Massage Using Pre-blended Aromatherapy Oils
Aromatherapy

Contents

1 Introduction

3 Legislation

6 Codes of practice

7 Sterilisation & hygiene

9 Professional ethics

10 Cost effectiveness

11 Preparation of the work area

13 Consultation & record card

15 Treatment planning

22 Posture and postural faults

26 Contra-indications

29 Preparing for treatment

31 Client positioning

33 Essential oils

34 Volatility of essential oils

35 Essential oil information
39 Essential oils compatible to treat common conditions

42 Absorption of essential oils into the body

45 Carrier oil information

47 Selection of pre-blended essential oils

51 Effects of massage

52 Massage techniques

58 Effects of massage on the body systems

64 Good techniques

66 Application to meet treatment objective

70 Massage procedure

71 Adapting procedure for a male client

72 Aftercare advice

74 Contra-actions
Essential oils were first recorded in the history books as far back as 2000 BC and have been used throughout the ages by various races in differing countries. Records in the Bible show the use of aromatic oils for the treatment of illness.

The early Egyptians extracted oils by a method of infusion and used them to embalm their dead and later, for the production of cosmetics.

The ancient Greeks acquired their knowledge of essential oils from the Egyptians and used this as a basis to build from. The Greek, Herodotus, was the first to record the method of distillation in around 425 BC.

Hippocrates, a Greek physician, wrote about a variety of medicinal plants and fought the plague with aromatic fumigations. He believed that the best way to achieve good health was to have an aromatic bath and massage daily. The Greeks passed their knowledge onto the Romans who used the oils for aromatic massage and in daily baths.

An Arab physician called Avicenna, wrote many books describing the various effects of plants on the body. Most importantly, he invented a primitive form of distillation that he used to produce essential oils and floral waters, a basis for the distillation methods used today.

The earliest written record of the use of aromatic oils in England was in the century, when many books were published which included recipes for producing essential oils. In the Century, the plague attacked England and it is a fact that the majority of people who survived the plague were using essential oils with antiseptic properties. The doctors of this time wore
protective clothing and breathed through a beak filled with cinnamon, cloves and aromatic herbs.

In 1652 an herbalist - Nicholas Culpeper, wrote a book that reinforced the medicinal properties of hundreds of plants and plant oils.

In the 1920’s the French chemist - Gattefosse founded modern Aromatherapy. He burnt his arm and discovered that when placed in a vat of lavender essential oil, the burn healed exceptionally well and eventually left no scarring. This discovery led him to undertake a great deal of research and he published his first book in 1928.

In the Indochina war of 1948-1959, Dr Jean Valnet, inspired by Gattefosse, and in the absence of his medical supplies, used the plant essences in his treatment of soldier’s battle wounds. He soon realised the enormous potential of the power of the oils.

In the 1950’s, a student of Gattefosse, Marguerite Maury, introduced the technique of combining essential oils with massage and brought this to Britain. She devoted the rest of her life to the teaching and training of this holistic approach.

The work of Robert Tisserand has undoubtedly generated great interest in aromatherapy in England. Not only has his book become a best seller in its field, but he has also established two aromatherapy associations in the UK.
**Legislation**

**Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**

This piece of legislation gives responsibilities to both the employer and the employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employers must provide:</th>
<th>Employees must:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Access to a health &amp; safety policy.</td>
<td>• Follow health and safety procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proper safety procedures.</td>
<td>• Act to protect themselves and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safe equipment that is serviced regularly.</td>
<td>• Treat all equipment properly and report any faults that they notice to their manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adequate training in safety procedures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A safe workplace that meets health requirements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All salons should display a health and safety poster and ensure that staff are trained in health and safety procedures. If a salon employs 5 or more staff they must have a written health and safety policy.

**The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992**

This act covers things such as toilet facilities, minimum working temperature, adequate lighting, adequate ventilation, appropriate floor covering, drinking water and staff area.

**The Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

This aims to prevent discrimination against people with disabilities. All employers are expected to make reasonable adjustments to their premises to enable a person with a disability to work there, or for a client to access the premises. A disability is defined as:

- A person with a physical or mental impairment.
- A person with an impairment that has an adverse effect on a person’s ability to perform normal activities.
- An impairment that has a long-term effect.

A disability can include diabetes, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, depression and heart disease.
The Care Standards Act 2000

The Care Standards Act is an act in the United Kingdom which provides for administration, regulation and inspection of various care institutions such as children's homes, nursing homes, residential care homes and independent hospitals.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002

These regulations explain how hazardous substances should be used, stored and disposed of. All employees should be made aware of the risks of such substances and where necessary be given further training.

Task

In order to comply with COSHH what must the employer do?

- Identify substances used in the workplace that may be hazardous.
- Assess the risks of each substance.
- Try to replace a hazardous substance with a less hazardous alternative.
- Decide what precautions are needed, i.e. wearing gloves.
- Preventing or controlling exposure to certain substances.
- Ensuring that control measures are used and maintained.
- Monitoring exposure.
- Ensuring employees are properly informed, trained and supervised.
- Detailed instructions must be kept regarding any products considered hazardous.

