

Complementary Therapy

For Relaxation and Stress Management

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Complementary Therapies

- Received alongside any treatment and medication to ‘complement’ them
- Help manage symptoms
- Help manage side effects
- Calm and balance body and mind so better able to manage illness
- Relaxation – ‘switch off’ from illness



How CTs can help manage porphyria

- Help reduce stress and anxiety – retain control and manage day to day life
- Prevent admission to hospital – reduction of stress as potential trigger
- Encourage better quality of sleep
- Help control and manage pain e.g abdominal pain
- Decrease nausea
- Time out – ‘me’ time
- Support carers

Complementary Therapies

Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

- Meditation
- Hypnosis
- Guided Imagery
- Biofeedback
- Relaxation Therapy
- CBT
- Prayer and Spirituality
- Homeopathy
- TCM
- Bodywork and Movement Therapy
- Acupuncture
- Ayurvedic Medicine
- Physical Medicine
- Chiropractic Therapy
- Energy Medicine
- Dietary Medicine
- Herbal Medicine
- Massage Therapy
- Naturopathy
- Neural Therapy
- Magnet Therapy

Massage

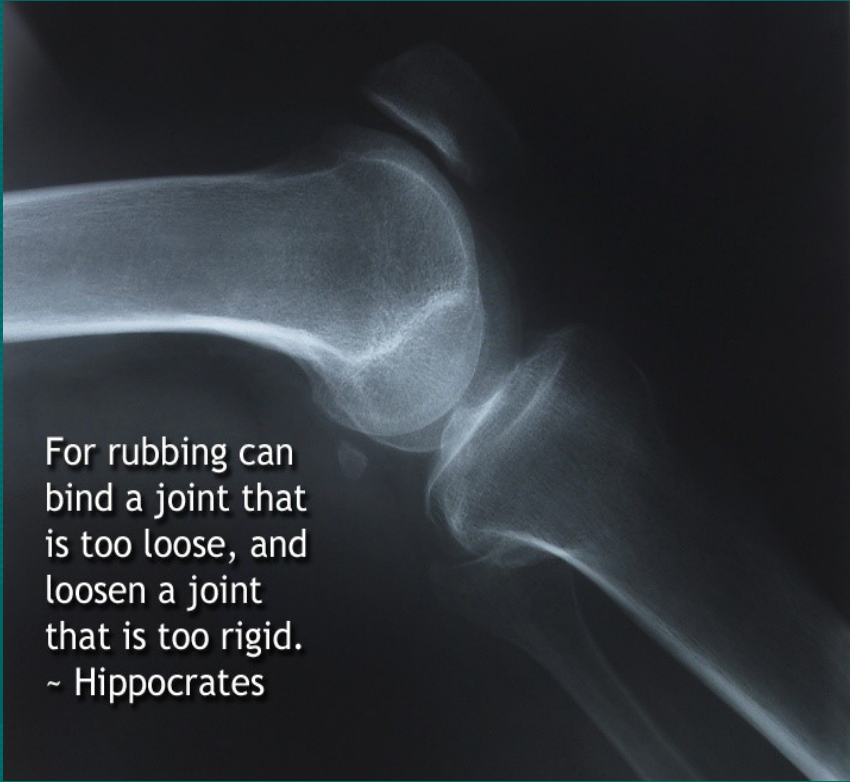
- **Massage** therapy is manual manipulation of soft body tissues (muscle, connective tissue, tendons and ligaments) to enhance a person's health and well-being
- Effleurage (stroking)
- Petrissage (kneading)
- Tapotement (beating - rhythmic percussion)
- Many different modalities e.g. Thai, Swedish, shiatsu, deep tissue



‘Rub it better’



THE PHYSICIAN MUST BE EXPERIENCED IN MANY
THINGS, BUT MOST ASSUREDLY IN RUBBING.
~ HIPPOCRATES



For rubbing can
bind a joint that
is too loose, and
loosen a joint
that is too rigid.
~ Hippocrates

