



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

This study examined the use of aromatherapy massage and music to decrease work stress and anxiety levels of emergency nurses.

DESIGN IMPLICATIONS

Designers and operators may either consider incorporating a space that can be used to administer massages or designing a space that offers the same environmental ambiance (i.e., acoustic isolation, music, and aroma from essential oils) for staff to retreat to.

The Effect of Aromatherapy Massage With Music on the Stress and Anxiety Levels of Emergency Nurses

Davis, C., Cooke, M., Holzhauser, K., Jones, M., Finucane, J.
2005 | Australian Emergency Nursing Journal
Volume 8, Issue 1, Pages 43-50

Key Concepts/Context

Nurses who work in emergency and intensive care units and new graduates suffer from high levels of stress, which is associated with sick leave. Some research shows that massage with aromatherapy relieves stress. However, this research is not specific to emergency room nursing staff.

Methods

Researchers randomly selected participants from all permanent registered nursing staff working in the emergency department of a large metropolitan adult facility that provides services for approximately 45,000 patients annually. They assessed participants' degree of perceived occupational stress before and after 12 weeks of an aromatherapy massage and music intervention. The investigators measured the participants' anxiety levels before and after each massage session. Finally, they also measured sick leave.

Findings

The researchers report that occupational stress and sick day levels did not decrease. However, they did note that the results clearly show the immediate positive effect of aromatherapy massage with music on the anxiety levels on staff. They report that the nurses found the massages extremely beneficial and indicated that they would be interested in paying for them if they were available and regular massages may improve stress levels.



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Limitations

The authors note that this study was conducted in one organization, which might make the findings context-specific and difficult to generalize.