

LAVENDER BATH BOMBS

Residents will explore a new pampering of cleanliness, the history of bathing, and make their own scented bath bombs using dried lavender from the garden, store, or courtyard and essential oil. We'll explore the benefits and other uses of lavender.

The Eldergrow garden offers a therapeutic connection to nature where residents engage in meaningful ways with the garden – cognitively, socially, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. **This lesson can be done without an Eldergrow garden, using an outside courtyard or through a window with a nature view.**

Activity Objectives:

Objective 1: Resident will use spacial awareness (SA)

Objective 2: Resident will engage cognitive stimulation (CS)

Objective 3: Resident will engage motor skills (MS)

MATERIALS:



- Pre-dried lavender sprigs (Collect or purchase [here](#))
- **Recipe Ingredients:**
 - 2 cups baking soda
 - 1 cup Epsom salt
 - 1 cup citric acid (what's in lemon juice) [link here](#), *see substitution option in recipe if you are concerned about this ingredient)
 - 3 tbsp oil (either olive, jojoba, almond, or fractionated coconut)
 - water
- Bath bomb molds, or mini-muffin silicone cups: ([Links here & here](#))
- 1 large and 1 small mixing bowls & 2 mixing spoons/spatulas
- Food prep-gloves & paper towels
- *Optional:* Lavender essential oil ([Link here](#)).
- *Optional:* Other essential oils or herbs to make a blend (maybe with several small bowls to make separate mixes for comparable aromas).
- *Optional:* mortar & pestle to crush lavender, gift labels (in Daily Prog.)
- Talking Points: **“Lavender”** and **“History of Bathing”**
- **Bath Bomb Directions**- last page of this lesson

PREPARATION:

- Pre-dry a large bundle of lavender, collected from the garden, a courtyard, or store-bought.
- If you have a garden, have residents gather around it, or gather around window for nature observations.
- Place materials off to the side until ready to use and have garden journal for comments or observations.

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS – CHOOSE 1, 2, OR ALL 3 PARTS:

Eldergrow Lesson Plans are guides only. In order to maximize resident engagement, please customize these plans to the various interests, cognitive levels, and physical abilities of residents.

1. OBSERVATIONS & "SCRATCH & SNIFF" SENSORY STIMULATION:

- Have residents **make garden/nature observations** with the garden journal especially if any herbs present. If there is lavender growing, pluck a fresh sprig to pass around and compare to the dried bundle's aroma that will be used to scent the bath bombs as a "Scratch & Sniff" sensory stimulation.
- Engage residents in comparisons, noting observations in the garden journal, and looking for changes to the garden or other plants. This helps to encourage activity engagement and memory.

2. TALKING POINTS, LAVENDER BENEFITS & USES:

- **Have residents take turns reading the "Lavender" Talking Points out loud** as they sit close to the garden, in a courtyard, or observe from a window, and explore the dried lavender bundle.
- **Keep energy high as lavender naturally soothes** our residents and may prompt sleepiness.
- **Start conversations!** *Have you tried lavender scented items before, like bath salts or room sprays? Has anyone used lavender in a receipt or to scent something in the home?*
- Compare it to other herbs- *Can you find other herbs in the garden, courtyard, or purchased? Are they used for food, medicine, aromatherapy? Do you have a favorite herb, or soothing scent?*
- See the "**Daily Programing**" for more about **lavender, crafts and uses, and other spa-day ideas** with wonderful background music and videos to augment this lesson.
- Emphasize the relaxation and soothing properties of lavender to transition into the bathing component of this lesson (if using that section).

3. ACTIVITY: MAKING BATH BOMBS AND THE HISTORY OF BATHING

- Set out materials and bath bomb ingredients in order - all dry ingredients except citric acid (see recipe for substitution suggestion), then all the wet ingredients & citric acid at the end.
- **Have residents take turns** reading the "**History of Bathing**" Talking Points out loud as you introduce the activity of making bath bombs using the dried lavender, or read them while others take turns making their individual bath bombs, or afterward as the bombs sit to dry a bit.

Follow directions on last page to make Lavender Bath Bombs:

- Encourage residents to chose their aromatic mixture to use, how strong of a scent they want, different essential oil scents, etc. You can divide the oil and essential oil mixture into several small bowls so they can have a different essential oil and compare aromas after.
- Have any residents who want to help put on food gloves to protect hands. You can have some residents crush up the lavender by hand (great strength exercise) or crush with a mortar+pestle. Mix together the lavender, Epson salt & baking soda in large bowl and the wet ingredients in smaller bowl. Then mix these & slowly mix in water and lastly the citric acid, making sure to not touch with bare hands (it can irritate skin when concentrated).
- Scoop enough of the wet-sand texture mix into the chosen molds, letting residents fill their own molds. Don't leave in metal mold for long or they may stick, especially if too wet.

