

Effects of Aromatherapy

Appraised by:

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Clinical Question

In nursing staff, does aromatherapy decrease stress/anxiety levels?

Source of Evidence

Chen, M.-C., Fang, S.-H., & Fang, L. (2015). The effects of aromatherapy in relieving symptoms related to job stress among nurses. *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, 21(1), 87–93. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/10.1111/ijn.12229>

Donaldson, J., Ingrao, C., Drake, D., & Ocampo, E. (2017). The effect of aromatherapy on anxiety experienced by hospital nurses. *MEDSURG Nursing*. 26(3), 201-206. Retrieved October 14, 2018, from <https://web-a-ebSCOhost-com.ezproxy.lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=7&sid=4a645a55-60ce-466e-9efd-44976f7efe66%40sdc-v-sessmgr05>

Eren, N.B., & Oztunc, G. (2017). The effects of aromatherapy on the stress and anxiety levels of nurses working in intensive care units. *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, 10(3), 1615-1623.

Johnson, K., West, T., Diana, S., Todd, J., Haynes, B., Bernhardt, J., & Johnson, R. (2017). Use of aromatherapy to promote a therapeutic nurse environment. *Intensive and Critical Care Nursing*, 40, 18-25. doi; 10.1016/j.iccn,2017.01.006

Synthesis of Evidence

Four articles were reviewed as evidence for this report. A systematic review of a randomized control trial and three quasi-experimental studies.

Chen, Fang, and Fang (2015) conducted a randomized control trial of 110 nursing staff that displayed more symptoms of stress related to the average nurse, scheduled to work over seven consecutive days. Fifty-seven were placed in the control group and 53 were placed in the experimental group. The experimental group wore an essential oil bottle hung in front of their right chest containing lavender essential oil in it, the control group wore an essential oil bottle on their right chest with no lavender essential oil in it. This study proved that this method of lavender essential oil aromatherapy was ineffective in reducing the number of job stress related symptoms suffered by nurses for 2 days only. The main finding of this research is that stress symptoms are decreased after using lavender essential oil aromatherapy for greater than 2 days.

Donaldson, Ingram, Drake, and Ocampo (2017) conducted a quasi-experimental non-randomized control trial. Prior to the beginning of the study the nurses completed a questionnaire on the level of stress they were experiencing. It included 44 RN's on an orthopedic trauma level

II center in Southern California. They issued questionnaires that measured the amount of stress each nurse was experiencing prior to beginning the study, and after the study was completed. Aromatherapy was dispensed near the nurse's station throughout the duration of the study. After the study was completed, the questionnaires showed that the anxiety and stress levels were the same both before and after the aromatherapy was done.

Eren and Oztunc (2017) conducted a quasi-experimental study of 45 ICU nurses. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of aromatherapy on the stress and anxiety levels of nurses in intensive care units. Before they received the aromatherapy their blood pressure, pulse, personal information questionnaire, perceived stress scale, state-trait anxiety inventory, and visual analog scale were taken. After receiving aromatherapy the tests were done again and showed to have no direct effect on the nurse's stress/anxiety levels or vital signs. There was a significant decrease in the nurse's state anxiety scores.

Johnson et al. (2017) conducted a quasi-experimental which was intended to assess perceived stress before and after the introduction of a certified pure therapeutic grade essential oil Lavender among RN's, CN's and PCT's who were employed in a TICU, SSC, and a TOU at a community level one trauma center. A pre and post survey evaluating stress levels was conducted. Data was collected with a survey which was sent out to the participants via online through a survey monkey. A total participants of 71. RN's, CN's and PCT's were introduced to the certified pure therapeutic grade essential oil of lavender for 24 hours for 30 days.. None of the participants withdrew from the study. They all enjoyed the stress and anxiety relieving effect of the oil. All participants acknowledged that oil of lavender works well as far as reduction of anxiety and stress is concerned.

Conclusions

Two of the articles said there were no significant findings that aromatherapy decreased stress/anxiety levels. Two articles supported that stress and anxiety levels were lowered and nurses enjoyed their time in quiet, dark environments during the day.

Implications for Nursing Practice

Recommended if you want to use aromatherapy to use it for at least two days a week for 15 minutes and for four days for it to have full effects on stress levels.