Chronic illness

- Living with chronic illness can mean you hold tension and stress throughout your body
- Pain causes us to hold ourselves in unnatural, strained ways
- Consistent aches/fatigue in back, neck, shoulders, legs and arms common
- Tension headaches caused by tight muscles
- Massage can help alleviate tension and relieve stress held in muscles and joints
- Massage using slow, soothing strokes can help relax the body and mind

Massage for relaxation

- When we are stressed the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) is activated – involuntary reaction to physical discomfort or mental anxiety
- Governs ‘fight or flight’ response – preparing body to cope with potential threat
- Cortisol stress hormone released into blood stream
- Causes: pupils dilate, senses heightened, heart rate increases, breathing rate increases, blood flow retained to muscles, blood drawn from non essential functions e.g. digestion/skin, blood pressure increases, excess glucose released to provide muscles with energy

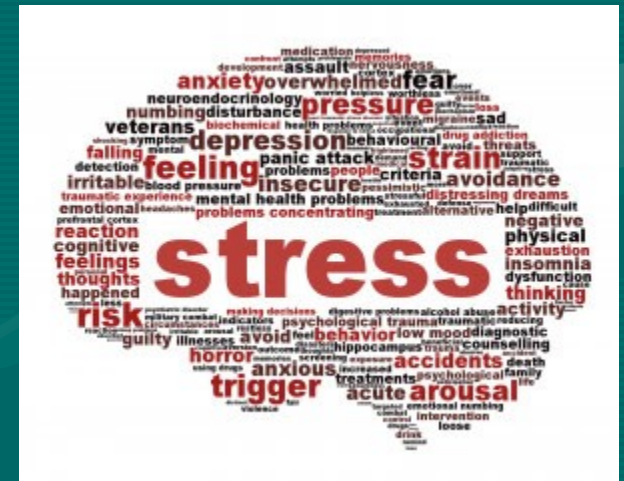
Stress! Useful in short bouts!



Primitive reaction that serves us well when being attacked!

Prolonged stress

- Over time, living in a state of constant stress has a negative effect on the organs and systems of your body
- Being in a constant state of 'high alert' means the body isn't functioning in a balanced, logical way
- Manifests as disorders such as **high blood pressure**, skin complaints, hair loss, insomnia, digestive disorders, increased likelihood to develop diabetes, lack of concentration, difficult to focus, low mood



Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)

- Massage, relaxation and soothing touch activates the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)
- This counteracts the SNS to return body chemistry to a state of equilibrium – homeostasis
- This calm, balanced state means the body is better capable of functioning effectively
- The PNS causes reduction in quantity of cortisol stress hormone in circulation, blood flows from muscles to organs – permitting them to function effectively e.g digestion, breathing rate decreases, heart rate decreases, blood pressure decreases, muscles relax/stop holding so rigidly, brain stops firing so rapidly – sense of panic decreases and better able to concentrate

Reflexology

- Ancient Egyptian therapy
- The application of appropriate pressure to specific points and areas on the feet, hands, or ears
- According to reflexology these points correspond to the different organs and systems of the body, and that pressing them has a corresponding reflex reaction on that area which can have a beneficial effect on the person's health



#63550464

Reflexology for lymphatic drainage

- Current research is concentrating on specific techniques over the lymphatic reflexes of the foot for patients with lymphoedema
- Arm Measurements are taken before and after treatment and have shown statistically significant change, despite only the feet being touched



Reflexology for chronic illness

Reflexology can help:

- Induce deep state of relaxation
- Regulate sleep patterns
- Calm anxiety
- Manage stress
- Reduce headaches and migraines
- Raise energy levels
- Raise metabolism
- Boost circulation
- Help with pain issues/pain perception
- Calm and alleviate digestive disorders