Inspection and registration of premises

The Local Authority Environmental Health Department enforces health and safety. An environmental health officer visits and inspects local business premises, to ensure that they meet with health and safety requirements. If any areas of danger are identified it is the responsibility of the employer to rectify the problem within a specified time limit. The inspector will issue an improvement notice; failure to comply with this will lead to prosecution.

The inspector also has the authority to close a business down if they feel that the levels of danger are such that the business must close whilst rectifying the problem. In this instance, a prohibition notice will be issued.
It is therefore very important that all businesses comply with health and safety legislation to prevent any accidents, legal proceedings or closures to business occurring.

**Legislation relating to the use and retail of aromatherapy products**

Beauty therapists performing an aromatherapy massage treatment are now not qualified to blend their own essential oils. The Aromatherapy Trade Council (ATC) is a good source of up to date information regarding these current legislative changes. The Medicines Act 1968 and The Cosmetic Products (safety) Regulations 2003 are the two pieces of legislation that are currently affecting the aromatherapy industry.

Since the Regulations may apply to the retail supply of pre-blended aromatherapy products, such as soaps, bath products, creams, lotions, aromatic waters and massage oils, those involved in this activity are advised to obtain a copy of the new UK Regulations.

The Aromatherapy Trade Council was founded in 1993 by a majority of the established essential oil traders in the UK. Its mission is to promote responsible marketing and consumer safety within the trade. The ATC has two main roles - issuing guidelines for the advertising, labelling, safety and packaging of essential oils. And working with government agencies (such as the Medicines Control Agency), to ensure the government understands the concerns of the aromatherapy trade and its customers.
Industry Codes Of Practice

The Industry Codes of Practice are a list of practices that should be adhered to in order to maintain a high standard of service within the industry.

Therapist hygiene and presentation
Hygiene is very important, not only to prevent infection and offensive odours but also to give a professional image to the client.

Task
Make a list of what is required of the therapist.

- Always wash hands before and after each client using soap dispensed from a covered container. You should dry your hands on disposable paper towels.
- Have clean teeth and avoid eating strong smelling foods and smoking.
- Bathe daily.
- Wear a clean, pressed uniform that is washed daily.
- Footwear should be clean, low heeled and a full shoe to protect the foot.
- Therapist's hair should be secured away from the face if it is long. If hair is shorter, it should be presented in a way that does not interfere with the treatment. If the hair is touched at any time during the treatment, the therapist must wash their hands.
- Nails are short, clean and free from enamel.
- Jewellery must be discreet and only a plain wedding band should be worn.
- Any cuts or abrasions on the therapist's hands must be covered.
- No visible facial piercings.

As a therapist, it is very important to present a well-groomed appearance as this gives a professional impression to the client. The client will also feel inspired by your appearance and wish to receive treatments and advice from you.
Sterilisation And Hygiene

Hygiene is very important to a therapist because correct hygiene:
• prevents infection (for both the therapist and client)
• prevents offensive odours
• gives a professional image to the client

Hygienic practices

Task
Make a list of the hygienic practices that are followed during an aromatherapy massage treatment.
• All towels are boil-washed after each client.
• Spatulas are used to remove products from containers, never fingers.
• If wooden spatulas are used for the removal of products, they are disposed of after each client.
• Lids are replaced straight away on all products.
• Waste is disposed of correctly.
• Surfaces are wiped clean with a detergent or surgical spirit.
• Any glass or plastic containers or pipettes must be washed in hot water and detergent.
**Disposal of waste**

All waste must be placed straight into a bin, which has a lid and contains a bin liner. At the end of the day/session, this should then be sealed and disposed of immediately into the main bin liner. Any waste that has met body fluids should be placed into a yellow bin liner if a large item, otherwise into a yellow 'sharps' container. This will then be collected and incinerated at a suitable site.

**Surfaces and floors**

Clean surfaces and floors daily with hot water and detergent and then disinfect with surgical spirit or a similar product. In a training environment, the top of the trolley should be wiped over before use every time. If the clients bare feet are to be exposed to the floor, either bedroll should be placed on the floor or disposable protective footwear should be provided.

**Hygiene when treating the client**

Before commencing treatment, you must ensure that the client has no contagious diseases or disorders. You should then sanitise the area. The client may shower first or alternatively sanitise the skin with a skin cleansing substance such as witch hazel or antiseptic.

When carrying out a massage treatment you must ensure that the genital area is covered. If the client does not have suitable clothing then disposable paper pants should be provided. This is to ensure that no body fluids from the client come into contact with any of the towels.
Professional Ethics

As a therapist, it is important that you follow a code of professional ethics. This is to ensure that you provide a professional treatment and do not offend anybody. Clients will wish to receive their treatment in a relaxed and professional environment. Examples of professional ethics that you should comply with:

- Do not talk about sex, religion or politics.
- Do not speak badly of another colleague or salon.
- Do not discriminate.
- Only use appropriate language.
- Do not entice clients away from another therapist or salon.
- Do not keep clients waiting for a treatment. If this is unavoidable then apologise to the client and keep them informed.
- Clients’ details are confidential and must not be discussed with others.
- Always give an honest opinion to the client when advising on treatments and products.
- Give the client the opportunity to make the decision to talk through the treatment. Some clients like to have a chat, others don’t.
- Follow procedures for treating a minor.

