

Introduction to Aromatherapy for Spa

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Key Terms

Aromatherapy: The use of essential oils for healing.

Essential oils: Volatile plant oils extracted from certain aromatic plants that have both physiological and psychological effects on the human body.

Fixed oils: Vegetable oils that are nonvolatile such as sweet almond or sunflower. Essential oils readily dissolve into fixed oils, so fixed oils are often used as a carrier for essential oils.

Functional group: A reactive oxygen or nitrogen-containing unit of a chemical compound (in an essential oil).

Learned-odor response: A response that occurs when an odor is paired with a person, place, or thing, and a memory link is formed.

Limbic system: The oldest part of the brain where olfactory signals activate smell-related responses.

Olfactory response: Olfaction is the sense of smell. An olfactory response refers to the mental, emotional, or spiritual changes that may be elicited by an aroma.

Oxidation: A reaction that occurs when the chemicals in essential oils interact with the oxygen that is present in the air. This results in degradation of the oil.

Quenching: Process that occurs when the action of one compound in an essential oil is suppressed by another compound, thereby making the oil safer for use.

Synergy: When the whole is greater than the sum of its parts and those parts are mutually enhancing.

Volatility: The rate at which a compound turns from a liquid to a gas at room temperature (i.e., when it evaporates).

Aromatherapy is both a complex area of study and a simple enhancing technique that can be added to any spa service. The goal of this chapter is to provide an overview of the topic and some guidance on safe and effective ways to use **essential oils** in a spa for those without extensive training. The National Association of Holistic Aromatherapy (NAHA) suggests a formal course of study of no less than 230 hours for professional therapists.¹ A number of comprehensive programs are described in the resources section at the back of the book. Also at the back of the book is a chart listing common names of essential oils with their botanical names to help therapists order the correct oil indicated in the text. In certain instances, the Latin names will be given in the text to provide clarity. This is to prevent confusion because sometimes the common name refers to more than one botanical species, or very similar common names are used for different species. For example, the common name *sage* can cause problems. Common sage (*Salvia officinalis*) is used differently than clary sage (*Salvia sclarea*) and Spanish sage (*Salvia lavandulifolia*). Common sage contains up to 42% thujone, a potentially dangerous ketone that is contraindicated for the elderly, pregnant women, those who are in a weakened condition, and children. Although common sage is not dangerous when applied topically in low concentration to healthy individuals, it does contain methyl chavicol, which can cause skin irritation. Clary sage contains 75% esters, which support relaxation and stress reduction and are safe for liberal use. Spanish sage contains camphor and cineol, making it the best of the three oils for respiratory support.

It is important to note that essential oils are not meant to take the place of professional medical treatments and should be used by massage therapists to provide general support for their clients. Although blends can be created that directly address the symptoms of many conditions, therapists must always be careful not to make false claims or go beyond their scope of practice.

Aromatherapy—An Art and Science

Looking at the many definitions of aromatherapy offered by different authors, one that comes very close to describing the reality of practice is that of Jade Shutes, president of NAHA (2000–2004). She defines aromatherapy as follows: “Aromatherapy is the art and science of healing body, mind, and spirit through essential oils.”

Each client is unique, so an aromatherapist must reflect on and synthesize numerous pieces of information when determining the best form of essential oil support for a client. This requires intuition, creativity, and the ability to process information abstractly and then form it into a support plan. In other words, the practice of aromatherapy is an *art*.

Aromatherapy is also a *science*. Essential oils are composed of a complex mixture of chemical compounds, and the skilled aromatherapist will select oils for a treatment based on their known biological effects (Fig. 7-1). Understanding the effects of different oils on the human body requires rigorous study and careful observation over time. The experienced practitioner will know that some compounds can have negative effects on the human body under particular conditions, so understanding how to select and blend different oils is both an art and a science.

Lastly, aromatherapy not only affects the body but also the *mind* and the *spirit*. The psychological effect of essential oils on the mind and spirit are based on the often powerful emotions and memories elicited by an aroma.

Essential oils are regularly used for their relaxing effects and to ensure that the treatment area is clean and healthy. It is important to point out that different types of health care providers may use essential oils in quite different ways. Medical doctors in France can legally prescribe essential oils to be taken internally for a specific pharmacological effect.² This type of use is not often seen in a spa

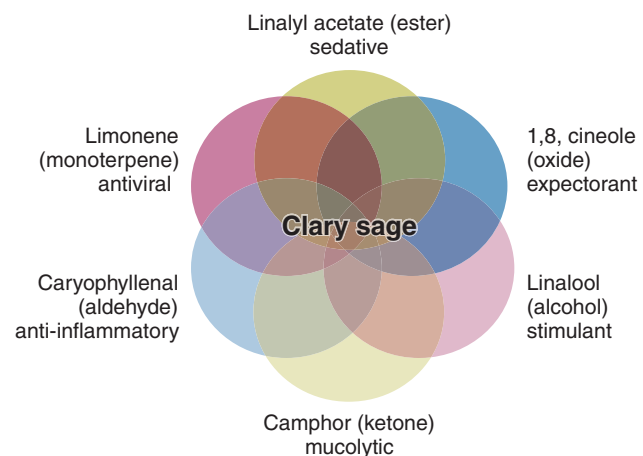


FIGURE 7-1 Essential oils are chemically complex. This diagram represents some of the chemical components that are found in clary sage and their general properties.

setting. More often, the oils will be used by massage therapists, counselors or life coaches, and estheticians. Massage therapists focus on topical applications of essential oils for stress reduction, injury rehabilitation, detoxification, and to help reduce chronic symptoms associated with an underlying soft tissue pathology. Psychologists, counselors, and life coaches focus on inhalations of essential oils to reduce anxiety, facilitate emotional clearing, dissipate defensive relating, improve moods, or to associate a scent with a positive experience for use as a resource in latter sessions. Finally, estheticians will often use professional skin care lines that incorporate essential oils as active ingredients to increase the therapeutic benefits of skin care applications. (e.g., Aveda, Decolor).

Aromatherapy can be viewed as the primary treatment (e.g., aromatherapy massage, aromatherapy wrap) or as accent notes in treatments with a different focus (e.g., aroma mists, cellulite cream, aromatic foot soak). All of these uses enhance the spa experience. Figure 7-2 lists six easy ways that aromatherapy can be added to any treatment, whereas Figure 7-3 provides an overview of aromatherapy treatments that are common in spas. As Susan Irvine writes in *The Mystery of Perfume*, “Scent passes under doors, seeps through walls, crosses boundaries. It is the un-containable, the symbol of being between one State and another.”³

Essential Oils

Essential oils are complex mixtures of chemical compounds that are found in aromatic plants. The compounds contained in essential oils are mostly terpenes, a class of chemical compound that is quite toxic to living plant tissues, so they must be stored in specialized structures such as glands, ducts, scales, and hairs (Fig. 7-4).

Most essential oil compounds are volatile to some degree, depending on how many carbon atoms they have or, in other words, their molecular size. Small molecules tend to be more volatile than larger molecules. The term **volatility** refers to the rate at which compounds turn from a liquid to a gas at room temperature and evaporate.

The specialized structures storing essential oils can be found in the leaves or needles, twig, bark, flowers, flower buds, fruits, stems, roots, or, sometimes, as in the conifers, all organs of the plant (Fig. 7-5). They are usually extracted from fresh plant material using steam distillation, carbon dioxide (CO₂) hyperbolic production, solvent extraction, or physical expression (Table 7-1). On average, most essential oil species contain about 1% to 2% of their fresh weight in essential oils. In some species of *Eucalyptus*, up to 10% of the fresh weight of the leaves consists of essential oil (100 lb of *Eucalyptus* leaves may yield up to 1 lb of oil). In rose and jasmine, the essential oil is nearly all found in the petals, so the yields are very low. For example, 60,000 whole rose flowers produce about 1 fl oz (30 ml) of oil, a yield of about

0.05% of the fresh weight on average. It is no surprise then that rose and jasmine are quite expensive, whereas *Eucalyptus* is inexpensive and readily available.

Many factors affect the chemical composition and therefore the therapeutic value of an essential oil. The chemical composition can vary greatly, depending on climate, soil conditions, air quality, and the variety or cultivar of the plant being grown; the cultivation, harvesting, and extraction methods being used; the storage and transportation conditions; and the age of the oil. No chemical compound is likely to be present in any essential oil in exactly the same proportion from 1 year to the next. The acceptable range in the percentage of the main chemical constituents present in most commercial essential oils has been defined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The purpose of the ISO standards is to describe the normal range of variability in the oil so that users can compare samples with an agreed standard. Essential oils are costly to produce, so they are often adulterated to increase the profit margin of the grower or supplier.

Professional aromatherapists notice that the human body responds differently to natural oils than to synthetic oils. This is probably due to the relative chemical simplicity of synthetic oils compared to natural oils. A pure, natural oil is so chemically complex that it is not economically viable to synthesize all of the compounds present in a laboratory. Instead, only the most important aroma compounds are synthesized. Even the best synthetic oils used in perfumery will seldom have more than about 30 chemical compounds compared to 100 to 400 or more present in a natural oil. Although little is known about how the chemical constituents interact with each other and thereby affect the body, it is likely that both the trace compounds as well as major constituents play a role in the overall therapeutic action of the oil. Also, any **quenching** effects due to the presence of particular compounds in an oil could be compromised in oils that have been synthesized or reconstructed from isolated components. Quenching effects occur when the action of one compound (usually negative) in an essential oil is suppressed by the presence of another compound, making the oil safer to use in such cases. For example, citral in a pure and isolated form is a strong skin irritant, but when it is combined with the other compounds in lemon oil, it is rarely irritating. (Lemon oil contains approximately 5% citral and 95% other terpenes.) The other terpenes present (particularly d-limonene and α -pinene) have a *quenching* effect on citral, so any side effects due to the presence of citral are minimized. Synthetic oils often cause nausea, headache, skin sensitivities, and emotional irritation. These symptoms are rarely, if ever, seen when pure oils are used.

Lastly, there are companies that specialize in supplying therapeutic-grade essential oils for the aromatherapy market and small suppliers who import oils based on close relationships developed with producers. The oils sold through such companies will be more expensive but



FIGURE 7-2 Six easy ways to add aromatherapy to any treatment. **(A)** Diffuse oils in the treatment room. When a client enters a clean and fragrant treatment room, the perception of the business and the treatment is enhanced. Use light scents such as lemon, mandarin, or lavender and avoid heavy fragrances such as ylang ylang or jasmine that some clients might dislike. **(B)** Steamy aromatic towels. Scent hot, moist towels with essential oils. These towels can be used for product removal or as an accent before a step in the treatment (e.g., steamy rosemary towel before the face massage). **(C)** Fragrant foot soaks. While the client fills in the health history form, it's nice to offer an aromatherapy foot bath. Foot soaks are warming and relaxing. **(D1 and D2)** Aromatherapy inhalations. At the beginning of the treatment, place a drop of essential oils between your hands. Rub the hands together and then hold them in an arc over the client's nose while he or she takes a deep breath. **(E)** Smell-scapes. Smell-scapes are aroma landscapes that are created to fit the theme of the treatment. Essential oils are carefully chosen and added to base product to treat the client to a unique olfactory experience. **(F)** Aroma mists. At any time during a treatment, an aroma mist can be spritzed over the client to refresh the body and fill the treatment room with a revitalizing fragrance.



FIGURE 7-3 Overview of some common aromatherapy treatments. **(A1 and A2)** Aromatherapy consultation. In a consultation, a blend of oils is created especially for a client. The blend can then be applied in numerous ways such as in a bath or through massage. **(B)** Aromatherapy body shampoo. Essential oils are added to a foaming cleanser for a revitalizing body shampoo. **(C)** Aromatherapy body polish. Essential oils might be added to a variety of granulated exfoliation products for a fragrant body polish. **(D)** Aromatherapy massage. Essential oils are well known to balance the central nervous system (CNS) and relax the body. A popular way to use essential oils is in a massage. **(E1 and E2)** Aromatherapy body wrap. Essential oils can be used in numerous types of body wraps. For example, essential oils might be added to melted shea butter and brushed on the body before it is wrapped. *(continued)*



FIGURE 7-3 (continued) **(F)** Aromatherapy baths. Essential oils can be added to hydrotherapy tubs or standard soaking tubs for therapeutic baths. Usually, the oils are mixed first into an emulsifier or carrier product to prevent skin irritation or “pooling” of the oils. **(G)** Aromatic saunas. Essential oils are added to the water that is used on the sauna’s heat source. Usually, respiratory support oils such as pine and eucalyptus are preferred. **(H)** Aromatic steams. Essential oils can be used in steam rooms, steam cabinets, or under a steam canopy. **(I)** Sunburn relief. Anti-inflammatory and skin soothing essential oils are added to aloe and brushed on the skin to heal the tissue after it has been burned by the sun. **(J)** Spot application. Certain essential oils such as German chamomile can be used at full strength for specific conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome. Oils from grapefruit, juniper berry, or thyme might be used as an application for cellulite. **(K)** Guided meditation with aromas. Essential oils can be used during a guided meditation session or hypnotherapy session for their psychological effects.

are much more attractive to professional aromatherapists. Even with the best of intentions, it should be noted that adulterated oils can sometimes be sold unknowingly by the most knowledgeable and reputable suppliers. A number of reputable suppliers who carry high-quality, therapeutic-grade essential oils can be found in the resources section at the back of the book.

When oils are exposed to light, heat, and oxygen, their chemical composition is altered (oxidation), and their therapeutic properties may change. To slow the rate of **oxidation**, keep the oils in dark bottles with as little air at the top of the bottle as possible. Store them in a refrigerator and replace them if they have not been used within a year. Citrus oils oxidize more rapidly than other oils, so they should be replaced every 6 months.

Safety Considerations

When therapeutic-grade essential oils are used at low concentration (1% to 3% or 6 to 18 drops to every fluid ounce of carrier) and applied externally, negative reactions are minimal. It is important for a therapist to understand the potential undesirable effects that may occur if the oils are used inappropriately or without understanding. It should be emphasized that before using any oil, you should identify any possible contraindications for use of the oil by checking safety data sheets or reliable textbooks.

It is out of a massage therapist’s scope of practice to recommend the internal use of essential oils because all essential oils are potentially toxic when taken internally, especially when taken in doses that are larger than those used therapeutically.

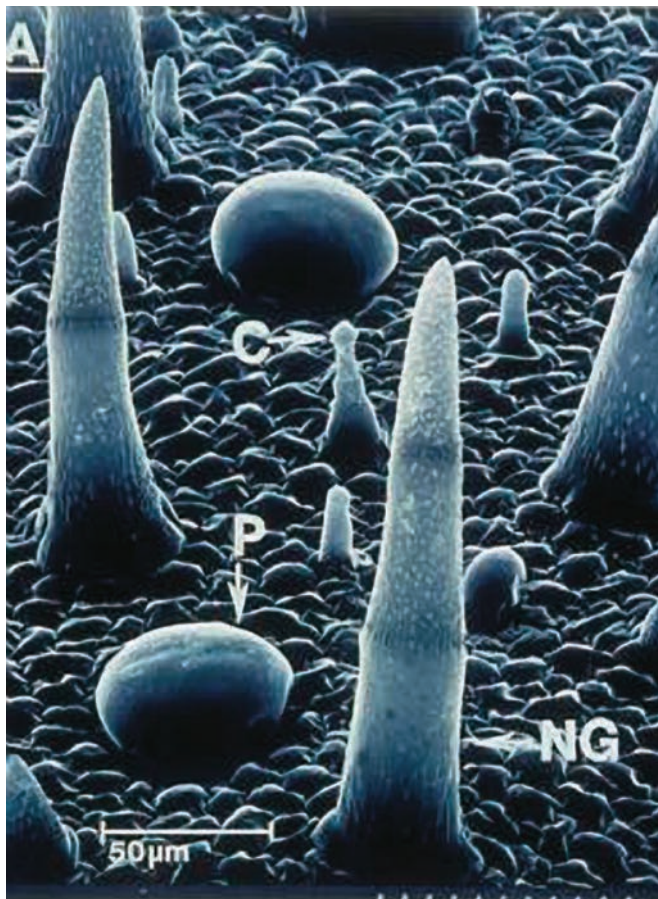


FIGURE 7-4 Essential oil storage structures. Magnification shows essential oils storage in a trichome (hair) of basil (*Ocimum basilicum*).



FIGURE 7-5 Essential oil storage sites. Essential oils might be stored in leaves, needles, twigs, resin tears, flowers, fruits, roots, bark, wood, heartwood, zests, or the whole plant.

by doctors. For this reason, oils must be kept out of the reach of children and not used internally. Some oils contain chemical components that may cause liver or kidney irritation when used for prolonged periods of time (even when they are applied topically). The general rule of thumb is that an oil should not be used continuously for longer than 2 weeks to prevent sensitization of the kidneys, liver, or skin.

