

Surgical Staff Reduces Workplace Stress with Elequil Aromatabs Aromatherapy

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Introduction

It is widely understood that healthcare workers experience high stress levels and face challenging working conditions. The reasons for the stress are varied and may include many different factors such as:¹

- Long and often unpredictable hours
- Intensely stressful and emotional situations caring for those who are sick
- Unique pressures from relationships with the patient, family members, and employers
- Working conditions with ongoing risk for hazardous exposures
- Demanding physical work and risk of injuries such as from patient handling
- Unstable and unpredictable work lives and financial strain

These high stress levels and challenging working conditions can lead to poor mental and physical health and affect psychological, emotional, and social well-being.²

Aromatherapy for Healthcare Workers

The use of aromatherapy in clinical settings for patients is growing and well-documented.³ The use of aromatherapy to help reduce stress experienced by healthcare workers is being explored as well.⁴

Elequil Aromatabs[®] aromatherapy (Beekley Medical[®], Bristol, CT) is an aromatherapy product that was created specifically for the clinical setting. Elequil Aromatabs use pure essential oils in a unique controlled delivery system that easily adheres to clothing and is well-suited for both patients and staff.



“Surgical team members were eager to try the Elequil Aromatabs. I personally saw a difference in the OR the first day trialing them and I noticed several others had positive responses as well.

The OR just felt a little bit more upbeat.”

~ Jessica, RN

Key Findings

- Average stress levels significantly reduced with the use of Elequil Aromatabs (scale of 0 to 5; 0 = no stress, 5 = extreme stress):
 - ~ Average across all three aromas (Lavender, Lavender-Peppermint, Orange-Peppermint): **39% reduction** (average stress score of 2.6 reduced to 1.6)
 - ~ Lavender: **46% reduction** (average stress score of 2.8 reduced to 1.5)
- **84%** of participants had a **positive experience** using Elequil Aromatabs
- **95%** of participants would **recommend** aromatherapy to their co-workers

Hospital Study

The Surgical Services Department staff at a hospital in East Texas conducted a study to measure the effects of aromatherapy in the workplace and determine if there was any change in reported stress levels. Participants were offered a choice of three Elequil Aromatabs® aromas: Lavender, Lavender-Peppermint, or Orange-Peppermint. Participants were asked questions about their stress levels before and after the use of Elequil, the reasons for their stress, their overall experience, and if they would recommend the aromatherapy to their co-workers.

“I love the Aromatabs. When we used them in the OR everyone was in a good mood, happy and relaxed. It helped us get through the day.”

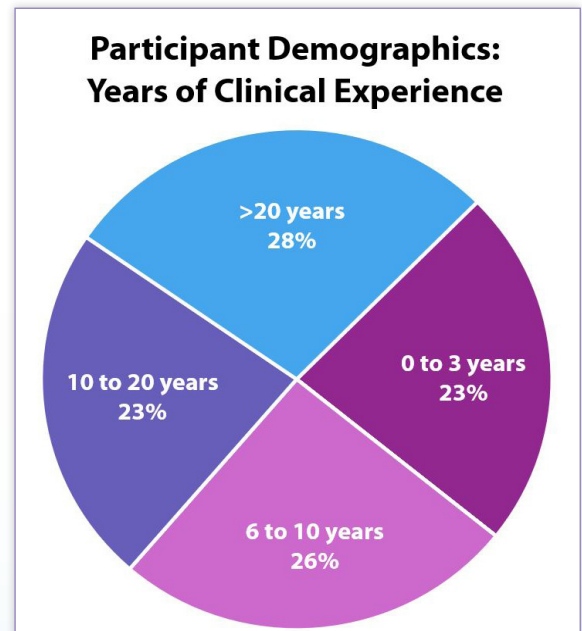
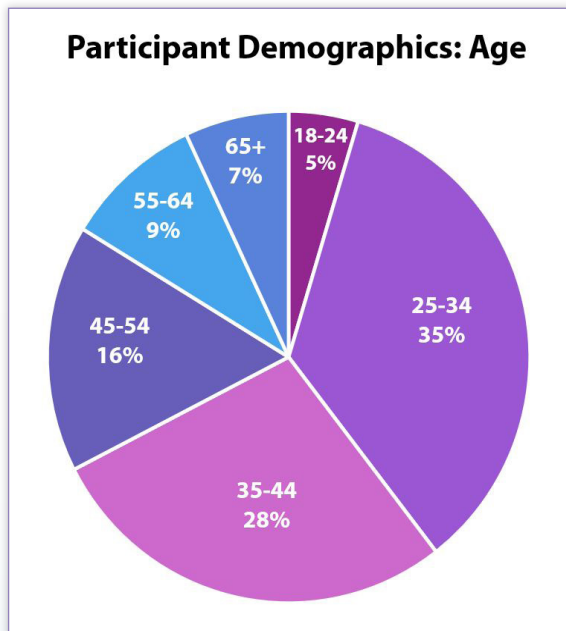
~ Leslie, CSTFA

