

# NURSE WELLNESS IN A CHAOTIC ENVIRONMENT

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## BACKGROUND

The ED is a volatile, intense, high stress environment that can lead to fatigue and feelings of being overwhelmed. Aromatherapy involves the therapeutic use of essential oils— concentrated oils extracted from various parts of aromatic plants. The intent of this utilization is to calm, balance, and rejuvenate mind, body, and spirit.

Many hospitals are now incorporating the use of Essential Oils. It is suggested that their use can relieve stress, reduce pain, and facilitate sleep. Anxiety, stress and sleep deprivation are very common culprits in the emergency department setting. Essential oils may lift the mood and calm the senses in this chaotic environment.

### Benefits of diffusing Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade Essential Oils into the air:

- *Naturally provides air purification.*
- *Destroys odors and mold in the air.*
- *Increases atmospheric oxygen.*
- *Naturally antimicrobial, antibacterial, antiviral.*
- *Increases ozone and negative ions in the area, which inhibits bacterial growth.*

Because these essential oils are a Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade and have no synthetic additives, they do not have a perfume/cologne type smell. They have subtle, non-offensive--mild scents. There are studies that use essential oils in combination with other complimentary modalities to reduce stress in an ED.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to describe a technique to enhance the ED environment by infusing Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade Essential Oils into the air to increase energy and decrease stress levels in the ED.

## METHODS

The setting is an urban, adult, academic, level 1 trauma center serving as a tertiary care referral center with an Adult ED (55,000 visits per year). An ED based Wellness Committee was developed to identify and implement non-invasive holistic techniques that may decrease stress levels in the ED. The Wellness Committee coordinated 2 specific aims:

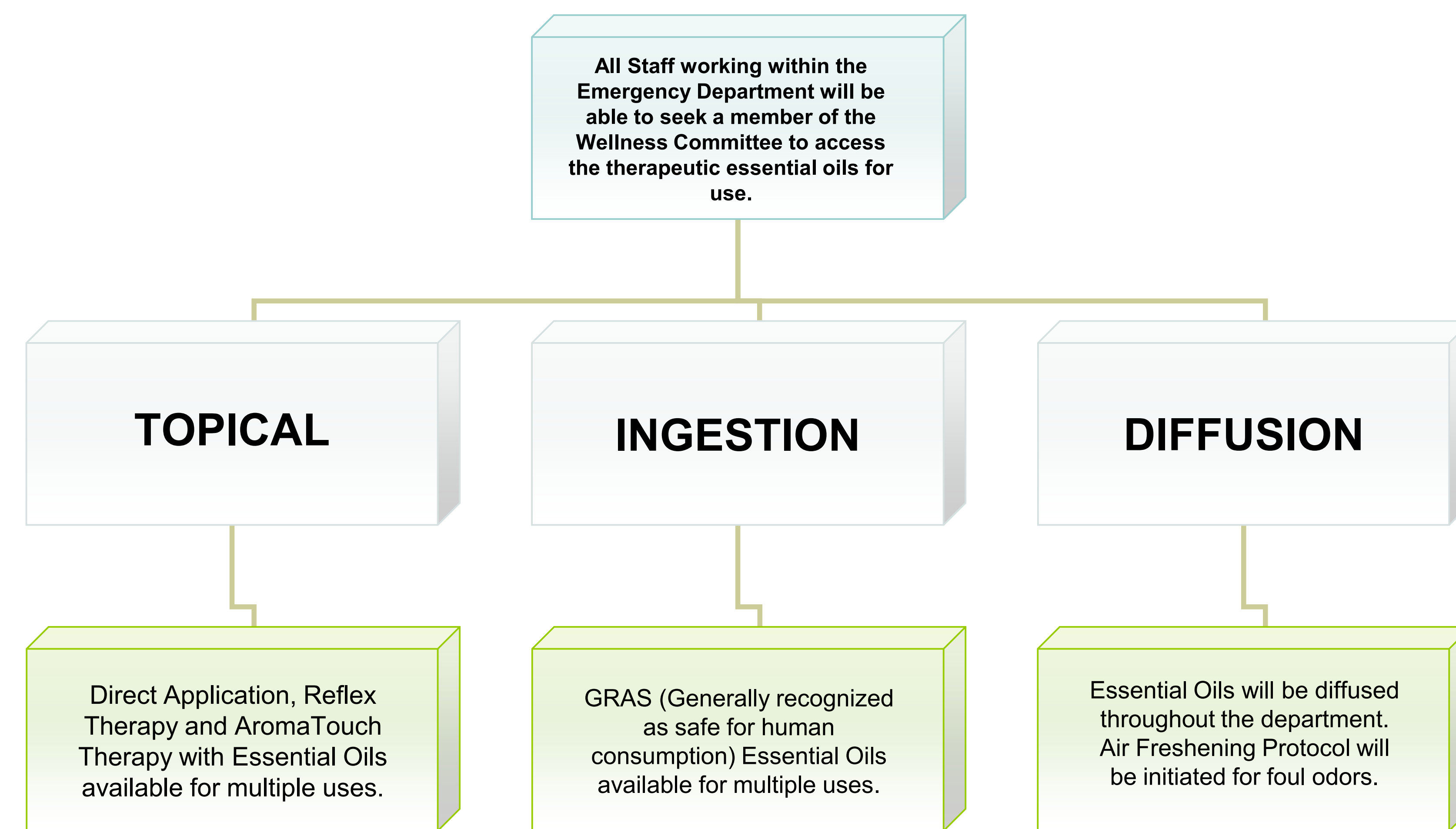
1. Initiate diffusion of certified pure therapeutic grade essential oils in the environment with written procedures anyone may follow.
2. Survey the perceived stress and optimal energy levels of staff in the home and at work before and after initiation of the diffusion procedures.