Treating minors

If you are performing a massage treatment on a client who is a minor (under 16 years of age in England and under 18 years of age in Scotland) you will need a parent or guardian present during the consultation and throughout the treatment. They will need to sign the record card as consent for the treatment to go ahead. This is a legal requirement and you would be breaking the law if you were to provide the treatment without consent.
**Cost effectiveness**

You need to consider being cost effective in three main areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimising waste</th>
<th>Being cost effective with your time</th>
<th>Charging an appropriate price for the treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Minimising waste**

For a business to run cost effectively and make a profit, it is important that all wastage is minimal. To work cost effectively:

- Use the minimal amount of product to produce the desired outcome.
- Split tissues, bedroll and cotton wool.
- Use minimal amount of towels.
- Place tops back on products to work hygienically and prevent spillage.
- Always turn off taps and do not run the water excessively.
- Store products correctly - dark, cool, dry and upright.
- Turn out lights when not in use.
- Be cost effective with your treatment time.

**Timing of treatments**

A calculation is made for how long each treatment should take to ensure that the price charged is correct and profitable. It is important that you complete the service within the agreed time because:

- It prevents time wastage within the salon.
- Clients can calculate the time required for the treatment.
- Clients are not left waiting.
- An effective appointment system is guaranteed.

**Pricing structure**

It is important that you have a price list for all treatments to ensure cost effectiveness, consistency with each treatment and to prevent confusion when calculating clients' bills. When working out the price for the treatment, you need to take into account:

- Treatment time.
- Products and materials used.
- Electricity etc.
- Price charged by competing salons.
- Percentage profit required.
Task
Complete the missing words:
You should prepare your work area by considering the following points:
1. Appropriate ventilation and heating will be required as the client will be undressed throughout the treatment, the room temperature should be slightly warmer than normal. The room temperature should be able to be adjusted throughout the treatment as required. Adequate ventilation is needed to prevent cross infection of viruses and diseases, carbon dioxide saturated air, stale odours and to disperse the aroma of the essential oils.
2. Subtle lighting is recommended, the lighting should be dim so that it is not bright on the client’s eyes; the client needs to be able to relax.
3. Ambience needs to be created, the room should smell pleasant - you may need to use aromatherapy oils and light candles. You should also consider the use of appropriate relaxing background music during the treatment, the radio would be inappropriate for an aromatherapy massage treatment.
4. Treatment couch, ideally with a face hole and preferably height adjustable is prepared to allow the individual therapist to work comfortably in line with their height. The treatment couch should be protected and have clean linen.
5. Blankets and pillows/bolsters may be needed to keep the client warm and comfortable during the treatment. Alternatively, some salons use a heated electrical blanket underneath the bed cover to keep the client warm.
6. Two chairs will be required for the consultation.
7. An adequate supply of freshly laundered **towels** will be needed.
8. A supply of **bedroll**, **cotton wool** and **tissues** should be available.
9. **Shower** and **toilet** facilities should be clean and in working order.
10. An empty, lined **bin** should be available for your use.
11. The **trolley** should be disinfected with appropriate product or surgical spirit.
12. All **products** should be available; containers are clean and contain an adequate quantity of product.
13. **Record card** and pen should be placed on the bottom shelf of the trolley. Check details of the client’s previous treatments prior to their arrival.

**Task**
Please answer the following questions to demonstrate your knowledge on preparation of the working area:

1. **Why must the room have adequate ventilation.**

   Adequate ventilation is needed to prevent cross infection of viruses and diseases, carbon dioxide saturated air, stale odours and to disperse the aroma of the essential oils.

2. **What type of lighting do you need for the treatment and why?**

   Subtle lighting - the lighting should be dim so that it is not bright on the client’s eyes; the client needs to be able to relax.

3. **How would you set the ambience for the treatment?**

   The room should smell pleasant, and you may need to use aromatherapy oils. You should also consider the use of appropriate relaxing background music during the treatment, dim lighting and candles.

4. **What do you need to keep the client warm and comfortable during the massage?**

   Blankets and pillows/bolsters may be needed to keep the client warm and comfortable during the treatment. Alternatively, some salons use a heated electrical blanket underneath the bed cover to keep the client warm.
Consultation And Record Cards

One of the most important parts of the treatment is the consultation. At this point, you will discuss the client’s needs and decide what is required to meet those needs. As a therapist, you must be able to put the client at ease and be good at encouraging clients to give you the required information. Considerations:

- **Good communication skills** - both verbal and non-verbal; examples of good body language are good posture, eye contact, smiling and encouraging head nods. You need to speak clearly, varying your tone and at the appropriate pace. Use words that your client will understand and always look at the client when you are talking to them.

- **Good questioning techniques** - this is vital to gain the information that you require to carry out the treatment. You will need to mainly use open questioning techniques.

- **Allow the client time to ask questions** - this will give the client the opportunity to clarify any concerns or worries and makes them feel valued.

- **Good observation skills** - you need to be able to read your client’s body language as it will help you to understand how your client is feeling.

- **Visual and manual assessment** - you will need to assess the client in order to select suitable treatment applications and products, also to consider any special requirements such as extra towels or bolsters.

