

# *Aromatherapy & Essential Oils*

## **For Weight Loss & Appetite Control**



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## Introduction

The holiday season approaches and there is one thing that you are guaranteed to go through – a rollercoaster of eating, from indulging in big meals and baked treats to telling yourself you'll do better tomorrow.

It's every dieter's worst nightmare – and once the holiday season is gone and you step on the scales it can be disheartening, to say the least. How can you keep your weight loss journey on track and make sure you keep your appetite in check?

As it turns out, the most effective solution might just be found in aromatherapy.

Imagine, after ushering in the New Year you don't need to stress about your weight loss commitment for your resolutions list, instead, you can sit pretty knowing you have effectively managed the holiday season without derailing your efforts.



You don't need to rush to the gym on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January to join up – you don't need to be too hard on yourself either. You can make it through winter unscathed by the typical temptations.

It's your appetite and cravings that present the greatest threat to achieving your weight loss goals so gaining control over the battle between your body and mind is key. While there is no magic bullet or pill that will simply melt your fat away – essential oils have an important role to play.

## Why Essential Oils Can Help You With Your Weight Loss

Essential oils have been in use across a variety of ancient cultures for thousands of years – from the Egyptians and Chinese to the Greeks, Indians, and Romans. However, it wasn't until the 50s that the western civilizations started using them in treatment setting after a French chemist founded the science in the 1920s.

The oils are taken from a variety of different sources in nature, including the fruit, leaves, seeds, and sap of a plant as well as the roots and bark, too. Each essential oil is unique and has its own healing properties.

Some essential oils have antibacterial properties while others are wonderful for reducing inflammation. There are also essential oils, which are helpful for boosting mood, burning fat, suppressing appetite, and alleviating cravings.



### Harmony Between Body And Mind

The true purpose of essential oils is to bring about harmony between your mind and body – and this works by stimulating parts of the brain to impact certain parts of your mental and/or physical state.

You might not realize just how powerful your sense of smell is – according to San Jose State University, the nose is capable of distinguishing between a *trillion* scents (<http://www.sjsu.edu/people/steven.macramalla/courses/perception/Lecture%2014%20--Olfaction.pdf>) and actively communicates with the brain's amygdala and hippocampus, the regions of the brain that are responsible for memories and emotions.

When you inhale these essential oils, the stimulation then influences your mental, physical, and emotional state. This, of course, has an influence on your stress levels, mood, blood pressure, motivation, heart rate, and even your mood.

So, yes, using essential oils can do incredible things for anxiety and stress, but it can also help you in your attempts to lose weight and keep your appetite at bay. Whether it's constant

cravings of fatty, sugary foods or you deal with mood swings and poor digestion, essential oils can play a key role.

## How to Harness the Power of Essential Oils

A study published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology, suggests that sniffing certain aromas can inhibit your desire to eat. Scents like eucalyptus, peppermint, and grapefruit are particularly helpful.

Just deeply inhaling their aroma a few times in each nostril should be enough to curb even the greatest craving or hunger pang. Experts do suggest that you avoid using the same essential oil two days in a row as you may become too used to them. So, for the greatest impact change your chosen scent on a daily basis.

# 14 Most Effective Essential Oils for Weight Loss & How To Use Them

## Grapefruit

This should come as no surprise, considering the Hollywood Diet revolves around eating grapefruit before every meal or snack. It's been a popular fruit in weight loss for decades, and it may be entirely to do with its scent. The essential oil is extracted from the fruit's rind and has proven to be excellent at burning fat, limiting bloating, and suppressing appetite.

This is believed to be due to high concentrations of a component that triggers AMPK, which causes the body to use its sugars thus preventing fat from accumulating and reducing the fat stores and encouraging weight loss. Studies have found that rats who were exposed to the oil three times a week for just 15 minutes a time lost weight and ate less.

So, how can you take advantage of the power of grapefruit essential oil? Add a drop or two to a glass of water and drink it first thing every morning. This should give your metabolism a boost thus helping you lose weight. You can also drink it after you eat, this may help prevent bloating and encourage proper digestion.

Alternatively, you can keep a bottle handy to inhale it when you're overrun by cravings. It even works if you rub a drop or two on your temples, wrists, and underneath your nose. Additionally, you can pop it in your diffuser.

## Cinnamon

Cinnamon essential oil has become popular among diabetics and the reason for this might just be due to the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, study (on the medicinal properties of true cinnamon) which found that it could help lower blood glucose.



As it turns out, true cinnamon has anti-oxidant, anti-microbial, anti-parasitic properties *as well as* being a fighter of free radicals. Therefore, cinnamon oil can help keep your blood sugar in check thus preventing cravings, over-eating, and weight gain.