It is believed that most essential oil compounds are able to pass through the placenta to the developing fetus. It is also possible that certain essential oils may disrupt the delicate hormonal balance of the body and cause unwanted effects during pregnancy. With the exception of mandarin

TABLE 7-1 Methods of Extraction of Aromatic Materials

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	COMMENTS
Expression ("essence" or essential oil)	Citrus fruit peels are subjected to lateral compression (squeezing) or machine abrasion (puncturing or grating) to extract the "essence" or essential oil from the rind.	This method of extraction is used to obtain essential oils from citrus fruits. Because no heat is used in the process, the composition of the expressed oil is very similar to that of the oil in the plant, and the smell is not affected by high temperatures.
Steam distillation (essential oil and hydrosol)	Steam is used to rupture the storage sites of volatile essential oils. The oils vaporize in the steam and are passed through a condenser, which cools the vapor so that it becomes a liquid. The water (from the steam) and the essential oils that have been condensed are separated. Some oils, such as rose oil, are slightly soluble in water, so the infused water, known as a flower water or hydrosol, is also sold as a valuable product.	Different plant species may require slightly different distillation conditions. Sometimes the plant is placed in the still directly after harvesting, sometimes it is left to dry, sometimes it is placed on a grate above the water, or sometimes it is mixed with the water. A variety of methods are used.
Solvent extraction (concrete, resinoid, and absolute)	Aromatic plant material is extracted by means of a hydrocarbon solvent. Solvent extraction yields either a concrete or a resinoid, which is further processed with pure alcohol to produce an absolute.	Solvent extraction is used with aromatic plants whose delicate fragrance would be damaged by the heat used in steam distillation. This includes jasmine, narcissus, and violet. Some plants are offered as either an absolute or an essential oil. Absolutes smell closer to the original plant than essential oils.
CO ₂ hyperbolic production (CO ₂ oil)	Under high pressure, hypercritical (in a state between a liquid, vapor, and gas) carbon dioxide is used as a solvent to extract essential oils.	This is considered by many as an ideal form of extraction because it happens at low temperature with no chemical reactions between the solvent and aromatic substances. ⁸

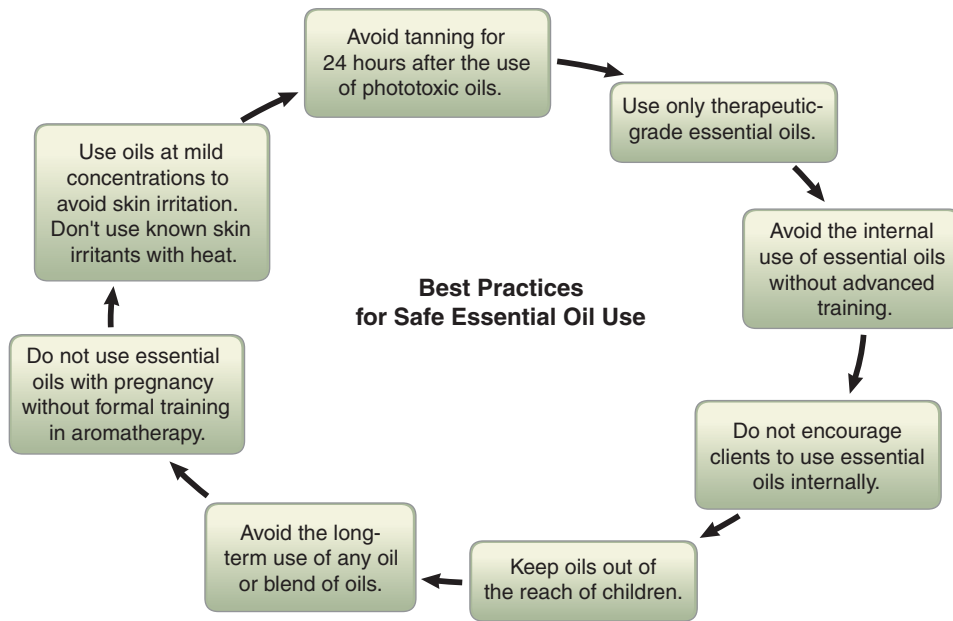


FIGURE 7-6 Best practices for safe aromatherapy.

and lavender (used at 1% concentrations = 6 drops/fl oz of carrier), those without formal training in aromatherapy should avoid the use of essential oils with pregnant clients.

The most likely undesirable effect that a spa therapist will see when using essential oils is skin irritation or phototoxicity. Skin irritation is rare if the therapist is using standard concentrations of 1% to 3% of therapeutic-grade oils (irritation is more likely with synthetic oils). When large amounts of certain oils are used topically, or when oils are

used with heat (e.g., stone massage, hot pack, hot sheet wrap), irritation is more likely to occur.

The term *phototoxicity* refers to an increased sensitivity to the sun. Oils containing compounds called coumarins and furocoumarins increase the skin's tendency to burn. Clients should avoid suntanning and tanning booths for 24 hours after the application of these oils. Figure 7-6 lists some general best practices for the safe use of essential oils. Table 7-2 lists oils that should be avoided or used with caution.

TABLE 7-2 Essential Oils to Avoid or Use with Caution

ESSENTIAL OILS TO COMPLETELY AVOID
Bitter almond, boldo leaf, buchu, yellow camphor, brown camphor, sassafras, calamus, horseradish, mugwort, mustard, pennyroyal, rue, savin, savory, tansy, thuja, wormseed, wormwood
ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID WITH PREGNANCY
Aniseed, basil, birch, wintergreen, cedarwood, clary sage, cypress, geranium, sweet fennel, jasmine, juniper berry, sweet marjoram, myrrh, peppermint, rosemary, common sage, thyme, hyssop
ESSENTIAL OILS THAT ARE SKIN IRRITANTS
Ajowan, cinnamon bark, cinnamon leaf, sweet fennel, cassia, clove leaf, clove bud, costus, oregano, basil, fir needle, lemongrass, lemon verbena, Melissa, peppermint, thyme
ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID WITH CLIENTS WHO HAVE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
Pine, hyssop, rosemary, common sage, thyme
ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID WITH CLIENTS WHO ARE TAKING HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES
Rosemary, eucalyptus, peppermint
ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID WITH CLIENTS WHO HAVE EPILEPSY OR A HISTORY OF SEIZURE
Sweet fennel, bitter fennel, common sage, hyssop, basil
ESSENTIAL OILS TO AVOID WITH A HISTORY OF ESTROGEN-DEPENDENT CANCER
Aniseed, basil, birch, wintergreen, cedarwood, clary sage, cypress, geranium, sweet fennel, jasmine, juniper berry, sweet marjoram, myrrh, peppermint, rosemary, common sage, thyme, hyssop
ESSENTIAL OILS THAT ARE PHOTOTOXIC
Bergamot, lime, bitter orange, lemon, grapefruit, sweet orange, mandarin, ginger, angelica root

Pathways In and Out of the Body

Essential oils enter the body by absorption through the skin, inhalation, and ingestion. They are eliminated through the kidneys, through perspiration, and through exhalation.

Absorption through the Skin

Compounds in essential oils that are absorbed through the skin enter the capillary network of the bloodstream. Although many aromatherapists take skin absorption for granted, the research supporting this is not clear. A number of studies indicate that essential oils promote penetration of other substances through the skin.⁴ Some show that certain compounds in essential oils pass through the skin, whereas others do not.⁵

Absorption of essential oil compounds will be affected by both the viscosity of the carrier product (thicker products slow the rate of absorption) and by the thickness of the adipose layer in the skin, which varies from individual to individual (the thicker the adipose layer, the slower the rate of absorption is likely to be). The most permeable areas of the body are the armpits, forehead, scalp, hands, feet, and inguinal areas.

Inhalation

When an essential oil is inhaled, the scent triggers an **olfactory response**, which will be discussed in the section on the psychology of oils.

Inhaled essential oil molecules travel down the respiratory tract to the lungs, where they are either absorbed by the mucous membrane lining of the respiratory tract or are transferred to the blood circulating in the lungs at the point of gaseous exchange between air and blood in the alveoli and respiratory bronchioles. In the nose, where the endothelium is thin, it is assumed that essential oil molecules reach local circulation in the brain fairly quickly and easily.⁶

Ingestion

Ingestion of essential oils is a form of treatment that is mainly used by medical doctors in Europe. When an oil is ingested, it is taken internally by placing 1 to 3 drops in water, on a sugar cube, or in honey. Ingestion is not commonly used by anyone other than doctors because all of the essential oil is rapidly absorbed by the body, making this a potentially toxic and dangerous practice.

The Physiological and Psychological Effects of Essential Oils

Aromatherapy has significant therapeutic potential because each essential oil has a unique combination of chemical compounds that interact with the body's chemistry and thereby affect specific organs, systems, or the body as a whole (physiological effects). The inhalation of essential oils also triggers an olfactory response that can lead to powerful mental and emotional behavioral changes (psychological effects).⁷ Holistic aromatherapy is concerned with both the symptoms of a condition and its underlying causes. Its aim is to address the body, mind, and spirit for mental, emotional, and physical wellness.

Physiological Effects

Each essential oil has a set of potential therapeutic properties based on its chemical composition (Fig. 7-7). Sometimes, the properties of the individual compounds present may seem to oppose each other. This is the case with lavender, which contains esters (generally sedative), and alcohols (generally stimulating). In fact, this check and balance system of chemicals with opposing physiological effects allows essential oils to act in a balanced manner without side effects.⁶

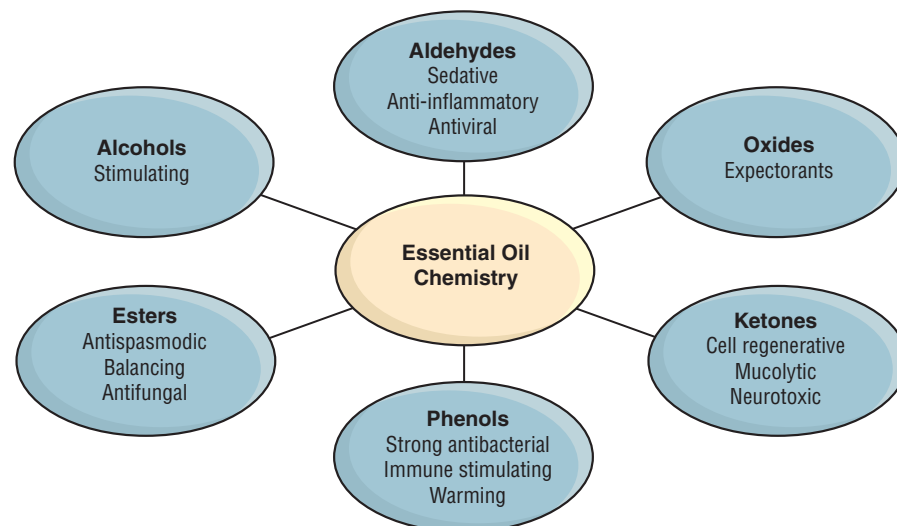


FIGURE 7-7 Essential oil chemistry. Chemical components in essential oils have therapeutic effects on the body.

Therapists use oils with specific properties (actions) to improve the functioning of a particular body system and support health. For example, if the treatment aims to decrease muscular tension and increase relaxation, oils that are antispasmodic, pain relieving, warming, and sedative will probably be chosen. Essential oils are often used in a spa setting to treat the symptoms of mild lymphatic stasis. These treatments can be focused on a cosmetic goal such as the reduction of cellulite, or they can aim to boost immunity, facilitate natural detoxification processes, and support general wellness. Lymph flow is hindered by a sedentary lifestyle or whenever a person sits or stands in one place for a long period of time. When lymph flow is slow, excess fluid may accumulate in the tissues and gradually overwhelm the lymph nodes and liver. This metabolic buildup may lead to infection and disease.

Citrus oils, such as lemon, grapefruit, and sweet orange, and warming oils, such as clove, black pepper, and ginger, are a good choice for lymph stimulation. Diuretics applied topically, including sweet fennel, grapefruit, and juniper berry, support elimination through the kidneys and increase the flow of urine. This accelerated elimination helps to detoxify the body and reduce water retention. All of the oils mentioned previously could be used in various ways to support detoxification treatments such as slimming wraps or herbal wraps. The oils may be applied to the body before a warming soak, or they might be applied in a massage at the end of the wrap. A blend of three to four of these oils might be massaged into target areas to further stimulate local circulation to the area.

A key benefit of using essential oils regularly is that they kill many strains of pathogenic microorganisms. They either destroy the pathogen or disrupt its life cycle so that it cannot reproduce. Oils that kill pathogenic organisms are known as antiseptics, antibacterials, antifungals, and antivirals. Certain essential oils also stimulate the production and activity of white blood cells, which boosts immunity. This cytophagocytic activity was noted by Gattefossé and Valnet and has been observed by many other researchers.^{8,9} Phagocytosis, the ability of white blood cells to ingest foreign bodies and wastes, is increased by essential oils known as depuratives or by the popular name of blood cleansers. Although a massage clinic or therapists would not sell or market essential oils to boost immunity because this would be out of their scope of practice, they will likely notice that clients feel energized, rested, and revitalized by treatments that include essential oils.

Aromatherapy massage is a popular treatment at many spas, and a wide variety of essential oils can be used in massage to achieve a broad spectrum of treatment goals. Often, essential oils are used for their pleasant aromas and to decrease stress. Oils high in a **functional group** known as the esters are usually effective antispasmodics. These oils, including Roman chamomile, clary sage, and petitgrain, are especially helpful in balancing the nervous system.¹⁰ Phenylpropane ethers—especially estragole, which is found in basil—are thought to stabilize an overactive sympathetic nervous system, whereas

cypress, basil, and sweet marjoram are noted for skeletal muscle spasm.⁶ Caution should be used with basil due to its methyl chavicol content, which may cause skin irritation.

White birch (*Betula alba*), German and Roman chamomile, frankincense, wintergreen, clove, lavender, and mint oils are all effective analgesics.¹¹ White birch, yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), sweet birch (*Betula lenta*), and wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*) all contain a high percentage (up to 98%) of methyl salicylate (an ester). Methyl salicylate is the active ingredient used in pain rubs such as Bengay. These oils would be effective in blends used in sports treatments or to decrease general muscular soreness. They could also be used in medical spas to decrease pain from a musculoskeletal condition such as osteoarthritis or Osgood-Schlatter disease.

Mint oils contain menthol, which has been used traditionally for headache pain. It should be noted that peppermint oil should not be applied undiluted to the temples to decrease headache pain. Used in this manner, it may cause a burning sensation and skin irritation. However, it is very effective for headaches when massaged, diluted in lotion or oil, into the posterior neck and shoulders. Mint oils are often used in treatments that aim to refresh the body because menthol increases peripheral circulation and affects cold receptors in the skin, resulting in a cooling sensation.

Essential oils that support the respiratory system are effective when used in the steam room or sauna. In a study by Eremenko et al.,¹² 96 patients suffering from chronic bronchitis showed significant clearing of the airways as well as reduced infection levels when inhaling vapors of camphor and menthol and particularly oils of eucalyptus and peppermint. The oils improved the function of the lungs and bronchi by reducing mucous congestion and dealing with chest infections, colds, and influenza.¹² When inhaling essential oils in steam, smaller doses are more effective than large amounts of oils.¹³ Pine, rosemary, eucalyptus, and thyme oil work well in both a sauna or steam room. Although a massage therapist at a spa will not focus on respiratory pathologies, a basic understanding of core respiratory oils will allow the therapist to support a client's overall health and wellness. For example, floral oils would not be used in a sauna or steam room because they may cause a headache in a close, hot environment.

Oils with a high sesquiterpene content are likely to have good anti-inflammatory properties. The most important anti-inflammatory compounds in essential oils are chamazulene and α -bisabolol (a sesquiterpene alcohol), both of which are found in German chamomile and in *Helichrysum*. The more effective compound of the two is α -bisabolol, which works mainly by inhibiting some of the enzymes involved in the inflammation response.² Anti-inflammatory oils will most often be used in a spa for skin irritations such as sunburn. They can be used in a medical spa for soft tissue pathologies such as carpal tunnel syndrome, plantar fasciitis, and tendonitis. Table 7-3 gives an overview of some of the properties of essential oils and some of the treatments they support.

TABLE 7-3 Therapeutic Actions and Properties of Selected Essential Oils

ACTION	DEFINITION	SELECTED INDICATION	SELECTED ESSENTIAL OILS	SELECTED METHOD OF APPLICATION
Alterative	An agent that corrects disordered body function and supports balance in the body	Stress, for recent trauma such as a car accident, as part of a detoxification regime, burnout, anxiety	Lavender, Melissa, geranium, fir, juniper berry, petitgrain, lemongrass, valerian	Bath, body lotion, massage, as part of any relaxation treatment, mist inhalation, room scent, foot bath, aromatherapy wrap, etc.
Analgesic	An agent that reduces the sensation of pain	Soft tissue pain (use analgesics that are also anti-inflammatory during acute injury)	Bay laurel, bay rum, bergamot, birch, cajeput, German chamomile, Roman chamomile, clove, coriander, eucalyptus, fir, ginger, jasmine (mild), lavender, lemongrass, sweet marjoram, peppermint, nutmeg, black pepper, rosemary, rosewood (mild), turmeric, wintergreen	Local application for an area of pain, massage, compress, muscle blends, sports massage blends
Anti-depressant	An agent that helps to alleviate depression	Depression, stress, anxiety	Basil, bergamot, geranium, jasmine, lavender, lemongrass, neroli, sweet orange, patchouli, rose, rosewood, clary sage, Spanish sage, sandalwood, vanilla, ylang ylang	Massage, bath, mist, inhalation, room scent, foot bath, with hypnosis or guided meditation
Anti-inflammatory	An agent that decreases inflammation	Recent soft tissue injury, skin irritation or sensitivity, neuritis	Benzoin, birch, camphor (white), German chamomile, frankincense, geranium, helichrysum, jasmine, peppermint, myrrh, bitter orange, sweet orange, patchouli, common sage, Spanish sage, spikenard, tea tree, turmeric, wintergreen, yarrow	Local application for area of inflammation, skin lotion, cool bath, sunburn wrap
Antimicrobial	An agent that destroys or inhibits the life cycle of pathogenic microorganisms	Onset of a cold or the flu, for skin infections, in natural cleaning products	Most essential oils to some degree	Massage, body lotion, lymph rub, bath, foot bath, body wrap
Antineuralgic	An agent that relieves or decreases pain from irritated nerves	Neuralgia	Bay rum, cajeput, Roman chamomile, clove, eucalyptus, helichrysum, Scotch pine	Application to the nerve path, massage to associated areas
Antipruritic	An agent that relieves or prevents itching	Itchy skin, insect bite, skin irritation, itchy scalp, sunburn	Birch, peppermint, wintergreen	Cool bath, skin lotion, hair rinse, body wrap
Antirheumatic	An agent that decreases or relieves rheumatism	Rheumatic conditions, stiff, sore muscular conditions	Bay laurel, bay rum, birch, clove, coriander, cypress, eucalyptus, juniper berry, lavender, lemon, lime, nutmeg, Scotch pine, rosemary, thyme, turmeric, yarrow	Massage, body wrap, dry skin brush, body lotion, bath
Antisclerotic	An agent that helps to prevent the hardening of tissue	Scar tissue, mature skin, wrinkles	Lemon, carrot seed	Spot treatment, application to scars, massage with cross-fiber friction
Antiseborrheic	An agent that controls the production of sebum	Oily skin, dandruff	Atlas cedarwood, clary sage (sebum regulator), Spanish sage (sebum regulator), valerian (antidandruff), ylang ylang	Skin lotion, bath, hair rinse, in skin care products for oily skin

(continued on page 140)

TABLE 7-3 Therapeutic Actions and Properties of Selected Essential Oils (continued)

