

Webinar on
**NATURAL PRODUCTS, CAM THERAPIES, AND
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Aromatherapy for overload and fatigue in family caregivers of the elderly at home: Pilot study

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Problem statement: Demographic and epidemiological changes in the world reflect an increasingly aging population, with chronic non-communicable diseases in need of caregivers. Caregivers experience stress due to routine care, which can generate overload, psychiatric symptoms, fatigue, medication use due to the absence of family support, making them vulnerable to depression and imbalance in personal life. The objective of this study was to identify the main nursing diagnoses of elderly people cared for at home by family members and to verify the impact of aromatherapy with lavender, sweet orange and bergamot essential oils, in a total concentration of 2%, on caregivers' overload and fatigue, through the Zarit-reduced and Piper-revised scales, comparing the effect of two routes of administration: inhalation and cutaneous.

Methodology: This is a pilot, quasi-experimental study, with a quantitative and qualitative approach, carried out with 23 caregivers of elderly people assisted by the Home Care Program of a University Hospital.

Results: All patients had "impaired physical mobility", "fall risk" and "deficit for self-care" and all caregivers presented "Tension in the role of caregiver" as nursing diagnoses. There was a statistically significant difference between the groups for "Impaired verbal communication" ($p=0.040$), more frequently in the cutaneous group. Temporal perceptions of fatigue reduced throughout the study for both groups, however, there was no statistical evidence of a decrease in overload or fatigue, regardless of time and groups. Qualitatively, caregivers reported that fatigue is associated with excess responsibility, routine and health conditions of the family member.

Conclusion & Significance: Attenuations of overload and fatigue were observed in the inhalation group, without statistical evidence. Further studies with a larger number of samples are recommended, aiming to achieve lower levels of overload and fatigue, since, in addition to the biopsychic benefits, there is a stimulus to autonomy and self-care of family caregivers at home.

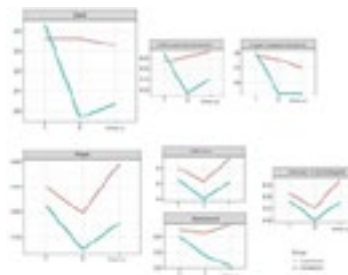


Figure 1. Mean scores for caregiver burden (Zarit), fatigue (Piper) and relationship and domains in the groups in the cutaneous and inhalation groups, according to assessment moments. Sao Paulo, 2022

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