Solar Plexus reflex point

- Solar plexus is a network of sympathetic nerves behind the stomach, just below your sternum
- The Solar Plexus reflex point is great for soothing the mind and body – ‘destress button’
- Located in the dip of the palm - cup hand as if you were catching a rain drop
- With thumb of the other hand gently press this point and hold for 10 seconds
- Move the thumb in a rotating motion
- Do in conjunction with some gentle deep breathing in and out and you'll find that a calmness comes about you and any pressure you are feeling gradually dissipates
- Effective for pain management, to calm anxiety and to wind down at the end of the day



Prince Charles is an advocate for Complementary Therapy and has spoken openly about how he suffers from social anxiety and uses pressure points in the hands to calm himself



Aromatherapy

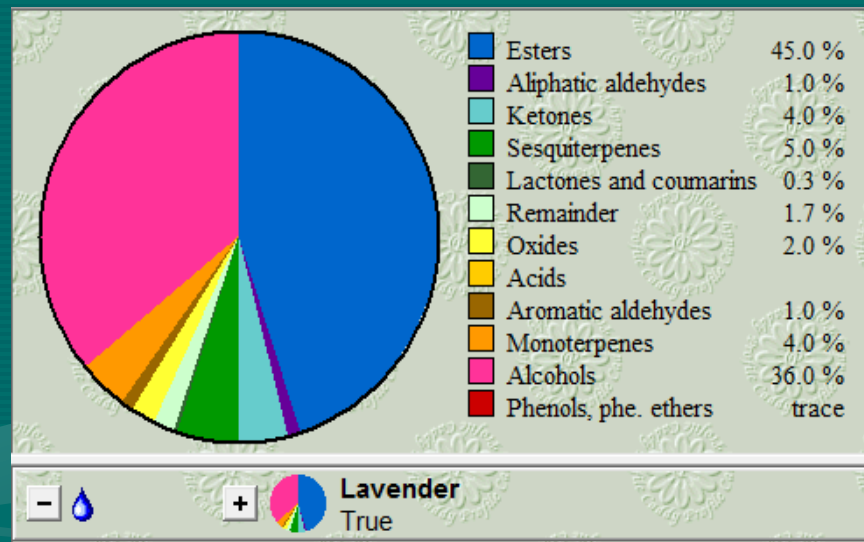
- Aromatherapy is the therapeutic use of plant-derived, aromatic **essential oils** to promote physical and psychological well-being
- **Essential oils** are the fragrant, highly concentrated natural constituents found in the leaves, flowers, roots and seeds of certain plants
- Provide the odour, characteristic properties and healing power of the plant from which it was extracted
- Extracted from the plant through various means – (typically crushing and steam distilling)
- After extraction, the resulting essential oil is a highly concentrated liquid that contains the aroma and therapeutic properties of the source from which it came

Aromatherapy

- Essential oils are made up of minute molecules that are very easily absorbed
- Each oil has a unique chemical composition of hydrocarbons and oxygenated compounds; terpenes, esters, oxides, alcohols, phenols, ketones, and aldehydes
- These components interact with bodily systems, and depending on the essential oil support various systems of the body
- Differ from fragrance oils which are artificially created, synthetic perfumes and therefore have different chemical compositions and do not possess the natural healing properties of essential oils

