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KICK CRAVINGS TO THE CURB

When you can't stop thinking about that certain food—ice cream, French fries, chocolate—reach for these essential oils **By Cheryl Cromer**

It's summer, which brings with it warmer weather, and thoughts about how we're going to look in those swimsuits. If you've put on a few pounds during the colder months, essential oil aromatherapy can help you get back into shape.

When you're tired or stressed, you are more likely to reach for unhealthy snacks. Smelling certain essential oils found to curb appetite and provoke alertness and energy in the brain can help thwart those cravings and also help you to think more clearly. Plus, some essential oils work with the body's endocrine system to still hunger pangs and give the metabolism a little boost.

While we know that effective weight control must include a combination of diet and exercise, aromatherapy can combat the stress associated with the battle of the bulge, and be an enjoyable component to a lifestyle that focuses on clean eating and fitness. Here are our favorite essential oils for weight loss:

CITRUS FOR CRAVINGS & MOODINESS

BERGAMOT (*Citrus bergamia*), **OR ITALIAN ORANGE ESSENTIAL OIL**: Bergamot helps alleviate depression, and may help if emotional eating is undermining your diet. Studies report that bergamot reduces the production of cortisol, which has also been linked to the inability to drop stubborn belly fat. Diffuse the essential oil during particularly stressful times to help you avoid mindless nibbling.

GRAPEFRUIT (*Citrus paradisi*): Studies have discovered that this essential oil not only provides a mood lift with its sweet aroma, it also contains a natural compound, nootkatone, that acts to control metabolism. Simply inhaling this bright citrus oil can halt food cravings and give you a burst of much-needed energy.

LEMON (*Citrus limon*): Essential oil of lemon is a mood brightener. Just think of the zest of citrus and it makes sense—who doesn't perk up after a refreshing glass of OJ or a squeeze of tart lemon in cool spring water? Two constituents in lemon essential oil pack a powerful punch to fat cells, while also easing pain in achy muscles. Add a few drops to your sports balm to relieve muscles sore from exercise.

JUNIPER & CYPRESS FOR WATER RETENTION

WOODSY JUNIPER (*Juniperus communis*) **AND CYPRESS** (*Cupressus sempervirens*): These are purifying essential oils that offer diuretic benefits to help flush water weight. Combine with grapefruit for an uplifting aromatic massage blend that also helps break down cellulite.

ROSEMARY & PEPPERMINT TO BOOST METABOLISM

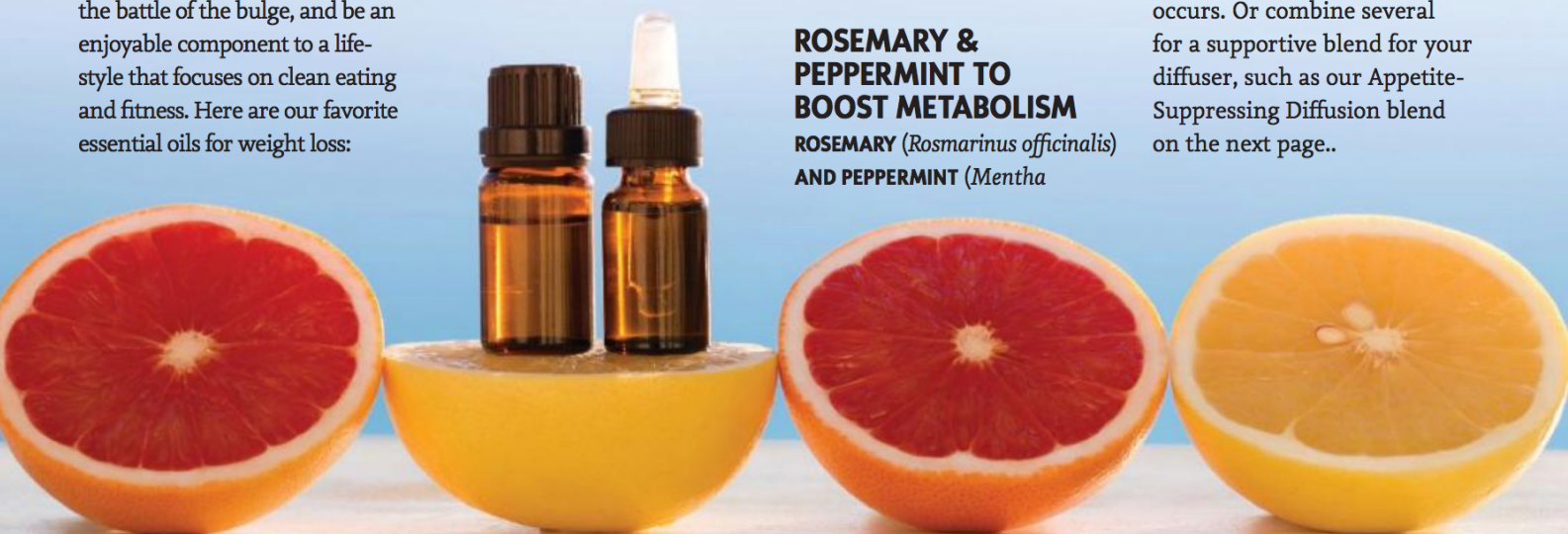
ROSEMARY (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) **AND PEPPERMINT** (*Mentha*

piperita): These savory culinary herbs enhance flavors and elevate low moods, but their essential oils are also powerful metabolism boosters. One scientific study reports that peppermint goes a step further to lower hunger levels when inhaled every two hours.

SPICE OILS FOR BLOOD SUGAR BALANCE

CINNAMON (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*) **AND GINGER** (*Zingiber officinale*): These two essential oils help reduce inflammation and regulate blood sugar, both of which are vital to successful weight loss. These oils also add warmth to massage blends for a comforting, balancing quality.

Any of these essential oils can be effective in suppressing appetite. Simply open your favorite and breathe deeply when the urge to overeat occurs. Or combine several for a supportive blend for your diffuser, such as our Appetite-Suppressing Diffusion blend on the next page..



Make Your Own Aromatherapy Blends

Appetite-Suppressing Diffusion

8 drops bergamot
5 drops grapefruit
2 drops ginger

Fight Fat Massage Blend I

5 drops grapefruit
5 drops lemon
5 drops cypress

Fight Fat Massage Blend II

5 drops rosemary
5 drops ginger
3 drops cinnamon
2 drops peppermint

Cellulite Buster Massage Blend

7 drops grapefruit
5 drops cypress
3 drops juniper

For best results with massage blends, mix essential oils in 1 oz. carrier oil, such as sweet almond or jojoba, and massage into affected areas such as stomach, hips, and thighs for 20–30 minutes. Do not bathe or wash off oils for an hour or two after application.



Aura Cacia Cypress Organic Essential Oils

Now Foods Sweet Almond Oil 100% Pure Moisturizing Oil

Nature's Alchemy Juniper Berry Essential Oil

HOW TO SAFELY ENJOY ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils are best used as aromatics or topical applications. Even the purest organic oils can be toxic to the system if swallowed.

Although our "Fat-Busting Aromatherapy Blends" (left) contain a small percentage of essential oils, they may interact with some medicines. If you are pregnant or nursing, or take prescription medications, please check with your physician prior to using essential oils. Conduct a skin patch test prior to use.

Cheryl Cromer is an Atlanta-based writer specializing in aromatherapy and the spa lifestyle. She has more than 17 years' experience as an artisan aromatherapist. When she's not writing or creating blends, Cheryl enjoys traveling, interior decorating, and life with her Pembroke Welsh Corgi, Elle.



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