

## **Aromatherapy Massage**

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### **An evaluation of aromatherapy massage in palliative care.**

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The use of complementary therapies, such as massage and aromatherapy massage, is rising in popularity among patients and healthcare professionals. They are increasingly being used to improve the quality of life of patients, but there is little evidence of their efficacy. This study assessed the effects of massage and aromatherapy massage on cancer patients in a palliative care setting. We studied 103 patients, who were randomly allocated to receive massage using a carrier oil (massage) or massage using a carrier oil plus the Roman chamomile essential oil (aromatherapy massage). Outcome measurements included the Rotterdam Symptom Checklist (RSCL), the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) and a semi-structured questionnaire, administered 2 weeks postmassage, to explore patients' perceptions of massage. There was a statistically significant reduction in anxiety after each massage on the STAI ( $P < 0.001$ ), and improved scores on the RSCL: psychological ( $P < 0.001$ ), quality of life ( $P < 0.01$ ), severe physical ( $P < 0.05$ ), and severe psychological ( $P < 0.05$ ) subscales for the combined aromatherapy and massage group. The aromatherapy group's scores improved on all RSCL subscales at the 1% level of significance or better, except for severely restricted activities. The massage group's scores improved on four RSCL subscales but these improvements did not reach statistical significance. Massage with or without essential oils appears to reduce levels of anxiety. The addition of an essential oil seems to enhance the effect of massage and to improve physical and psychological symptoms, as well as overall quality of life.

Publication Types:

- Clinical Trial
- Randomized Controlled Trial