

18. Symptoms and Signs

Reference

Ogasawara E, Shiihara Y, Koitabashi K, et al. The relaxing and refreshing effects of aromatherapeutic massage using citrus fruit essential oil — evaluation using skin conductance and a mood adjective check list. *Nihon Kango Kenkyu Gakkai Zasshi (Journal of Japanese Society of Nursing Research)* 2007; 30 (4): 1726 (in Japanese with English abstract). Ichushi Web ID 2007310111

1. Objectives

To verify the effects of aromatherapeutic massage using citrus fruit essential oil for deepening relaxation and increasing refreshment.

2. Design

Crossover randomized controlled trial (RCT – cross over).

3. Setting

Gunma University, Japan.

4. Participants

Thirty-five healthy female students, excluding students who dislike citrus fruit aroma.

5. Intervention

Arm 1: Aromatherapy group (essential oil; n=20, average age 20.6 years).

Arm 2: Control group (no essential oil; n=15, average age 21.2 years).

6. Main outcome measures

Skin conductance (SC); abbreviated Japanese UWIST Mood Adjective Check List (JUMACL) questionnaire: tense arousal (TA) and energetic arousal (EA) scores.

7. Main results

1) There was no between-group difference in SC.

2) There was a significantly smaller decrease in EA in Arm 1 than in Arm 2 ($P<0.05$).

8. Conclusions

Massage decreases SC and TA and has a relaxing effect whether or not the massage oil contains essential oil.

9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

10. Abstractor's comments

There are many difficulties in evaluating the effects of essential oils and in identifying their effects in an experimental study. However, this trial deserves credit for investigating the question and for maintaining conditions as rigorously as possible. The authors need to verify the effects of essential oils more objectively by including brain waves and electrocardiogram (frequency analysis) as indicators because there was only one objective outcome measure (skin conductance), no safety assessment, and a sample consisting exclusively of female students.

11. Abstractor and date

Ogata A, 24 December 2010, 18 March 2011.