- **Reference to other records** - you should obtain any previous record cards and check previous treatment and product details to provide a background about the client’s treatment history. You may also need to check medical conditions and establish if any contra-indications have been given previous medical consent.

- **Adapting your consultation** - you should adapt your consultation for each individual client taking into consideration their age, gender, previous knowledge of massage treatments, culture, religion and any disabilities.
Task
1. What should you do during the consultation for a massage treatment using pre-blended aromatherapy oils?

- Introduce yourself and exchange pleasantries.
- Complete the record card.
- Discuss the client's requirements.
- Suggest a treatment to meet the client's needs.
- Carry out any necessary sensitivity tests.
- Explain the treatment procedure.
- Discuss cost, time and frequency of treatments.
- In some instances, you may need to recommend aftercare or retail products if a certain result is to be achieved.
- Obtain a copy of the client's signature to provide agreement to the treatment.

2. What may happen if the consultation is carried out ineffectively?

- You would be less likely to meet the client's requirements.
- The client would not relax during the treatment, as they do not feel confident in your service.
- You would not give a professional image to the client.
- You would feel less confident performing the treatment, as you do not have all the required information.
- The client may be dissatisfied with the result.
- If you did not obtain important information such as client signature or check for contra-indications, then you could put the client and yourself at risk. This could result in the client taking legal action against the salon.
- You would not get repeat business from the client.
- They would not recommend the salon to friends etc.
- All the above would have a negative effect on the salons takings.
Record keeping

A record card should be completed for all treatments and contains confidential information about each client that is specific to each treatment. They should be stored in alphabetical order by surname in a locked metal filing cabinet or box. This should be easily accessible to the therapist, when ready to perform a treatment. This information could also be updated onto a computerised system.

Task

What information should a record card contain for an aromatherapy treatment?

- Personal details
- Doctors name and telephone number
- Any medical details
- List to check for contra-indications (including allergies)
- Treatment aims and outcomes
- Treatment plan on which to base future treatments
- Client’s signature or parent/guardian signature if the client is a minor
- Application time/techniques
- All products used
- Client’s physical characteristics
- Postural identifications or noted body language
- Details on lifestyle
- Retail sales

After each treatment, you should update the record card. This would be particularly useful in the following instances:
- You need to contact a client due to a cancellation, double booking etc.
- You need to check up on a particular detail of the treatment.
- If another therapist is to take over the treatment.
- The client wishes to purchase a product that you used in a previous treatment.
Data Protection Act 1998

This legislation is in place to protect client’s privacy and confidentiality. You will be required to keep records of your clients’ treatments; these could be either computer or paper based. Inform the client that their records will be stored and will only be accessed by those authorised to do so. The information should be:

1. Adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose
2. Accurate
3. Kept for no longer than is necessary
4. Secure

Conducting a sensitivity patch test

If a client has a sensitive skin that is prone to allergic reactions to products, you should carry out a patch test of the suspected blend prior to the treatment. The patch test (aromatherapy blend) is applied to the crease of the client’s elbow 24-48 hours prior to treatment. Advise the client not to bathe or use heat treatments for the next 24-48 hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive reaction to patch test</th>
<th>Negative reaction to patch test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A positive reaction will develop if the client is allergic to the blend and the symptoms will be redness, itching, swelling or hives.</td>
<td>• A negative reaction would show no symptoms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The treatment can not go ahead with this blend.</td>
<td>• The treatment can proceed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The client will not necessarily always be allergic, as hormonal influences can change the body’s sensitivity to products. You should advise that they are currently allergic to the product, and that you will be happy to re-test in a few months time. You should then offer the client a treatment with an alternative product, or test for another product.
Treatment Planning

When devising an individual treatment plan you should take into account many different points however, primarily the main reason for treatment.

An initial treatment plan is completed with the client during the consultation. All the details are noted on the record card and agreed to by the client.

It is very important that you write down the contents of the treatment plan as important details can easily be forgotten. In addition, another therapist may need to refer to the treatment plan. The following information should be taken into account:

- **Treatment objectives** - this is the aim of the treatment for example, uplifting, relaxation or improved sense of wellbeing. Your treatment plan should always be in line with the client requirements.

- **Lifestyle** - the client’s lifestyle plays a very important part in the treatment plan. It will affect how often the client can/should receive treatment, application of treatment, effectiveness of treatment and the homecare advice given. You should consider occupation, domestic...
situation, dietary and fluid intake, hobbies, means of relaxation, exercise habits, smoking and drinking habits and sleeping patterns.

- **Medical history** - certain conditions may affect how the client needs to be positioned for the treatment, how long the client can lie still for, treatment choice, blend selection or how the treatment should be performed.

- **Emotional condition** - is an important factor that must be taken into account before deciding on the treatment plan. The application of your massage will vary depending on the client's emotional condition, and will also affect your blend selection. You may also wish to consider if your client has Yin or Yang tendencies, so that you can adapt your treatment accordingly.

- **Choice of pre-blended oils** - your essential oil choice can only be made after a thorough consultation with the client. Your choice will depend on the client's emotional and physical condition at the time of treatment and what outcomes the client would like.

- **Contra-indications** - may restrict how the treatment is applied or blend selection and this would need to be taken into account.