ACTION	DEFINITION	SELECTED INDICATION	SELECTED ESSENTIAL OILS	SELECTED METHOD OF APPLICATION
Antiviral	An agent that destroys or disrupts the life cycle of a viral pathogen	Onset of a cold or the flu or to generally boost immunity	Camphor (white), clove, eucalyptus, hys-sop, lime, sweet marjoram, peppermint, oregano (caution), patchouli, Scotch pine, tea tree, thyme	Inhalation, massage, lymph rub, body lotion, body wrap, bath
Astringent	An agent that firms or tightens tissue	Saggy skin, skin lacking in tone, oily skin, as a support for inflammatory conditions	Balsam fir, bay rum, benzoin, birch, atlas cedarwood, cypress, frankincense, geranium, grapefruit, helichrysum, hys-sop, juniper berry, lemon, lemongrass, linden, peppermint, myrrh, bitter orange, patchouli, rose, rosemary, clary sage, common sage, Spanish sage, sandal-wood, spruce (<i>tsuga</i>), tea tree, thyme, wintergreen, yarrow	Skin care products, massage, cellulite and firming treatments, body wraps, body lotion
Cicatrisant	An agent that promotes healing through the formation of scar tissue	Wounds, skin condi-tions, skin revitaliza-tion treatments	Balsam fir, German chamomile, Roman chamomile, elemi, eucalyptus, geranium, helichrysum, hyssop, jasmine, juniper berry, lavender, lemon, myrrh, neroli, pal-marosa, patchouli, rose, rosemary, clary sage, sandalwood, thyme, yarrow	Skin care products, skin care treatments, massage, baths
Cytophylactic	An agent that increases the activity of leu-kocytes in the body, therefore boosting immunity	To boost general immunity	German chamomile, frankincense, lavender, oregano (caution), rosemary, tea tree	Massage, reflexology, baths, foot baths, lymph rubs, dry skin brushing, detoxi-fication treatment
Depurative	An agent that combats impurities in the blood and organs and aids detoxification	Detoxification treat-ments, revitalization treatments, to support a diet	Angelica, birch, carrot seed, coriander, eucalyptus, grapefruit, juniper berry, lemon, rose, Spanish sage, vetiver	Massage, reflexology, baths, foot baths, lymph rubs, dry skin brushing, detoxi-fication treatment
Diuretic	An agent that promotes the production of urine and aids water retention	Detoxification treatments, water retention, revitalization treatments	Angelica, balsam fir, bay laurel, benzoin, bergamot, birch, camphor (white), cardamom, atlas cedarwood, cypress, eucalyptus, frankincense, geranium, grapefruit, he-lichrysum, hyssop, juniper berry, lavender, lemon, linden, mandarin, sweet marjoram, patchouli, black pepper, Scotch pine, rose-mary, common sage, sandalwood, spruce (<i>tsuga</i>), thyme, turmeric, valerian	Massage, bath, body lotion, dry skin brush, body wrap, detoxification treatment
Emollient	An agent that softens the skin	Dry skin, mature skin, dehydrated skin, rough skin	Linden (other oils are not specific emol-lients but support dry skin: frankincense, myrrh, elemi, rose, lavender)	Skin lotion, massage, bath, skin care products, body wraps
Expectorant	An agent that promotes the removal of mucus from the respiratory system	These oils can be used for general respira-tory support to prevent congestion and aid breathing	Angelica, balsam fir, bay rum, benzoin, cajeput, camphor (white), atlas cedar-wood, eucalyptus, fir, frankincense, ginger, hyssop, sweet marjoram, pepper-mint, myrrh, Scotch pine, Spanish sage, spruce (<i>tsuga</i>), tea tree, thyme, yarrow	Inhalation, chest rub, steam bath, shower, sauna
Fungicidal	An agent that combats fungal infection	Fungal foot infections	Angelica, bay laurel, atlas cedarwood, coriander, geranium, helichrysum, lemongrass, sweet marjoram, myrrh, bitter orange, rosemary, sandalwood, spikenard, tea tree, thyme	Direct application to the local area of fungus, in cleaning products used at the spa
Hepatic	An agent that tones and stimulates the function of the liver	As a support for liver cleansing or detoxifi-cation treatments	Carrot seed, German chamomile, Roman chamomile, cypress, helichrysum, peppermint, rose, rosemary	Body wrap, dry skin brush, body lotion, bath, massage
Hypotensive	An agent that lowers blood pressure	Stress, anxiety	Bay laurel, lavender, lemon, sweet marjoram, neroli, sweet orange, clary sage, Spanish sage, turmeric, valerian, yarrow, ylang ylang	Massage, body lotion, room scent, with guided meditation, hypnosis, inhalation, mist

TABLE 7-3 Therapeutic Actions and Properties of Selected Essential Oils (continued)

ACTION	DEFINITION	SELECTED INDICATION	SELECTED ESSENTIAL OILS	SELECTED METHOD OF APPLICATION
Nervine	An agent that strengthens and tones the nerves and nervous system	Stress, nervous tension, burnout, neuritis, neuralgia	Angelica, basil, helichrysum, hyssop, juniper berry, lavender, lemon, lemongrass, linden, sweet marjoram, peppermint, patchouli, petitgrain, rosemary, clary sage, Spanish sage, spruce (<i>tsuga</i>), thyme, ylang ylang	Body wrap, massage, body lotion, bath, direct application to an area of nerve pain
Relaxant	An agent that soothes and relieves tension	Stress, anxiety, insomnia	German chamomile, Roman chamomile, lavender, neroli, nutmeg, sandalwood, vanilla, ylang ylang	Body wrap, massage, bath reflexology, body lotion, room scent, mist, inhalation
Restorative	An agent that revitalizes and strengthens the body	Low immunity, burnout, mental exhaustion, stress	Basil, coriander, lavender, lemon, lime, myrrh, Scotch pine, rosemary, tea tree	Body wrap, massage, bath reflexology, body lotion, room scent, mist, inhalation
Rubefacient	An agent that increases local circulation to the skin and is warming; may lead to skin irritation	Tight muscles, detoxification, cellulite treatments, muscle pain and soreness	Birch, camphor (white), eucalyptus, fir, ginger, juniper berry, oregano (caution), black pepper, Scotch pine, rosemary, spruce (<i>tsuga</i>), thyme, turmeric, vetiver, wintergreen	Cellulite application, massage, spot treatment, muscle blends, sports massage blends
Sedative	An agent that sedates or calms the CNS, a body system, or the body in general	Relaxation treatments, stress, anxiety, insomnia	Balsam fir, bay laurel, benzoin, atlas cedarwood, German chamomile, Roman chamomile, frankincense, hyssop, jasmine, juniper berry, lavender (balancing), lemongrass, linden, mandarin, sweet marjoram, myrrh, bitter orange, sweet orange, rose, clary sage, sandalwood, spikenard, tuberose, valerian (depresses CNS), vanilla, vetiver, yarrow, ylang ylang	Body wrap, massage, bath reflexology, body lotion, room scent, mist, inhalation, with hypnosis or meditation
Stimulant	An agent that increases the function of a body system or the body in general	Mental and physical burnout, stress, to revitalize and energize	Angelica, bay rum, bergamot, camphor (white), cove, cardamom, carrot seed, atlas cedarwood (circulatory), coriander, elemi, eucalyptus, fir, geranium, ginger, grapefruit (lymphatic), lavender (balancing), lemon (lymphatic), mandarin (lymphatic), peppermint, nutmeg, neroli (nerve), sweet orange (lymphatic), palmarosa (circulatory), patchouli, black pepper, petitgrain, Scotch pine, rosemary, rosewood (immune), common sage, Spanish sage, spruce (<i>tsuga</i>), thyme, turmeric, vetiver (circulation)	Body wrap, massage, bath, reflexology, body lotion, room scent, mist, inhalation, dry skin brushing
Sudorific or Diaphoretic	An agent that promotes or increases perspiration	To warm an area, detoxification treatments, cellulite treatments, sore muscles	Bay laurel, cajeput, German chamomile, Roman chamomile, cypress, ginger, hyssop, juniper berry, sweet marjoram, rosemary, tea tree, thyme, yarrow	Body wrap, massage, body lotion, spot treatment
Vasoconstrictor	An agent that causes narrowing of the blood vessels	Varicose veins, broken capillaries	Cypress, lemon, peppermint (rose, lavender, German chamomile can be used as support oils)	Direct application to the local area
Vulnerary	An agent that is healing for the skin	Skin conditions, wounds	Balsam fir, benzoin, bergamot, German chamomile, Roman chamomile, eucalyptus, geranium, hyssop, juniper berry, sweet marjoram, rosemary, rosewood (tissue regenerator)	Massage, body lotion, skin care products

Psychological Effects

In a therapeutic setting, good smells can be used together with massage, hydrotherapy soaks, meditation, hypnotherapy, or any other treatments to promote relaxation. This is important because stress is at the core of many modern diseases, and studies suggest that by simply decreasing stress, health and immunity can be improved. Smells can evoke intense emotional reactions and can even be used to change behavioral patterns. This psychological use of aromas has ancient roots. Incense has been burned for thousands of years to connect the human spirit with the gods and to shift consciousness from the everyday to the divine. There is credible evidence that agreeable fragrances can improve our mood and sense of well-being. This is not surprising because our olfactory receptors are directly connected to the **limbic system**, the oldest and most emotional part of our brain (Fig. 7-8).

One way that smells can be used for healing is through a **learned-odor response**. In learned-odor responses, a smell is used to form memory links to a person, place, or thing (e.g., a positive experience or relaxed state). Hiramoto et al.¹⁴ paired camphor with fever induction and found that a fever response could be elicited by camphor afterward. Whole memories, complete with all their associated emotions, can be prompted by smell.¹⁵ This is entirely unconscious and cannot necessarily be prompted voluntarily, although countless studies have shown that recall can be enhanced if the learning was done in the presence of an odor and that same odor is presented at the time of recall. This information can be used by the therapist to help the client recall “resource” states from a body treatment or meditation session. For example, if the therapist uses an exfoliation or body wash product scented with an uplifting mint fragrance in the treatment room, the client will remember the session every time he or she uses a home care product with the same fragrance. Not only will the client remember the session mentally but also his or her body will “remember” and, through that memory, feel more relaxed.

Therapists interested in designing a treatment that would encourage their clients to relax completely would turn to oils known as sedatives, calmatives, and relaxants. These oils help the body to let go of mental, emotional, and physical tension. For example, when the sedative essential oils of lavender, rose, and valerian were dispersed in the air, rats took longer to perform tasks.¹⁶ This shows that these oils have the ability to sedate the CNS. Oils such as lavender, Roman or German chamomile, and sweet marjoram sedate the body and decrease stress because they stimulate the raphe nucleus, which releases serotonin. Ambient lavender was also shown to increase sleep and lead to better waking moods in psychogeriatric patients under long-term treatment for insomnia.¹⁷ During stressful magnetic resonance imaging medical testing, a vanilla-like scent was used successfully to help patients relax and to reduce anxiety at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York.¹⁸

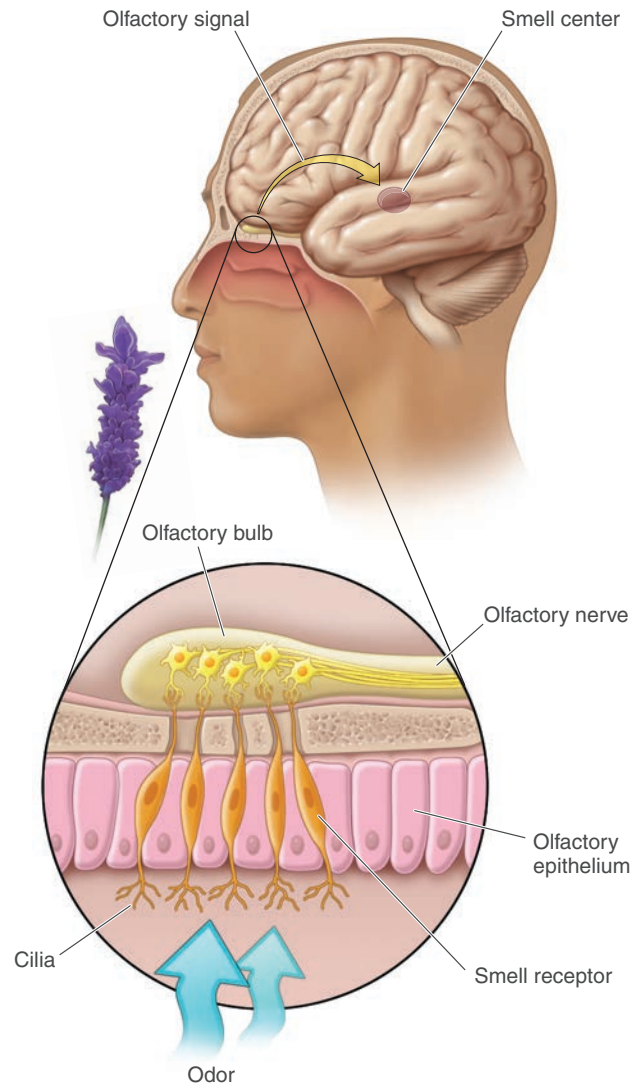


FIGURE 7-8 The limbic system. Olfactory receptors are directly connected to the limbic system, the oldest and most emotional part of the brain.

Stimulating scents are being used by many companies to promote alertness and increase the efficiency and precision of their workers.¹⁹ In one study, there was an increase of cerebral blood flow in humans following inhalation of 1,8-cineol (rosemary, eucalyptus oil).²⁰ Rosemary, lemon, basil, and peppermint offer a quick energy pickup because they stimulate the locus ceruleus, which releases noradrenalin. People do much better in a task that requires sustained attention if they receive regular puffs of an uplifting aroma.²¹

Peppermint, which is often the oil chosen to promote alert states, enhanced the sensory pathway for visual detection, which allowed subjects more control over their allocation of attention. Ambient peppermint aroma increased word learning and recall.¹⁹ A spa therapist would use stimulating oils in treatments aimed at energizing the body or at the end of a relaxation treatment to help wake the client up.

Spas spend large amounts of money to influence a client's perception of their business. Perception can only be created or altered through one of the five senses because these are the means by which we interpret our environment. The positive emotional effects of agreeable fragrances can be used to affect our perception of other people, of a business, or of a product. In a study to show that scent impacts social relationships, people in photographs were given a higher "attractiveness rating" when the test subjects were exposed to a pleasant fragrance. In a test on shampoos, the product originally ranked last in performance was ranked first in a second test after its fragrance was adjusted.²²

Smell-Scapes

Olfaction provides the spa therapist with another form of communication. It creates connections to the spiritual aspect of self; to the cultural background of a treatment; and to the natural world of field and forest, sea, and desert. It adds dimension and texture to the treatment and provides an emotionally satisfying experience for the client.

When a designer plans a service, one of the aspects that should be considered is the smell-scape. A smell-scape is the aroma landscape that is planned for the treatment. The therapist will want to keep all the scents in a particular category but vary them in such a way that they maintain the client's interest. For example, a citrus salt glow would obviously include citrus oils. If the therapist used the same scent for all of the products (massage oil, body mist, finishing lotion, etc.), the client will register the scent for the first 10 minutes of the treatment but then forget it. A therapist that wants aroma to be an integral part of the treatment will vary the smell-scape. He or she might use grapefruit in the massage oil, mandarin with a floral accent in the body mist, and lemon in the finishing lotion. Each time the product is changed, the room is filled with a new scent, and the client's olfactory enjoyment is enhanced.

For culturally inspired treatments, the smell-scape creates a powerful emotional link to the region where the service originated. In ayurveda, the traditional medical system of India, medicated oils called *taila* are used.²³ Traditional *taila* smell very strange to the Western nose, and some clients take time to adjust to the new aromas. As this adjustment takes place, it often brings a deeper curiosity about ayurveda, which, in turn, enriches the client's experience of the treatment. Culturally influenced treatments must be designed carefully. It makes sense that a treatment named the Nile body wrap would use plant products that were known and used in ancient Egypt. North American pine oil would be out of place in such a treatment, but frankincense, myrrh, and rose are appropriate. In Chapter 15, Your Spa Program and Menu of Services, a table of different themes, smell-scapes, accents, and associations can be found that provide more ideas on scents that might be used in a particular smell-scape.

One easy way to create interest is to contrast distinct smell categories against their opposites. If the massage oil is scented

with essential oils that have deep, pungent, heavy, and spicy aromas, the body polish product might be scented with oils that smell light, green, and of citrus. Table 7-4 breaks essential oils into smell categories for easy scent contrasts.

When therapists use smell-scapes in a treatment, they are using oils psychologically. Blending oils for a physiological effect requires a different set of considerations. Eventually, therapists will find that they can achieve both a physiological and psychological balance in their blends. This type of blending is called *holistic blending* because the formulation aims to address the needs of the body, mind, and spirit.

Blending Essential Oils

The techniques outlined in this chapter are keys to blending only. They are meant to provide structure for those who are learning how to blend by providing a way to "think" about the blend and the many considerations that a therapist must have in mind when blending. Like smell itself, the blending process is personal, biased, and inspired by private memories and relationships with past events. There is no such thing as a bad blend, and there are many different ways, beyond those outlined here, for the therapist to approach blending. Before the blending begins, the therapist will need to choose the type of carrier product that is to be used.

Carrier Products

A *carrier product* (some therapists refer to them as a vehicle) is a general term for the product that is used to carry the essential oil to the client. Essential oils are rarely applied at full strength. More often, they are diluted into a carrier product before they are used in a treatment. Massage therapists will most often use an expeller-pressed **fixed oil** as a carrier for essential oils delivered in massage. Expeller-pressed fixed oils are different from essential oils in that they do not evaporate (they are composed of nonvolatile compounds) and are classified as lipids. Fixed oils are sometimes used to adulterate essential oils because essential oils dissolve completely and easily in fixed oils. Fixed oils are lubricating for the skin and often therapeutically useful in their own right. Commonly used fixed oils include expeller-pressed sunflower, sweet almond, apricot kernel, hemp (anti-inflammatory and pain relieving), avocado, borage, jojoba (sebum balancing), or hazelnut, although many different types of fixed oils can be used. Some fixed oils such as evening primrose, hemp, jojoba, wheat germ, and pure vitamin E may be added in small amounts to other fixed oils to enhance the therapeutic properties of these oils or act as a natural preservative (1 tsp of preservative oils to 1 oz of the main fixed oil).