Chemistry of Essential Oils

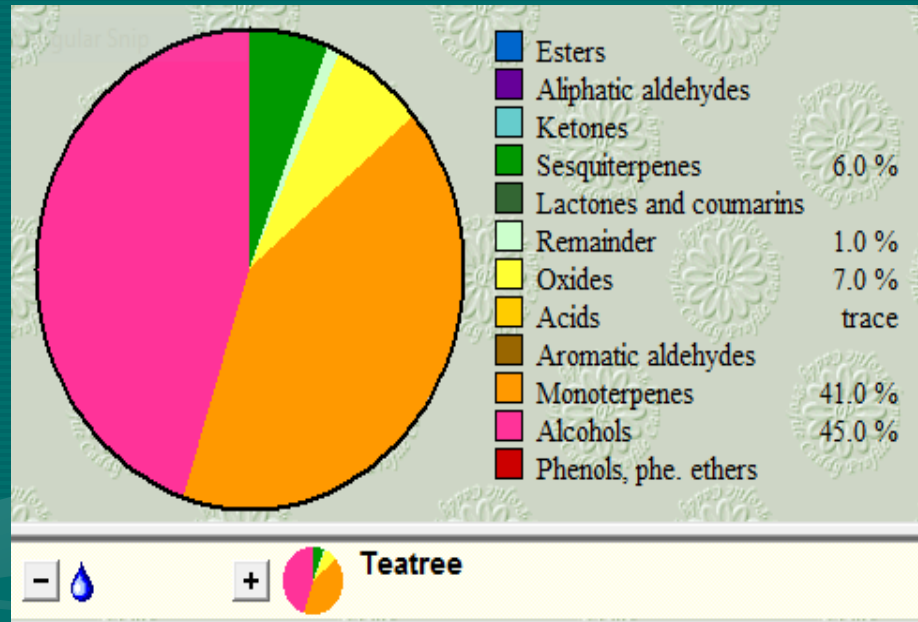
- The properties and therapeutic benefits of each essential oil vary depending on their chemistry
- This pie chart illustrates the chemical composition of pure lavender oil



- Esters – relaxing, calming and balancing. Regulate nervous system
- Alcohols – high resistance to oxydation. Ability to revert cells to normal function in animal studies, antiviral, antifungal

Chemistry of Essential Oils

- This pie chart illustrates the chemical composition of Tea Tree essential oil



- Monoterpenes – antiviral, antifungal, antimicrobial
- Alcohols – antioxidant, antiviral, antifungal
- Oxides – expectorant, stimulating

Application

- Oils are massaging into the skin – diluted in a massage medium
- Applied in ointments, compresses
- Put in baths/foot soaks

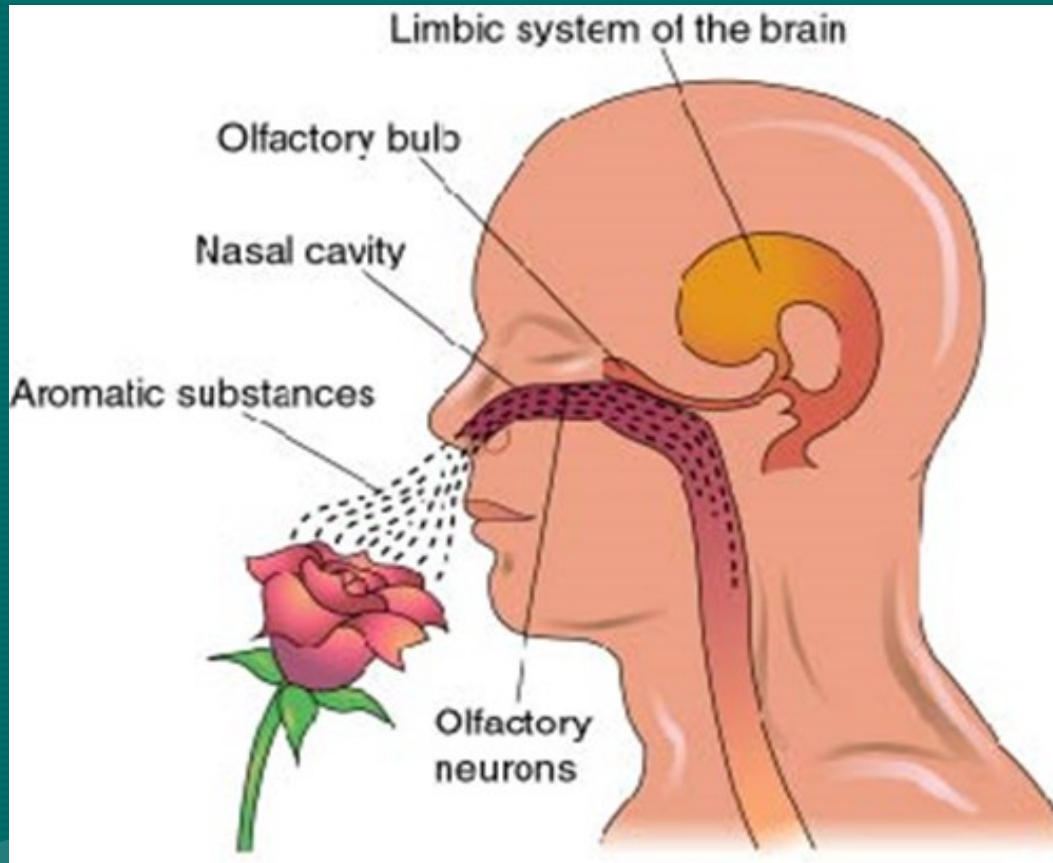
The oils then enter the circulation through the skin

