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Effect of peppermint and eucalyptus oil preparations on neurophysiological and experimental algesimetric headache parameters

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Abstract

The effects of peppermint oil and eucalyptus oil preparations on neurophysiological, psychological and experimental algesimetric parameters were investigated in 32 healthy subjects in a double-blind, placebo-controlled, randomized cross-over design. Four different test preparations were applied to large areas of the forehead and temples using a small sponge and their effect was evaluated by comparing baseline and treatment measure. The combination of peppermint oil, eucalyptus oil and ethanol increased cognitive performance and had a muscle-relaxing and mentally relaxing effect, but had little influence on pain sensitivity. A significant analgesic effect with a reduction in sensitivity to headache was produced by a combination of peppermint oil and ethanol. The essential plant oil preparations often used in empiric medicine can thus be shown by laboratory tests to exert significant effects on mechanisms associated with the pathophysiology of headache.

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