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Is it possible to alleviate chronic pain with aromatherapy and massage

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Chronic pain is clearly a major health care problem all over the world. Unfortunately, there have been concerns about the effectiveness of traditional medical interventions, suggesting the need for alternative chronic pain treatment strategies. Alternative strategies including physical therapy and rehabilitation, exercises, peripheral techniques such as aromatherapy, and massage have also been employed to manage chronic pain and improve functional status. In this abstract, the outcomes of three randomized controlled studies conducted by Gok Metin and her colleagues using aromatherapy and massage that focusing on to alleviate rheumatoid arthritis pain, diabetic peripheral neuropathic pain and chemotherapy induced peripheral neuropathic are presented. The first study using aromatherapy massage three times each week for a 6-week period for both knees of patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis significantly decreased pain scores ($p < .05$). The aromatherapy massage essential oil was a 5% mixture consisting of *Lavandula angustifolia*, *Juniperus communis*, *Cananga odorata*, and *Rosmarinus officinalis* in the ratio 3:3:2:2 in 100 mL of coconut carrier oil in that study. The second study using aromatherapy massage three times per week for a period of 4 weeks to the feet and the hands in patients with diabetic peripheral neuropathic pain significantly decreased neuropathic pain scores ($p < .05$). Related study authors utilized an aromatherapy oil blend including rosemary, geranium, lavender, eucalyptus, and chamomile at a ratio of 1:1:1:1:1 with the coconut carrier oil in a 5% solution. As for the third study using classical massage one time per week for a period of 12 weeks to the feet and the hands in patients receiving adjuvant paclitaxel regimen significantly alleviated chemotherapy induced peripheral neuropathic pain scores ($p < .05$). Overall, considering the outcomes of these randomized controlled trials aromatherapy and massage can be readily integrated into clinical settings by nursing staff to alleviate chronic pain.

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