

# Smell Therapy

## *Olfactory training when you have smell loss*



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## What is smell therapy?

Smell therapy is also called *olfactory training*. It involves sniffing the same 4 scents every day. Research shows that this therapy can improve a person's ability to smell when they have lost some or all of their sense of smell.

## What do I need to do?

Buy 4 to 8 small bottles of essential oil with scents that are familiar to you. These may include lemon, eucalyptus, lavender, clove, orange, or peppermint.

Then, follow these steps for your therapy:

1. Do a nasal saline rinse with the *budesonide* medicine that your provider prescribed. (Please see the handout "Sinus Rinse" for details.)
2. Open 1 bottle of essential oil. Hold the bottle under your nose and breathe softly for 15 seconds.
3. When breathing in, recall how that scent smelled before you lost your sense of smell. Focus all your attention on that scent memory.
4. Take a 15-second break.
5. Repeat these steps with the other 3 essential oils.

Do this therapy 1 to 2 times a day for 3 months. After 3 months, repeat the process using 4 new scents.

## Reminders

- Make sure you have a smoke alarm that works. Change the batteries every 6 months.
- If your home uses natural gas, install a device that detects both carbon monoxide **and** explosive gas.
- Make sure to throw out any food that you think might be spoiled.



## QUESTIONS?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

**Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery Center:**  
206.598.4022

To learn more about smell loss, visit the ENT Health website by the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery:  
[www.enthealth.org/conditions/hyposmia-and-anosmia](http://www.enthealth.org/conditions/hyposmia-and-anosmia)