Adding it to your meals may also aid in slowing down just how quickly glucose is released which, of course, also helps your weight loss journey. It may also be effective in curbing cravings (and preventing over-eating) because of the presence of eugenol. This is a component, which can change neurosensory perceptions thus changing how you smell *and* taste food.

It's easy to use for weight loss – simply drink it! Add a drop or two in warm water with raw honey and enjoy this daily. You can drink it before a meal or in the evening when your cravings tend to strike. It can also be added to your cooking, whether it's smoothies, oatmeal, or even baking.

Alternatively, you can inhale it as you do with grapefruit oil. It's particularly helpful for those guilty of emotional eating. You may also use it topically or with a diffuser.

## **Ginger**

This is an anti-inflammatory, which can play an important role in weight loss, as relieving inflammation will allow your body to digest and absorb nutrients more efficiently. Gingerols, the compound found in ginger, reduce intestinal inflammation and in addition to nutrient absorption, it also helps prevent disease. Importantly, though, your body will get the vitamins and minerals that it needs which provides you with the energy to keep chasing your weight loss goals.

According to the Amala Cancer Research Centre, ginger essential oil also contains antioxidants, which fight inflammation, even if it's chronic! Ginger can help prevent obesity as caused by a diet high in fat, especially when the fat is around the belly. This is because ginger suppresses cortisol levels, which can cause people to over-eat the wrong types of foods.

Add a drop or two to a cup of warm water and add raw honey or fresh lemon juice before you enjoy it. Of course, as with all of the essential oils mentioned above you can also inhale it directly in the face of cravings.

### **Peppermint**

This oil is most commonly used for the digestive system, but its ability to relax the abdominal muscles and decrease bloating shows it has a place in the weight loss world, too. Its cooling compound improves digestion and expels gas calming even the most upset stomach. It also has an effect on how you smell and taste food, thus it may be the ideal option for curbing the appetite and suppressing cravings.



Again, a drop or two to a glass of water is the perfect dose and you can enjoy it 30 minutes before you are due to sit down to a meal. However, it is particularly powerful when you keep the bottle handy to inhale it when you are overcome by hunger or cravings. It can suppress your appetite and make you feel full. You can also take a sniff or two before you eat to prevent any overeating.

Of course, you may also pop it in your diffuser and allow it to run throughout the day as a means of preventing cravings *and* lifting your mood.

### **Lemon**

Like grapefruit essential oil, the lemon oil is extracted from the rind of the fruit. The rind contains limonene, a medical compound known as a natural fat dissolver. A study from the Niigata University School of Medicine found that when the two oils are combined they support the breakdown of body fat, which prevents weight gain. Lemon oil also improves digestion overall.

Looking to use it to help you lose weight? It's the same method of grapefruit essential oil – just a drop or two in a glass of water and drink it when you wake up. Again, you can also inhale it to prevent cravings *or* use it in a massage oil on cellulite.

### **Bergamot**

People who are caught up in emotional eating know just how much depression and anxiety can play a role in this. Sadly, giving in to those feelings may provide you with an immediate boost but it won't last, and this results in feeling lower than before and is a serious blow to your self-esteem.

A study from the Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine has found, though, that 15 minutes of inhaling bergamot will reduce cortisol levels *and* give you a serious mood boost.

Additionally, University Magna Graecia found in their 2011 study that 30 days of taking the oil orally reduced blood glucose and cholesterol levels. As it turns out, bergamot contains polyphenols, the compound you may recognize from its presence in green tea) and this helps burn fat and sugar. While the sweet scent creates relaxation and a mood boost the polyphenols help prevent emotional eating and cravings.



This most effective way to harness the power of bergamot oil for weight loss is by inhaling it from the bottle *or* adding a few drops to your shower!

### **Sandalwood**

This is another excellent option for anyone who is prone to emotional eating during stressful situations. It can help bring about a sense of calm thus suppressing negative feelings. That pleasing woody scent creates a natural therapeutic effect to the brain's limbic system. The limbic system, of course, is the part of the brain controlling emotions like anger and pleasure.

Using essential oils to balance your mood and emotions will ensure you feel good, thus you are able to strive for weight loss.

There are three options on how to use sandalwood in your weight loss journey – you can inhale it, you can diffuse it, or you can go ahead and apply it topically.

### **Lavender**

It's the most popular of all of the essential oils and it might just be the most versatile as well. You see, each of the oils we're discussing will help you fight weight loss, but they each do so differently. While some of these suggestions will aid digestion and others will suppress appetite, lavender's effect is different.

One of the biggest contributors to weight gain in our modern society is anxiety and depression. Lavender, of course, can bring about a sense of calm and help fight feelings of anxiety and depression. It also reduces levels of cortisol, the hormone that is responsible for forcing your body to hold onto its excess fat stores.