Perceived stress and optimal energy levels were gathered by surveying staff 2 weeks prior to onset of diffusion of certified pure therapeutic grade essential oils and presented in proportions. Perceived stress and optimal energy levels were gathered by surveying staff for 2 weeks after a 30 day period of intermittent diffusion of certified pure therapeutic grade essential oils and presented in proportions.

## RESULTS

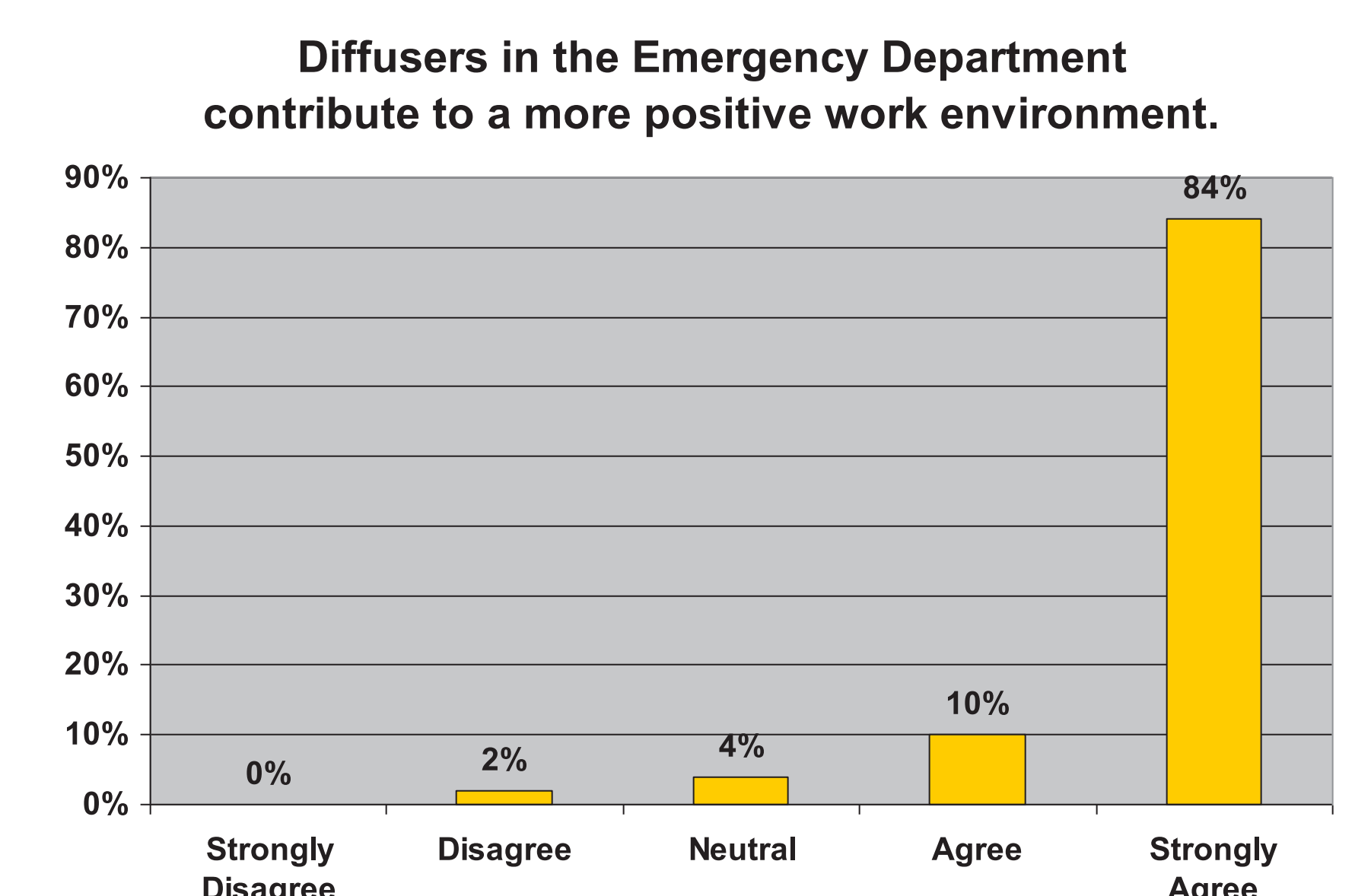
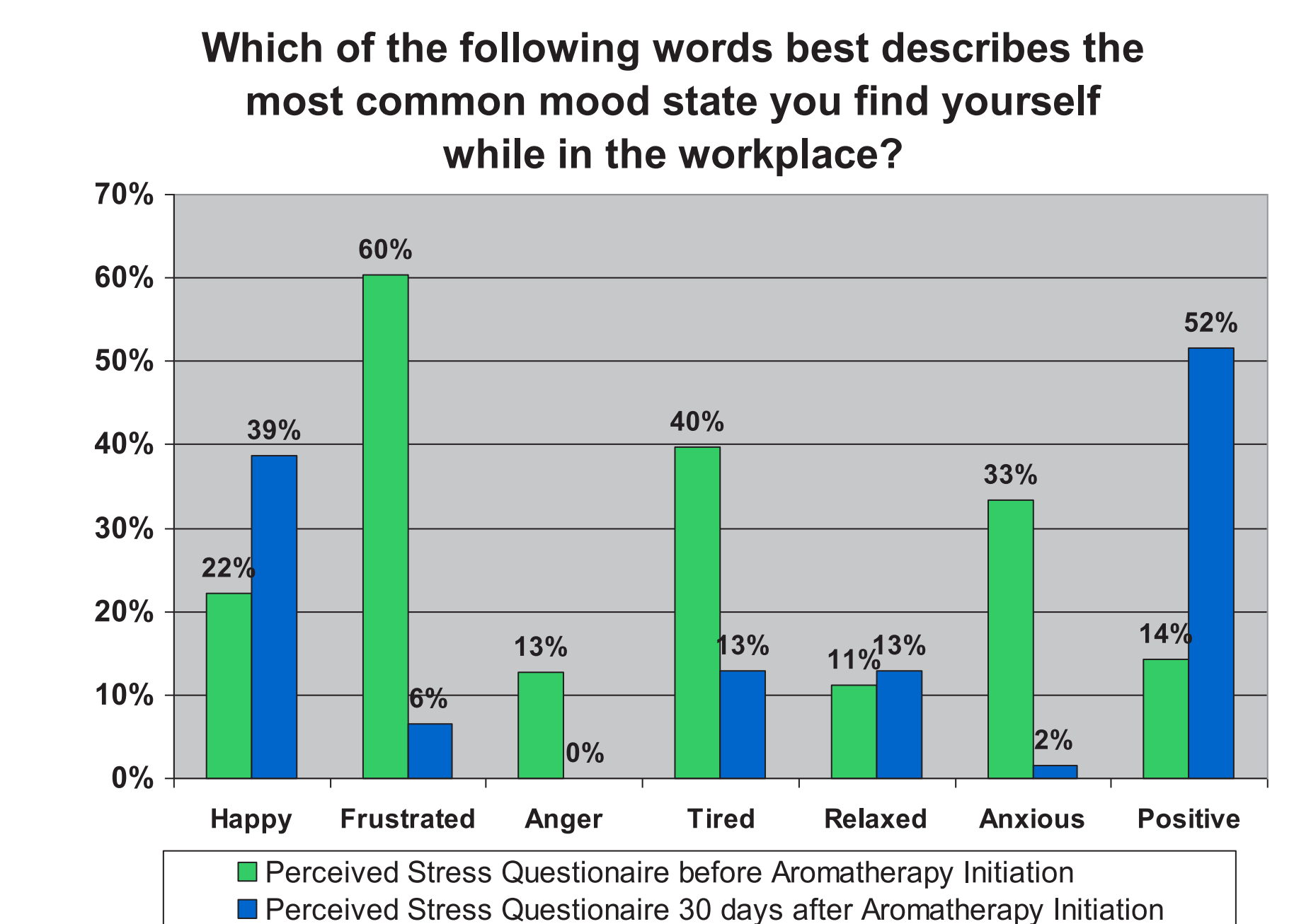
