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The use of aromatherapy to decrease pain and nausea in medical/surgical patients

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Background: Aromatherapy has been shown to have positive effects on several different aspects of pain management and well being. This project was initiated as a way to improve pain management on a general medical/surgical unit in conjunction with opiate pain management.

Materials & Methods: Aromatherapy therapy tabs were offered to patients with sickle cell, general pain, nausea/vomiting and a post survey about the patient's experience was conducted to determine the effectiveness. Lavender and sandalwood were used for relaxation, comfort, sleep, pain relief. Orange-peppermint uplifts, energizes, and can soothe queasiness and was used for nausea/vomiting patients.

Results: 97% of all patients with pain reported that it helped them to relax and feel comfort. All nausea and vomiting patients reported it helped them to relax and feel comfort. 85% of nausea and vomiting patients reported it helped soothe queasiness. 25% of staff survey reported it made their job easier. We measured one data point prior to the intervention and in pain management score (PMS) was 45.5%. The (PMS) improved to 77.5% then 50% respectively then 100% in the post intervention periods still showing improvement from the initial score of 45.5%.

Conclusion: With the implementation of the aromatherapy as an adjunct to pain management we noted an improvement in pain scores from the initial to present which reflects the impact this project had on the patients' experience. Although it did not totally help relieve pain for the majority of our patients, it helped in other areas such as sleep, relaxation and comfort.

Biography

Joyce Yeo has completed her Master's degree in nursing from Columbia University. She is a Clinical Nurse III on a medical surgical unit of 31 beds.

Gemma Umali BSN RN completed her Bachelor Degree of Nursing from Pines City College in the Phillipines and is also currently a Clinical Nurse III on a general medical surgical unit at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Allen Hospital.

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