Methods

In this study conducted during June 2023, participants used one Elequil Aromatab of their choice (Lavender, Lavender-Peppermint, or Orange-Peppermint) daily for a week and were instructed to use the minimum scent level in the morning and increase it to the maximum level in the afternoon, if needed. Following the completion of their use of the aromatherapy, participants were asked to complete a short online survey.

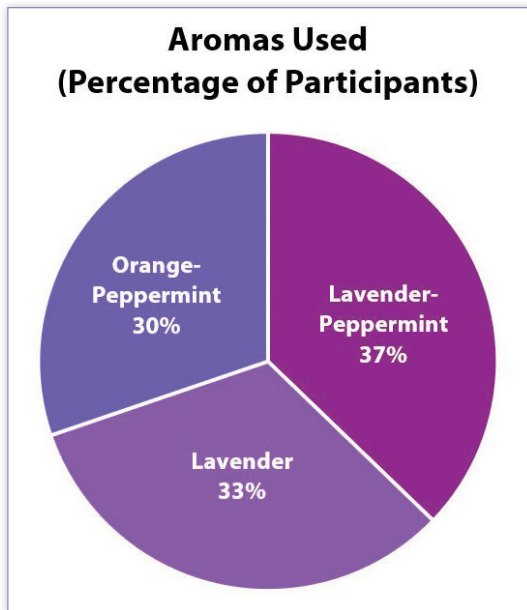
Demographics

Responses from 8 male and 35 female participants are included in the results herein; responses from two non-clinical participants have been excluded. Participants were primarily nurses and surgical technologists plus a few individuals in other clinical roles (e.g., doctor, resident, surgical assistant, manager). As shown in the charts below, participants spanned a variety of ages and years of experience in the clinical setting.



Aromas

Participants selected either Lavender, Lavender-Peppermint, or Orange-Peppermint Elequil Aromatabs® to use during the entire week. There was a fairly even distribution across the three aromas, with a slightly higher percentage choosing Lavender-Peppermint.



