

Aromatherapy in reducing patient stress levels



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This report investigates how effective is aromatherapy, as a Complementary and Alternative Therapy, in order to decrease the level of stress in humans.

The consequences of unhealthful lifestyles and negative environments bring the malady of stress in our life today. One of the most effective things that people can do to reduce their stress is exercise and aromatherapy.

Aromatherapy is a Complementary therapy which is the use of essential oils from plants for healing. Most clients suffer from stress-related disorder and aromatherapy encourages the alleviate process by relieving stress and relaxation. Aromatherapy appears to be one of the fastest growing

Complementary therapies in the United Kingdom. Research studies found that aromatherapy can have real effect on the mind, body and the spirit.

Many essential oils are recognized for their stress-relieving effects where can dramatically assist in concentration and focus, improve productivity and mood. Specific essential oils like Rose (*Rosa Centifolia*) and Lavender (*Lavandula Anguistifolia*) have strong effects on the mood. However, some essential oils are phototoxic and can irritate the skin and eyes, if we are not using them carefully. In the future, Aromatherapy and essential oils will be expanding more in Europe and will be more accepted in hospital departments.

Introduction

Modern life is full of pressure, deadlines and liabilities and as a result, people have high levels of stress. Stress factors maybe physical, mental or environmental in origin. Stress is related with health problems, where the best way of reducing them is Aromatherapy. Aromatherapy is part of one of the modern forms in therapy, the Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

CAM is a group of healthcare practitioners that they focusing on illnesses or diseases in a natural way. Aromatherapy is the practice of using essential oils to treat 'mind, body and spirit' in order to promote health and well-being. Aromatherapy is proven that is reducing stress, affectedly on human beings. Studies have shown that essential oils give relief in any discomfort in the body, like pain, headaches and stress. The use of essential oils can help people control stress and calm down the nervous system. In addition, it has been reported that people provide access to alternative therapies more in United Kingdom than other countries. According to journal articles, the most effective essential oils for stress are Rose (*Rosa Centrifolia*) and Lavender (*Lavandula Anguistifolia*). However, some people believe that essential oils are irritating the skin and also they try to justify that there is lack of evidence in aromatherapy treatments.

Main Body

Stress, anxiety and tension seem to be common characteristics in our life, considerably nowadays. Stress is actually a result of unhealthful lifestyles, a negative environment, and self-defeating attitudes and beliefs. In particular stress cause GAS (General Adaption Syndrome) by activating the sympathetic part of the ANS (Autonomic Nervous System). Hormones bring about physiological changes in the body, often referred to as the 'fight-or-flight' Syndrome (Selye, 1978). It is responsible for many of our illnesses which are difficult to treat. Therefore, distress is a consequence of psychobiological reactions which conceive warning signs such as insomnia, fatigue and mild depression. Stress is a multidimensional syndrome because it involves mind, body and emotions (Battaglia, 2003). According to United

States scientists, stress is known to be a major contributor, either directly or indirectly, to coronary heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidental injuries, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide (Micozzi, 2001). As a result, stress is one of the major health problems on any aromatherapist's care-list.

Aromatherapy can deal with stress since it uses multidimensional holistic approach.

One of the most effective things that people can do to management their stress is to take active steps, so as to reduce its level. Most researches have been largely focused on the physical benefits of exercise, virtually in any exercise that can help people feel more focused and relaxed as long as the activity is enjoyable (Micozzi, 2001). Also additional factors that are used to reduce the levels of stress are healthy lifestyle, techniques to calm the mind, herbs to support the body, particularly the adrenals glands and use of essential oils that are relaxing and nerviness (Battaglia, 2003). Americans are using Alternative and Complementary Therapies, often for stress-related complaints. The most common Complementary and Alternative therapies that are helpful to counteract stress are aromatherapy, aquatherapy, energy therapies, humor, imagery, massage, music, relaxation techniques, chiropractic, spiritual healing, herbal medicine, mega vitamin therapy, biofeedback, hypnosis, homeopathy, acupuncture and folk remedies (Keegan, 2003).

CAM (Complementary Alternative Medicine) is the practice of therapies that emphasizes on prevention or treatment, or both, using 'mind and body' and focusing on illnesses or diseases (Spencer and Jacobs, 1999).