Inhale it or diffuse it, either way, it will help you in your drive to manage your mood and fight the weight gain.

### **Eucalyptus**

Looking for a way to reduce stress? Check! Desperate for relief from mental fatigue? Double check! In desperate need of weight loss assistance? Hold on to your hats because due to its efficiency with the first two eucalyptus oil is the ideal tool to aid you in your weight loss journey. A quick sniff can save you from giving into your cravings by giving you an invigorating boost.

Inhaling it is the most efficient way to harness its power – just have a sniff as and when you need it, particularly when you feel a craving upon you. Alternatively, you can add it to your shower to start your day off right.

## Frankincense

Tapped from the resin of a Somalian tree this oil is effective in calming anxiety, which of course can be the trigger for overeating. More than that, though, it also aids digestion, which can provide helpful for weight loss.

You can inhale it as with the majority of the oils listed above or choose to add drops of it to your diffuser. Either way, it works!

## Jasmine

A few years ago, a British newspaper ran a story claiming that smelling jasmine has the same calming effects as taking valium. The science is still out on that strong claim; however, we know that jasmine *does* have a calming effect. It has been used to treat anxiety, depression, and insomnia. Therefore, it's an excellent choice when it comes to controlling cravings and fighting for weight loss.



Inhaling jasmine oil is helpful, particularly if you do so before you eat. While you can inhale it at any point, you feel anxious or you have a craving, doing so before you eat should help prevent overeating. You can add it to your diffuser (in addition to some grapefruit oil) to boost your mood and relieve cravings.

## Orange

This appetite suppressing essential oil can also help prevent you from overeating. Of course, it also packs a vitamin C punch and serves up serious antioxidants. It's great to boost the mood and help keep your spirits high to avoid emotional eating.

This is ideal to inhale as it acts quickly to leave you feeling energized. However, you can also add it to water and enjoy the glass before a meal.

## Rosemary

It's as delicious as it is potent, and you might not look at rosemary the same again. Forget sticking sprigs of it in your leg of lamb – know that it reduces cortisol levels. Not only does cortisol increase the risk of heart disease and dangerously high blood pressure, but it also tends to cause overeating and wrong food choices. Managing your cortisol levels is a sure way to keep your weight in check.

The perfect way to use it is by inhaling it – simply take deep breaths for around five minutes (whether right from the bottle or by putting it on a cloth or cotton ball).

### **Fennel**

This is a scent that is both earthy and sweet and fennel is great for improving sleep, digestion, and curbing your appetite. It just happens to contain melatonin, which is known for regulating your body's circadian rhythm.

According to Spain's University of Granada, melatonin can have a positive effect on weight loss as it allows the body to burn the fat instead of store it.

You can either drop it in water to drink before you eat or instead put a drop on each of your wrists (this is particularly helpful for anyone who constantly battles cravings for sweets).

## Choosing The Right Oils And Precautions

As with all essential oils, it is imperative that you are purchasing therapeutic-grade oils as these are completely pure, toxin and additive free and totally undiluted. If you cannot get your hands on therapeutic-grade oils, you should avoid taking it internally as it is not recommended by the FDA.

The bottle should indicate that the product you are purchasing contains 100% pure essential oil and that includes listing the scientific name of your ingredient. For example, Citrus Paradisi is what should be listed on grapefruit essential oil – if the bottle says fragrance then you aren't buying the real deal.

**Always look for therapeutic grade. The oil should state that it is 100% pure, therapeutic grade essential oil.**

Please note that essential oils are incredibly powerful and while yes, they are natural, there will be people who experience allergic reactions. Before you start regularly using a new essential oil do a skin patch test on your leg or arm to ensure you aren't allergic.

If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you should speak to your doctor before starting to use any essential oils (especially if you intend to take them orally). You should also speak to your doctor if you take any medications regularly or you are being treated for a diagnosed illness.

## Final Thoughts

Of course, the most effective way to manage your weight is through regular exercise and eating a healthy diet. However, we all need a helping hand and essential oils have shown to be an effective complementary tool.

Remember, though, we are all different and what works for you might not work for your friend – so you may need to try a variety of essential oils before you find the one that works for you.

Additionally, you may find certain methods are more effective for you – so before you write off an essential oil try taking it orally (if it's one for ingestion), in the diffuser, shower, or through inhalation. Your body may respond better to one of these methods better than the other – cycle through each of them before you move on to a new essential oil.

Try to choose an essential oil that lines up with your biggest problem – so if you are an emotional eater choose the oil that will help you beat that.

If it's anxiety that fuels your weight then choose an oil that corresponds to that, and so on.

**Don't be disheartened if the first oil you try isn't the right oil – keep pushing!**