- **Previous contra-actions** - if a client has previously suffered from contra-actions to the treatment, you will need to adjust accordingly or select an alternative blend to prevent the contra-actions from re-occurring.

- **Area to be treated** - this should be taken into consideration as the client may wish the therapist to concentrate on a specific area.

- **Skin condition** - is recorded to make sure that appropriate products and techniques are selected.

- **Weight** - should be checked, as this will provide a guideline when deciding on the client's fitness levels and ability. If a client is overweight, they may suffer from joint problems, immobility, breathing problems etc. A person's weight is also linked strongly with blood pressure problems and diabetes, which will restrict the treatment. If the client has a large amount of adipose tissue you will need to massage much deeper to relax muscular tension, and the opposite
applies for a client with a low amount of adipose tissue. This is only a
guideline, thus feedback must be gained to determine the amount of
pressure required by the client.

• **Size** - the client’s body size should also be taken into account when
deciding on your treatment application. A larger person will require
more strokes to cover the area and the opposite applies for a smaller
person, therefore your procedure will need to be adapted. The body
size will also affect how much massage medium you require for an
effective massage treatment. You may also have a choice of massage
couches to use which may be suitable for a client with a larger frame.

• **Muscle tone** - depending on the client’s muscle tone, you will adapt
your massage routine and movements to suit the individual.

• **Age** - should be taken into consideration when applying your massage
procedure. An elderly client may have frail bones and fragile skin that
is prone to bruising and therefore additional care must be taken to
ensure that your massage is gentle but still beneficial for the client’s
needs. An elderly client may struggle to get up after lying on their
stomach, try to adapt your massage so that they only lie on their
stomach for 15 minutes. An elderly client would also benefit from
more massage to their hands, feet and lower legs where circulation is
often poor.

• **Health** - you will need to take into account any health implications and
adapt the treatment for client comfort and to achieve optimum
benefits.

• **Previous treatment details** - this is recorded as it provides guidance
on the client’s level of commitment and outcome from previous
treatments.

• **Posture** - you will adapt your massage techniques to assist with
certain postural faults, this is discussed in more detail further on in
the package.

It is important that the treatment plan is realistic, as you will find that
the client will follow the treatment plan, and the improvements will be far
greater than that of a client who is trying to follow an unrealistic
treatment plan.
Task
Please answer the following questions to demonstrate your knowledge of record keeping and treatment planning.

1. Why it is important that you keep up to date record of the aromatherapy treatments?

- So that you will know which oils have been used on the client previously.
- To keep a record of any specific treatment applications that are individual to your client.
- To ensure you have accurate contra-indication information for the client.
- If another therapist were to take over, they would know how to perform the treatment to meet the client’s requirements.
- To record feedback and contra-actions from previous treatments.
- For legal reasons, it shows that you are taking due care to look after your clients.

2. Why is it important that when storing client records on a computer you comply with the Data Protection Act?

To ensure that client details remain confidential and secure.

3. What are the principles of good practice that should be followed when processing data on the computer?

It should be:
1. Adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose
2. Accurate
3. Kept for no longer than is necessary
4. Secure
4. What information should be considered when treatment planning?

- Treatment objectives
- Lifestyle
- Medical history
- Emotional condition
- Choice of essential and carrier oils
- Contra-indications
- Contra-actions
- Area to be treated
- Skin condition
- Weight
- Size
- Muscle tone
- Age
- Health
- Posture
- Previous treatment details

5. What lifestyle factors should be discussed and considered before devising the treatment plan?

- Occupation
- Domestic situation
- Dietary and fluid intake
- Hobbies and means of relaxation
- Exercise habits
- Smoking and drinking habits
- Sleep patterns
Posture

The therapist needs to be able to recognise postural and skeletal conditions and adapt the routine to suit the individual conditions. This will ensure that:

* The therapist recognises any serious postural faults that cannot be treated. A serious fault should be referred to a doctor.
* The treatment will not cause harm or discomfort.
* The most effective treatment procedure is selected.
* If the client has a minor postural fault, advice can be given to prevent the condition from worsening.

When carrying out a postural check, attach a weighted plumb line or faradic pad and wire to the cubicle tracking. This will provide a straight line that should fall inline with the client’s earlobe, centre of the shoulder, behind the hip joint, in front of the knee joint and in front of the ankle joint.

Good Posture

Points that indicate good posture are:

1. The head should not extend beyond the mid line.
2. When relaxed the arms should lie evenly at the sides.
3. The distance between the scapulas and spine is equal on both sides.
4. Scapulas are positioned equally horizontally.
5. The spinal column is straight.
6. The back has a natural curve.
7. The abdomen should appear flat.
8. The curves of the waist are level.
9. The buttocks should not protrude abnormally.
10. The legs should be equal in length, with knees facing forwards.
11. Body weight is evenly distributed.
12. The feet should face forwards and be slightly apart.
It is rare to find a person who has a perfect posture, there are some common postural faults that many people present that are due to:

Client lifestyle → Occupation → Driving → Pregnancy

Illness → Ageing → Carrying small children → Heavy shopping bags or shoulder bags

Embarrassment of a certain aspect of body → Respiratory conditions → Muscle imbalance

Poor posture would be any deviation away from the points listed under good posture; it may only be a minor fault or could be a more predominant postural fault. Some common examples of postural conditions are now outlined.

