



It Just Makes SCENTS: Utilizing Aromatherapy in Pediatric Patients with Migraines

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Purpose

This nurse-driven aromatherapy protocol was implemented with the purpose of empowering nurses to provide comfort measures to pediatric patients with migraines and improve patient outcomes related to pain, anxiety, nausea, and sleep.

Objectives

1. Identify the need for aromatherapy use in patients with migraines
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of aromatherapy for patients with migraines
3. Describe the process to implement a nurse-driven aromatherapy protocol

Background

Migraines are a disabling condition that affects 10 percent of children nationally, often leading to hospital admission for management. If pain is not adequately improved from pharmacological interventions, non-pharmacological methods of pain relief are often sought to help alleviate symptoms. Using a holistic intervention, such as aromatherapy, has shown to assist with pain relief, relaxation, and overall improved symptom management for children with pain.

Methods

Existing literature identified strong evidence to support the use of aromatherapy to decrease migraine symptoms. The nurse-led team planned and implemented a trial for use of aromatherapy for pediatric patients admitted for migraine headaches. Nurses were educated on the protocol including qualifications and contraindications for use, how to access and apply aromatherapy, documentation in the medical record, and patient evaluation and outcomes. After 24 hours, the nurse would evaluate the impact of aromatherapy on patient outcomes and determine if continued home use was desired through a standard evaluation survey. After a 3-month trial, the use of aromatherapy became standard practice for migraine patients. After the trial, aromatherapy has been expanded to all patients with pain, anxiety, nausea, and sleep disturbances.



Aromatherapy Evaluation

Please take a moment to complete this survey on aromatherapy to help improve our practice!
Please circle your response or write it in the blank spaces.

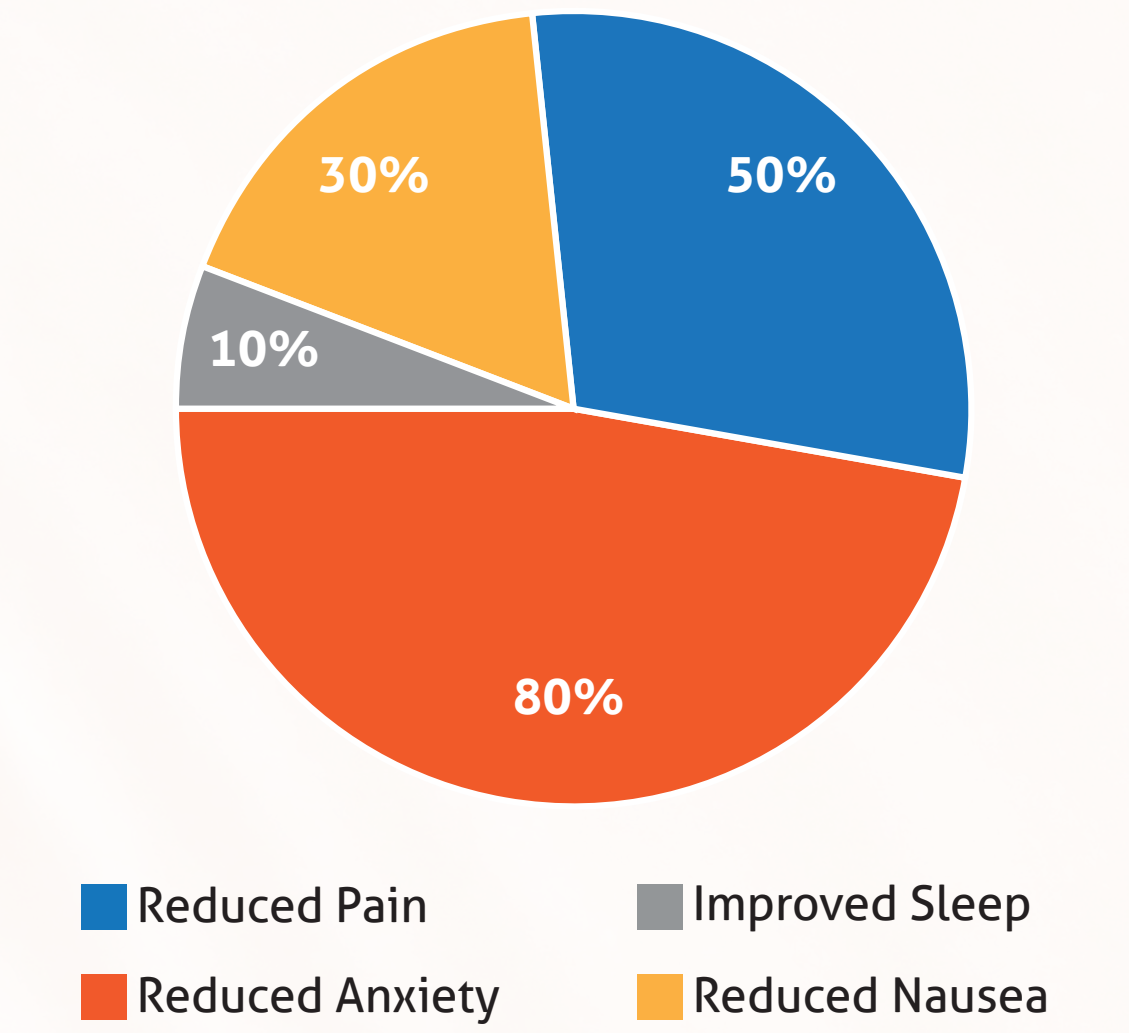
1. Did the aromatherapy help your primary concern? Yes or No
What was your primary concern? _____
2. Did the aromatherapy help other concerns (examples: sleep, nausea, anxiety)? Yes or No
What other concerns did the aromatherapy help with? _____
3. If your concern is pain, what was your pain score BEFORE using aromatherapy? Please circle your pain score number
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. If your concern is pain, what was your pain score AFTER using aromatherapy? Please circle your pain score number
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Would you continue to use aromatherapy at home? Yes or No

Thank you,
5 Tower Staff

Results

Initially, 30 patients admitted for migraines met inclusion criteria and received aromatherapy. All patients reported improvement in symptoms. For those who reported reduced pain, average pain score decreased from 7 to 4 on a 10-point numeric pain scale. Seventy percent of the patients expressed a desire to continue aromatherapy in the home setting. Since the trial, over 200 patients have received aromatherapy and 95% of those patients have reported improved symptom management.

Aromatherapy Outcomes for Patients with Migrains



Conclusions/Implications for Practice

Results support the use of aromatherapy as an adjuvant therapy for migraine treatment. This trial demonstrated that aromatherapy was a feasible intervention with high patient satisfaction. Future implications will include expansion of aromatherapy to other areas of the hospital.

References

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