Implementation of Aromatherapy for the Reduction of Stress Among ICU Nurses

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Background

The prevalence of stress among Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurses has significantly increased in recent years.¹ The increase in patient to nurse ratio, or "duty overload," accounts for the highest amount of stress in ICU nurses.¹ 51.24% of ICU nurses report experiencing a medium level of stress and 44.82% report a high level of stress.¹ Aromatherapy has shown to decrease an individual's level of stress and promote relaxation and higher energy levels.

PICOT Question

In adult critical care nurses (P), what is the effect of aromatherapy (I) on nurses' stress level (O) compared to adult critical care nurses without the use of aromatherapy (C) within one shift (T).

Literature Search

Key Terms: Stress levels; nursing; aromatherapy; ICU Database: CINAHL Complete; Nursing Reference Center Plus **Article Selection Criteria:** Publication between 2017-2022; published in English; published in academic journals; peer-reviewed articles



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Synthesis of Findings

- night shifts, increased energy and lowered stress by 44% in registered nurses between the ages of 23-64.²⁻⁴
- a week after exposure to constant aromatic diffusion over a 30-day period.²⁻³
- A bidimensional model analysis found that there was a large negative correlation between anxiety and depression with the implementation of aromatic therapy.^{2,5}

Decision to Change

- The high levels of stress among Intensive Care Unit nurses needs intervention.
- The use of aromatherapy is a complementary health practice that uses smell to improve job performance through reduced stress.
- Evidence showed that there is a reduction in stress levels among Intensive Care Unit nurses who received aromatherapy intervention.
- Lavender and citrus diffusion in Intensive Care Units increased energy, lowered stress and decreased systolic and diastolic blood pressures in registered nurses.

Evaluation

- essential oil diffusion will decrease the stress level of ICU nurses by 25%.
- impressions of feeling troubled and ways of having behaved in a difficult with a five-point likert scale.⁶
- The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21) consists of 21 all" and 3 being "most of the time".⁷



• Lavender and citrus diffusion in Intensive Care Units, during both day and

• Nurses working in Intensive Care Units demonstrated reduced stress within

• By the end of the 3 month implementation period, the use of aromatherapy via • Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) consists of 10 statements related to personal situation. Six questions in the scale are negatively constructed (1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 10) and four are positively constructed (4, 5, 7 and 8). They are all answered

statements assessing 3 aspects of mental health. The client assigns a 0-3 value to each statement indicating how often it applied to them, with 0 being "not at

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