**Dowager's hump**

Fatty deposits are laid down and build up on the back of the neck to form a hump.

- The client should keep their head and neck in correct line.
- Recommend the client pushes the head & neck backwards, holds for 1 second, releases and repeats.
- Massage may help to break down the fatty deposits over the back of the neck and shoulders.
### Winged scapulae

The shoulder blades protrude. The pectoral muscles will be stretched and the adductor muscles of the scapula will tighten.

| Advise the client about correct posture. | Exercises are needed to tighten the pectoral muscles. | Additional effleurage and petrissage movements should be applied over the upper back to relax the muscles. | Recommend stretching exercises for the upper back. |

### Kyphosis

Rounded shoulders develop. The pectoral muscles tighten and the muscles over the thoracic region of the spine become stretched. In women, it can lead to sagging breasts.

| Advise the client about correct posture. | Exercises are required to strengthen the scapula adductors. | Effleurage & petrissage movements over the chest area will help to stretch tightened muscles. | Recommend stretches for the pectoral muscles. |
### Lordosis
Recognised by increased curvature of the lumbar area of the lower back. This causes the muscles of the lower back to tighten and the abdominal muscles to become over stretched.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advise the client about correct posture.</th>
<th>Recommend exercises to strengthen the abdominal muscles.</th>
<th>Recommend stretching exercises for the lower back.</th>
<th>Additional effleurage &amp; petrissage movements to the lumbar area will help to relax tightened lower back muscles.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Scoliosis
Recognised by a lateral curve of the spine, which could be either in a C or S shape. This causes the muscles on one side of the body to shorten which results in uneven shoulders, hips or waist.

| Advise the client about correct posture. | Recommend exercises to strengthen the stretched muscles- (this would be the side of the body which is higher up). | Application of effleurage & petrissage movements to relax the side of the body that is lower. | Recommend stretches to the shortened side to lengthen the tightened muscles. |
Contra-indications

It is important that you can recognise a contra-indication to help prevent any further harm to the client and to prevent cross-infection and secondary infection.

Contra-indications to massage using pre-blended aromatherapy oils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contra-indications that prevent treatment</th>
<th>Contra-indications that restrict treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deep vein thrombosis</td>
<td>Diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During chemotherapy or radiotherapy</td>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin diseases and disorders – i.e. impetigo, tinea and scabies</td>
<td>High and low blood pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Varicose veins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product allergies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical conditions requiring GP referral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why is it important that you do not diagnose any of these conditions?

You should not diagnose as you are not qualified to do so. It is unprofessional and may worry or upset the client unnecessarily.

Would you be able to proceed with treatment if the client has any of the above conditions that restrict treatment?

It depends on the condition, however if the client obtains and doctors note providing consent for the treatment, you may proceed with caution. Alternatively, once the condition is no longer present you can treat the client. You may be able to go ahead with treatment but avoiding an area or adapting to work around the condition.

Deep vein thrombosis

A blood clot forms in the deep veins, usually in the leg. The symptoms are warmth, redness, swelling of the leg and a noticeable pain or ache when standing/walking etc. Massage is not recommended as it could cause the blood clot to be dislodged, it may then travel, and block a vital organ such as the heart or lungs and this could prove fatal.
Receiving treatment for cancer - chemotherapy or radiotherapy

If a client has cancer, massage is not advisable as it may stimulate cancerous cells to spread due to the stimulation of the lymphatic system. If the client is terminally ill, massage is often recommended as a method of relaxation and pain relief, however this should only be carried out whilst liaising closely with the client’s physician.

Contagious skin diseases and disorders

You should not proceed with treatment if the client has any contagious skin disease or disorders as you do not want to risk spreading the infection to yourself or others.

Diabetes

A diabetic has reduced healing, i.e. bruising and blood vessel bleeding. Treatments that cause the body to perspire or the blood vessels to dilate will disturb the blood sugar balance in the body. The client should inform you of their condition. A diabetic person may feel dizzy or may go into a coma if their blood sugar level becomes too high or too low.

Epilepsy

A disorder that is due to an abnormal discharge of electrical impulses across the brain resulting in attention lapsing for short periods or more severe seizures, which may result in unconsciousness. The client would have to inform you if they were epileptic.

High or low blood pressure

The client would have to inform you during the consultation if they had blood pressure problems. The client may feel faint or have palpitations during the treatment. A client who suffers from blood pressure problems should be regularly reviewed.

Varicose veins

Varicose veins appear as a swollen and bulging blue/purple vein on the leg. Do not work over as it may cause discomfort or the veins to rupture. Adapt the treatment by avoiding the area.

