

Stress and Tension Relief Bath Oil

Abstract

Female client's work stress level is affecting her quality of life at home. She has a difficult time settling down in the evening and is looking for an essential oil bath blend to calm her physically, emotionally and mentally. The client was given an essential oil blend of bergamot, clary sage, cajuput, and roman chamomile. She experienced positive results; however, we cannot conclude that the oils were the determining factor that caused her to relax. Further study of the essential oil blend is recommended.

Case Description

The client is a 38 year old Caucasian woman that experiences a lot of stress both physically and mentally. She works for a non-profit and does the work of five people. She has difficulty unwinding from her high paced day. She notices that at day's end she needs to sleep 9-10 hours to feel rested; however, some days her mind won't turn off for her to fall asleep. Her current stress reduction activities are running four times per week, having a beer or glass of wine each night and watching television.

The client eats three nutritious meals a day, drinks one cup of coffee and eight to ten 8 oz glasses of water per day. She is currently not under her physician's care nor is she taking any medication.

After discussing various essential oil application methods, the client decided she wanted a stress relief essential oil bath blend.

Literature Review

Bergamot *Citrus aurantium* var. *bergamot* essential oil is expressed from the fruits peel. The plant mainly “grows near the Mediterranean, including Southern Italy, Sicily, and Spain” (American College of Healthcare Sciences, 2012, p. 33). Cooksley (2002) describes bergamot’s psycho-emotional attributes benefits depression, anxiety, stress-related disorders, nervous tension, anger, and frustration. Keville and Green (2009) support Cooksley’s description and adds that bergamot balances a person’s emotions and installs composure.

Clary Sage *Salvia sclarea* essential oil is grown mainly in Russia with smaller quantities produced in Morocco, south of France, England and the United States. Solvent extraction and steam distillation are the means in which the oil is removed from the plant’s flowers. In July of 2010, the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* found that *Salvia sclarea* oil had a strong anti-stressor and antidepressant effect.

Cajuput *Melaleuca leucadendron* essential oil is steam distilled from the fresh leaves and twigs of this tree. Cajuput can be found in Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Australia, and Southeast United States. American College of Healthcare Sciences’ Essential Oil Cajuput Monograph (2012) states the oil’s therapeutic action relevant to this case study as anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, analgesic, carminative, decongestant, and vulnerary.

Chamomile (Roman) *Chamaemelum nobile* is grown for oil distillation in Europe, Britain, Italy, France, and the United States (American College of Healthcare Sciences, 2012, p. 53). Kurt Schnaubelt, Ph.D. (1995) attributes this oils main effects as “Antispasmodic, calming to the central nervous system; relieves symptoms related to shock” (p. 63 – 64)

Treatment Protocol/Methods

Client was given a five ml amber bottle with the following essential oils: ten drops of Bergamot *Citrus aurantium* var.

bergamot, three drops of Clary Sage *Salvia sclarea*, three drops of Cajuput *Melaleuca leucadendron*, three drops of Roman Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile*. She was instructed to fill her bath with warm water, apply five drops of the essential oil blend to the bath water and stir before getting into the water. No specific soaking time was given.

Client was read the following cautions/contraindications:

- This blend contains oils with toxic rating I and II. A skin patch test is required.
- Avoid using this blend during the first trimester of pregnancy.
- Do not use if there is a history of epilepsy or hypertension.
- Do not use this blend at the same time as homeopathic remedies.
- Do not exceed recommended doses. RDD: 5 drops/3 times daily.
- 2 hours after use, do not expose skin to direct sunlight.

Client Response

Client stated that the dominant scent initially was the clary sage essential oil. After a few minutes the other oils' scents became more noticeable. The aroma was very pleasant and she felt her body relax during and after the soak. She did notice that after twenty-five minutes of soaking, the back of her legs, stomach, and lower back started to tingle.

Evaluation

The overall effectiveness of the bath blend was positive. Because of the tingling sensation, it was recommended to the client to either soak less using five drops of the blend or only place two to three drops of the blend in the water when soaking for twenty minutes or more. If she continued to experience the tingling sensation while soaking with the oil,

she is to stop using it and a new bath blend would be created for her.

This study cannot conclude that the essential oils, the warm bath water, the bathing time or a combination of these three items were the main cause of her relaxation. We do know that the client still experiences stress throughout her busy work day and that she now has an additional option to help her relieve tension after work. Additional studies are recommended.

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