



Effect of Ambient Odor of Lavender on Dental Anxiety

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Published: 1 Oct 2014

Abstract

Dental anxiety is defined as an abnormal fearing or dread toward preventive or therapeutic visits by a dentist and unreasonable anxiety against dental procedures. It is estimated that dental anxiety affects one-third of the general population. Its physical and cognitive symptoms may result in behavioral issues such as avoidance of early dental visits that troubles both patient and dentist. In order to discount this type of anxiety, various approaches have been suggested, such as anxiolytics and general anesthesia. However, most of them are potentially dangerous (drug interactions or allergy), or are not routinely available and cost-effective. Therefore, alternative medicine and utilizing the benefits of nature is a cost-effective way and studies have stated that smelling ambient odors have some positive physiologic effects. This study was planned to assess the effect of ambient odor of Lavender on the level of anxiety in clients of 2 general dental clinics in Mashhad during 2012. 390 patients had the inclusion criteria, divided randomly into 2 groups, Lavender odor exposed (case group=195) or distilled water (control group=195) in waiting room and then, they answered the anxiety tests (State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, Dental Anxiety Scale) before the dental procedure, while being unaware of the type of the odor. Mean scores of DAS, anxiety state and anxiety trait were similar between 2 groups. So, it seems that 2 groups had a similar level of anxiety. According to non-significant effect of Lavender oil in this article, further studies with the other forms of Lavender such as Lavender scent and oral administration of Lavender should be carried out.

Keywords: Complementary Therapy, Ambient Odor, Lavender, Dental Anxiety.

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