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REVIEW ARTICLE

AROMATHERAPY FOR TOOTH ACHE

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ABSTRACT

Aromatherapy is one of the emerging vistas in the science of healing. Recent trends focuses on going back to natural modalities of treatment. Aromatherapy has found to work wonders in different aspects of dentistry. The various applications of aromatherapy in dentistry has been overviewed.

INTRODUCTION

Toothaches happen to everyone at some point in our life. The best way we know to take care of it is to numb it or to have the tooth worked on immediately. But what happens when neither one of these options is available and you are suffering? Of course a dentist is the best way to get a tooth to stop hurting, but to help with the pain until that time, here is a great "green" approach to helping ease the pain a bit.

History

There is evidence in the Bible of oils being used for anointing, and ancient Indian and Chinese texts detail their medical uses. Fragrant cosmetics, temple incenses and perfumes were made using essences like myrrh, frankincense, cedar wood and juniper. The Greek civilization produced great holistic physicians who also recognized the healing power of plants. Hippocrates' observations lead him to recommend aromatic baths and massages to maintain good health. Another, Dioscorides collated and wrote down about medicinal plants in a vast 'Materia Medica'. An Arab physician Avicenna is credited with steam distillation a process to produce essential oils which is still used today. In 1920, it was Rene Maurice Gattefosse who coined the word Aromatherapie and by 1928 he had published a book of same name. In 1964, Dr. Jean Valnet who was a French army surgeon published a book Aromatherapie which can be considered as Bible of Aromatherapy. In 1977 Robert Tisserand published a book The Art of Aromatherapy

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Essential oils for tooth pain

Clove oil

Clove oil contains eugenol, which is used in dental cement and filler. It has analgesic and antibacterial properties, which help prevent and fight infection. Though there are few definitive clinical trials concerning clove oil, it has been approved for use as an anesthetic and topical antiseptic by the German Commission E. Simply apply the oil directly on the affected tooth using a cotton swab to ease the pain and reduce inflammation. Do not swallow and discontinue if irritation occurs.

Peppermint oil

Peppermint oil is commonly found in toothpaste as well as chewing gum. According to the University of Maryland Medical Center, peppermint oil has been shown to be an effective antibacterial and antiviral. It is also has mild anesthetic properties, which make it ideal for temporary treatment of tooth pain. Pure peppermint essential oil should neither be ingested nor used on young children. As always, discontinue use if an allergic reaction or irritation occurs.

Tea tree oil

History has shown that tea tree leaves and oil were used by the Aborigines to treat infections. It has antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal properties and causes a mild anesthetic effect. Research by S. Shapiro, A. Meier and B. Guggenheim published in 1994 show the effectiveness of tea tree oil for dental maladies. Tea tree oil can be applied directly on the

affected tooth. Do not swallow tea tree oil. Discontinue use and contact your physician if any allergic reaction occurs.

Lavender oil

Lavender oil is effective for destroying certain types of bacteria. Herbalist Richard Mabey suggests applying the oil directly on your tooth to ease pain and discomfort. Inhaling lavender oil is also widely used by aroma therapists to ease anxiety associated with dental procedures. Discontinue use and contact your physician if any irritation or allergic reaction occurs.

Applications in dentistry

Complementary alternative medicine is a group of diverse medical and health care systems, practices and products that are not considered to be part of conventional medicine. New modalities of treatment have been now practiced widely in the field of dentistry. Aromatherapy is one such modality which comes under alternative medicine.

1. Dental abscess

Use one drop of tea tree or dilute one drop of clove oil in a teaspoon of sweet almond oil and apply directly to the gum using a cotton bud. Make a hot compress by adding 2 drops of chamomile to small bowl of hot water, swirl the water so the oil disperses evenly. Place a clean cloth on surface of water so it picks up oil and then apply to affected area. This will help to relieve pain and help to draw out pus. Also mix one drop of chamomile and two drops of tea tree in a teaspoon of sweet almond oil and apply three times a day to the outside of affected cheek or jaw.

2. Toothache

Dilute one drop clove oil in 5 ml (one teaspoon) of sweet almond oil and rub directly on to the gum. Tincture of myrrh is also helpful when applied to the gum surrounding the painful tooth. Clove oil and myrrh shouldn't be used by pregnant women. It should not be swallowed.

3. Gingivitis

Mouthwash can be prepared by adding 5 drops of lemon, 5 drops of myrrh, and 15 drops of peppermint to a bottle containing 100 ml of vodka. Shake well before use and add 3 teaspoons of mixture to a glass of warm water then rinse the mouth well. Use regularly after brushing and flossing.

4. Halitosis

Mouthwash:-5 drops of sweet fennel + 5 drops of myrrh +15 drops of peppermint to 100 ml vodka. Shake well before using and add 3 spoon of mouthwash to a glass of warm water and rinse the mouth thoroughly. Fennel oil should be avoided by people with epilepsy so lemon oil can be used instead.

5. Herpes cold sores

As soon as eruption is suspected apply one drop of tea tree or geranium on a cotton bud to the area. Massage the glands just under jaw with blend of five drops bergamot, five drops lavender and six drops of tea tree in 25 ml sweet almond oil.

6. Aphthous ulcers

Tea tree oil mouth rinses are helpful. A drop or two of tea tree oil may be added to toothpaste before brushing. Red raspberry tea which contains flavanoids can also be used.

7. Cellulitis

Anti-cellulite massage oil can be prepared by mixing six drops of grapefruit, 8 drops of juniper and 6 drops of cypress or 8 drops of rosemary oil in 50 ml sweet Almond oil. Apply the massage oil with firm upward kneading and stroking movements to the affected areas. Rosemary oil should be avoided by people with high blood pressure, so cypress oil can be used instead.

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