The Effects of Aromatherapy on Falls in a Geriatric Psychiatric Population

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The presenters have no relevant financial or nonfinancial relationships.
No conflict of interest to report.

Case Study

- Population
  - Geropsych
  - Primary cognitively impaired
  - Middle stages of Dementia
  - Over the age 55

- Setting
  - 12 bed acute care inpatient unit
  - Part of an approximately 100 bed psychiatric hospital on the east coast

Jan-Jun 2012 our unit saw 21 Geriatric patient falls
Issues within Geriatric Psychiatric Population

- Higher levels of anxiety in the afternoon
- Literature Review
- Pharmacologic remedies used
- Falls are physically and emotionally traumatic
- Costly
- Fall Prevention is a top priority

Why Aromatherapy?

- Complementary alternative to pharmacology intervention for afternoon agitation that increases a patient’s fall risk
- Safety
  - Pure essential oils
  - Non-toxic if ingested
  - Plastic diffuser
  - Room temp distilled water
- Used in hospitals nationally and internationally
- Cost effective

Why Lavender?

- Reduction of anxiety
  - Literature review
- Promotes relaxation by augmenting parasympathetic activity
  - HRV, ECG, PET analysis after lavender olfactory stimulus
- Reduction of falls
  - Nursing home lavender patch study
- Mild antiseptic properties of Lavender
  - Microbiology study
Case Study Implementation

- Research and Education
- Purchase Diffuser and Lavender pure essential oils
- Plan
  - Staff engagement
  - Formalize diffuser start time
    - Daily in the afternoon/evening in patient common area
  - Added intervention to therapeutic milieu:
    - Soft music, dimmed lights, dedicated quiet hours, reduced stimulation
  - Sustainability

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of Patients</td>
<td># of PRN Ativan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Apr</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Patient Falls: 21  Patient Falls: 13

Conclusion

- Case study:
  - Reduction in use of Ativan PO/IM PRN
  - Reduction in falls in the Geriatric Psychiatric Population during January-June 2012 as compared to January-June 2013
- Unanticipated benefits:
  - Staff reports: calm, less chaotic, and relaxing
  - Visitor reports: spa-like, and “nice place to visit”
- Continued use as an intervention
- Further study merited
References


Contact

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