

Ballard CG, O'Brien JT, Reichelt K, Perry EK.
Aromatherapy as a safe and effective treatment for the management of agitation in severe dementia: the results of a double-blind, placebo-controlled trial with Melissa. J Clin Psychiatry 2002;63(7).

Coping with disabilities

Preserving an emotional balance

Maintaining a positive self image

Preparing for an uncertain future

Dealing with treatment and environment

Developing adequate care relationships

Maintaining social relationships



Melissa aroma therapy

Aroma therapy

Author	CG Ballard*, JT O'Brien, K Reichelt, & EK Perry	
Year	2002	
Country	United Kingdom	
Email*	c.g.ballard@ncl.ac.uk	
Objective	To determine the value of aroma therapy with <i>Melissa officinalis</i> (lemon balm) for agitation in people with severe dementia	
Setting	National Health Service care facilities	
Participants	People with severe dementia and clinically significant agitation.	
	Mean age	E: 77.2 (±7.6); C: 79.6 (±8.5)
	Gender	E: 20 female (56%); C: 23 (64%)
	MMSE	-
Design	Double blind, placebo-controlled trial, with two conditions (Melissa essential oil vs. sunflower oil)	
	Sample size	n _E =36, n _C =36
	Follow-up	4 weeks
Intervention	Application of the oil to patients' faces and arms. Ten percent (per weight) Melissa oil was combined with base lotion. The lotion was topically applied to the face and arms of residents (total 200 mg oil per day).	
	Frequency	twice a day
	Duration	1 to 2 minutes, for 4 weeks
	Facilitator	care assistant
Outcome measures	Behaviour	Cohen-Mansfield Agitation Inventory (CMAI; Cohen-Mansfield, 1989) Neuropsychiatric Inventory (NPI; Cummings et al., 1994) Barthel Scale (Mahoney & Barthel, 1965) Dementia Care Mapping (DCM; Kitwood & Bredin, 1997)
Results	Though both the lemon balm group and sun flower oil (placebo) group experienced significant reductions of agitation (CMAI), greater reductions were found for the treatment with lemon balm (resp. 35% vs. 11%). More subjects in the lemon balm group had clinically significant less behavioural symptoms (60% vs. 14%). People with dementia in the lemon balm group were socially withdrawn less frequently and spent more time on constructive activities than the sunflower oil group.	
Implementation material	Melissa essential oil concentrations of terpenes: citronellal (22%), caryophyllene (18%), neral (7%), geranyl acetate (3%), citronallal (4%). The base lotion contained Prunus dulcis oil, glycerine, stearic acid, cetearyl, alcohol, tocopheryl acetate).	

E = experimental group; C = control group

* Corresponding author