Complementary and Alternative Medicine is a group of healthcare

<https://assignbuster.com/aromatherapy-in-reducing-patient-stress-levels/>

practitioners which are using conventional medicine and interactive medicine. Interactive medicine is a practice that is associated with both conventional and CAM treatments, in which they are evidence for safety and success in treatments. Complementary Alternative Medicine includes Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Acupuncture, massage, Yoga, Reiki, Homeopathy, Chiropractic, hypnosis, Bowen Techniques and other alternative therapies.

Aromatherapy is the practice of using essential oils extracted from plants to promote health and well-being. Aromatherapy is been used as a Complementary and Alternative Medicine for mental and physiological diseases. It has emerged as one of the most popular complementary therapies in the 21st century (Battaglia, 2003). A holistic aromatherapy treatment ambition is treating a whole person in a completely natural way. Aromatherapy can soothe the body system and it helps in balancing the bodily hormones. Essential oils are the most frequently materials of the aromatherapists. Essential oils are extracted from different parts of plants such as the roots, bark, stalks, flowers and leaves. These aromatic substances, which are made in plants by special cells, are volatilized in carrier oils and used in massage (Davis, 2000). Essential oils are generally extracted by distillation, expression or solvent extraction. The aroma alone can have a real effect on the mind, and via the mind, on the lung, and via the lung, on the body. Many people view natural therapies, like aromatherapy, as ‘ magic potions’ (Battaglia, 2003).

However, Aromatherapy should be avoided by pregnant women, people with severe asthma and people who receiving chemotherapy. In addition, people

with high blood pressure should avoid essential oils such as Rosemary (*Rosmarinus Officinalis*) and Spike Lavender (*Lavendula Spica*). People believe that aromatherapy can motivate side effects such as headaches, constipation, liver damage, harm nervous system and rash. Therefore, some oils like Cinnamon (*Cinnamomun Zeylanicum*) and Lemon (*Citrus Limonum*) can irritate the skin or the eyes.

In the United States, Complementary therapies are used more than Europe and Asia. In Germany it has been informed that 95% of physicians are using herbal therapy, themselves. Therefore, practitioners in Canada reported that 73% thought they should have some knowledge about alternative treatments. In addition, it has been reported that 40% of medical practices may provides access to CAM, in United States. They interviewed 1539 adults in United States and the 34% commented that they had used at least on alternative therapy in last year, in ages between 25 to 49 years (Spencer and Jacobs, 1999).

Ten RCTs (Randomized Clinical Trial) found that ‘ massage and aromatherapy’ have effectiveness on psychological well-being, and they act efficiently against anxiety (Ernst, Pittler and Wider, 2006). The essential oils have effects at the psychological, physiological and cellular levels. Some aromatherapists have aromatherapy as a principle of maintaining health and well-being. Aromatherapy frequently treats anxiety, headaches, insomnia, musculoskeletal pain and other stress-related conditions.

According to the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine (2008), aromatherapy is been used as a complementary and alternative medicine for

physical and psychological diseases. In accordance with the above, seven (7) female and six (6) male volunteers for 3 particular treatments in which a stress during task was given before and after 1 of 3 treatments. They blended 3 essentials oils which are Sweet Orange (*Citrus Sinensis*), True Lavender (*Lavandula Anguistifolia*) and Sweet Marjoram (*Origanum Majorama*), which are all mixed into the carrier oils. Moreover when aromatherapy treatments finished, they noticed that massage treatments are decreasing significantly anxiety, feelings of fatigue and increased positive and comfortable feelings. Therefore, as compared to massage alone, the aromatherapy body treatment provides relief, particularly fatigue of mental origin.

As reported by the article: 'Effect of flavor components in lemon essential oil on physical or psychological stress', lemon essential oils has effects on physical and psychological stress. Lemon essential oil (*Citrus Limonum*) is citrus essential oil which affect behavioural, hormonal and neuronal responses in rodents and humans (Bunckle, 2001). Its active constituents include pinenel, limonene, phellandrene, camphene, linalool, acetates of linalool and geranyl, citral and citronellal. The monoterpene compounds in citrus essential oil affected the released of monoamines from rat brain tissues (Fukumoto, Sawasaki, Miyake and Vokogosh, 2006). These specific flavour compounds, such as limonene and linalool, have particular effect on behavioural, hormonal and neuronal parameters. However, more studies are needed to analyze the effect of citrus essential oils in aromatherapy.

