



Nan Kathryn Fuchs, PhD

Women's Health Letter

Your Voice of Reason for Women's Health

ALOPECIA—Hair Loss—and AROMATHERAPY

A Scottish study took 86 people with alopecia and divided them into two groups. Each was given a formula of essential oils to massage into their scalp daily. One group had essential oils of rosemary, thyme, lavender and cedarwood in a base of jojoba and grapeseed oils. The others used the unscented carrier oils alone with no essential oils added. At the end of seven months, the study showed that 44% of people who used the essential oils had improvement in their alopecia, compared with only 15% of those in the control group. In addition, the improvement was significant and reproducible. These essential oils, which are very strong dilutions of plant oils, contain antibacterial and antiviral activity, along with unknown properties that seem to improve hair loss in enough people to be worth trying.

The formula used in this study has been reproduced in this country and is called Stimulating Scalp Blend. It is now available through Nature's Gift, 316 Old Hickory Blvd. East, Madison, TN 37115, or online at www.naturesgift.com/aromatherapyskincare.htm. The price of a small bottle is \$14.00 which includes shipping charges. Marge Clark, owner of the company, suggest using a very small amount of the formula (just a drop or two) and rubbing it into your scalp at night. The small one ounce bottle will last three to five weeks, she says, depending on how much you use.

Marge points out that essential oils are typically used for two weeks then stopped for a week. This pattern may be repeated, but always take a week off at least every two weeks when using these or other essential oils.

Researchers in the Scottish study wrapped patients' heads in towels after each application to allow the warmth from the towel to assist the oils in penetrating the scalp. Marge doesn't suggest this but points out that you may want to shampoo your hair in the morning. While she had no testimonials for her formula, she said that a number of people have reordered this product. Let us or Marge know how it's working if you try this product. Because the study on which her formula is based appears to be sound, this method makes sense for a safe approach to growing healthy hair.