- Inhalation of vapours for immediate first aid

The oils enter the circulation through the lungs and olfactory system

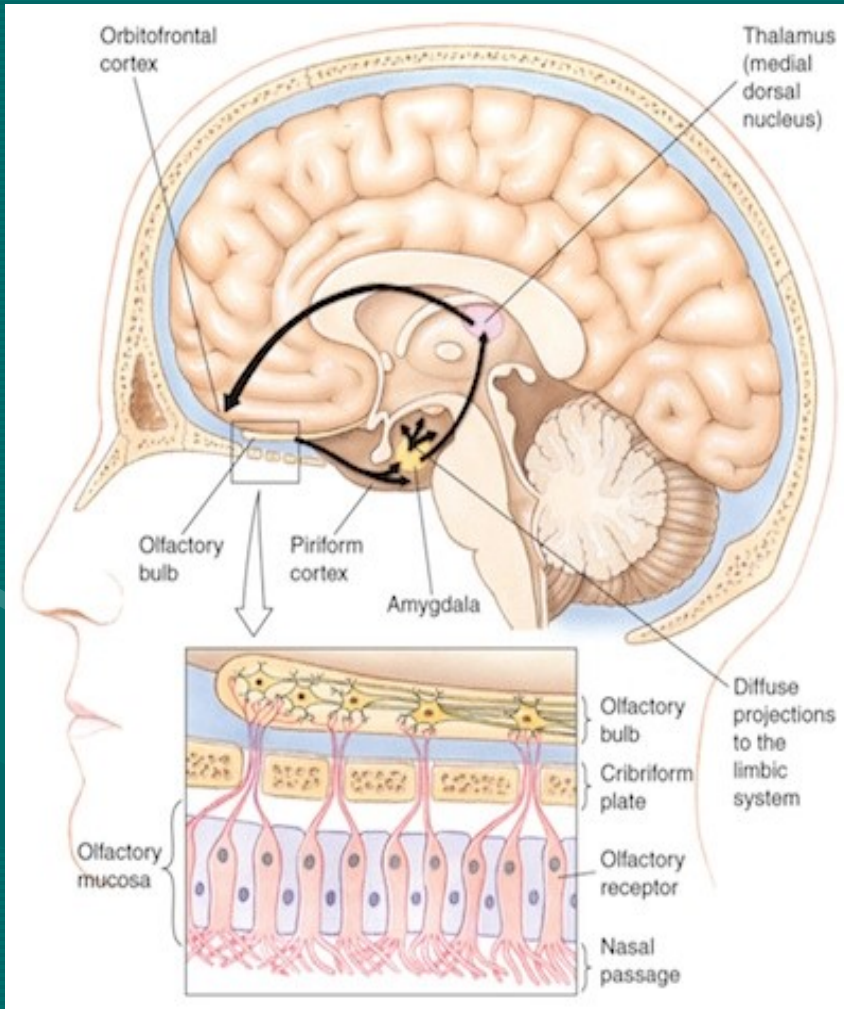
- Both methods allow the oil's chemical compounds to cross into the bloodstream