Plain, unscented lotion or massage cream, bath gel, exfoliation product, aloe vera, clay, and body gels can be purchased as carrier products for essential oils. This is

TABLE 7-4 Basic Scents of Essential Oils and Other Aromatic Materials

SPICY	REFRESHING	HERBACEOUS	SWEET	EXOTIC
Ajowan	Basil	Ajowan	Copaiba balsam	Bay rum
Allspice	Bay laurel	Angelica root	Peru balsam	Copaiba balsam
Angelica seed	Melissa	French basil	Tolu balsam	Peru balsam
Aniseed seed	Fir needle	Calamintha	Benzoin	Tolu balsam
Peru balsam	Bergamot	German chamomile	Sweet birch	Ginger CO ₂
Tolu balsam	Cajeput	Roman chamomile	Jasmine	Jasmine
Bay rum	Cypress	Helichrysum	Lavender	Myrrh
Caraway	Elemi	Hyssop	Lime	Narcissus
Cardamom	Eucalyptus	Marigold	Mandarin	Nutmeg
Cascarilla bark	Geranium	Marjoram	Mimosa	Oakmoss
Cassia	Juniper berry	Myrtle	Neroli	Neroli
Cinnamon	Lemongrass	Oregano	Carnation	Patchouli
Clove	Tilia absolute	Patchouli	Rose	Sandalwood
Coriander	Myrtle	Rosemary	Rosewood	Spikenard
Cubeb	Palmarosa	Common sage	Liquidamber	Liquidamber
Cumin	Pine	Santolina	Tonka	Tonka
Ginger CO ₂	Rosemary	Tarragon	Tuberose	Tuberose
Nutmeg	Spanish sage	Thyme	Vanilla	Turmeric
Black pepper	Clary sage	Valerian	Wintergreen	Valerian
Turmeric	Common sage	Yarrow	Ylang ylang	Vetiver
LIGHT AND FRESH	POWDERY	EARTHY	FLORAL	WARM/HOMEY
Rosewood	Copaiba balsam	Angelica root	Gardenia	Almond
Sweet orange	Peru balsam	Carrot seed	Geranium	Honey
Bay laurel	Tolu balsam	German chamomile	Hyacinth	Beeswax
Bergamot	Benzoin	Fennel seed	Jasmine	German chamomile
Grapefruit	Cedarwood	Ginger	Lavender	Cinnamon
Lavender	Frankincense	Myrrh	Tilia absolute	Clove
Lemon	Orris	Oakmoss	Mimosa	Inula
Lemongrass	Sandalwood	Patchouli	Narcissus	Lavender
Lime	Liquidamber	Spikenard	Neroli	Nutmeg
Litsea	Tonka	Vetiver	Rose	Vanilla
Mandarin	Vanilla	Yarrow	Carnation	Mandarin
Clary sage	Violet flower		Tuberose	Rose
Lemon verbena			Violet flower	
			Ylang ylang	

TABLE 7-4 Basic Scents of Essential Oils and Other Aromatic Materials (continued)

LEMONY	CAMPHORACEOUS	MEDICINAL	LEATHER	ALPINE
Melissa	Exotic basil	Bay laurel	Cade	Fir needle
Elemi	Borneol	Sweet birch	Cypress	Bay laurel
<i>Eucalyptus citriodora</i>	Cajeput	Cajeput	Guaiacwood	Sweet birch
Lemon	White camphor	White camphor	Labdanum	Cedarwood
Lemongrass	Eucalyptus	Eucalyptus	Oakmoss	Cypress
Litsea	Niaouli	Niaouli	Opopanax	Juniper
Lemon verbena	Oregano	Spanish sage	Patchouli	Spruce
		Tea tree	Valerian	
		Thyme	Vetiver	
			Yarrow	
WOODY	GREEN	MINTY	CITRUS	MUSKY
Amyris	Galbanum	Cornmint	Bergamot	Ambrette seed
Cade	Tilia absolute	Peppermint	Grapefruit	Costus
Cascarilla bark	Myrtle	Spearmint	Lime	Cumin
Cedarwood	Narcissus (dark)		Lemon	Labdanum
Cubeb	Tagetes		Mandarin	
Inula	Tarragon		Bitter orange	
Rosewood	Valerian (dark)		Sweet orange	
Sandalwood	Violet Leaf			

especially helpful if the therapist is designing an original service and wants to create a smell-scape for the client, although it is important to avoid products that contain components that block the absorption of essential oils through the skin. Such products include mineral oil, petroleum, lanolin, coconut oil, and coco butter. Sometimes, a spa product will be fragranced when it arrives at the spa. If the scent is light, it can easily be modified by adding essential oils. This is not ideal, however, because the fragrance may be synthetic and not appropriate for use in aromatherapy.

Essential Oil Concentrations

The term *concentration* refers to the amount of essential oil in the final volume of massage oil or carrier product. Table 7-5 outlines how many drops of essential oil are added

to a base or carrier for a particular concentration. Figure 7-9 illustrates which concentration to use on a particular type of client or condition. Concentrations of between 1% and 4% are standard in the field of aromatherapy and are low enough to insure safety and minimize negative reactions. Concentrations of above 4% are used in acute situations or by experienced therapists; 100% (neat) applications are used for spot treatments with specific oils such as tea tree for toe fungus; helichrysum for trigger point therapy; lavender for small burns; German chamomile for inflammation of soft tissue; and lemon, tea tree, or lavender to dot on a skin blemish.

Synergy

A **synergy** is when the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and those parts are mutually enhancing. Derived

TABLE 7-5 Carrier Volume to Essential Oil Concentration

CARRIER (OZ)	EO 1% (DROPS)	EO 2% (DROPS)	EO 2.5% (DROPS)	EO 3% (DROPS)	EO 4% (DROPS)
½	3	6	7	9	12
1	6	12	15	18	24
2	12	24	30	36	48 (½ tsp)
4	24	48	60	72	96
8	48	96	120	144	192

EO, essential oil.

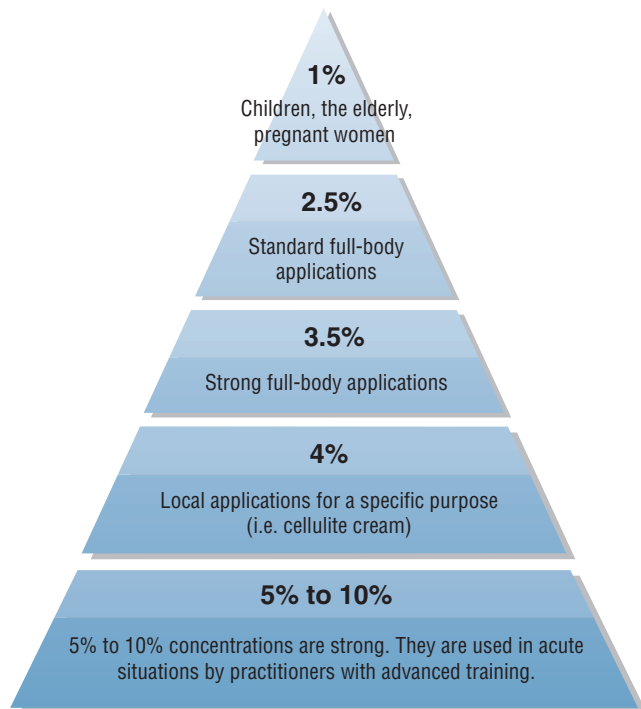


FIGURE 7-9 Standard concentrations in aromatherapy.

from *synergios*, which is a Greek word that means “associate or partner” or, literally in this context, working together. Synergistic interactions between chemical compounds create a greater spectrum of action than would be possible using a single oil alone.

When creating synergistic blends, it is important to remember that essential oils are chemically complex, so blending too many oils at once tends to muddy the result. Often, only three to four oils are needed to make a good synergistic blend. When you put two, three, or four oils together with similar or complementary therapeutic actions, you create a blend that is much more effective than a single oil working along.

To create a synergy for relaxation, fir could be chosen for its alterative action, which helps the body to regain balanced function. Sweet marjoram could be added for its nervine qualities, which help to strengthen and support the overall nervous system. Finally, lavender might be added as a restorative that helps with burnout and exhaustion. These three oils will have a broader action on stress than fir on its own.

You can also use the *action* or *property* words in aromatherapy literature to create a synergy. For example, if you wanted a blend that was antiviral, you would simply pick two to three oils that listed “antiviral” in the action/property area associated with the essential oil. The chemistry of oils can also be used. For example, if you want a blend that is a powerful muscular antispasmodic, you would turn to essential oils high in esters, such as Roman chamomile (77%), clary sage (70%), and petitgrain (65%).

Top, Middle, and Base Note Blending

Many perfumers and aromatherapists use the top, middle, and base note classifications of essential oils and perfume materials to achieve a symphony of balance in the fragrance. Top, middle, and base notes are determined by their different rates of evaporation. Top notes are generally composed of small molecules (i.e., they are lightweight and evaporate quickly). They are the first aromas to hit your nose and give you the initial impression of the fragrance. Middle notes are slower to evaporate and create the substance or main theme of the fragrance. Base notes appear last due to their larger molecular size and slower rate of evaporation. They also bind all the other ingredients in a scent, holding the scent together. When using notes to create blends, the idea is to include an oil that resonates on each note so that the fragrance smells integrated and whole. If the blend does not harmonize, try to use “bridging oils” such as jasmine and ylang ylang that resonate on more than one note. If the blend smells “rough,” you can soften it by adding a blend smoother such as rosemary, marjoram, or a citrus oil. Blend enhancers such as sandalwood, bergamot, clary sage, and lavender will bring out the scent of the other oils, bridge gaps, and generally enhance the aroma. Rose and chamomile species will often “jump out” of a blend and can be modified with black pepper, geranium, lemon, or clove. Table 7-6 provides an overview of the note classification of some essential oils.

Approach to Blending

In a spa setting, therapists often approach blending by asking questions such as, “What smells good?” “What combination of aromas will delight and inspire my clients?” or “Can I create an aroma that will affirm and encourage the spirit or cause deep restful relaxation?” Each blending situation is different, and therapists must constantly evolve their skills to integrate both practical and intuitive approaches to blending. It is helpful to look at every specific classifications of blends.

- **Physiological blend:** This type of blend aims to meet the needs of the body. If the client has sore muscles, the essential oils are chosen to decrease pain and spasm in muscle tissue. If the client is stressed out, the oils are chosen to balance the CNS and decrease stress.
- **Psychological blend:** A psychological blend is focused on changing a mood, overcoming an internal obstacle, opening the mind to new ideas or new ways of being, forming a connection to a resource state, refreshing the mind, and alleviating mental fatigue and burnout.
- **Spirit blend:** A spirit blend affirms characteristics of the individual spirit. It reminds wearers to focus on the aspects that they like most about themselves and want to strengthen. For example, an individual who is having difficulty in expressing or in experiencing joy might build a blend around grapefruit, which affirms joy.

TABLE 7-6 Top, Middle, and Base Notes of Essential Oils

TOP NOTES			
Anise	Fennel	Mandarin	Petitgrain
Bay	Fir	Marjoram	Pine
Bergamot	Galbanum	Mimosa	Rosemary
Birch	Ginger	Nutmeg	Spearmint
Carrot seed	Grapefruit	Orange	Tangerine
Cedarwood	Juniper berry	Oregano	Taragon
Coriander	Lavender	Palmarosa	Thyme
Cypress	Lemon	Pepper	Wintergreen
Davana	Lime	Peppermint	Wormwood
MIDDLE NOTES			
Allspice	Clary sage	Melissa	Ylang ylang
Basil	Clove	Neroli	
Beeswax	Geranium	Orris	
Benzoin	Jasmine	Osmanthus	
Boronia	Lavender	Pepper	
Carnation	Lemon verbena	Rose	
Roman chamomile	Lemongrass	Tagetes	
Champa	Linden	Tuberose	
Cinnamon	<i>Litsea cubeba</i>	Violet leaf	
BASE NOTES			
Ambrette	Fir	Opopanax	Vanilla
Angelica	Frankincense	Patchouli	Vetiver
Benzoin	Galbanum	Peru balsam	
Cassia	Hay	Sandalwood	
German chamomile	Helichrysum	Seaweed	
Clary sage	Myrrh	Tarragon	
Copaiba balsam	Nutmeg absolute	Tolu balsam	
Costus	Oakmoss	Tonka	

An individual who is suffering from feelings of jealousy and wants to amplify the more trusting aspects of his or her spirit might build the blend around clary sage.

- **Holistic blend:** A holistic blend includes an essential oil(s) for the body, mind, and spirit to address the needs of the entire individual.
- **Perfume blend:** A perfume blend can include aspects of the blends described previously but is intended to be worn as a personal scent or to scent a product. In all blends, the oils will amalgamate to form a new scent (as opposed to smelling like a single oil). The scent created by the merging of many aromas has its own personality—something entirely new and complete in itself. The perfume blend is a creative expression of themes.

- **Smell-scape blend:** A smell-scape blend is one blend in a series of blends based on a unifying theme. The idea is to keep the blend within the parameters of the theme but to smell differently than every other blend in the smell-scape to create the most olfactory interest for the client.

Holistic Blending Type 1

Clients will often experience their physiological conditions in a variety of psychological ways. A client who has moderate to severe back pain will also feel a certain way about dealing with that pain on a daily basis. The ongoing pain may cause irritation, firing of the sympathetic nervous system (fight or flight response), agitation, and increased

stress levels. A therapist who creates a blend that addresses both the physiological situation and the psychological reaction to the situation is blending “holistically.”

Holistic blending type 1 is a blending method for novice blenders that encourages them to identify their reasons for using an essential oil and considering both the physiological and psychological state of the client. In this method, the physiological oils will be chosen first. The psychological oil, the most difficult of the oils to select, will be chosen last. Holistic blends should be composed of a total of three to six oils. A therapist who wants to weight the blend for its physiological action will choose more oils to address the physiological needs of the client. For a psychologically weighted blend, the therapist would choose more oils to address the psychological needs of the client.

Choose First: Core Physiological Oil

The core physiological oil should directly address the physiological condition of the client. For example, if the client requests a blend for neuralgia, the core physiological oil would need to have an antineuralgic, or nervine, action. If the client has recently been in a car accident and is experiencing mild inflammation in the cervical vertebrae, the physiological oil would likely be anti-inflammatory and analgesic.

Choose Second: Physiological Support Oil

The physiological support oil complements the actions of the core physiological oil. It should address the condition but from a different direction. For example, suppose that helichrysum is chosen as the core physiological oil for its nervine action and usefulness in treating the neuralgia mentioned previously in the first example. You might then choose Roman chamomile as the physiological support oil because it is a reliable antispasmodic and analgesic. Alternatively, for acute inflammation, you might choose German chamomile oil for its anti-inflammatory abilities. For additional support, you might include frankincense, which is mildly analgesic and also anti-inflammatory.

Choose Third: Psychological Balance Oil

The psychological balance oil is chosen to address the emotional aspect of the client’s condition. It is often sedative for the CNS but not always because some conditions require stimulation of the CNS. If a client is feeling agitated about a reduction in his or her work output because of neuralgia, the psychological balance oil would be chosen to deal with that agitation. An oil such as lavender might be used to balance out the CNS and bring mental/emotional relief. In the second example, in which the client had recently been in a car accident, the psychological oil might be chosen to combat the emotional imbalance often felt after such an event. Neroli, which is used to combat shock and anxiety, might be chosen. Geranium, lavender, or cypress would also be good choices because they stabilize the endocrine system.

The psychological support oil is the most difficult to choose because it requires the most thought. You must choose an oil that will address the emotional/mental/spiritual needs of the client but not contradict the

physiological actions of the other two oils. For example, if a warming oil such as clove was chosen as the psychological balance oil for the neuralgia blend, it would counteract the anti-inflammatory cooling actions of the helichrysum and Roman chamomile. The warming, cooling, sedative, and stimulating properties of the oils should be considered in holistic blending.

Holistic Blending Type 2

The second type of holistic blend is very similar to the previous blend but equally balances the body, mind, and spirit. It is composed of only three oils.

Choose First: Body Oil

The oil for the body will directly address the physiological state of the client. This is different from the first blend, which provided support for a symptom of a specific condition or a body system. This time, the oil has a larger focus—the entire physiological state of the client. Massage therapists are not doctors, and we cannot diagnose a client’s physical condition. Instead, we are trying to get an impression of the client’s body state. Perhaps you notice that the client fidgets in the chair and gets up to walk nervously around the room. The body oil for this client would be different from that for a client who looked at you listlessly during the health intake and slumped in the chair.

Choose Second: Mental Oil

The second oil addresses the mental state of the client and seeks to bring balance and clarity to mental processes. The first client in the previous example might be supported by a mental oil that is expanding and positive to disrupt any unchecked negative self-talk. Frankincense is an excellent choice because frankincense is transformational, meditative, and expanding. The second client might best be supported by an oil that facilitates mental clarity and sharpness, such as peppermint.

Choose Third: Spirit Oil

This oil is chosen to support the part of the self that the client wants to affirm. It is helpful to ask clients what they would like to “radiate” into the world or, in less esoteric language, what they love and value most about themselves. The oils should resonate with those qualities. For example, if the client in the first example loved his or her openheartedness, rose might be chosen as the spirit oil. Rose directly affirms the heart and openheartedness. If the second client claims to really like the fact that he or she is good with money, the therapist might choose basil as the spirit oil. Basil is associated with wealth and abundance in many cultures worldwide.

Application Methods

Well-trained, professional aromatherapists are assets to spas. They can provide custom blending specifically tailored

to the needs of the individual client. They can also develop signature blends for the business and provide smell-scape recommendations for specific treatments. Even the simplest aromatherapy treatment can benefit a client immensely by decreasing stress and increasing the pleasure he or she derives from the service. The methods of application described below focus on some of the common ways that essential oils can be used in a spa. Figure 7-3 shown earlier in the chapter provides an overview of common aromatherapy treatments.

Inhalations

Unless the spa has a medical focus, you will probably use inhalations to facilitate clear breathing in saunas, steams, and showers or to provide mental stimulation or mood enhancement. Some steam baths have a special holder in which essential oils are placed. If this is not available, the oils can be placed directly onto the floor at the edges of the cabinet or room; 4 to 6 drops provide a light but detectible scent because the essential oils evaporate into the steam. In the sauna, add the oils to the water that will be ladled on the heat source; 2 to 6 drops of essential oil are used, depending on the size of the water container. Oils added to the heat source in a sauna must always be mixed in water because essential oils are potentially combustible and could pop or flame up if added plain. A drop of oil can be placed on a tissue tucked in the face cradle to prevent congestion from lying in the prone position during any treatment.

Diffusing essential oils throughout an area can purify the air, repel insects, enhance mood, or simply make the place smell good. A commercial nebulizing diffuser is the best choice if the aim is to eliminate microbes and promote a clean, healthy living or working space (Fig. 7-10). Earthenware burners, electronic fan diffusers, or items such as lamp rings can be used to scent a room. Spa suppliers will have a variety of different types of scented diffusers. Aromatherapy candles are often scented with synthetics, so



FIGURE 7-10 Aromatherapy diffusers. A nebulizing diffuser is the best choice if the goal is to decrease airborne pathogens and create a clean and healthy environment.

they should be generally avoided. If the candle is in a base of beeswax or soy, it is more likely to contain a pure oil because essential oils dissolve into beeswax and soy but not into regular candle wax.



SANITATION

Nebulizing diffusers have a glass chamber that should be cleaned out with alcohol once a day to keep the apparatus functioning well. Follow the manufacturer's directions.

