of essential oils for a speedy recovery

by Penny Keay

Bell’s palsy is a condition in which the damage to the facial nerves causes the muscles on one side of the face to become weakened or paralyzed. This type of facial paralysis causes the side of the face affected to feel strange, numb, tingly or even painful to the touch.

The eye on that side may not close completely. Either this could cause the eye to tear excessively or in some cases to become dry. Each case is individual depending on the nerve trauma involved. In severe cases, the whole side of the face may droop.

What causes this condition?

Any number of things can cause the nerves to be affected. Typically, some type of trauma has occurred to the nerves involved (maybe hit on the face by some cold snow).

It is also thought that it could be caused by a viral infection. Herpes virus has been known to cause facial paralysis.

This condition is not as uncommon as one might think, afflicting up to 40,000 Americans a year according to the Bell’s palsy information website.

Here in Minnesota and other northern climates, chilling the face and neck can easily bring on the weakness.

I have known of several cases – during the early spring, fall or winter months where you roll down the car window for a few minutes and get a blast of cold air on that side of the face. Within a day, the weakness will appear, typically upon waking the next morning.

Usually recovery, with no permanent damage, is forthcoming, with healing taking place within as little as 2-4 weeks. In some cases, it may be a month or two for the paralysis be resolved. Rare occasions complete healing of the nerves and muscles can take longer but usually no longer than a year.

What to do while the nerves heal, that is the question. Can essential oils speed the process along?

Don’t assume your facial paralysis is Bell’s palsy – visit your physician before you proceed with self- treatment! Knowing what is the cause helps you figure out the best essential oils to help you heal.

See your doctor to rule out other possible causes. Once you have been diagnosed by your doctor, you may want to try a few essential oil massage blends to help speed your recovery.

Please let him know if you would prefer to try complementary health solutions before he prescribes any medications including steroids (in severe cases often time prednisone is prescribed.).

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Keeping the area from getting re-injured or traumatized further is of utmost importance. If the paralysis is due to a viral infection you’ll may want to start inhaling essential oils with anti-viral properties. Massaging a pain relieving essential oil blend may help with the discomfort.

Anyway, massage the area of the face and neck with essential oils that have been mixed with your favorite carrier oil. Castor Oil is a good choice as it is helpful with inflammatory conditions such as arthritis. Since the nerves are inflamed with Bell’s Palsy, Castor oil may help.

Using essential oils that have nerve regenerating properties might speed the healing process.

The best known essential oils for help with regeneration is Helichrysum and Lavender but other oils can also help. Juniper berry, Peppermint, Rosemary, Eucalyptus globulus and Sweet Marjoram can help you with the discomfort.

Roman Chamomile and German Chamomile are good for inflammation and you may want to add those oils to the massage blend too.

Peppermint, Rosemary and Helichrysum are helpful with any type of pain as they have strong analgesic properties.

**Massage Blend for Facial Pain**

Helichrysum – 20 drops  
Lavender – 8 drops  
Peppermint – 6 drops  
Rosemary – 4 drops  
Sweet Marjoram – 2 drops  
Jojoba – 2 ounces

Blend all in a PET plastic bottle. Then using only a few drops – just enough to cover the affected area massage lightly.

If you have Bell’s palsy, be sure to massage the entire affected side of the face (avoiding eyes and other mucous membranes) and down behind the ear and onto the back of the neck. Use 3- 4 times a day if possible.

You can also use Dar’s Massage oil but this should not be used long term nor as frequently as the above blend.

Other premixed massage blends that may be of benefit include Joint Rub, (for pain and discomfort), Scar Lightening Blend. (for nerve regeneration), Muscle Rub (for pain and heating).

Using a 10% Helichrysum in a Roll-on is easy to use too and in a recent case that is all this person used.

His Bell’s palsy was completely resolved within 10 days. Initially, he had pain and numbness along with excessive tearing from his left eye.

Remember, it will take time for the nerves to heal. Be patient and above all, don’t let the trauma recur.