

# The Vibrational Power of Scents

The sense of smell is perhaps the most underrated of human's five senses, but in reality it is very powerful. Scents, just like sound or light, are vibrational waves which travel through the air, reach the nose, and are interpreted by the brain.

This paper will explain how scents work on the mind and body and clinical research done that proves the effectiveness of aromatherapy.

## History

Aromatherapy has been around for thousands of years dating back to ancient civilizations of Egypt, China, and India. It has been used as an alternate or complementary therapy to treat issues like stress, depression, anxiety, headaches, pain, insomnia, eczema, and digestive issues.

## How Scents Affect Humans

Humans have 300 active olfactory receptor genes which can detect thousands of different fragrance molecules

Research performed by the US National Library of Medicine shows that odors breathed in affect the limbic system in humans. The limbic system governs emotional processing, motivation, fear, and pleasure. Also impacted are the amygdala and the hippocampus and these impact learning and memory. Imaging studies, such as EEGs, on human brains show the impact of scents.

Scents are able to cross the blood-brain barrier and directly impact the central nervous system. Thus studies have suggested fragrances can have an almost immediate impact on the body as measured in blood pressure, muscle tension, pulse rate, brain activity, and more.

## Essential Oils and Aromatherapy

Essential Oils (EO) are the fragrant or aromatic part of the plant which could be on the leaves, bark, or peel, which are released by crushing or steaming them. The oils are highly concentrated and strong. For example lavender oil is often concentrated at 220:1 ratio.

EO's can be used in aromatherapy by three methods: indirect inhalation, direct inhalation, and massage. Indirect inhalation is by using a room diffuser to spread the EO drops through the air. Direct inhalation is using an inhaler where EO drops are placed on top of hot water. In massage EO drops are diluted into a carrier oil and rubbed into the skin.

Some studies have measured how fragrances affect brain activity through EEGs. And EEGs are able to identify the wave state of the brain such as Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Theta, and Delta. Examples of effects on the brain:

<b>Fragrance</b>	<b>EEG Wave Changes</b>	<b>Brain Functions</b>
Rose Oil	Increased Alpha in bilateral posterior regions	Cortical and function of inhibitory processing of motor response.
Rosemary	Frontal Alpha and Beta Decreased	Increased Alertness
Valerian extract	Increased Delta and Theta. Decreased Beta	Increased Tiredness
Japanese Green Tea	Increase in Beta 1 at Right Front Region	Improved memory task performance
Jasmine	Increased Beta in the anterior center and left posterior regions	Increased feeling of well-being, active, fresh, and romantic
Lavender and Bergamot	Absolute theta increased at the right prefrontal region	Both physical and mental states became more stable and relaxed.
Lavender	Increased Beta	Increased Drowsiness
Neroli and grapefruit oils	Slow alpha (8–10 Hz) and theta activities increased in the occipital region.	Reduce the cortical deactivation or promote a relaxed state.

Should be noted that studies conclusions have limitations because there is not a standard methodology among all studies. Variables can include concentration and purity of oil, dosage, exposure time to oil, recording length of EEG.

### **Research Studies**

*“Studies on anxiety and depression:*

- *A trial of 103 cancer patients studied the effects of massage compared to massage with Roman chamomile essential oil. Two weeks later, a decrease in anxiety and improved symptoms were noted in the group that had massage with essential oil. The group that had massage only did not have the same benefit.*
- *Another study of 58 patients with various cancers who completed six aromatherapy sessions showed a decrease in anxiety and depression compared with before the sessions began.*

*Study on sleep*

- *Newly diagnosed patients with acute myeloid leukemia who were hospitalized to receive intensive chemotherapy inhaled an essential oil through a diffuser overnight for 3 weeks. Patients were given the choice of lavender, peppermint, or chamomile. Improvement*

*was reported in sleep, tiredness, drowsiness, lack of appetite, depression, anxiety, and well-being.*

#### *Studies on nausea and vomiting*

- *A study of inhaled ginger essential oil in women receiving chemotherapy for breast cancer somewhat decreased acute nausea, but did not lessen vomiting or chronic nausea.*
- *A study of inhaled bergamot essential oil in children and adolescents at the time of stem cell infusion reported an increase in anxiety and nausea and no effect on pain. In a study of adult patients at the time of stem cell infusion, tasting or sniffing sliced oranges was more effective at reducing nausea, retching, and coughing than inhaling an orange essential oil.*

#### *Studies on procedure-related symptoms*

- *Women having breast biopsies were randomly assigned to receive lavender-sandalwood or orange-peppermint essential oil drops placed on a felt tab and attached to their hospital gown or to no scent on the felt tab. Women who received the lavender-sandalwood aromatherapy tab had less anxiety than women who received the orange-peppermint aromatherapy tab or no scent tab.*
- *In a study of inhaled lavender essential oil, eucalyptus essential oil, or no essential oil in cancer patients having needles inserted into a central venous port catheter, patients who inhaled lavender essential oil reported less pain.”*

#### *In Summary*

Scents and aromatherapy have been proven in studies to alter the mind in positive ways in a rapid manner. As sound healers we should strongly consider using the power of essential oils to enhance a sound healing session if the participants are open to it. Be aware that certain smells may be too strong for some people. Also be aware that the listed effects on an essential bottle may not necessarily be accurate or proven as true. It would be very interesting to see future research done on the combinatory effects of sound healing and aromatherapy.

References:

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