Results

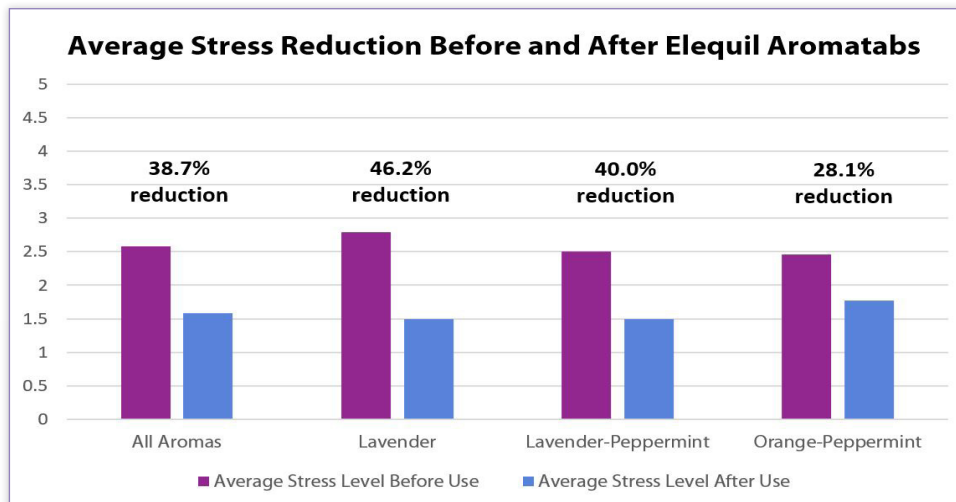
Stress Reduction

Using a scale of 0 (no stress) to 5 (severe stress), participants were asked to rate their stress levels before and after the use of aromatherapy. When looking at the results for all three Elequil Aromatabs aromas offered, there was a **38.7% reduction** in average stress levels (2.58 reduced to 1.58).

For each individual aroma, the average stress level reductions were as follows:

- Lavender: 46.2% reduction (average of 2.79 reduced to 1.50)
- Lavender-Peppermint: 40.0% reduction (average of 2.50 reduced to 1.50)
- Orange-Peppermint: 28.1% reduction (average of 2.46 reduced to 1.77)

Orange-Peppermint is designed to uplift and soothe queasiness. However, participants who chose this aroma experienced reduced stress levels as well, although to a lesser degree than the other two aromas that are geared toward promoting relaxation and calming anxiousness.

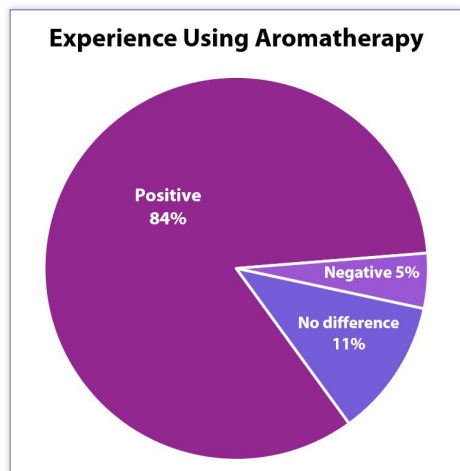


“I found the Elequil Aromatabs to be very calming. Every time I would be deep into something and smell the lavender, it reminded me to take a breath and I felt my head clear. I could tell a difference in myself when I wore one and I do think others could as well.”

~ Jessica, RN

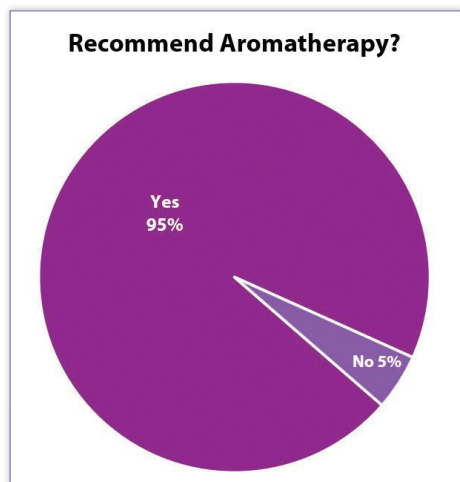
Positive Experience Using Aromatherapy

Participants were asked about their experience using the aromatherapy. **83.7%** of all respondents said their experience was **positive**.



Majority Recommend Aromatherapy

Participants were asked if they would recommend aromatherapy to their co-workers. **95.3%** of all respondents said **yes**.