Aromatic Exfoliations and Body Shampoos

Essential oils can be added to a granulated exfoliation product or applied in a foaming bath gel for a fragrant and satisfying body polish or body shampoo. Add 24 drops of an essential oil blend to 2 oz of either exfoliation product or foaming body wash. Aromatic exfoliation can be the first step in a larger treatment as discussed in Chapter 8, Exfoliation Treatments.

Aromatherapy Massage

An aromatherapy massage provides both physiological and psychological benefits for the client. Use a 2% (12 drops/oz of carrier) to 3% (18 drops/oz of carrier) concentration of essential oils in carrier oil or cream for a full-body massage. Use a 1% (6 drops/oz of carrier) concentration when massaging the elderly, children, or pregnant women; 4% blends (24 drops in 1 oz) can be used for spot treatments (trigger point therapy, cross fiber friction, etc.) or for specific conditions (carpal tunnel, lateral epicondylitis, etc.). Certain oils such as German chamomile can be used at 100% to decrease pain and inflammation in a specific area.

In a classic aromatherapy treatment, the therapist meets with the client during a formal aromatherapy consultation in which the client fills out a health history form and the client and therapist discuss the client's expectations of aromatherapy and health care goals. A custom blend is created and then applied in a full-body massage. Some therapists use methods such as applied kinesiology or body talking to choose oils for the client. In such a method, the client holds a bottle of oil and the therapist uses muscle testing to determine which oil increases strength in the muscle. Some therapists let the client pick all of the oils for the blend, believing that clients will only be drawn to oils that support them in their particular healing process. Other therapists take the opposite approach and choose oils that the client has a mild dislike of. The assumption in this case is that clients are out of balance with what they need for healing and that healing will happen slowly as the client develops an affinity to the oil or blend. Most often, choosing oils for the blend is a joint process between the client and the therapist. The therapist suggests oils that have physiological or psychological effects that would support the client's healing

needs, and the client shares likes and dislikes until both are satisfied with the oils chosen. The therapist will then check for contraindications before creating the final blend of oils.

Some spas choose not to offer custom blending but create a series of premade blends from which the clients choose a scent they like. This allows the clients to have more massage time for the same amount of money. It also enhances retail opportunities because clients often become attached to a scent and will purchase the body wash, body lotion, and room mist that match their massage oil. A selection of starter oils and ready to blend recipes is offered in Table 7-7 for easy adoption by a massage clinic or spa.

Aromatherapy Baths

A hydrotherapy tub is a specialized soaking unit that has multiple air and water jets. Essential oils can be added to the hydrotherapy tub or to a standard soaking tub for therapeutic baths. Sometimes, the oils are added simply for the pleasure of their fragrance, or they can be used to treat sore muscles, stress, insomnia, low immunity, skin problems, depression, irritability, or a variety of other conditions. The drawback to using essential oils in a bath is that the oils will pool on the

top of the water. When the client gets into the bath, the oils will stick to the area that hits the water first, or they will pool around exposed area and may cause skin irritation. For this reason, it is best to dilute the oils in carrier oil and massage the blend into the client's skin. After the massage, the client soaks in a warm tub where he or she can enjoy the fragrance of the oils and allow for greater skin absorption. Sometimes, essential oils are added to an emulsifier, which disperses them in the body of the water to prevent pooling. In this case, 6 to 9 drops of essential oil are used for a bath.

Aromatic foot and hand baths can be used to treat disorders of the feet and hands, such as arthritis and athlete's foot, or used for relaxation, low immunity, or stress-related disorders. The oils are diluted into a carrier product and massage into the skin before the area is soaked, or the oils are blended into an emulsifier and added directly to the bath. In the case of a foot or hand bath, 2 to 4 drops of oil might be used.

Aromatherapy Wraps

Aromatherapy wraps can take many forms. In the simplest wrap, the client is cocooned in blankets at the end of an

TABLE 7-7 Starter Oils and Easy Blend Recipes

21 VERSATILE OILS	THESE BLENDS ARE FORMULATED AT A 2% CONCENTRATION FOR USE IN 1 OZ OF CARRIER PRODUCT (12 TOTAL DROPS TO 1 OZ OF CARRIER). THEY ARE COMPOSED OF THE 21 STARTER OILS AT THE LEFT.
Bay laurel	Muscle ease: Bay laurel (3), rosemary (1), lemon (6), juniper berry (2)
Bergamot	Breathe easy: Eucalyptus (3), lemon (7), thyme (2)
Clary sage	Mother-to-be: Lavender (7), mandarin (7)
Cypress	Clarity: Thyme (1), grapefruit (9), cypress (2)
Eucalyptus	Rain: Cypress (7), thyme (2), geranium (2)
Frankincense	Equilibrium: Clary sage (3), neroli (2), bergamot (7)
Geranium	Girl power: Clary sage (2), lavender (6), geranium (1), frankincense (3)
German chamomile	Body boost: Lemon (4), thyme (1), bergamot (4), lavender (3)
Ginger CO ₂	Purity: Juniper berry (3), grapefruit (8), thyme (1)
Grapefruit	Revitalize: Bergamot (6), rosemary (2), lavender (4)
Jasmine	Ocean: Rosemary (3), frankincense (7), ylang ylang (2)
Juniper berry	Zen: Ylang ylang (2), ginger CO ₂ (2), mandarin (8)
Lavender	Renew: German chamomile (1), rosemary (2), clary sage (4), lavender (7)
Lemon	Shimmer: Bay laurel (3), ylang ylang (1), bergamot (7), frankincense (3)
Mandarin	Meditation: Frankincense (4), jasmine (1), ginger CO ₂ (2)
Neroli	Energy: Peppermint (1), thyme (4), bay laurel (4)
Peppermint	Summer: Neroli (2), lavender (4), bergamot (6)
Rose	Refresh: Peppermint (1), eucalyptus (2), lemon (8), geranium (1)
Rosemary	Moon mist: Jasmine (2), grapefruit (10)
Thyme	Relax factor: Rose (1), clary sage (2), mandarin (6), frankincense (3)
Ylang ylang	Circulate: Ginger CO ₂ (2), grapefruit (9), juniper berry (1)

aromatherapy massage to relax while the essential oils continue to absorb into the bloodstream. Sometimes, essential oils are blended into a very heavy carrier product such as wheat germ oil or shea butter; massaged into the skin; left to absorb during a wrap; and then removed with hot towels, a Vichy shower, or a body shampoo. If a body shampoo is used to remove the excess carrier, a light moisture lotion may be applied at the end of the treatment to rehydrate the skin. These treatments are sometimes called emollient wraps because the heavy carrier product is nourishing for the skin and softens very dry or dehydrated skin. Other carrier products might also be used. For example, aloe vera and anti-inflammatory oils can be brushed on the skin for an effective sunburn relief wrap. Essential oils can be added to body milk (very light and watery lotion) and misted on the body with an atomizer before the body is wrapped. Some therapists soak cotton sheets in hot water and essential oils and apply them in a hot sheet wrap. This is the least effective method of using essential oils in a wrap because the oils tend to evaporate very quickly and do not really penetrate the skin. However, this type of sheet wrap does smell nice. Alternatively, essential oil-scented hand towels can be layered on the body after it has been massaged with aromatic oils, and the body can be wrapped. Oils might also be mixed up with clay (kaolin, French green, Sedona, etc.) and applied to the body with a brush before the client is wrapped. As you can see, there is no end to the ways that different steps can be mixed and matched to form satisfying treatments. Body wrap procedures are covered in Chapter 9, Body Wraps.

Aroma Mists and Aura Mists

Aroma mists have a number of different uses in a spa setting. They can be used as air purifiers and fresheners, as linen fresheners, as mood enhancers, skin toners, or body coolers. In many of the services described in upcoming chapters, aroma mists are used as a treatment step. Aroma

mists make nice take home gifts for clients because they can use them to refresh the car or to mist at any time as an olfactory link to the relaxation they experienced in their spa treatment.

An aura mist is an aromatherapy body mist that is used only at the very end of the treatment. It is misted in a high arch over the client from the head to the toes. It should be scented with an aroma that contrasts with the treatment products and fills the treatment room with a refreshing scent. This helps to wake the client up and stimulate them at the end of the session.

A number of different base fluids can be used when creating aroma or aura mists including purified water, herbal teas, floral waters (hydrosols), lemon juice, witch hazel, and vinegar. Add 30 drops of an essential oil blend to 2 oz of base liquid in a bottle with a spray top. It is best to refrigerate mists between uses to prevent the product from expiring. If tea is used as a base, the product will have a short shelf life (2 to 3 days) and should be made up in small batches only.

Support Lotions

A support lotion is a blend of essential oils mixed into a lotion base that is given to the client to use as a form of self-care. The oils might be chosen to give the client an energy boost, to calm the client if he or she is feeling anxious, as a link to a positive affirmation or new life choice (quit smoking, take a break, eat healthy, etc.), or as a pleasant reminder of his or her stay at the spa. The lotion can be used at any time by the clients in a variety of ways and gives clients a simple way to bring aromatherapy into their lives. They can rub it on their hands and then hold their hands over their nose for a simple inhalation. They can spread the lotion over the anterior neck, down the sternum, under the breast tissue, and behind the neck, where lymph nodes come up close to the surface of the body for a gentle immunity boost. Finally, they can rub the lotion all over their body and take a bath.

SPA FUSION

INTEGRATION OF SKILLS



STUDY TIP: Botanical Flash Cards

Aromatherapists use the botanical names of plants to ensure they are using the correct species in their treatments. If aromatherapy is important to you, learn the botanical names of essential oil, bearing plants with botanical flash cards. To create flash cards, review Appendix B (Essential Oils and Their Botanical Names) at the back of this book. List the common name of an essential oil on one side of the card (e.g., Bergamot) and the botanical name on the other side (*Citrus x bergamia*). When you pronounce Latin, you usually simply sound out the word as it is spelled—there is nothing tricky about it. Work through five cards a day until you have them memorized, and soon you will have an excellent foundation of knowledge of botanical names.

CHAPTER WRAP-UP

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils for healing the mind, body, and spirit. Different health care providers will use essential oils in diverse ways based on their scope of practice. These modern-day uses mirror ancient times, when aromatic substances were used for both medical and spiritual practice.

Essential oils are volatile plant oils extracted from certain aromatic plants that have both physiological and psychological effects on the human body. These oils are chemically complex and may contain as many as 400 different components. The oils are stored in the leaves, needles, twig, bark, flowers, flower buds, fruits, stems, and roots; they are extracted through steam distillation, expression, solvent extraction, or CO₂ hyperbolic production. Essential oils are often adulterated on the international market to increase the profit margin of the grower or supplier. Aromatherapists believe that the human body responds differently to natural oils than to those that are synthetic or adulterated. For this reason, it is important to purchase high-quality, therapeutic-grade essential oils from a reputable supplier.

The oils enter the body via the skin, inhalation through the lungs, and ingestion (which is not used without advanced training). Once in the body, the chemical compounds in essential oils interact with the body's chemistry to affect specific organs, systems, or the body as a whole (physiological effects). The inhalation of essential oils also triggers an olfactory response that can lead to powerful mental and emotional behavioral changes (psychological effects).

Basic blending methods such as synergistic blending and note blending allow the therapist to create interesting smell-scapes to enhance the client's spa experience. Aromatherapy massage, exfoliation, wraps, and hydrotherapy introduce clients to the benefits of essential oils. The pleasing fragrances of the oils also support their use as accent notes in other services.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Multiple Choice

- These compounds, present in essential oils, can be toxic to the living plant and must be stored in specialized structures such as glands, ducts, scales, and hairs. These compounds are:
 - Mostly terpenes
 - Not chemical in nature
 - Only found in flowers
 - Mostly aldehydes
- Aromatherapy is said to affect the mind, body, and spirit. Essential oils have a physiological effect on the body. How do they affect the mind and spirit?
 - Through their effect on the limbic system after inhalation
 - Through absorption of the oil into the bloodstream
 - Through olfactory effects but only when paired with hypnosis
 - Through the ability of black pepper oil to break addictive behaviors
- Volatility is best described as:
 - The ability to scent an area for a given period of time
 - The ability to turn from a liquid to a gas at room temperature
 - The ability to attract useful and needed insects to the plant
 - The ability to defend the plant against microbial infection
- Essential oils are described as:
 - Chemically complex with 100 to 400 or more chemicals present in the oil
 - Chemically simple with 3 to 7 chemicals found in the oil
 - Not chemical when they are in a natural form
 - Chemically dangerous unless they are adjusted in the lab before sale to the public

SPA FUSION

INTEGRATION OF SKILLS (continued)



5. Distilled essential oils will smell:

- a. Just like the plant from which it has been extracted
- b. Burnt—distillation should not be used to produce essential oils
- c. Slightly different than the natural plant as some chemical compounds are lost during the distillation process
- d. Sweeter than the plant in its natural form

Fill in the Blank

6. In the process of extraction known as _____, essential oils are placed in a still, and steam is used to burst the essential oil storage sites.
7. The therapeutic value of essential oils will decrease with age even under ideal storage conditions, mostly due to oxidation and the resulting chemical changes this causes. Replace essential oils if they have not been used within _____. Citrus oils should be replaced every _____.
8. When the potential unwanted side effects of one compound are decreased or eliminated by one or more other compounds present in an essential oil, this is referred to as _____.
9. Many factors affect the chemical composition and therefore the therapeutic value of an essential oil. Three of these factors are _____, _____, and _____.
10. The human body seems to respond differently to natural oils compared to synthetic oils. Synthetic oils often cause _____, _____, and _____.

PART
TWO

Spa
Treatments

Exfoliation Treatments

Chapter Outline

Types of Exfoliation Treatments

General Treatment Considerations

Scope of Practice

Skin Conditions

Overexfoliation

Dry Skin Brushing

Dry Skin Brushing Techniques

The Enhanced Dry Skin Brushing Procedure

The Salt or Sugar Glow

The Salt or Sugar Glow Procedure

The Full-Body Polish

The Full-Body Polish Procedure

The Body or Loofah Scrub

The Buff and Bronze

The Buff and Bronze Procedure

Home Care and Retail



SPA FUSION

INTEGRATION OF SKILLS

STUDY TIP: Good Listening Skills

SPA INSPIRATION: Roll Tape!

CHAPTER WRAP-UP

Key Terms

Aura mist: An aromatherapy body mist that is used only at the very end of the treatment. It is misted in a high arch over the client from the head to the toes. It should be scented with an aroma that contrasts with the treatment products and fills the treatment room with a refreshing scent.

Dihydroxyacetone (DHA): The component in autotanning products that causes the skin cells to change color and appear tanned.

Dissolving exfoliants: Dissolving exfoliants are composed of alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) and beta hydroxy acids (BHAs). AHAs include glycolic, citric, lactic, and malic acids. The most widely used BHA in cosmetics is salicylic acid or its related substances, sodium salicylate and willow extract.

Enzymatic exfoliation: Exfoliation that relies on biological action rather than physical abrasion. They are applied to the skin and then rinsed off. The enzymes used dissolve keratin in the skin, thereby removing dead cells and supporting the natural process of exfoliation. Papain from papaya is a good example of one of these enzymes.

Exfoliation: A process by which dead skin cells are removed to improve the skin texture and appearance. Other benefits include increased circulation and lymph flow, increased immunity, and relaxation.

Mechanical exfoliation: A physical process in which the body is rubbed with an abrasive product or with a coarse handheld item such as a loofah.

Ultraviolet A (UVA) rays: Sometimes referred to as “aging rays,” these rays from the sun penetrate deeper into the skin than UVB rays and cause photosensitivity reactions.

Ultraviolet B (UVB) rays: Also known as “burning rays,” these rays from the sun are the primary rays associated with skin damage and cancer from the sun.

In a manual **exfoliation** treatment, the skin is polished or scrubbed with a coarse-textured product that gently “sands” the skin’s surface. This brightens the skin by removing the dull top layer of dead cells, deep cleanses the pores, and improves the skin’s texture. These actions are important for skin health and have other therapeutic benefits that work in synergy with massage. During an exfoliation treatment, the vital energy of the body is improved and the body is relaxed. This chapter aims to describe the types of exfoliation treatments commonly used by massage therapists. It also provides a brief overview of other exfoliation treatments provided by estheticians or physicians in the spa profession.

Before delivering the treatments described in this chapter, you may wish to review the information in Chapter 4 (Your Spa Massage), Chapter 5 (Foundation Skills for Spa Treatment Delivery), and Chapter 7 (Introduction to Aromatherapy for Spa). You may also want to look at the sample exfoliation treatments provided at the back of the book for inspiration when developing your spa program.

Types of Exfoliation Treatments

There are two basic types of exfoliation: **mechanical exfoliation**, which is used by both massage therapists and estheticians, and **enzymatic or dissolving exfoliation**, which is used by estheticians or delivered only by a physician.

Mechanical exfoliants rely on the skin being physically rubbed with a mildly abrasive exfoliation product or a coarse handheld item such as a loofah or cactus fiber cloth. Types of mechanical exfoliation include dry skin brushing, salt or sugar glows, body scrubs, friction, or body polish treatments.

Although the words *brush*, *scrub*, *glow*, *friction*, and *polish* are often used interchangeably, each of these words implies a type of product, type of implement, or the degree of abrasiveness in the treatment. The overview of manual exfoliation treatments provided in Table 8-1 will help you differentiate between these treatments.

The enzyme and **dissolving exfoliants** used by estheticians and physicians rely on their biological action rather than simple physical abrasion. They are applied to the skin and then rinsed off. The enzymes used in these treatments dissolve keratin in the skin, removing dead cells and supporting the natural process of exfoliation. These types of treatments are not described in this text because they are usually out of the scope of practice of massage therapists.

Broaden Your Understanding 8-1 provides an overview of exfoliation treatments offered exclusively by estheticians or physicians in a spa.

General Treatment Considerations

Before you provide exfoliation treatments at the spa or in your massage practice, check with the state board of massage to ensure that the types of treatments you want to provide are in your scope of practice as defined by the state where you work. You should also pay attention to the client’s overall skin condition and the dangers of overexfoliation.

Scope of Practice

Massage therapists in most states (but not all) must be careful not to encroach on the scope of practice for estheticians when they promote or deliver an exfoliation treatment. Massage therapists usually aim to decrease muscle tension, increase the vital energy of the body, and relax the body with exfoliation treatments. A fair amount of soft tissue manipulation is usually included in the service to meet these treatment goals. To avoid problems, it is a good idea to highlight these body-oriented goals in the promotional description of the treatment rather than focus on the benefits of the treatment for the skin.

Skin Conditions

Exfoliation products should not be used on open wounds or broken skin, on clients with chronic skin conditions (unless recommended by a physician), on sunburned or inflamed skin, over varicose veins, or immediately after waxing or shaving. Using exfoliation products in these circumstances may cause irritation or complicate the condition.

