

# Oregano destroys *S. Pneumoniae* in lab

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**ATLANTA (Reuters)** ---In several new experiments, researchers have found that some essential oils --- in particular, those derived from oregano, thyme and rosewood --. create a lytic reaction (cell death/disruption) in microorganisms, including *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

Dr. Diane Horne of Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, told the 98th General Assembly of the American Society of Microbiology that the discovery of the impact of the oils on cells such as *Streptococcus pneumoniae* occurred through a bit of serendipity.

A co-researcher was spraying aromatic oils in the laboratory. "When I looked at the *S. pneumoniae* that I was preparing for another experiment, the cells were just falling apart," Horne reported.

Horne and co-worker Sue Chao of the Young Living Essential Oil Company of Payton, Utah, evaluated the lytic properties of 74 different essential oils, eventually testing nine of them in a series of experiments to determine the impact of each oil on disease-causing microbes.

Optimal results occurred with oregano, thyme and rosewood, while intermediate inhibition of microbe growth was seen with cinnamon oil and clove oil, Horne said at a poster presentation at the general meeting of the American Society of Microbiology.

According to Horne, the oils also demonstrated efficacy against *E. coli* and several species of fungi. But she said that the oils did not seem to adversely affect *Staphylococcus aureus*.

While the oils appeared to work in the test tube and Petri dish experiments, Horne said that, "It is too soon to say if the oils will have an impact against *S. pneumoniae* in people." She commented that the use of aromatherapy with the effective oils would not be harmful to a patient with *S. pneumoniae* infection, and it might even prove helpful in controlling the infection.

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