Mechanism of Action



When you smell an essential oil, cilia and receptor cells in the olfactory organ receive the aroma and send signals to the limbic system of the brain (the center of memory and emotion)

Mechanism of Action



The limbic system is also called the **RHINENCEPHALON** or “smell brain”. It is the part of the brain that deals with emotions and basic instincts

This odour message is first analysed by the **AMYGDALA** and **HIPPOCAMPUS**. These are both memory centres. At this point, the smell may trigger a memory, whether recent or past

The message, or triggered memory, is then passed to the **HYPOTHALAMUS** which has the option of sending the message off to other parts of the brain

The hypothalamus governs the **PITUITARY GLAND** which controls the release of hormones throughout the body. It acts as a regulator and a relay station for the **ENDOCRINE** and **AUTONOMIC NERVOUS** system.

The **AUTONOMIC** nervous system contains nerves leading to the body's glands and organs and governs heart rate, body temperature, stress levels, respiratory and digestive functions.

Blending Essential Oils

- Aromatherapy has an instantaneous emotional and physiological response within the body
- As scents have such a powerful effect on emotions it is important you have a positive odour association and like the smell of any aromatherapy used (particularly when dealing with psychological issues such as anxiety)
- If you person doesn't like the smell you will have an immediate negative reaction which overrides any potential therapeutic benefit
- Using 2 or more essential oils with similar properties together increases the power and potency of the overall aroma
- Decreases the likelihood of a negative scent association

Essential Oils

- Certain oils are
 - Calming and sedative to the nervous system
 - Relaxant
 - Stimulant
 - Antidepressant
 - Hypotensive – lower blood pressure
 - Cicatrisant - promote scar formation)
 - Cytophylactic - stimulate growth of new healthy cells
 - Pain relieving/local anaesthetic
 - Anti-inflammatory
 - Immunostimulant – boost immune system



Benefits of Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy can help

- Relieve stress
- Calm anxiety
- Relax the body
- Promote better sleep
- Calm skin complaints
- Raise mood
- Improve appetite
- Reduce nausea



Breathing for calm and relaxation

- People who are anxious tend to breathe in their upper lungs with shallow, rapid breaths, instead of breathing into their lower lungs
- Take a long, slow breath in through your nose, first filling your lower lungs, then your upper lungs.
- Hold your breath to the count of "three."
- Exhale slowly through pursed lips, while you relax the muscles in your face, jaw, shoulders, and stomach
- Combining relaxing breathing with an appropriate essential oil can be very therapeutic

Aromasticks



- Anxiety/stress –
- Low mood/fatigue –
- Insomnia –
- Nausea -

Contraindications

- Essential Oils should never be applied neat to skin
- Although natural are very powerful – trigger epileptic fits, allergic reactions, sensitisation
- Consult a qualified aromatherapist, especially if you have skin sensitivity – certain oils encourage photosensitisation when applied to the skin



Conclusion

Complementary Therapy can help manage chronic illness like porphyria as they can:

- Actively help you to relax the body and mind
- Activate the PNS – encourage the body to regulate
- Distraction/switch off from illness
- Pleasurable experience (rather than clinical/uncomfortable)
- Decrease pain perception
- Improve sleep
- Raise mood and motivation
- Positive focus when things prove difficult – something to look forward to
- Support carers

Accessing Complementary Therapies

- Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council
<https://www.cnhc.org.uk/>
- Federation of Holistic Therapists
<https://www.fht.org.uk/>
- Provide a register of complementary health practitioners with approved qualifications

Thank you for listening!

- Any Questions?



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