Overexfoliation

The overuse of manual exfoliation products during a treatment can leave the skin sensitive and inflamed. If such products are used too frequently, the skin will start to thicken and grow leathery. Exfoliation treatments should not be given more than once a week for the best results.

Dry Skin Brushing


Dry skin brushing is a technique in which the skin and lymphatic system are stimulated with a natural bristle brush, rough hand mitts, or textured cloths. Dry skin brushing increases local blood flow to the skin, bringing fresh oxygen and nutrients to the skin. The sebaceous glands are stimulated and dead skin cells are removed to reveal the healthy new skin below.

TABLE 8-1 Overview of Manual Exfoliation Treatments

Dry skin brushing	Dry skin brushing is a treatment in which the body is brushed to stimulate local blood circulation to the skin, boost general immunity, increase the vital energy of the body, and desquamate dead skin cells. It is usually performed with natural bristle brushes, but rough hand mitts or terry cloths can also be used. This is a mild to moderate exfoliation treatment because only light pressure is used with the body brushes.
Wet skin brushing	Wet skin brushing is applied in the same manner as dry skin brushing except that the body is dampened with water, apple cider vinegar, or a foaming body shampoo before it is brushed.
Salt glow	In a salt glow treatment, a specialized salt is mixed with oil, body wash, water, apple cider vinegar, or other wet or oily product and applied to the body to stimulate local circulation to the skin, smooth the skin, increase the vital energy of the body, or relax the body. The degree of vigor with which the therapist applies the strokes determines the abrasiveness of the treatment.
Sugar glow	A sugar glow treatment is less abrasive than a salt glow. Table sugar, brown sugar, or raw sugar is mixed with water, oil, milk, wine, or a body wash product and then applied to the body to increase local circulation to the skin, relax the body, and smooth the skin.
Body polish	A body polish is different than a salt glow in that the exfoliation product is usually blended into an emollient base to protect the skin. A body polish often has a skin care focus, so the steps of the treatment follow those of a facial. This is the most relaxing and elegant of the manual exfoliation treatments, so stress reduction is often a primary treatment goal.
Body scrub or loofah scrub	As the name suggests, a body scrub is a vigorous and revitalizing treatment. A loofah mitt, rough hand mitts, or cactus fiber cloths are used with a foaming body wash to cleanse the skin, stimulate local circulation to the skin, and rejuvenate the body.
Friction	In <i>Rational Hydrotherapy</i> , Kellogg ¹⁰ gives very specific recommendations for the way that friction should be applied to a particular client for a specific physiological effect. For general purposes, a friction could best be described as a treatment in which the skin is rubbed in a back-and-forth motion with dry hands or with a wet lubricant such as apple cider vinegar or a body shampoo. Terry mitts or rough hand mitts may also be used with water at specific temperatures (i.e., cold mitt friction). The abrasiveness of a friction are based on the treatment goals of the individual service and the types of implements that are used.
Buff and bronze	A treatment that includes a full-body exfoliation, moisture massage, and the application of an autotanning product that leaves the client looking as if they are naturally tanned.

Dry brushing is a nice enhancer treatment before a full-body massage. When the dry brushing is part of a spa treatment, each area can be brushed separately before applying the treatment product, or the entire body can be brushed first before applying the spa product. When planning such a treatment, consider how many times the client will have to turn over. The fewer times the client has to turn over, the more relaxing the treatment will be.

Dry Skin Brushing Techniques

Use a natural fiber brush with very light pressure on dry skin, working from distal to proximal with rhythmic strokes. Although some claim that circular motions and “figure of eights” are calming, dry brushing works best when it is done in brisk, straight lines with very light pressure, directed toward the heart. Brushing techniques for each body area are described below and shown in Figure 8-1. For a video demonstrating dry skin brushing techniques, visit thePoint. 

Posterior Legs

Undrape the first posterior leg and brush it with light, rhythmic strokes from the ankle to the knee. Overlap the strokes so that the entire area is covered by brush strokes. Brush from the knee to the hip across the top of the thigh with overlapping strokes. To brush the inner thigh, stand at the client’s hip facing toward the foot of the table. Place both brushes on the medial aspect of the thigh and pull them

toward the lateral side of the leg in light, rhythmic strokes. To brush the lateral thigh, stand by the knee and run the brushes briskly up the iliotibial band to the hip. To finish dry brushing the posterior leg, brush from the ankle all the way up the leg with long, flushing strokes. Many therapists brush from the knee to the hip before they brush from the ankle to the knee. The reason for this is that they believe that brushing the proximal area first “clears and opens up” lymph flow, so that stagnation does not occur when the distal area is brushed.

The Back

Stand on one side of the client, facing across the client’s body. Place the brushes on the far side of the client and pull them in light strokes toward the spine. Move around the table to the other side of the client in order to repeat the side brush. To dry brush the main area of the back, stand at the head of the table and begin the stroke at the sacrum, pulling the brush toward the head of the client. To ensure that the strokes are rhythmic, only brush as far as the mid-back. Use a separate set of strokes from the mid-back to the shoulders.

Anterior Legs

When dry brushing the anterior legs, it is easiest to start with the medial leg by standing at the client’s hip and facing toward the foot of the table. Start the strokes by the ankle and work up the leg. Each stroke runs from the medial side of the leg to the midline of the leg. To dry brush the



Broaden Your Understanding 8-1

EXFOLIATION TREATMENTS OFFERED BY ESTHETICIANS AND PHYSICIANS IN THE SPA INDUSTRY

Ideally, all the therapists at a spa would have a working understanding of the different types of exfoliation treatments that are available. Massage therapists who understand the types of exfoliation treatments used by estheticians and physicians are better placed to advise clients on possible treatment options and can suggest appropriate providers for the client. The following exfoliation treatments are often seen in a spa but are not regularly performed by a massage therapist.

Facial Exfoliation: A specially formulated product is used to exfoliate skin cells from delicate facial tissue. This treatment is usually part of a facial service.

Enzyme Exfoliation: An enzyme such as papain is applied to the skin to dissolve keratin and remove dead and dulling skin cells. The product should not be rubbed in. Enzyme exfoliation treatments are most often used by estheticians in facial treatments but can also be used in full-body treatments.

Skin Peels: High concentrations of alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) and beta hydroxy acids (BHAs) can be used to resurface the skin. Only estheticians with advanced training should use these products. Treatments should only be carried out under the supervision of a physician.

Chemical Peels: Chemical peel products may include trichloroacetic acid or tretinoin (a vitamin A derivative) to decrease fine lines and wrinkles and “resurface” the skin. Chemical peels (known as *chemosurgery*) should be applied only by a physician.

Dermabrasion: Dermabrasion and dermaplaning help to “refinish” the skin’s top layers. These treatments both involve a controlled surgical scraping and should be performed only by a physician.

Microdermabrasion: Microdermabrasion is a nonsurgical procedure used by qualified estheticians. The skin is literally “sandblasted” with microcrystals of aluminum oxide to treat sun damage, wrinkles, hyperpigmentation, acne scarring, and stretch marks.

Laser Skin Treatments: Laser skin treatments use a carbon dioxide laser beam to remove layers of damaged skin. It is commonly used for wrinkles, fine lines, scars, or uneven pigmentation. This treatment should only be performed by a qualified, experienced physician.

top of the anterior leg, stand by the foot and brush upward toward the knee with light, overlapping strokes. The thigh is brushed from the knee to the hip in straight, overlapping strokes. The lateral section of the leg is brushed from the ankle to the knee along the peroneal muscles and from the knee to the hip along the iliotibial band. As with the posterior leg, some therapists prefer to brush from the knee to the hip before they brush from the ankle to the knee. To complete the anterior leg, brush from the ankle all the way to the hip with long, continuous strokes.

Abdominal Area

To brush the abdominal area, stand to one side of the client and brush from the far side of the body toward the centerline. Brush the sides of the client from the hip into the armpit by standing at the head of the table and pulling the brushes upward in a straight line.

Chest

Stand at the head of the table and brush from below the navel, pulling in a straight line between the breasts with overlapping strokes. To avoid the breast drape, simply lift the brush and “jump” over it. Brush from the armpit up and around the breast, ending at the upper portion of the sternum. Again, jump the breast drape to keep the flow of the stroke. To finish the chest area, stand to one side of the massage table and brush across the upper chest from one shoulder to the other in a straight line.

Arms

Brush from the fingers to the elbow and from the elbow to the shoulder. Some therapists prefer to brush from the elbow to the shoulder before they brush from the fingers to the elbow. To complete the arms, use long strokes all the way from the fingers to the shoulder.

Feet

Brush the feet from the toes down to the heel. Brush firmly to avoid tickling the client, but if they are too ticklish to tolerate this, skip the feet and move on.



SANITATION

Before brushing the feet, check them carefully for fungal infections. If athlete’s foot or any other contagious condition exists, skip the feet to avoid spreading the condition. When brushing the feet, wipe them first with a disposable antibacterial cloth such as a diaper wipe.

The Enhanced Dry Skin Brushing Procedure

In the enhanced dry brushing treatment described below, an invigorating toning massage step, a herbal steam, and

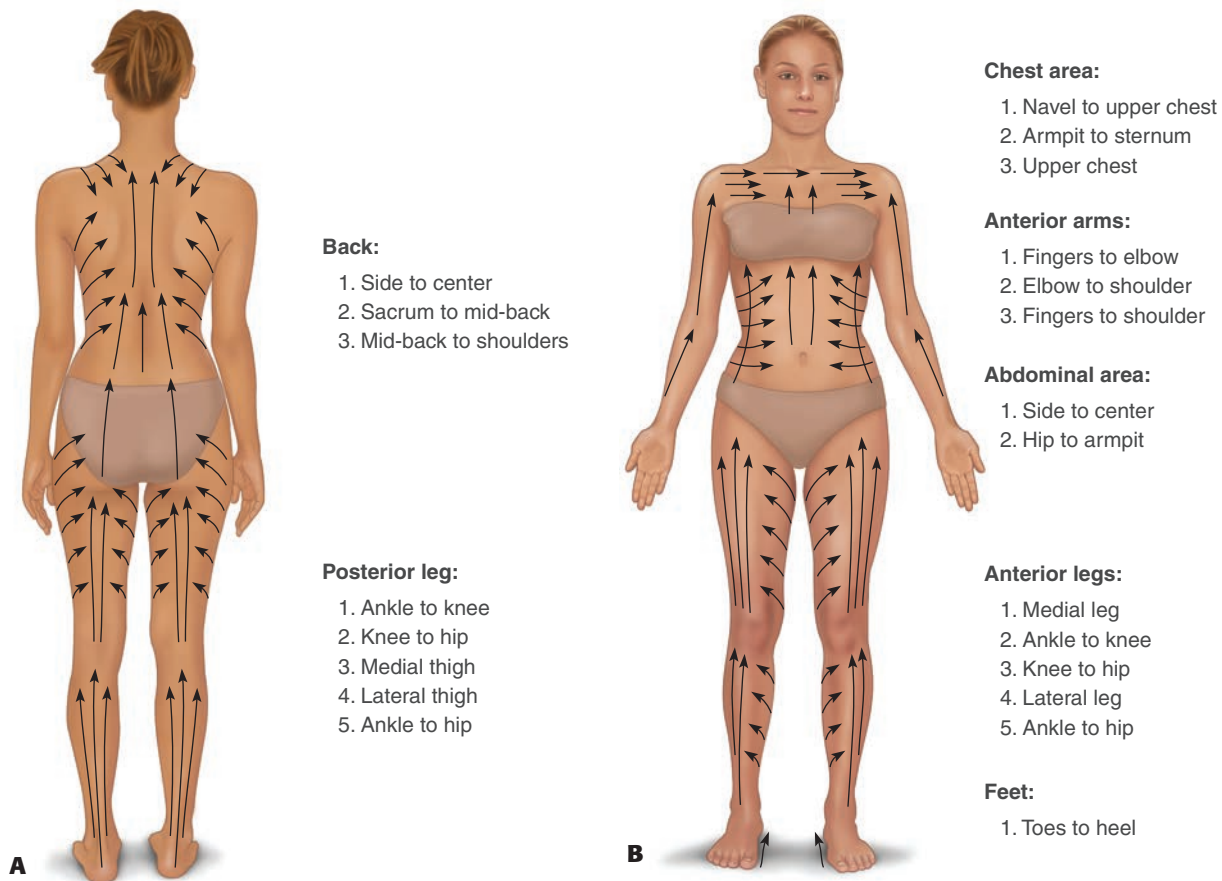


FIGURE 8-1 Dry skin brushing techniques. (A) The posterior body. (B) The anterior body.

the application of a revitalizing support lotion are added to the treatment. The addition of these simple enhancers creates a well-rounded and satisfying skin brushing service. For an overview of the treatment, review the dry skin brushing outline in Treatment Overview 8-1 and Figure 8-2.

Session Start

The client can begin the treatment in either a supine or a prone position because the order in which each area of the body is brushed is not fixed. In this particular procedure, the posterior legs, gluteals, back, and posterior arms are treated first. The client is then turned into the supine position so that his or her anterior legs, abdominal area, upper chest, anterior arms, and feet are treated.

To start the service, place one hand on the client's sacrum and one hand on C7 and ask the client to take three slow, deep breaths. Next, undrape the first posterior leg and proceed with the treatment.

Step 1: Dry Brush the Area

Dry brush the particular area as described previously under "Dry Skin Brushing Techniques." It is important to note

that people learning dry skin brushing often make the mistake of brushing too hard. The lighter the brush stroke, the more effective the treatment.

Step 2: Toning Massage

Carefully pour skin toner into one hand from a bottle with a flip-top lid. Apply the toner to the client with massage strokes. Add more toner as needed until there is sufficient lubrication for massage. Most alcohol-free toners (avoid the use of products with alcohol because these dry the skin) contain glycerin, which makes them feel slippery and refreshing. Keep the toning massage brief because skin toners tend to be cooling, and the client may get cold if this step is carried on for too long.

Step 3: Application of a Steamy Herbal-Infused Towel

Remove a hot, moist, herbal-infused towel from the soda cooler and lay it over the body area you're working on. Allow the towel to sit without touching it for 30 seconds. To "activate" the towel and increase the client's perception of warmth, use compression strokes over the top of the towel. Remove the towel and blot the client dry with a soft hand towel.

Treatment Overview 8-1: Dry Skin Brushing Overview



Indications

Dull skin; low energy; stress; sore muscles; to support a larger treatment aimed at detoxification; dull, congested skin; as preparation for application of a treatment product (the removal of dead skin cells supports product absorption)

Contraindications

Skin conditions, broken or inflamed skin, sunburn, high blood pressure, heart or circulatory conditions, illness or fever, lymphatic condition, cancer (except under the supervision of a physician), any condition contraindicated for massage

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup

Massage sheet, blanket or bath sheet for warmth, bolster, warm packs as needed

Supplies for the Work Table Setup (for the Enhanced Procedure)

- 1) Skin toner in a bottle with a flip-top lid
- 2) Soda cooler with nine herbal-infused towels
- 3) Revitalizing support lotion in a bottle with a flip-top lid or other finishing product
- 4) Aura mist

Basic Procedure

Dry brush the particular body area working from the distal area toward the heart. Begin on the posterior legs; proceed to the gluteals and back; turn the client and brush the anterior legs, belly, arms, and upper chest before brushing the feet.

Enhanced Procedure

- 1) Dry brush the particular body area working from the distal area toward the heart.
- 2) Apply a skin toner with a variety of massage strokes.
- 3) Steam the area with a herbal-infused towel.
- 4) Apply a revitalizing support lotion or seaweed gel to the area.
- 5) End the session with an aura mist of a contrasting scent.

Revitalizing Lotion Recipe

2 fl oz of plain unscented lotion, lavender essential oil (9 drops), grapefruit essential oil (15 drops), thyme essential oil (4 drops), juniper berry essential oil (2 drops)

Step 4: Application of a Finishing Product

In this treatment, a revitalizing support lotion is used as the finishing product, but seaweed gel, plain moisture lotion, or aloe vera gel may also be used. A revitalizing support lotion consists of a regular moisture lotion or gel product mixed with essential oils that support the lymphatic system (see Treatment Overview 8-1 for a recipe). Apply the lotion from the distal area to the proximal area with long, flushing strokes.

Session End

Once each area of the body has been treated, end the service with a neck and face massage, a face steam, or with a

simple **aura mist**. Make sure to use an aroma that contrasts with the scent of the herbal towels and revitalizing lotion for the greatest olfactory impact as discussed in Chapter 7 (Introduction to Aromatherapy for Spa).



SANITATION

At the end of the treatment, the dry skin brushes are washed in warm, soapy water and placed in alcohol for 20 minutes. They are allowed to air dry and then placed back into a closed container. Because alcohol is very drying for the brushes, they will need to be replaced regularly.

The Salt or Sugar Glow

Salt and sugar glows are therapeutically useful because they stimulate local circulation to the skin, increase the vital energy of the body, remove dead cells and impurities from the skin, and improve skin health. The role of minerals in healthy skin metabolism and body function is not fully understood. Minerals from Dead Sea salt and other salt deposits (e.g., Bearn salt from the Pyrenees Mountains in the South of France) are believed to help regulate some skin and certain body functions. In a study published in the *International Journal of Cosmetic Science*,¹ potassium from sea salt increased carbon dioxide (CO₂) transport, whereas calcium helped to regulate cell membrane permeability in the skin. Some minerals are hygroscopic (meaning they attract water molecules) and can be used to restore skin moisture perhaps by increasing intercellular water capacity. Of the many different types of salt that can be used for a salt glow, the cheapest and most readily available is ordinary sea salt, which is available at many local grocery stores. The most popular type of sea salt for spa treatments is Dead Sea salt.

The Dead Sea is an ancient landlocked sea whose water has been slowly evaporating over the centuries, producing a concentrated natural salt solution. After bathing in the Dead Sea, people often report a feeling of increased energy, well-being, and special baby-soft skin. The main elements in Dead Sea water are chlorine, magnesium, sodium, calcium, potassium, and bromine.¹ These minerals are absorbed through the skin by bathing in the dissolved salts or by using a Dead Sea salt cosmetic preparation. In the study noted previously, the skin-smoothing effects of Dead Sea minerals in a cosmetic product were compared with the same cosmetic product containing no Dead Sea minerals. The control in the study, a plain gel with no active ingredients, showed an average decrease in skin roughness of only 10.4%. The cosmetic product containing no Dead Sea minerals reduced roughness by 27.8%. The cosmetic product containing Dead Sea minerals reduced roughness by 40.7%.¹



FIGURE 8-2 Enhanced dry brushing procedure. (A) Dry brush the area. (B1 and B2) Toning massage. (C) Herbal steam. (D) Application of a finishing product.

