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Aromatherapy and reflexology experiences of Rheumatoid Arthritis patients

Zehra Gok Metin

Hacettepe University, Turkey

Statement of the Problem: Nonpharmacological interventions such as aromatherapy and reflexology have increasingly been used to manage symptoms among patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). There have been quantitative studies, have shown that aromatherapy and reflexology may reduce psychological distress and enhance symptom control in RA patients). However, little is known about the personal meanings patients associate with these therapies. Therefore, present study explored the patients' experiences of aromatherapy and reflexology by using face to face interview. Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Totally 34 RA patients who received aromatherapy massage (n=17) or reflexology (n=17) constituted the study sample. "Patients' demographic questionnaire" and "Individual experiences form for aromatherapy and reflexology" were used to record patients' statements during face to face interviews. Patients' statements on aromatherapy and reflexology were categorized based on similarity and presented by using percentages. Findings: Patients' mean age was 54.4±1.2 years and the great majority of the patients were female (88.2%). Regarding patients' experiences on aromatherapy, all subjects stated that walked more easily, wanted to sleep immediately after each aromatherapy session, felt more comfortable, 94.1% of patients' had relief of daily functions and movements, felt improvements in vitality, energy capacity and mood. 76.5% of participants stated return to hobbies and activities they enjoy after aromatherapy sessions. As for reflexology, all participants reported that return to hobbies and activities they enjoy, felt improvements in vitality, energy capacity and mood. 94.1% of patients' stated that walked more easily, 88.2% had relief of daily functions and movements, and 82.4% fulfilled house work without difficulty. Conclusion & Significance: Consistent with studies reporting cancer patients' perceptions, RA individuals in this study specified that aromatherapy and reflexology had beneficial effects to perform their activities of daily living easily, felt self-empowered, having lower symptom burden, and depressive mood.

Biography

ZehraGokMetin has completed her PhD in 2015 from Hacettepe University and stayed almost one year at University of Alabama at Birmingham for Post-doctoral studies. She is an Instructor at Hacettepe University Faculty of Nursing. She is working on symptom management especially for pain for five years. She has several publications in reputed journals and has been serving as a reviewer for reputed journals.

zehrakok85@hotmail.com

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