Product allergies

If the client has had an allergic reaction to certain ingredients or products in the past, this should be noted on the record card. A suitable massage medium or blend should then be selected that is least likely to
trigger an allergic reaction. If the client is prone to allergic reactions, it may be advisable to patch test prior to proceeding with treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions requiring medical referral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the client has a medical condition which you are uncertain of you should ask the client to check with their doctor before receiving treatment. This is to prevent any future complications to the client.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pregnancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the client is pregnant, it is advisable not to lie on their stomach during the massage. You may need to massage the clients back whilst they are in a seated position or lying on their side. Only use pre-blended aromatherapy oils that are safe for use during pregnancy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a pregnant client you **must avoid** the use of the following oils:

- Cedarwood
- Clary sage
- Eucalyptus
- Fennel
- Juniper
- Pine
- Rosemary
- Hyssop
- Peppermint
- Yarrow
- Ajowan
- Angelica
- Basil
- Bay Laurel
- Celery seeds
- Buchu
- Calamintha
- Citronella
- Cumin
- Marjoram
- Mugwort
- Myrrh
- Oregano
- Thyme

It is recommended that you do not massage the abdomen.
Preparation For The Aromatherapy Massage Treatment

1. Prepare the work area.
2. Greet the client.
3. Explain the treatment procedure, benefits, timings and cost.
4. Carry out the consultation and complete the record card - check verbally for contra-indications. It is a nice touch to soak the clients feet in a bowl of water during the consultation.
5. Allow the client time to ask any questions.
6. Instruct the client how to prepare for the treatment:
   - Ask them to remove jewellery from the area and glasses if worn.
   - Clothing should be removed (explain what underclothes should be kept on).
   - Explain to the client how to lie on the couch.
   - Provide a large towel for covering the client.
   - Leave the client in privacy to prepare for the treatment.
7. On your return, you may wish to cover with extra towels.
8. Wash hands.
9. Check visually for contra-indications.
10. Remove any make-up as required. Make-up will need removing if the face is being treated as part of the full body aromatherapy massage. It is important that the make-up is removed to ensure that the client does not have a reaction to the products, to check the client’s skin condition, for hygiene reasons and to ensure maximum penetration and benefit of the essential oils.
11. Conduct analysis, decide on appropriate treatment plan, and blend for the client’s needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal reassurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Due to the nature of the treatment, you will find that clients require additional reassurance to that normally provided. You can reassure the client that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only the area being treated will be exposed at any one time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They will feel more relaxed as they become used to their therapist. Generally, on the first visit the client will not be as relaxed as on subsequent visits due to the new surroundings and therapist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If they feel uncomfortable at any time, they must let you know so that you can adapt the treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the client does not feel comfortable having a certain area massaged then that area can be avoided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Modesty, privacy and covering the client

You should maintain the client’s modesty and privacy throughout the treatment, to comply with basic ethics and to ensure client comfort. To maintain modesty:

- You must ensure that the client is suitably covered at all times with appropriate towels (one for the upper trunk and one for the lower body), and that only the areas being treated are exposed.
- Whilst the client is changing, you must ensure that nobody enters the treatment area. This should also be maintained throughout the treatment with an exception of the therapist.
- Talk using quiet tones – particularly when in a training environment, as conversations can easily be overheard.

Materials required for an aromatherapy massage treatment

The equipment and materials required for an aromatherapy treatment:

- **Treatment couch** - preferably height adjustable to allow the individual therapist to work comfortably in line with their height. A face hole may also be used to allow the client to lie comfortably during the back massage. This also enables the therapist to have access to the neck and shoulder area, whilst the muscles are in a relaxed position.
- **Selection of pre-blended essential oils** – this is the massage medium for the aromatherapy treatment.
- **Small measuring container** – required to measure the required quantity of blend for the size of the area being treated.
- **Witch hazel or cologne** - to wipe over the client’s skin if they have not showered.
- **Surgical spirit** – used to clean the feet, trolley, couch etc.
- **Plastic bowls** - to store the cotton wool.
- **Skin care products** - required for cleansing the face in the preparation stage.
- **Cotton wool** - to apply cleansing products to the skin.
- **Bedroll** - may be used to cover the massage couch and trolley.
- **Towels** - to protect the massage couch, cover the client during the massage treatment, support the body during the massage and for drying off the client after a shower.
Client positioning

Position the client on the couch ensuring maximum support and comfort. A pillow or towel roll should be supplied for support. The position of the client should be central to the bed and allow the therapist access to the areas that are being treated. The client should be encouraged to lie straight and not cross their legs.

In the **prone** lying position (on the front), the head is usually turned to the side and support can be given under the ankles. This position is used when massaging the back, back of legs and buttocks.

In the **supine** lying position (on the back), the front of the body, face, neck, shoulders and scalp is easily massaged. Offer support under the neck or head and support may be beneficial under the knees.

In a **seated** position, the client will sit on a stool and lean onto the protected couch. Pillows or towels should first be placed over the couch. Encourage the client to lean forwards, placing their arms loosely folded and upwards for maximum comfort.

A pregnant client may lie on their **side**, as they will find it uncomfortable to lie on their front. The client’s back and waist can be massaged comfortably in this position. Pillows are placed under the client’s head and stomach for additional support.
Task
Please answer the following questions

1. Why is the correct client positioning important?

Client positioning is important to enable the client to relax and prevent the client from experiencing any discomfort during the treatment, which could lead to muscular aches and pains.

2. What are the benefits of using a face hole in a treatment couch?

It allows the client to lie comfortably during the back massage. This also enables the therapist to have access to the neck and shoulder area, whilst the muscles are in a relaxed position.

3. Explain when you would recommend/select the different massage positions.

The **prone** lying position is used when massaging the back, back of legs and buttocks.