Bearn salt, from springs in the Pyrenees Mountains of Southern France, has well-known restorative and antistress properties, making it especially useful for hydrotherapy tub soaks. It is mined close to a small spa town called Salies-de-Béarn, where the thermal waters are seven times more salty than seawater. The thermal pool in the middle of town is a favorite place to soak tired feet after hiking in the Pyrenees. As early as the 16th century, the ladies of the court of Navarre would leave their chateaus to bathe in Salies, believing it would prevent premature aging. Today, the salt springs are still used to heal urinary infections, to treat arthritis, and for children with developmental problems.


Epsom salts are inorganic mineral salts that support the body in its efforts to detoxify itself. Epsom salts are often used for sore, tired muscles and as a soaking agent for bruises, sprains, and strains. Because Epsom salts are drying, they are best used on oily skin types.

Chemically, salt consists of 60.663% elemental chlorine (Cl^-) and 39.337% sodium (Na^+). Table salt is processed, so it contains higher levels of chlorine than other types of salt. The relatively high chlorine content of table salt can burn a client's skin, and this is the reason that it is not suitable for use in spa treatments. Sea salt and mineral salts are safer for spa use because they contain a wider range of minerals

and proportionately less total chlorine. They are therefore gentler, less irritating to the skin, and can be safely used in spa treatments.

Sugar is gentler than salt and has emollient and humectant (moisturizing) properties that leave the skin feeling soft and smooth. When dissolved, it can be applied to the skin as a “glaze” to soften, increase water content, and aid in healing. Brown sugar and table sugar are granular, so they can be used for exfoliation, whereas honey, molasses, and dissolved sugar are used as body glazes.

The Salt or Sugar Glow Procedure

As with all spa treatments, there are a number of different delivery options for this service. Often, a salt or sugar glow will be a quick 30-minute treatment that is used to prepare the body for another service. Sometimes, the salt or sugar glow is given together with a Vichy shower to take advantage of the contrasting water temperatures, an equally important part of the treatment. The treatment described here is not traditional in its approach but will quickly gain popularity with clients. It is meant to be used in a dry room and delivered with a full-body massage. The massage step is intertwined with the salt or sugar step so that each part of the body is addressed separately. Because so much massage is used in this treatment, it takes from 75 to 90 minutes to deliver the session. For an overview of the treatment, review the salt or sugar glow outline in Treatment Overview 8–2 and Figure 8–3. Table 8–2 describes different salt and sugar mixtures and various ways to apply the salt or sugar to the body. Also, you can see a video demonstrating this technique by visiting thePoint. 

Session Start

Bolster the client as you would for a massage. The order in which each body area is addressed is not fixed, but it works well if the client starts in a prone position, beginning the treatment with the posterior legs and gluteals and progressing to the back. The client can then be turned into a supine position for the last half of the treatment while the anterior legs, feet, abdominal area, upper chest, and arms are treated. The treatment ends with a neck and face massage.

Step 1: Massage

Undrape the desired body area and apply massage oil with Swedish strokes. You can determine the length of the massage step, the depth you use, and the types of strokes you use based on how you design the session or on the treatment goals you have agreed with the client. Many therapists choose to offer a longer version of this treatment and include a full range of strokes during the massage step.

Step 2: Exfoliation

Be careful not to apply salt or sugar to a body area that is not well oiled because this may cause irritation to the skin and will feel abrasive to the client. After lubricating the area with massage oil, lightly sprinkle the salt or sugar onto the area with a cheese shaker or scoop it up from a bowl after it

Treatment Overview 8–2: The Salt or Sugar Glow Overview



Indications

Low energy; sore muscles; stress; dull, rough skin; or as a preparation step before the application of a treatment product in a larger service

Contraindications

Skin condition, inflamed skin, broken skin, poorly managed diabetes, illness, fever, any condition contraindicated for massage

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom layer to top layer)

- 1) Plastic table protector
- 2) Bottom massage sheet
- 3) Bath towel—the weave of the bath towel will catch excess salt or sugar that falls off the client during the first half of the treatment. When the client turns over, the towel will prevent him or her from feeling the salt or sugar granules.
- 4) Top massage sheet
- 5) Blanket or bath sheet for warmth

Supplies for the Work Table Setup

- 1) Salt or sugar in a bowl or a cheese shaker
- 2) Massage oil or body wash gel for mixing up salt or sugar
- 3) Aroma mist or skin toner
- 4) Mist bottle or cosmetic sponges for applying aroma mist or toner
- 5) Finishing product (lotion, gel, etc.)
- 6) Soda cooler and hot, moist towels
- 7) Bowl of warm water
- 8) Other items as needed for variations or enhancers (i.e., slippers, robe, foot soak, essential oils, etc.)

Dry Room Procedure

- 1) Massage the body area.
- 2) Apply salt or sugar and exfoliate the area.
- 3) Remove salt or sugar with a hot towel.
- 4) Apply aroma mist or skin toner.
- 5) Pat the area dry with a hand towel.
- 6) Apply a finishing lotion or gel.
- 7) Redrape the body area and move on to the next area.
- 8) At the end of the treatment, provide a massage of the neck and face then finish with an aura mist of a contrasting scent.

Wet Room Procedure

- 1) Begin on the posterior of the body.
- 2) Wet the body with warm water.
- 3) Apply salt or sugar in a bath gel.
- 4) Add warm water and exfoliate the posterior body.
- 5) Rinse the salt or sugar from the body.
- 6) Turn the client and repeat on the anterior body.
- 7) Dry the client and move him or her to a massage table.
- 8) Apply a finishing lotion or gel.

Note

If a Vichy shower is used (instead of a handheld shower), the rinsing step can take up to 10 minutes.



FIGURE 8-3 The salt or sugar glow. **(A)** Massage. Undrape the desired body area and apply massage oil with Swedish strokes. **(B)** Apply salt or sugar to the body with a shaker (the salt or sugar can be premixed with oil or bath gel and applied by hand if preferred). **(C)** Exfoliation. Using gentle, superficial strokes, rub the salt or sugar across the surface of the body. **(D)** Product removal. Remove the salt or sugar with a moist, hot towel and apply a skin toner to firm the skin and remove excess salt. **(E)** Redrape. Dry the area with a soft hand towel, redrape, and move to the next body area where the same steps will be repeated.

has been mixed with oil and apply it by hand. Avoid using too much salt or sugar because a very small amount gives good results. Also, be careful not to get the salt or sugar all over the massage table when sprinkling.

Work the salt or sugar across the top of the skin with gentle circular strokes to stimulate the soft tissue and to remove dead skin cells. Massage therapists often overexfoliate because they tend to work into the muscle rather than keeping the strokes superficial. With coarse crystalline products such as salt, this can cause some discomfort to the client. It is advisable to check regularly if the client is happy with the depth of the application and the sensation of the exfoliation.

The salt or sugar will often trickle off the client onto the bath towel you placed on top of the massage sheet. Although you may want to avoid getting product all over the massage table, there is no way to prevent some of the salt or sugar from falling off the client. If large amounts of salt or sugar fall off the client, it may feel uncomfortable when he or she is turned over and has to lie on it. In this case, you are probably using too much salt or sugar and not enough oil.

Step 3: Product Removal

Remove the salt or sugar mix with a hot towel. It should be possible to remove all of the salt or sugar using just one hand towel per body part. Review Chapter 5 (Foundation

TABLE 8-2 Salt and Sugar Mix Ups

SALT OR SUGAR SILK		
Most often, salt or sugar is mixed with a fixed oil such as sunflower or sweet almond oil (a variety of fixed oils can be used) and then applied directly to the skin by hand. You can choose from premixed products purchased through a spa supply outlet or you can mix your own.		
Cream Silk	Sweet and Silky	Sea Silk
¼ cup Dead Sea salt, ¼ cup table sugar, 2 tbsp milk powder, 1 tbsp sweet almond or sunflower oil, and ¼ cup of body cream will make a nice emollient salt or sugar glow mixture. Depending on the granule size of the salt, more or less lotion may be required.	½ cup table sugar, ¼ cup brown sugar, 1 tbsp ground lavender powder, and 1 tbsp aloe vera gel. Add sweet almond or sunflower oil to create a slightly runny paste or to achieve the consistency desired by the individual therapist.	½ cup Dead Sea salt, ¼ cup plain sea salt, 1 tsp seaweed powder, and 1 tbsp aloe vera gel. Add sweet almond or sunflower oil to create a slightly runny paste or to achieve the consistency desired by the individual therapist.
SALT OR SUGAR FOAM		
If the salt or sugar glow is delivered in a wet room with a Vichy, Swiss, standard, or handheld shower, a body wash gel makes a desirable base. The gel will turn to bubbles that are easily rinsed away, leaving the skin clean and smooth. The dry room option is to apply the salt or sugar with oil as noted above and then add foaming body wash over the top. You place your hands in warm water and then use the water to work the body wash into lather. Remove the body wash, salt or sugar, and oil with one hot, moist towel and proceed to the next body area.		
Foamy Flowers	Foamy Fruits	Foamy and Flirtatious
¼ cup plain body wash, ¼ cup brown sugar, 2 drops ylang ylang essential oil, 7 drops mandarin essential oils, and 5 drops lavender essential oil. You may choose to add more or less sugar depending on the consistency you desire.	¼ cup plain body wash, ¼ cup sea salt, 8 drops grapefruit, 8 drops lemon, and 1 drop peppermint essential oil. You may choose to add more or less sugar depending on the consistency you desire.	¼ cup plain body wash, ¼ cup table sugar, 11 drops lime oil, 2 drops jasmine oil, and 2 drops rosemary oil. You may choose to add more or less sugar depending on the consistency you desire.
SALT OR SUGAR SHAKE-UP		
Dry salt or sugar is stored in a cheese shaker and sprinkled on the body after the body has been massaged generously with oil. This feels like cool raindrops falling onto the body. Extra oil is added as needed to provide adequate lubrication for the salt or sugar exfoliation.		
Sea Shake	Earth Shake	Milk Shake
Dead Sea salts mixed with 1 tbsp seaweed powder stored in a cheese shaker	Table sugar with 1 tbsp Sedona clay stored in a cheese shaker	Table sugar with ½ cup powdered milk stored in a cheese shaker
SALT OR SUGAR HAPPY HOUR		
These mixtures are blended and applied directly to the skin as in the mixtures made with oil. Massage the client first with a generous layer of oil so that there is sufficient lubrication for the exfoliation. The "happy hour" products are applied over the top of the oil, and then the entire mixture is removed with a hot, moist towel.		
Sangria	Japanese Plumb	Champagne Sparkler
½ cup of table sugar, ¼ cup of red table wine, ¼ cup of orange juice, and 2 tbsp of grapeseed oil. You may choose to add more or less sugar depending on the consistency you desire.	½ cup of table sugar, ½ cup of Japanese plumb wine, and 2 tbsp of sesame seed oil. You may choose to add more or less sugar depending on the consistency you desire.	½ cup of table sugar, ½ cup of champagne, and 2 tbsp of sunflower oil. You may choose to add more or less sugar depending on the consistency you desire.
Margarita	Cream de Coco	Sea Breeze
½ cup of finely granulated sea salt, 8 drops of lime essential oil, and sunflower oil to the consistency desired by the therapist	½ cup of table sugar, ½ cup of powdered cocoa, and sunflower oil to the consistency desired by the therapist	½ cup of finely granulated sea salt, ½ cup of cranberry juice, and 2 tbsp of sunflower oil

Skills for Spa Treatment Delivery) for step-by-step direction for using hot towels to remove product.

Step 4: Aroma Mist or Skin Toner

Apply an aroma mist or skin toner to the area and then blot the skin dry with a soft, dry hand towel. Large facial sponges can also be used to apply skin toner directly to the skin. The mist or toner allows you to pick up any stray salt or sugar while returning the skin to the proper pH.

Step 5: Application of a Finishing Product

Lotion, body cream, or a light gel product can be applied to the skin to lock in moisture and add to the overall textural enjoyment of the treatment. Redrape the finished body area and move on to the next body area.

Session End

Once each area has been treated, massage the client's neck and face with a massage cream. This rounds out and completes the treatment. The session can end with an aura mist

spritzed in a high arch above the client to fill the treatment room with a refreshing scent.

The Full-Body Polish

A full-body polish is usually delivered as a standalone service and involves an elegant four-step exfoliation process that focuses on skin care and deep relaxation. This treatment also increases local circulation to the skin, stimulates the vital energy of the body, removes dead skin cells, and cleanses and smooths the skin's surface.

In a body polish, an exfoliation product, a cleanser, a toner, and a moisturizer are used separately in each step of the treatment to mimic the steps in a facial. Usually, the exfoliation product has a fine-textured ingredient such as mesh pumice that is suspended in a heavy emollient to protect the skin. This creates a softer sensation than a salt, sugar, or dry brush exfoliation. For this reason, a full-body polish is considered the more elegant and gentle of the exfoliation treatments.

The development of a well-considered treatment concept and smell-scape will enhance the client's perception of this service and give it a unique flair. For example, the Four Seasons Hotel and Spa² offers a crushed pearl and lavender polish, whereas the Ritz-Carlton Hotel and Spa³ highlights the alpine berry body polish on their treatment menu. The sugar sand polish featured at the Beau Rivage Spa on the Mississippi Gulf Coast uses the fine white sand found only on the Gulf's barrier islands.⁴ Samasati Spa on the Caribbean Coast uses the refined sand from their beaches in an avocado and black sand body polish.⁵ Each of these treatment names suggests a certain type of smell-scape that adds interest to the treatment. Matched products can be purchased from spa suppliers or you can create your own using essential oils as discussed in Chapter 7 (Introduction to Aromatherapy for Spa).

The Full-Body Polish Procedure

As with the salt or sugar glow, the treatment described below was developed for massage therapists to use in a dry room. In a traditional body polish, massage would not normally be included as part of the treatment. This takes longer, but clients respond well to treatments that include an exceptional massage, so aim to deliver this service in 75 to 90 minutes, depending on the length of the massage. It should be noted that in a traditional body polish, the cleanser step is always first (just as in a facial). In a dry room, it is helpful to exfoliate before using the cleanser because the cleanser helps to "lift" the fine-mesh exfoliant off of the skin, leaving the skin smoother. The full-body polish outline in Treatment Overview 8-3 and Figure 8-4 provide a useful snapshot of the service.

Treatment Overview 8-3: The Full-Body Polish Overview



Indications

Dull, congested skin; stress; to facilitate relaxation; or as preparation for the application of a treatment product

Contraindications

Skin conditions, broken or inflamed skin, sunburn, poorly managed diabetes, illness, fever, any condition contraindicated for massage

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom layer to top layer)

- 1) Plastic table protector
- 2) Bottom massage sheet
- 3) Bath towel—the bath towel will catch any excess moisture from the treatment, keeping the client dryer.
- 4) Top massage sheet
- 5) Blanket or bath sheet for warmth

Supplies for the Work Table Setup

- 1) Bowl of warm water
- 2) Exfoliation gloves (optional)
- 3) Exfoliation product
- 4) Body wash product
- 5) Body mist or skin toner product
- 6) Rich moisture cream
- 7) Soda cooler
- 8) Hot, moist towels
- 9) Dry hand towel

Dry Room Procedure

For each body area:

- 1) Dampen the body area with warm water.
- 2) Apply the body polish product with bare hands or exfoliation gloves.
- 3) Apply the body wash product and work into a lather.
- 4) Remove the polish and body wash product with a hot, moist towel.
- 5) Apply aroma mist or skin toner.
- 6) Blot the area dry with a soft hand towel.
- 7) Apply rich body cream with massage strokes.
- 8) Redrape the area and move onto the next area.
- 9) Finish the service with a neck and face massage and an aura mist of a contrasting scent.

Wet Room Procedure

- 1) Wet the posterior body with the handheld shower and apply the body wash product.
- 2) Rinse the cleanser off with the handheld shower.
- 3) Apply body polish with the hands to the posterior body.
- 4) Rinse with the handheld shower (if a Vichy is used, the rinse step can be a 10-minute contrast shower).
- 5) Turn the client into the supine position and repeat steps 1 to 4 on the anterior body.
- 6) Move the client to a massage table covered with massage sheets.
- 7) Apply the toner to the posterior body and blot with a soft hand towel.
- 8) Apply moisture lotion, cream, or gel with massage strokes to the posterior body.
- 9) Turn the client into the supine position.
- 10) Repeat steps 7 and 8 on the anterior body.
- 11) Provide a neck and face massage if desired.
- 12) Finish with an aura mist of a contrasting scent.



FIGURE 8-4 The full-body polish. **(A)** Exfoliate and cleanse. Dampen the body area with warm water and apply an emollient exfoliation cream. Textured exfoliation gloves can be worn if desired by the therapist. After the exfoliation is applied, cleanser helps to lift the exfoliation product off the skin, leaving the body feeling clean and smooth. Remove the cleanser and exfoliation product together in one step. **(B)** Tone. Apply a skin toner or aroma mist with cosmetic sponges or a mist bottle. Dry the skin with a soft, dry hand towel. **(C)** Moisturize. Use a heavy moisture cream if this will also be the massage step. If massage is not included, a light lotion or gel can be used. **(D)** End the session with an aura mist.

Session Start

In this procedure, each body area is treated in exactly the same way, so the sequence of body areas is not important. It works well to begin in the prone position with the posterior legs, gluteals, and back and then turn the client into the supine position for the anterior legs, feet, abdominal area, upper chest, and arms. End the treatment with a neck and face massage and an aura mist to revitalize the client before he or she leaves the spa.

Step 1: Exfoliation

Wearing exfoliation gloves, the therapist places his or her hands in a bowl of warm water and lightly wets the body area in focus. Use the water sparingly. Do not allow droplets of water to roll down the sides of the client. Add a small amount of body polish to the gloves and use circular motions to manually exfoliate the area.

In a wet room setting, a Vichy or handheld shower is used to rinse the product off. In a dry room, hot, moist towels are used to remove the product. To save on laundry,

the exfoliation product is not removed before the cleansing step. Instead, the cleansing product is applied on top of the exfoliation product and both products are removed with one towel.

Step 2: Cleansing

Apply a liquid or lotion-based cleanser to the body with the hands and work it into a gentle lather. Remove the product with a hot, moist towel. The body wash is used to lift exfoliant off the skin, leaving the skin smoother.

Step 3: Aroma Mist or Skin Toner

Apply an aroma mist with a spritz top or apply skin toner with large cotton pads or facial sponges. Blot the skin dry with a soft hand towel.

