
Aromatherapy in the Workplace

Elequil Aromatabs® Reduce Nurses' Work-Related Stress

Maria Shonyo, President
Vela Technologies, LLC

Key Benefits Achieved

- Percentage of nurses feeling moderate-high levels of workplace stress decreased from 17% to 3%
 - Overall 10% increase in those feeling no stress throughout their work day
 - Statistically significant difference demonstrated in how nursing staff perceive stress at work when using Elequil aromatabs®
-

Healthcare Providers Face Extraordinary Stress

Without a doubt, healthcare workers experience high levels of stress in the workplace. Nurses in particular are especially hard hit due to a multitude of factors:

- Heavy workloads
- High nurse to patient ratios
- Rotating shifts
- Time pressures caring for patients with complex healthcare needs
- Too much responsibility and too little authority¹

Stress is not only difficult on the individual: The health and emotional well-being of healthcare workers can directly affect their quality of life and job satisfaction as well as the quality of care they deliver.²

Aromatherapy Study

Objectives

A team of four BSN nursing students from the College of Saint Elizabeth in Morristown, NJ, conducted a capstone project study to determine if the use of lavender aromatherapy would help reduce perceived stress experienced by nurses working in the acute care hospital setting:

- Melissa Collado, BSN, RN
- Karen Landaverde, BSN, RN
- Anaelisa Ramirez, BSN, RN
- Jessica Spencer, BSN, RN

Study Methods

Study participants included 24 full-time registered nurses from a local community hospital in New Jersey:

- 14 nurses from the Med-Surg Telemetry unit
- 10 nurses from the Labor and Delivery unit

The study was conducted over three consecutive days in April 2020. Study participants filled out a simple stress

level survey with a visual analog scale³ every four hours throughout their 12-hour shift. Both day and night shifts were included.

- Day 1: No use of aromatherapy.
- Day 2: Elequil aromatabs[®] Lavender (Beekley Medical[®], Bristol, CT), at minimum aroma level, was applied to the nurse’s outermost item of clothing.
- Day 3: Elequil aromatabs Lavender, at maximum aroma level, was applied to the nurse’s outermost item of clothing.









Jessica Spencer, one of the four nursing students conducting this study, commented, *“I would hope that our findings one day show the importance of wellness in the nursing profession.”*

Results

The nursing students drew the following conclusions from the results of their study:

- Without aromatherapy, 80% of nurses reported feeling mild to moderate-high levels of stress while 20% felt no stress.
- The percentage of nurses feeling moderate-high levels of workplace stress decreased from 17% to 3% with the use of Elequil[®] lavender aromatherapy at maximum aroma level.
- There was an overall 10% increase in those feeling no stress throughout their work day with the use of Elequil lavender aromatherapy at maximum aroma level.
- There was a statistically significant difference demonstrated in how nursing staff perceive stress at work when using Elequil[®].

Visual Analog Scale Used in The Stress Level Survey

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Anxiousness Level	None	Mild	Mild-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	Highest
Faces						

Effects of Stress

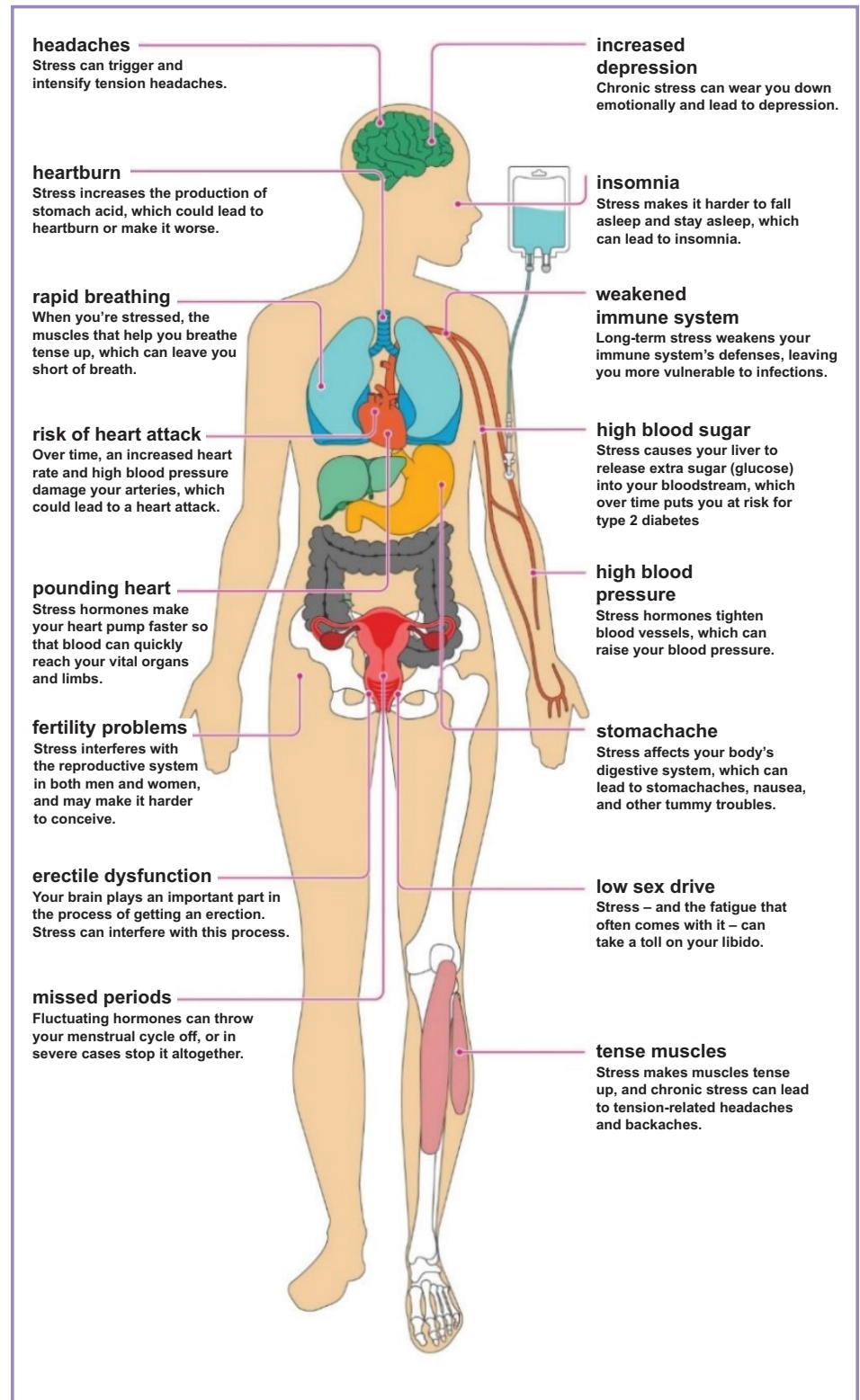
The effects of stress and anxiety are as broad and wide-ranging as the causes. Healthcare workers today face even higher levels of stress as they struggle to deal with COVID-19, which has brought an entirely new set of challenges to all facets of healthcare.