CLOSING & ACTIVITY AMENDMENTS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS

Have your **garden journal** ready again to write down **resident comments, activity participation, garden observations** and **tasks**. For residents with **limitations** or those who need **more challenging projects**:

- Encourage a resident with **hand support assistance** or have them hold your wrist as you measure ingredients, mixing them in the bowl or filling the mold. For low vision or residents with limited finger dexterity, have them guide your hand as you do various tasks. Do the same when writing plant labels.
- Residents with **low vision may not be able to see the herbs or read essential oil labels**. Describe the characteristics to them to see if they might identify it that way, and try a mystery scent guessing game to see if residents can ID the essential oil(s) without seeing the label.
- Have a **resident who likes to write serve as the garden journal secretary** and write the various herbs present and what mixture went into the bath bombs. Next time they make garden observations, see if those herbs are still doing well.
- If residents would rather **gift their new bath bombs** as a gift instead of using (can be a shower steamer as well), then try creating the gift tag print-outs in the Daily Programming.
- Assist as minimally as possible to the particular resident's ability - **this way it's a collaboration that plays to the resident's strengths, allowing them to be successful and fulfilled with the work they can do!** This may require you to ensure a staff member can work with that particular resident during the activity so they are still included and supported.
- Changes in the Eldergrow or an outside garden can help stimulate short-term memories, so do encourage residents to make these observations as well as reflect back on previous observations so they can see how their **garden is changing over time**. Some people like to write the "plant of the day". Consider adding a couple of noteworthy aspects of your choice plant for them to continue to learn and remember about their garden's plant collection. Tape copies of the Talking Points around the room for future reference.
- **Assist residents with walkers or wheelchairs** to the garden or outside to make observations, and tend to the plants. Or bring over the bowl of pruned plant parts for them to explore, or pot up a hardy small plant from the garden to bring to someone to admire up close!
- Some residents prefer to only **assist with gross motor garden care**. One may enjoy hand tilling the soil or adding new soil around the plants. Someone else may like to water each plant to the count of three or dust off the shelves and garden structure.

BATH BOMBS DIRECTIONS:

Items: (Makes 6 large bath bombs or 24 mini bombs)

- 2 cups baking soda
- 1 cup Epsom salt
- 1 cup citric acid*
- 3 tbsp. carrier oil of your choice: jojoba oil, olive oil, almond oil or fractionated coconut oil
- 2 tbsp. water
- 50-60 drops of Essential oil(s) Lavender or any that you like
- Handful **chopped lavender leaves/flowers**
- Large Bath bomb molds or silicone mini muffin mold, 2 bowls, 2 mixing spoons, food prep gloves and paper towels

Directions: *If you prefer to not use citric acid, you could substitute lemon juice for the water, though the bomb will lack most of its iconic fizz when used.

1. Have residents put on food prep gloves. Handling citric acid can be irritating to the skin.
2. Mix the baking soda, Epsom salt and lavender leaves/flowers (**not** citric acid yet) in one bowl and the essential oil(s) and carrier oil in another.
3. Pour the oils into the dry ingredient mixture **very slowly** and mix well.
4. Slowly add in 2 tbsp. of water. Mix until well-combined.
5. Add the citric acid now, mixing well and see if the mixture fizzes (a teaser for bath-time).
6. Mixture should feel like damp sand and will keep its shape when pressed together with **gloved hands** (*the acid can irritate skin when concentrated*).
7. Pack the mixture into the mold. If using bath bomb molds, let the mold sit for one minute. Then tap the mold and gently pull it apart. Let the bomb dry on a paper towel overnight. If using a silicone mold, you can leave them in the mold overnight. Set them aside for safe keeping (they might look like food, for example).
8. Once dry, enjoy them in a soothing, luxurious bath or shower aromatherapy!

Helpful Tips:

- Too wet of a mix will make it hard to remove from the mold, while too dry will crumble.
- Wrap your unused bath bombs tightly in tinfoil or keep them in an airtight container. Do not expose them to moisture as they will start to fizz!

Don't have a tub? No problem... Other ways to use a bath bomb:

- Shower bomb – place it in a porous bag and tie it to the shower head.
- Foot soak – place into warm water and soak those toes!
- Room freshener – Crush it by placing it in a plastic bag and use a rolling pin to break apart.
- Put some pieces into a spray bottle with water and spray around.