In accordance with the journal article: 'Effectiveness of aromatherapy in reducing stress and anxiety level in undergraduate health science students:

<https://assignbuster.com/aromatherapy-in-reducing-patient-stress-levels/>

a preliminary study', thirty-six students between aged 18 to 29 received treatments in two different groups, aroma group and control group. The aroma groups showed powerful decrease in stress and anxiety levels (24%), while in control group decreased stress level only (11%). As a result, aromatherapy proved to be effective in reducing stress and anxiety level in the graduate health students.

The most effective essential oil for health problems is Rose (*Rosa Centifolia*) (Hoffmann, 1990). The rose has traditionally been called the 'Queen of Flowers' and in aromatherapy Rose essential oil is often thought of as the queen among essential oils (Davis, 2005). Rose has powerful effects on the mental and emotional level. Other useful essential oils are basil, chamomile, clary sage, hyssop, jasmine, lavender, marjoram, orange flower absolute, patchouli, pine, rosemary, sandalwood, verbena, ylang-ylang. There are soothing, calming, refreshing and relaxing oils. In addition, we can use these specific essential oils in bath, perfume, in vaporization and cologne (Hoffmann, 1990).

Some of the most practical actions that people can do about stress are yoga, medication, exercise, creative activities and aromatherapy, which they have an important function as de-stressing techniques (Davis, 2006). All the sedative and antidepressant oils are Bergamot, Chamomile, Clary Sage, Jasmine, Lavender, Marjoram, Neroli, Rose, Rosewood and Vetiver. Other essential oils, like Geranium Rosemary, Peppermint and Thyme, could help in the short-term, but they should not be over-used. These specific essential oils have actions on the adrenals glands. Likewise aromatic baths helps stressful people to calm and relax.

According to Keville and Green (2009), the use of sedative essential oils, just as rose, remained as a part of health care through the ninety century. Most sedating are the citrus scents which include melissa, neroli, petitgrain, chamomile, asafetida, valerian and opopanax. Keville and Green (2009) said that lavender (*lavandula angustifolia*) is one of the most popular essential oil to relieve stress. Two compounds in lavender, linalool and terpineol, are proved to relax the CNS (Central Nervous System). Additionally another compound, alpha waves, correlates with relaxation and less depressed anxiety, headaches and strain from overwork.

Various essential oils, as Bergamot, Roman Chamomile, Clary Sage, Frankincense, Lavender, Petitgrain, Rosewood, Sweet Marjoram, Sweet Orange, Sandalwood, Tangerine and Ylang-Ylang are available to help cope with stresses. Also essential oils that help to lighter tiredness aches and pain are for instance Basil, Black Pepper, Ginger, Lemon, Geranium, Peppermint and Thyme. What's more essential oils, such as Bergamot, Mandarin, Melissa, Neroli, Rose and Jasmine help from anti-depressant, anxiety and quit (Battaglia, 2003).

Another research found that patients who had aromatherapy treatments described significantly greater development in their mood and have decreased the level of anxiety and stress. According to Journal article: 'Alternative and Complementary Modalities for Managing Stress and Anxiety', aquatherapy and aromatherapy treatments are two effective ways that are used for reducing stress and pain. In particular aquatherapy is a use of some form of water to augment healing. In this specific study 122 patients had aromatherapy treatments in order to reduce their level of anxiety and stress.

<https://assignbuster.com/aromatherapy-in-reducing-patient-stress-levels/>

After aromatherapy treatments, patients felt less anxious and appeared to have more positive feelings. They noticed that rose and lavender essential oils have soothing effects on person's feelings. In the same study, Manley commented that these specific essential oils, which are lemon, lemongrass, peppermint, basil, bergamot, chamomile and sandalwood, have relaxing and psychologically stimulating effect in people. In addition Keegan (2003) supported that people should have more knowledge about alternative and complementary therapies in order to provide the consequences of stress.