A reduction in stress can benefit not only the nurse but also the patients they care for. Reduced stress can translate to fewer medical errors, better patient-caregiver relationships and higher patient satisfaction. Nurses who report more health promotion behaviors⁴ also report less job stress and/or higher job satisfaction, and nurses who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to feel committed to their jobs.⁵ Conversely, work-related stress is associated with high turnover rates and psychosomatic complaints.⁶

Aromatherapy Alleviates Workplace Stress

Elequil aromatabs® is an individualized, non-pharmacologic aromatherapy product created for the clinical setting. The self-adhesive tab is quick and easy to apply to the upper chest area of clothing and stays with the individual as they go about their day. **Elequil aromatabs was found to help alleviate work-related stress for nurses participating in this study.** Other studies have similarly supported the feasibility of utilizing essential oils for stress reduction among nurses. In one study, the pre-survey score had a significantly higher mean than the post-survey score, trending down from “feeling stress half of the time” to “once in a while.”⁷

The Effects of Stress on Your Body



Source: Healthline, The Effects of Stress on Your Body, <https://www.healthline.com/health/stress/effects-on-body#1>.

Forward-looking question posed by this capstone project: **“How can we as a society continue to work together to reduce workplace stress for healthcare workers, particularly nurses in acute care settings?”**

Name	LinkedIn
Karen Landaverde, BSN, RN	https://www.linkedin.com/in/karen-landaverde-03a894130
Anaelisa Ramirez, BSN, RN	http://www.linkedin.com/in/anaelisa-ramirez-7b72a01b1
Jessica Spencer, BSN, RN	http://linkedin.com/in/jessica-spencer-rn-bsn-9b9520145

References

- 1 Sarafis, P., Rousaki, E., Tsounis, A. et al. The impact of occupational stress on nurses' caring behaviors and their health related quality of life. *BMC Nurs* 15, 56 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-016-0178-y>.
 - 2 Ibid.
 - 3 Cao X, Yumul R, Elvir Lazo OL, Friedman J, Durra O, Zhang X, et al. (2017). A novel visual facial anxiety scale for assessing preoperative anxiety. *PLoS One*. 2017 Feb 14;12(2):e0171233. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0171233>.
 - 4 Health promotion is defined by the World Health Organization as the process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants and thereby improve their health; Study.com, Health Behaviors and Promotion: Definition & Explanation, retrieved from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/health-behaviors-and-promotion-definition-explanation.html>.
 - 5 Williams, Heather L. BSN, RN, CEN, FMCHC; Costley, Teresa MSN, APRN, ACNS-BC; Bellury, Lanell M. PhD, RN, AOCNS, OCN; Moobed, Jasmine BSN, RN, CMSRN. Do Health Promotion Behaviors Affect Levels of Job Satisfaction and Job Stress for Nurses in an Acute Care Hospital?, *JONA: The Journal of Nursing Administration: June 2018 - Volume 48 - Issue 6 - p 342-348* doi: 10.1097/NNA.0000000000000625, retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29794598/>.
 - 6 Ibid.
 - 7 Johnson K, West T, Diana S, et al. Use of aromatherapy to promote a therapeutic nurse environment. *Intensive Crit Care Nurs*. 2017;40:18-25. doi:10.1016/j.iccn.2017.01.006, retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28237089/>.
-