



Revere Health – Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery – Ear Nose and Throat/ENT
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Smell / Olfactory Training

Smell Training or Olfactory Training is a method used to help people with smell loss. The idea is that the brain has “neural plasticity” and over time you can retrain your smell nerves and brain to smell again. There have been experiments with Smell Training that have shown improvement in a patient’s ability to smell after undergoing a simple, twice-a-day exercise for 12 - 16 weeks. This Smell Training does not have any negative side-effects and is a simple therapy to do at home. There is no guarantee that the Smell Training will work for your smell loss, but it is an easy, quick, and simple thing to try which could help you smell better overall.

The original study used 4 different smells: Rose, Eucalyptus, Clove, and Lemon. While these are the most commonly used smells in the experiments, you are welcome to use any other smells you would like, as long as they are strong odors. I recommend you use the 4 smells used most commonly in the experiments, but there is no reason you can’t add additional smells like peppermint, vanilla, lavender, cinnamon, etc.

You can buy a kit online from an online retailer like Amazon or you can get the supplies on your own. To make your own kit, purchase Rose, Eucalyptus, Clove and Lemon essential oils from your local health store. Pour some of each oil into separate small glass jars. You can add cotton or watercolor paper to the jar to help soak up the smell. Keep the lids tight on the jars between each use. I do not recommend smelling directly from the essential oil bottle. Label each jar. About once a week, ask someone who has a good sense of smell to smell the jars and see if you need to add any additional oil. You should add additional oil at least once a month.

Once you have a purchased kit or your homemade jars are ready:

- 1) Take the lid off of one of the jars and smell for about 10-15 seconds. While smelling, tell yourself, even out loud, what you are smelling. Look at the label and tell yourself what you are smelling. Wait 30 seconds before smelling the next smell.**
- 2) Repeat this for each of the 4 smells (or more if you have chosen to do more)**
- 3) Repeat this twice a day, once in the morning and once at night**
- 4) Continue this therapy for at least 12 - 16 weeks**

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