The **supine** lying position is used when massaging the front of the body, face, neck, shoulders and scalp.

The **seated** position is used when massaging the back, neck and shoulders for an elderly, disabled or pregnant client who cannot lie in the prone position.

The client may lie on their **side** if pregnant, as they will find it uncomfortable to lie on their front. The client’s back and waist can be massaged comfortably in this position.
An essential oil is a naturally occurring life force of a plant, present in the cells of certain plants and often referred to as a plant hormone. As a hormone, each essential oil has its own specific properties; however, in general they have a curative effect on different systems of the body. This means that the oils can mimic the hormones of the body or stimulate the glands inside the body to produce their own hormones. As our hormones control all our bodily functions, essential oils can have very powerful effects. Therefore, essential oils can act on all systems within the body for example, some may have an affect on the circulation whereas another may work on the reproductive system. The essential oil can enter the body via inhalation, the skin, the olfactory system or the sweat/sebaceous glands.

Properties of essential oils

Each essential oil contains a varying percentage of different chemical constituents with each chemical having its own recognisable aroma. When all these aromas blend, they produce the specific aroma for the essential oil. In addition, the chemical make-up will also reflect the therapeutic properties and effects of an essential oil. Essential oils are organic compounds with hydrogen, carbon and oxygen being the building blocks from which essential oils are made from.
### Volatility of essential oils

All essential oils are volatile however their evaporation rates vary, grouping the oils into either top, middle or base notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaporate quickly</td>
<td>Evaporate moderately and are absorbed</td>
<td>Evaporate slowly and are absorbed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and are absorbed most</td>
<td>moderately into the body</td>
<td>slowly into the body but effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quickly into the body</td>
<td></td>
<td>last longest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top notes**
- These oils evaporate the quickest, with an evaporation rate of 1-14.
- Their effects will last for approximately 24 hours.
- They are absorbed most quickly into the body.
- They have a sharp aroma.
- They have a stimulating, uplifting effect.
- Main production is from citrus fruits and flowers, for example lemon, grapefruit, tea tree, lemongrass, eucalyptus, and clary sage.

**Middle notes**
- These oils evaporate moderately, with an evaporation rate of 15-60.
- Their effects will last for 2-3 days.
- They are absorbed moderately into the body.
- Have a floral aroma.
- They affect organs of the body therefore aiding bodily functions and they usually have an antiseptic effect.
- Produced from flowers and herbs, for example lavender, camomile, geranium, marjoram and rosemary.

**Base notes**
- These oils evaporate the slowest, with an evaporation rate of 61-100.
- Their effects will last for 1 week.
- They are absorbed slowly into the body.
- Their aroma is heavy and earthy.
- Properties are relaxing and soothing.
- They are known as fixatives, as they prolong the life of a blend.
- Produced from woods and resins, for example neroli, rose & ylang-ylang.
Where are essential oils derived from?

The essential oil is present within the plant in either the root, stem, flower, fruit, leaf or bark, and the amount within each plant can vary depending on the plant. The essential oil itself is contained inside an odoriferous molecule and is extracted by various methods. The table below explains what part of the plant is used for extraction of each essential oil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of the Plant</th>
<th>Essential Oils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flowers or leaves</td>
<td>Geranium, Jasmine, Lavender, Rose, Neroli, Ylang Ylang, Clove, Cypress, Eucalyptus, Lemongrass, Petitgrain, Tea tree, Clary Sage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Bergamot, Grapefruit, Orange, Lemon, Lime, Mandarin, Black pepper, Juniper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herb</td>
<td>Basil, Coriander, Garlic, Mint, Patchouli, Pennyroyal, Rosemary, Chamomile, Fennel, Marjoram, Peppermint, Thyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resin</td>
<td>Benzoin, Frankincense, Myrrh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Camphor, Cedarwood, Rosewood, Sandalwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roots</td>
<td>Angelica root, Ginger, Vetiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeds</td>
<td>Cardamom, Carrot seed, Fennel, Nutmeg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Essential Oil Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential oil</th>
<th>Uses and benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Chamomile - German** | Anti-inflammatory  
                          Calming and soothing  
                          Nervous tension  
                          Nervous bowel conditions  
                          Muscular aches and pains  
                          Headaches  
                          Insomnia  
                          Allergies & sensitive skin  
                          Menstrual problems  
                          Relaxation |
| **Clary Sage**     | Muscular aches and pains  
                          Depression  
                          Skin care - acne skin conditions, boils, dandruff  
                          Asthma  
                          Painful periods, irregular periods or PMT  
                          Menopausal symptoms  
                          Muscular spasm of the respiratory system |
| **Eucalyptus**     | Muscular aches  
                          Asthma  
                          Coughs, colds, flu, throat infections, sinusitis  
                          Bronchitis and catarrh  
                          Neuralgia  
                          Headaches  
                          Poor circulation  
                          Rheumatoid arthritis  
                          Heals cuts, burns, blisters & infections |
| **Geranium**       | Uplifting  
                          Anxiety and depression  
                          Hormonal imbalances and PMT  
                          Nervous tension  
                          Stress  
                          Oedema  
                          Improves circulation  
                          Cellulite  
                          Varicose veins |