

## **Candles and weight gain - the power of your nose**

It might be hard to believe, but candles can actually contribute to weight gain in some people, and it isn't because of the caloric level of the wax (or soy).

Our brains process information in various ways, and our minds represent the information we are exposed to within specific systems through the senses. Our five main senses are Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Olfactory, and Gustatory (sight, sound, touch/feelings, smell, and taste). The most dominant representational system for most people is one of the primary systems designated as VAK (Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic). All five representational systems are at work in varying degrees in different people.

With regard to our eating habits and food, obviously taste is an important component, because we tend to not eat things that we don't find tasty. That also goes for our sense of smell. If something doesn't smell good, we tend to avoid it, particularly if it is also something we eat. In other words, if something doesn't smell good, we likely won't even try tasting it to see if it tastes good. There is actually a fruit, called Durian, that smells awful but tastes quite good (according to the brave souls who have actually eaten it).

Our sense of smell affects our appetite and weight gain in a way that might surprise you. Some candles, particularly those burned during the winter holidays, are of sweet, food smells, like cookie dough. When we smell those candles, our appetite receptors are triggered, and we might feel hungry (whether we are hungry or not). For people who respond strongly to those scents, especially for those who like sweets to begin with, that can really cause some problems. At a time when some people have a hard enough time staying away from sweets and otherwise fattening foods, being lulled into wanting even more of those foods can be difficult to resist.

The remedy is simple: get rid of all your cookie dough and fresh baked scented candles. Do it now, while you are thinking about it and while you still have plenty of time to find appropriate replacements. Replace them with pleasant, outdoorsy scents. During the warm weather months, use flowery scents like rose and lilac. For the autumn and winter months, use evergreen, mistletoe, or the ever-fresh "starry night." There are some wonderful people in and around Hendricks County who make candles using natural ingredients. Even some of the popular national brands are working at making their candles more environmentally friendly, so find what's right for you.

Imagine, lovely scents that comfort and provide joy without triggering you to eat the fat and sugar laden foods that can damage your health and lower your energy. Do it for you! How cool is that!

**First Published in the August 2009 Hendricks County ICON**  
**by Karl R. Zimmer III**

About: Karl R. Zimmer III is a therapeutic hypnotist, licensed and certified by the State of Indiana. His practice, Zimmer Success Group (<http://Z-Success.com>), is in Plainfield.

Consult your doctor before starting any exercise program or diet, especially if you have been diagnosed with diabetes or any other medical condition.