



Integrative Therapy Fact Sheet: Aromatherapy

What is Aromatherapy?

Aromatherapy is the use of concentrated plant oils to stimulate the body's sense of smell. They can be inhaled, sprayed into the air, applied to skin directly, or included as part of a massage.

How Can Aromatherapy Help Me?

Aromatherapy may have an impact on the body both physically and emotionally. The sense of smell can be a powerful trigger of past memories and emotions. Through the sense of smell some people may find a path to past memories and emotions which many times are not reached by other means. There is a growing body of research focused on the effects of aromatherapy on health and well-being.

What Does Aromatherapy Cost?

The cost of aromatherapy is based on the service provided. Generally, a session with an aromatherapist is approximately \$50 per hour with appointment times varying in length. The cost of a 1 oz. bottle of essential oil is \$15-\$25. Synthetic products are not natural and are not the same as true essential oils.

Special Points to Remember

- Aromatherapy is recognized in the United States by most state boards of nursing as part of holistic nursing. It is advised, however, that you work with a trained and experienced aromatherapist.
- Any substance can be harmful if misused. Most negative responses to aromatherapy are due to the poor quality of available essential oils. Being well informed about your essential oil's source is the best way to find pure essential oils.
- Essential oils that may be helpful in calming the stress or anxiety of cancer patients include lemongrass, lavender, and chamomile.
- A small number of people may develop an allergic or physical reaction to aromatherapy, such as a rash or headache, particularly to the lotions or certain smells.

Is Aromatherapy Offered at the Zakim Center?

The Zakim Center does not currently offer aromatherapy. However, if you have questions about integrative therapies or wonder if aromatherapy is right for you, speaking with our nurse practitioner may be helpful. Our nurse practitioner will explain the safety and benefits of integrative therapies, how they work in conjunction with traditional cancer treatment, and which ones may best fit your diagnosis, treatment schedule, and interests. To schedule an integrative medicine consult, please call **617-632-3322**.



Cost of Integrative Medicine Consultations

Integrative medicine consultations at Dana-Farber are billed to your insurance company, and the cost varies based on coverage.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, financial assistance is available to those who qualify for our other fee based services including acupuncture and massage. For more information, please contact the Zakim Center office at **617-632-3322** or **Zakim_Center@dfci.harvard.edu**.

Additional Information

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health's "Aromatherapy" Page

<https://nccih.nih.gov/health/aromatherapy>

Buckle J. The Role of Aromatherapy in Nursing Care. Nursing Clinics of North America 2001;36:57-72.

<http://europepmc.org/abstract/med/11342402>

To learn more about the Zakim Center's programs and services, please visit our website at **dana-farber.org/zakim**, email **Zakim_Center@dfci.harvard.edu**, or call **617-632-3322**.

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