

## WHAT IS AROMATHERAPY?

Aromatherapy is the use of aromatic, highly concentrated essential oils which are the life force of the plant. These oils are extracted from different parts of the plant such as wood, bark, leaves, flowers, berries, cones and rind of citrus fruits.

Each essential oil has many therapeutic properties, which when mixed with a carrier oil is then used during massage to enhance its effects. They can also be used in lotions, baths and vaporisers.

### Why will it help?

You may find aromatherapy helpful if you have concerns with any of the following;

Relaxation/Wellbeing Anxiety/Stress Low mood Fatigue/Sleeplessness	Social Support Coping Isolation Body image	Discomfort Pain Breathlessness Nausea & Vomiting	Headache Odours/wound care Constipation Diarrhoea
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### Evidence base

The best available evidence suggests that reflexology can:

- promote relaxation
- improve sleep pattern
- improve low mood
- reduce nausea
- reduce stress and tension
- reduce psychological distress / provide emotional support
- alleviate anxiety
- improve well-being and quality of life

### Preparing yourself for treatment

- Please wear loose, comfortable clothing so that you can remain warm after the treatment. The therapist will need to see your legs and feet.
- Remove jewellery from the area the therapist will be working on.
- Allow yourself time to rest after the treatment.

### What your treatment or care will be?

Your first appointment will be to discuss your health and agree a treatment plan. This will last about 45mins. You may be offered a short (10-15 minute) sample treatment if time allows.

A course of aromatherapy treatments usually has between 5 and 10 treatments. Each treatment lasts about 45 minutes.

The treatment begins and ends with gentle relaxation. Only gentle techniques are used when working with cancer patients. Moisturiser or massage oil will be used to avoid unnecessary pain or friction. The therapist will use her hands to massage using very light and gentle movements. No instruments are used.

The only area exposed will be the area the therapist is working on at the time.

Towelling will be used to cover your body. If you feel any areas sore, tender or

painful, tell the therapist. At the beginning and end of each treatment you will have time to say how the treatments have been affecting you. The therapist may record a tape of some helpful relaxation skills for you to use at home. It's up to you to choose to have each treatment. Ask as many questions as you like. Remember to tell the therapist about anything that worries you.

### **After the treatment**

#### **Do**

- Allow yourself time to rest after the treatment.
- Be sure to drink about 2 pints of water through the rest of the day
- Eat a light meal
- Reduce intake of tea, coffee and cola

#### **Do not**

- Take strenuous exercise
- Drink alcohol

### **How much better will it make you?**

Generally people feel;

- More relaxed
- Comfortable
- Better able to cope
- Better able to sleep

### **Possible reactions to treatment**

A few people have uncomfortable reactions to treatment. These may be;

- Tiredness
- Thirst
- Headache
- Going to the toilet more often

These symptoms should be gone in a few hours. Mostly they can be helped by drinking more water.

### **If you are concerned**

- If you are concerned about the after-effects of a treatment going on longer than expected, speak to your GP or contact the Gerard Lynch Centre during office hours on: 028 9069 9202.

### **What will happen if you don't have Massage or Aromatherapy?**

- This treatment is your choice. The decision not to have complementary therapy will not affect your medical care in any way. You may be offered an alternative complementary therapy.

### **What alternatives will be offered?**

- You may be offered an alternative complementary therapy.
- You may choose to leave the treatment to another time.

**What can I do to make the treatment a success?**

- Allow time to rest after each treatment
- Practice any relaxation exercises given as often as possible

**Sources of further information about aromatherapy**

Reflexology Forum gives connections to all the reflexology professional bodies ([www.reflexologyforum.org.uk](http://www.reflexologyforum.org.uk)) **See next page**

- The Prince of Wales's Foundation for Integrated Health for information on many complementary therapies (020 7619 6140 [www.fihealth.org.uk](http://www.fihealth.org.uk)).
- Cancer BACUP Publications booklet on Cancer and Complementary therapies (020 7696 9003; [www.cancerbacup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbacup.org.uk))

**Contacting a therapist in the Community**

Many therapists work in their own practices. To ensure that you contact a well trained and insured therapist, ask to see their current professional body membership.

Then you will be sure that they;

- work under a code of conduct and ethics
- have trained to a standard
- are insured to practice
- have continued their professional development

**Aromatherapy and Massage services for Cancer Patients in Northern Ireland**

Cancer patients can access aromatherapy and massage at;

Gerard Lynch Centre, Belfast	9069 9202
Action Cancer, Belfast	9080 3344
Care for Cancer, Omagh	8224 6599
Cancer Lifeline, North Belfast	9035 1999
Derry Well-woman Centre	7136 0777
TASSK Healthy Living Centre, Banbridge	4062 9930

- Aromatherapy Forum Member organisations currently include:

<b>Association of Reflexologists</b> 5 Fore Street Taunton Somerset TA1 1HX T: 0870 567 3320 F: 01823 336646 E: info@aor.org.uk Website: <a href="http://www.aor.org.uk">www.aor.org.uk</a>	<b>British Reflexology Association</b> Monks Orchard Whitbourne Worcester WR6 5RB T: 01886-821207 F: 01886-822017 E: bra@britreflex.co.uk Website: <a href="http://www.britreflex.co.uk">www.britreflex.co.uk</a>
<b>Centre for Clinical Reflexology</b> 2 Bramley Avenue Levenshulme Manchester, M19 2GB T: 0161 443 1582 0161 443 2047 0161 225 9752 E: cliveohara@btconnect.com Website: <a href="http://www.clinicalreflexology.org">www.clinicalreflexology.org</a>	<b>International Guild of Professional Practitioners</b> 4 Heathfield Terrace Chiswick London W4 4JE T: 020 8994 7856 Website: <a href="http://www.igpp.co.uk">www.igpp.co.uk</a>
<b>International Federation of Reflexologists</b> 76 - 78 Edridge Road Croydon Surrey CR0 1EF T: 020 8645 9134 F: 020 8649 9291 Website: <a href="http://www.IntFedReflexologists.org">www.IntFedReflexologists.org</a>	<b>International Institute of Reflexology (UK)</b> 146 Upperthorpe, Walkley Sheffield, S6 3NF T/F: 01142 812100 E: info@reflexology-uk.net Website: <a href="http://www.reflexology-uk.net">www.reflexology-uk.net</a>
<b>Professional Association of Clinical Therapists</b> Federation of Holistic Therapists FHT 3rd Floor Eastleigh House Upper Market Street Eastleigh SO50 9FD T: 023 8048 8900, F: 023 8048 8970 E: info@fht.org.uk, Website: <a href="http://www.fht.org.uk">www.fht.org.uk</a>	<b>Reflexologists Society</b> 135 Collins Meadow Harlow Essex CM19 4EJ T: 0870 607 3241 T/F: 01279 441304 E: hoths@tiscali.co.uk
<b>Scottish Institute of Reflexology</b> Flat 1-2, 110 Easterhouse Road Glasgow G34 9RG T/F: 0141 773 0018 E: mmreflex@aol.com Website: <a href="http://www.scottishreflexology.org">www.scottishreflexology.org</a>	<b>Irish Reflexologist Institute</b> Tel: +353 41 9847774, <a href="mailto:administrator@reflexology.ie">administrator@reflexology.ie</a> Website: <a href="http://www.reflexology.ie">www.reflexology.ie</a>