Top Reasons for Stress

As part of the survey, participants were asked to identify the reason(s) for their stress. The top three reasons were (multiple selections allowed):

1. Sleep deprivation: selected by 35% (15 out of 43)
2. Time pressures: selected by 30% (13 out of 43)
3. Understaffing: selected by 19% (8 out of 43)

Conclusions

This study focusing on workplace stress experienced by clinical staff in the Surgical Services Department revealed several important findings and observations:

- Elequil Aromatabs® aromatherapy was readily welcomed into the department
- Staff stress levels were significantly reduced
- Staff overwhelmingly reported a positive experience using Elequil Aromatabs
- Staff would recommend aromatherapy to their co-workers
- The use of Elequil Aromatabs promoted positive morale

The study laid the groundwork for Elequil Aromatabs to be implemented by other units within the hospital to similarly help decrease staff stress levels.

“I really enjoyed the aroma of the Lavender-Peppermint, I had it on my scrub top all day.”
~ Andy, MD

About the Authors

Dolores Martinez, BSN, RN, CNOR, has over 10 years' experience as an Operating Room nurse and a background in oncology. Ms. Martinez is the surgery educator at an East Texas teaching hospital where she is responsible for the administration of Peri-Op 101 for



the hospital's surgery nurse residency program and oversees the education and orientation of all new surgery department nursing staff. She led her department in obtaining a Center of Excellence in Surgical Safety-RSI nomination from the Association of Operating Room Nurses (AORN). Ms. Martinez graduated with her Associate Degree in Nursing from Tyler Junior College and received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Texas at Tyler. Ms. Martinez recently achieved certification from the Competency & Credentialing Institute as a Certified Nurse Operating Room and is a member of AORN.

Cheryl Watson, BSN, RN, has been a surgical nurse for over 20 years. Ms. Watson has excelled in multiple roles in her career as a preceptor, travel nurse, CVOR scrub, charge nurse, magnet hospital committee leader, and robot coordinator. She is currently the surgical services manager at a growing academic hospital in East



Texas. Ms. Watson enjoys the challenge of continually inspiring staff to raise the standards for patients while improving the work culture for staff. She has a passion for learning and professional development and serves on the board of the Greater East Texas chapter of AORN. Ms. Watson graduated from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and is working towards her Masters of Science in Nursing.

Elequil Aromatabs® Aromatherapy

Elequil Aromatabs aromatherapy is a simple non-pharmacological intervention that uses 100% pure essential oils. Elequil Aromatabs aromatherapy has a unique controlled delivery system with easy hands-free application, adheres to the patient's gown or clothing, and allows minimum and maximum aroma exposure.



Lavender-Peppermint
Lasts up to 8 hours

Lavender-Peppermint promotes relaxation during pain, helps comfort and calm anxiousness, and soothes queasiness



Lavender
Lasts up to 8 hours



Lavender-Sandalwood
Lasts up to 24 hours

Lavender and Lavender-Sandalwood promote relaxation during pain, help comfort and calm anxiousness



Orange-Peppermint
Lasts up to 8 hours



Orange-Ginger
Lasts up to 8 hours

Orange-Peppermint and Orange-Ginger uplift and can soothe queasiness

References:

1. CDC, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Healthcare Workers, Risk Factors for Stress and Burnout, April 23, 2024, retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/healthcare/risk-factors/stress-burnout.html#:~:text=Many%20healthcare%20workers%20experienced%20increased,disorder%20related%20to%20the%20pandemic.>
2. Ibid.
3. Clinical Study and White Paper Guide Using Elequil Aromatabs Aromatherapy, Beekley Corporation, 2024, retrieved from <https://beekley.com/Portals/0/Resource%20Library/Other/Aromatherapy/Elequil%20Aromatabs%20Clinical%20Study%20and%20White%20Paper%20Guide.pdf>.
4. Aromatherapy Reduces Nursing Stress in Urban Safety Net Hospital, J.D. Buchert, May 2024, retrieved from https://elequil.com/Portals/4/Resource%20Library%20Documents/Aromatherapy_Reduces_Nursing_Stress_in_Urban_Safety_Net_Hospital.pdf.

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