Recent recommendations found that aromatherapy is one of the fastest growing Complementary therapies in the United Kingdom. Therefore, Micozzi (2001) support that in the United Kingdom it is difficult to pick up a magazine that does not mention aromatherapy. The IFPA (International Federation of Professional Aromatherapists) have over 3000 practicing members in United Kingdom. On the other hand, Aromatherapy did not become popular in the United States until the 1980s. Most people in the United States approximately the 70% have never used any of these complementary therapies (Spencer and Jacobs, 1999). Although the practice of Aromatherapy is similar on both the United Kingdom and the United States, Aromatherapy is more popular in the United Kingdom. This leads us to put that as matter on consideration. Why Aromatherapy is not developed in the United States? According to Falsetto (2010) aromatherapy education in the United Kingdom is higher than a lot of education providers in the United States. Therefore, aromatherapists in the United States are not interested in expanding the profession of aromatherapy, because they are not seem to use the essential oils, in their work, as much as those in the United Kingdom.

The authors Ernst, Pittler and Wider (2006) stated that some essential oils cause photosensitive reactions and some others have carcinogenic potential. Moreover they insist that all essential oils have allergic reactions. , In addition Davis (2001) commented that even small amounts of oil can built up to a toxic level in the body over a period of time and also some of the oils are very poisonous indeed. However, Davis (2001) encourages people to have safe use of essential oil in order to have enjoyable health benefits without any risk. She said that essential oils help the whole person in maintaining a balance of health. She insists that essential oils have therapeutic properties in aromatherapy treatment without phototoxic effects. Although, essential oils are highly complex chemically, it makes them both flexible and safe.

According to journal article, Lemon essential oil (*Citrus Limonum*) is the strongest citrus essential oil that has effect on psychological stress (Bunckle, 2001). Keville and Green (2009) support that, citrus essential oils which are relieving stress, are Melissa, neroli, peritgrain, chamomile, asafetida, valerian and opapanax. In addition, they insist that the most popular citrus essential oil for stress is Lavender (*Lavandula Anguistifolia*). Which of the two researches is correct and safe? As we know, lemon essential oil may irritate sensitive skin. In this specific journal article the article does not make any comments about the negativity of essential oils. Most research studies agree with Keville and Green (2009) that lavender essential oil is the most powerful oil to deal with stress. It provides balancing action on the central nervous system that may well be valuable in manic-stress states. Also another

essential oil that encounter with stress is Rose that has sedative effect on the body's nervous system as well as Rosemary.

Spencer and Jacobs (1999) support that in Complementary and Alternative Medicine there are many areas in which evidences about the risks, benefits or efficacy choices in treatments are lacking. However, Aromatherapy has grown over the years and the main concern of scientists today is using the modality safety. The use of aromatherapy possibly offers the safest and best quality products since aromatherapists have specific types of training and testing due to become professional practitioners.

The practice of aromatherapy varies widely across the world. There are increasing numbers of the aromatherapy in finding acceptance around the world today. What is more nowadays, Aromatherapy has been able to be practicing at home and also can be used in the office, where it can be used to treat stress. The profession of aromatherapy will be probably expanding more on France, England, Japan and United States, in the future, as it is a modern method of therapy. In the future the practice of massage will be acceptance in many hospital departments around the world (Falsetto, 2010). Several hospitals are now funding nurses to attend aromatherapy courses. The future of aromatherapy looks bright indeed. People everywhere are learning continuously more about the advantages of aromatherapy.

Conclusion

To sum up, Aromatherapy treatments can reduce patients' level of anxiety and stress. According to various research studies, essential oils are available to help deal with stressful problems. Modern scientists have been doing

researches on aromatherapy and they have proven its healing properties by using essential oils. The use of essential oils can help people control stress, alleviate anxiety and tension. However, some essential oils are phototoxic and irritate the sensitive skin. But if we are careful with blending the essential oils, we will avoid any risk. Some hospitals also started using aromatherapy procedures to calm the patients. There are few studies that have looked for the safety of aromatherapy in people. As a consequence, more research is needed to increase the popularity of aromatherapy.