Step 4: Moisturize

If the moisturizing step is also the massage step, a heavy moisturizing cream works best. If massage is not part of the treatment, a light body milk, lotion, or gel product may be used.

Session End

If the treatment ends in the supine position, a neck and face massage can be given as a closing step. End the session with an aura mist spritzed over the client in a high arch to fill the treatment room with a refreshing scent.

The Body or Loofah Scrub

The body or loofah scrub is the most invigorating and least formal of the exfoliation treatments. It is often paired with uplifting and refreshing smell-scapes such as eucalyptus or citrus and mint. Like the salt glow or body polish, the amount of massage you provide with this service will determine the amount of time required for delivery. Although this treatment is not described in step-by-step detail, the loofah scrub overview in Treatment Overview 8-4 and Figure 8-5 provide a useful snapshot of the service.



SANITATION

The handheld loofahs (approximately \$2.00 each) should be thrown away or given to the client after each treatment because they deteriorate when sanitized with alcohol.

The Buff and Bronze

As people became more aware of the dangers of natural tanning in the sun over the last few decades, tanning booths became popular because they were marketed as a healthier alternative. Tanning booths use mainly **ultraviolet A (UVA) rays** to cause pigment changes without burning. Because tanning booths are more or less **ultraviolet B (UVB)** free, it was thought that they were safe. As more research has been conducted, both UVA and UVB rays have been found to be implicated in skin damage, immune suppression,⁶ premature aging,⁷ and skin cancer.⁸

Artificial sunless tanning products provide an alternative to tanning booths. The professional products available through spa suppliers produce natural-looking results that are safe for the skin and easy to maintain. Avoid over-the-counter products that are of lower quality and sometimes have an orange tint. Artificial tanning products can be applied in many different ways, including air brushing, buff and bronze spa treatments, and even in sunless tanning booths.

Although booths and air-brushing techniques are quick and effective, full-body buff and bronze treatments are effective and also relaxing and enjoyable to receive. All three types of application have linked home care products that help to generate more income for the spa or clinic. Buff and bronze treatments can also be used to attract male clientele,

Treatment Overview 8-4: The Loofah Scrub Overview



Indications

Low energy, to revitalize the body, to decrease stress, or as preparation for the application of a treatment product

Contraindications

Skin conditions, broken or inflamed skin, sunburn, poorly managed diabetes, illness, fever, any condition contraindicated for massage

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom layer to top layer)

- 1) Plastic table protector
- 2) Bottom massage sheet
- 3) Bath towel—the bath towel will catch any excess moisture from the treatment, keeping the client drier.
- 4) Top massage sheet
- 5) Blanket or bath sheet for warmth

Supplies for the Work Table Setup

- 1) Body wash product
- 2) Two loofah mitts
- 3) Bowl of warm water
- 3) Body mist or skin toner
- 4) Dry hand towel
- 5) Moisturizer

Dry Room Procedure

- 1) Use a gluteal drape so that the entire posterior body can be treated at one time.
- 2) Apply a foaming body wash with two handheld loofahs to the posterior body.
- 3) Apply a body mist or skin toner to each body area.
- 4) Redrape the body and massage each posterior area with a massage cream or moisturizing lotion.
- 5) Turn the client and repeat the steps on the anterior body.
- 6) Provide a neck and face massage if desired.
- 7) Finish with an aura mist of a contrasting scent.

Wet Room Procedure

- 1) Wet the posterior body with the handheld shower and apply the body wash product with two handheld loofahs.
- 2) Rinse the cleanser with the handheld shower (if a Vichy is used, the rinse step can be a 10-minute contrast shower).
- 3) Turn the client into the supine position and repeat steps 1 and 2 on the anterior body.
- 4) Move the client to a massage table set with massage sheets.
- 5) Apply the toner to the posterior body and blot with a soft hand towel.
- 6) Apply moisture lotion, cream, or gel with massage strokes to the posterior body.
- 7) Turn the client into the supine position.
- 8) Repeat steps 5 and 6 on the anterior body.
- 9) Provide a neck and face massage if desired.
- 10) Finish with an aura mist of a contrasting scent.



FIGURE 8-5 The loofah scrub. **(A)** Loofah scrub. Apply a foaming body wash with two handheld loofah mitts to the posterior body. Use a gluteal drape so that the entire area can be treated at once. **(B)** Remove. Use hot, moist towels to remove the foaming body wash from the posterior body and then dry the client with a hand towel. **(C)** Moisture massage. Redrape the posterior body with a sheet and massage moisture cream into each body area separately. Repeat the scrub on the anterior body using a breast drape and anterior pelvic drape.

especially bodybuilders who must look tan under the bright lights of the competition stage. Bodybuilders often shave their bodies, making application simple. With hairy men, the therapist should plan extra treatment time so that they can work the product into the skin well.

Most of the sunless tanning products use the chemical interaction of **dihydroxyacetone (DHA)**, a sugar, with the amino acids in the dead skin cells in the upper layers of the skin. The chemical interaction causes the cells to change color, leaving the skin golden brown until the skin cells naturally slough off.⁹ Although the rate at which skin cells slough off varies from person to person, sunless tans usually start to fade in about 3 days, and the product needs to be reapplied.

The Buff and Bronze Procedure

Clients should shave or remove unwanted hair from the body the evening before the treatment. Exfoliation is usually not performed on freshly shaved or waxed skin. For this reason, only a gentle, fine-mesh product should be used in this treatment. If shaving or waxing takes place after the treatment, it will streak the autotanner even if the tan has already developed. Usually, an exfoliation product is sold with the autotanning product and a specific

type of moisturizer to make product planning easy for the therapist.

Autotanning product will stain clothing and the palms of the therapist's hands, so it is best to wear vinyl gloves. An apron and beige or dark-colored treatment sheets can be purchased to protect both bedding and clothing from stains. The buff and bronze overview in Treatment Overview 8-5 and Figure 8-6 provides a snapshot of this service.

Session Start

Ask the client to get on the massage table in the supine position. Exfoliate the anterior body and then turn the client to exfoliate the posterior body. Next, the moisturizing and bronzing steps are carried out straight after the exfoliation on the posterior body. The client is turned over again so that the moisturizing and bronzing steps can be completed on the anterior side of the body. This prevents the wet exfoliation from streaking the bronzing product and allows the client to finish the session face up.

If the client has extremely dry or "patchy" skin where some areas are very dry, apply a cold pressed oil such as sunflower or sweet almond oil to the body before the rest of the treatment. This conditions and softens the skin. When the exfoliation product and cleanser are used in their normal

Treatment Overview 8-5: The Buff and Bronze Overview



Indications

For cosmetic purposes to hide skin discolorations, to appear tan while protecting the skin from the sun, relaxation

Contraindications

Broken skin, inflamed skin, sunburned skin, allergies to DHA, illness, fever, any condition contraindicated for massage

Supplies for the Treatment Table Setup (from the bottom layer to the top layer)

- 1) Beige or dark massage sheet
- 2) Bath towel
- 3) Top massage sheet
- 4) A warming device such as a heat lamp because the client will air dry and may become cold if warming is not planned

Supplies for the Work Table Setup

- 1) Bowl of warm water
- 2) Exfoliation product
- 3) Body wash product
- 4) Moisturizing product
- 5) Autotanning product
- 6) Vinyl gloves
- 7) Buffing mitts
- 8) Soda cooler
- 9) Hot, moist towels

Dry Room Procedure

Supine—treat each area with the same series of steps before moving on to the next body area.

- 1) Exfoliate area.
- 2) Cleanse area.
- 3) Remove both products with a hot towel.
- 4) Apply moisturizer (do not apply autotanning product to the anterior body yet).
- 5) Turn the client prone and repeat steps 1 to 4 on the posterior body.
- 6) Apply autotanning product to posterior body areas.
- 7) Allow the product to air dry.
- 8) Buff the posterior body.
- 9) Turn the client back to the supine position.
- 10) Apply more moisture lotion if the skin feels dry.
- 11) Apply autotanning product to the anterior body areas.
- 12) Allow the client to air dry.
- 13) Buff the anterior body.

sequence, they will remove the excess oil and not affect the processing of the autotanner product.

In some clinics, the therapist has the client perform the exfoliation step himself or herself. In this case, the therapist takes the client to the shower and shows him or her how the product should be applied. After the shower, the client is moved to a treatment table, and the therapist performs the moisturizing and autotanning steps. When the client does the exfoliation himself or herself, it cuts the treatment time by about 20 minutes. Another option is for the therapist to

apply the exfoliation product to the entire body; remove it with a standard shower, Vichy shower, or handheld shower; dry the client; and then move him or her to a massage table for the rest of the service.

Step 1: Exfoliate Anterior

Bolster the client in the supine position and exfoliate the legs, abdominal area, and arms by wetting the hands and applying a generous amount of exfoliant to the area. Pay special attention to the area around the ankles, knees, elbows, and wrists. The arm can be lifted to expose the armpit and the side of the body. This area is often overlooked and should be carefully addressed with all of the products.

Step 2: Cleanse Anterior

Apply a foaming cleanser over the top of the exfoliation product and work it into lather with warm water. Remove both the cleanser and exfoliation product with hot towels.

Step 3: Moisturize Anterior

Apply the moisturizer to anterior areas, paying particular attention to the elbows, knees, ankles, and wrists. If the moisturizer soaks in quickly, apply the moisturizer a second time so that the skin is soft and evenly moisturized. Do not apply the autotanning product at this stage because water or moisture from the posterior exfoliation would streak it. Turn the client and bolster him or her in the prone position.

Step 4: Exfoliate Posterior

Apply warm water and a generous amount of exfoliant to the posterior legs, gluteals, back, and posterior arms. Pay special attention to the wrists, elbows, ankles, and the back of the neck.

Step 5: Cleanse Posterior

Apply a foaming cleanser over the top of the exfoliation product and work it into lather with warm water. Remove both with hot towels.

Step 6: Moisturize Posterior

Apply the moisturizer to any dry areas first such as the elbows, knees, ankles, and wrists. Use enough moisturizer to hydrate the area completely. If it absorbs into the skin quickly and dries out, apply a second coat so that the skin feels soft, silky, and evenly moisturized. Apply moisturizer in this way to the entire posterior body.

Step 7: Autotanning Application Posterior

Apply the autotanning product evenly over the posterior of the body. Rub it in a little but not completely. Excessive rubbing when the product is first applied may rub some of the tan away. Leave the autotanning product in a slightly moist state and allow it to absorb into the skin.



FIGURE 8-6 The buff and bronze. **(A)** Exfoliate, cleanse, and moisturize all anterior body areas and then turn the client to the prone position to repeat these steps on the posterior body. Apply moisturizer liberally to each area until the client is evenly moisturized. **(B)** Apply autotanning product to the posterior body areas, allow the client to air dry, and buff the posterior body. Turn the client and repeat these steps on the anterior body. **(C)** Lightly buff fleshy body areas such as the abdominal area. Knees, ankles, elbows, and wrists can be buffed more vigorously.

It is a good idea to turn up the lights while the autotanning product is being applied. Most autotanning products have a brown tint added to make it easier to see where the product has been applied, but it is still difficult to see the product clearly in a dark treatment room.

Step 8: Buff Posterior

The autotanning product should only be buffed once it has absorbed into the skin and had time to air dry. To buff an area, simply place a buffing mitt on each hand and use circular motions to gently smooth the product. The buffing should be light and even. It is important not to overbuff the client by rubbing too hard with the mitts. The mitts are meant to smooth out any areas where product may have absorbed unevenly. Pay particular attention to areas such as the ankles, wrists, elbows, and knees. When the posterior body has been “buffed,” turn the client supine and proceed with the moisturizing, autotanning, and buffing steps on the anterior body.

Step 9: Remoisturize Anterior

If the body still feels moisturized, proceed with the autotanning step. If it has dried out, apply a second layer of moisturizer to the anterior body.

Step 10: Autotanning Application Anterior

Apply the autotanning product evenly over the anterior of the body and allow the product to air dry to prevent streaking during buffing.

Step 11: Buff Anterior

Lightly buff the anterior body, making sure to buff across any lines where product application was overlapping. Buff into the elbows, knees, ankles, and wrists carefully to prevent streaking in these tricky areas.

Tricky Places

Some areas are tricky to work with because they absorb autotanning product easily and can become discolored. Work carefully on the feet and hands, ankles, wrists and knees, underarms, and face.

Feet and Hands

Do not apply autotanning product to the bottoms of the feet or the palms of the hands because it will look strange and out of place. Apply a small amount of product across the top of the feet (don't work it in between the toes) and the top of the hands (don't work it in between the fingers). Use a damp tissue to remove product from the nail and edge of the cuticle immediately after the feet and hands have been treated.

Ankles, Wrists, and Knees

If these areas have been adequately moisturized, they should tan evenly. Light applications of autotanning product are better than heavy applications. Heavy applications tend to discolor the area because dry patches turn darker. Buff the ankles, wrists, and knees into the surrounding tissues for the best results. Although the “fleshy” areas of the body such as the abdominal area or arms should not be overbuffed, areas

such as the ankles or knees, where the skin tends to be dry or wrinkled, need to be buffed well. This will create a smooth look and prevent these areas from absorbing excess product and appearing darker than the main areas of the body.

Underarms

Lift the arm and sweep the product across the underarm and smoothly down the sides of the body to avoid a white streak. Use the buffing mitts to smooth the transition zone between the anterior and posterior sides of the body. The underarms should have been shaved if necessary the evening before the treatment takes place. Autotanning product does not develop when it is applied over the top of antiperspirants or deodorants, so the underarms should be cleansed before application.

Face

Apply a small amount of autotanning product to the face after the skin has been well moisturized. Work in upward strokes from under the chin to the forehead. Make sure to work the product into the earlobe and side of the face down the neck to avoid uneven coverage. Make sure to apply product to the back of the neck and behind the ears to avoid uneven coverage should the client choose to wear his or her hair up. Some products look streaky as they dry.

This is normal, and they will look fine within 3 hours when the tan starts to emerge.

Home Care and Retail

To keep the tan looking natural or to darken the tan to a deeper shade, clients can purchase home care tanning products from the clinic or spa. Instruct the client to moisturize daily to keep the tan looking smooth. Every 3 days, reapply autotanning product to maintain the desired color. Instruct clients to gently exfoliate before each application of moisturizer and autotanning product. If the product tends to streak when the client applies it at home, tell him or her to exfoliate in the morning and apply the autotanning product in the evening before bed. Often, clients exfoliate too aggressively, which causes the skin to absorb the product unevenly.

For a darker tan, the client should apply the autotanning product three nights in a row or until the tan is the desired shade. The client can apply the product as often as every 3 hours. The client should not exfoliate before each of these applications if they take place on the days following the initial treatment. If the client waits 2 to 3 days before using the home care products, he or she should exfoliate on the first day but not on the second and third days.

SPA FUSION INTEGRATION OF SKILLS



STUDY TIP: Good Listening Skills

Good listening skills are important in all aspects of your studies and in interactions with clients when you become a professional therapist. Review this checklist of good listening and use it to assess your own listening skills. If you find that you are weak in a particular area, pay attention and strive to build these skills.

- I am present and willing to listen.
- I have eliminated or minimized distractions (e.g., turned off the TV, put away my phone, etc.).
- I am attuned to the speaker's body language (e.g., I am paying attention to nonverbal communication cues such as eye contact or crossed arms).
- My body position is open and receptive (e.g., I am making good eye contact, and my arms are uncrossed).
- My eye contact is consistent.
- I use short verbal interjections to encourage the speaker (e.g., "I'm listening," "Really?" "What then?").

- I reflect the meaning of the communication back to the speaker when appropriate ("What I heard you say was . . .").
- I reflect the speaker's feelings back when appropriate ("It sounds like you are feeling upset. Are you upset?").
- I am aware of communication blockers and avoid them (e.g., interrupting the speaker, etc.).

SPA INSPIRATION: Roll Tape!

It can be difficult to pay attention to your body mechanics while also learning new techniques and applying a variety of products to the body. When your body falls into poor postural habits, those habits start to feel normal and may become difficult to change. One way to develop more self-awareness is to ask a friend or classmate to videotape you while you deliver a spa session. This way, you can see how you hold your body during each technique and even as you reach for different products or pull hot towels from the soda cooler. Identify two areas that need improvement and

(continued on page 172)



SPA FUSION

INTEGRATION OF SKILLS (continued)

focus on those areas. Repeat the video process later to see where you have made progress and where you still need further improvement. If you pay careful attention to body mechanics while in massage and spa school, you are likely to carry good habits with you into professional practice.

CHAPTER WRAP-UP

In this chapter, you learned about exfoliation treatments. Exfoliation is both a step in other treatments and also an important service as a standalone application. Massage therapists often deliver exfoliation treatments, including dry skin brushing, salt or sugar glows, body polishes, body scrubs, and buff and bronze treatments. The most appropriate choice of exfoliation treatment depends on the particular set of treatment goals. Salt glows and body scrubs are more vigorous than a body polish or dry skin brushing treatment. Some treatments aim to revitalize and energize the body, whereas others aim to help the body relax. Practice different types of exfoliation treatments until you have achieved mastery. These skills will serve you well when you seek employment at a spa or add spa treatments to your own practice.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Multiple Choice

- There are two basic types of exfoliation. These are:
 - Assisted and releasing
 - Cleansing and scraping
 - Mechanical and enzymatic or dissolving
 - Biological and assisted
- Because of scope of practice restrictions in most states, massage therapists cannot generally:
 - Cleanse the face or feet.
 - Cleanse, exfoliate, or mask the face.
 - Use salt or sugar.
 - Apply any exfoliation treatment.
- Exfoliation treatments are indicated for the following situations:
 - Skin disorders
 - Freshly shaved skin
 - Increased vitality and body energy
 - Sunburn
- When using salt or sugar as the exfoliation product, the massage therapist should:
 - Use light pressure and not work into the muscle tissue.
 - Use deep pressure and work into the muscle tissue.
 - Use only circular compressions.
 - Use only those strokes that are directed proximal to distal.
- Inorganic mineral salts that support natural detoxification and are often used for sore, tired muscles and as a soaking agent for sprains are called:
 - Pyrenees salts
 - Burn salts
 - Table salts
 - Epsom salts

Fill in the Blank

- Name three conditions that are contraindicated for an exfoliation treatment. _____, _____, _____
- _____ salt should not be used in spa treatments because it will burn the client, cause skin irritation, and lead to extreme dryness. Sea salt and Epsom salt are much safer.
- The overuse of exfoliation products can leave the skin sensitive and inflamed. Over time, they can make the skin look _____.
- Chemical peels can only be applied by a _____.
- Microdermabrasion is a nonsurgical procedure used by qualified _____. The skin is literally sandblasted with microcrystals to treat skin conditions.