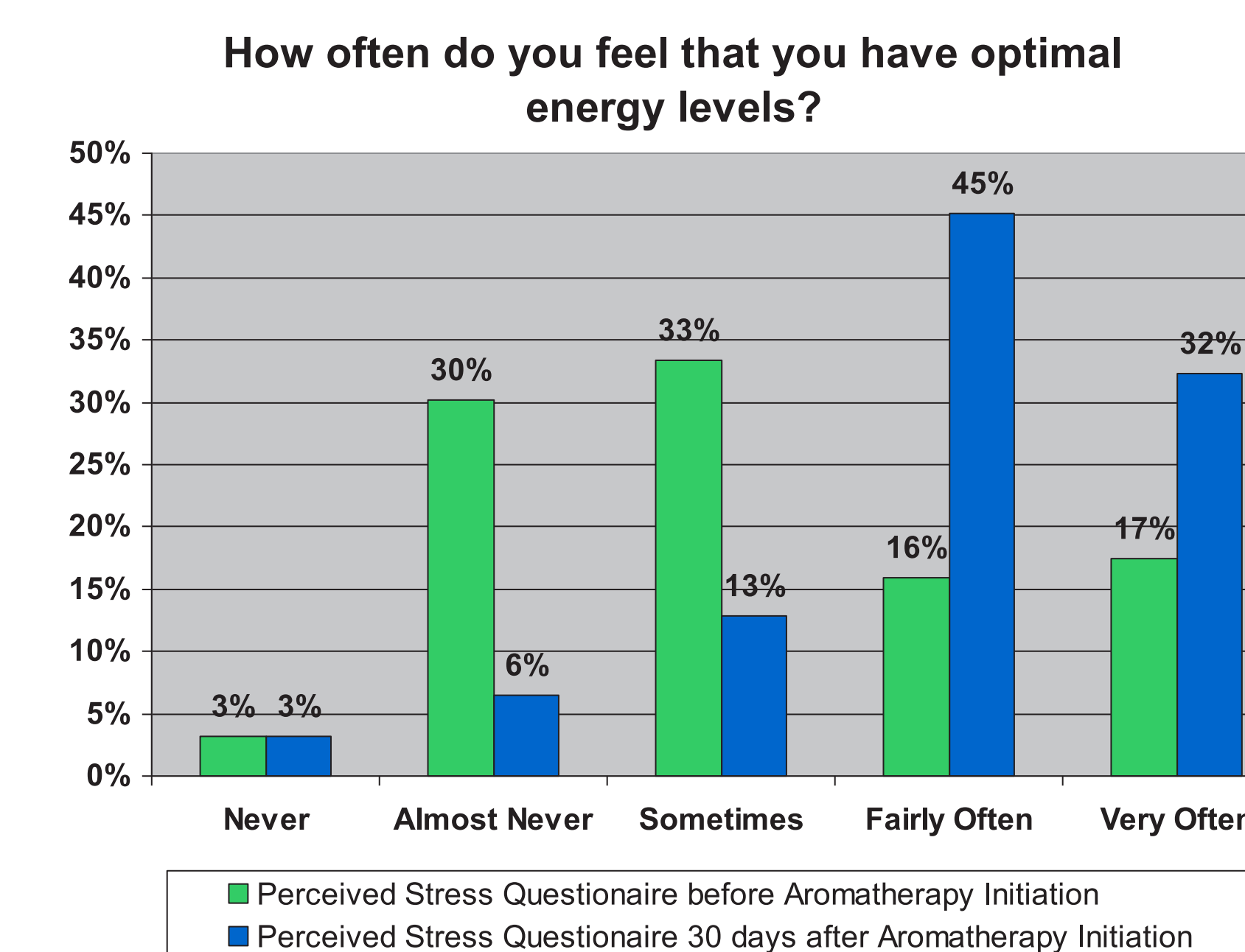
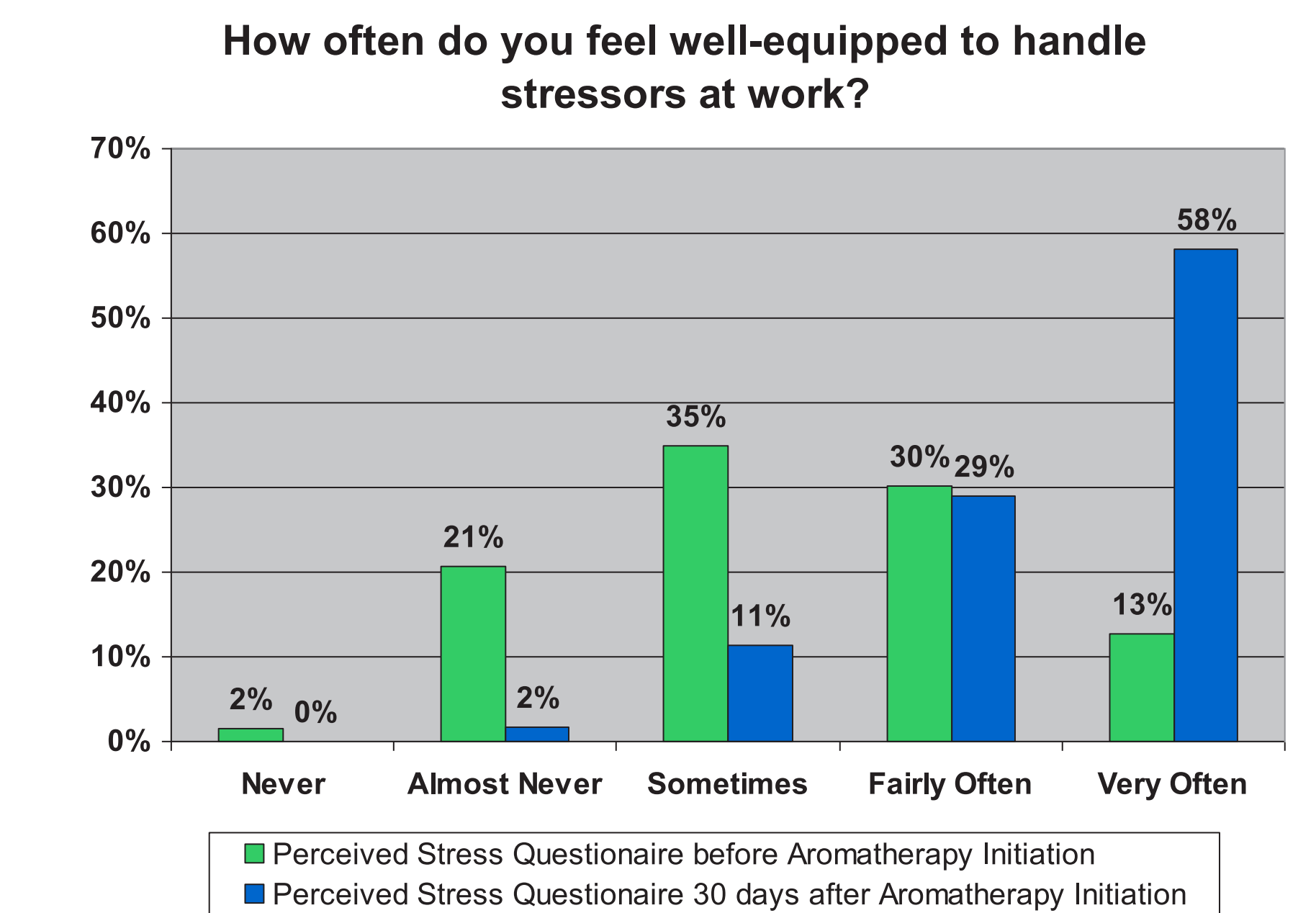
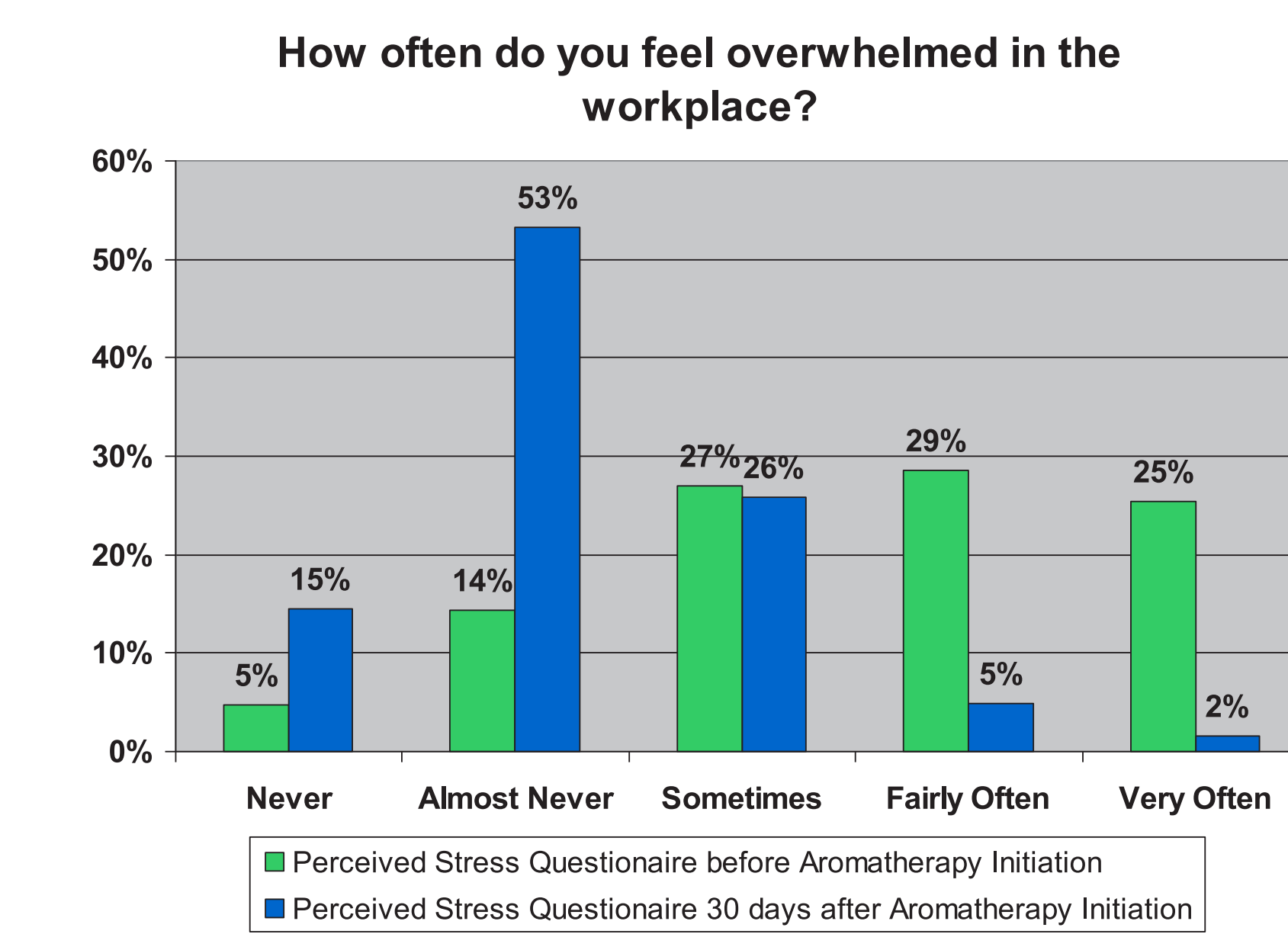
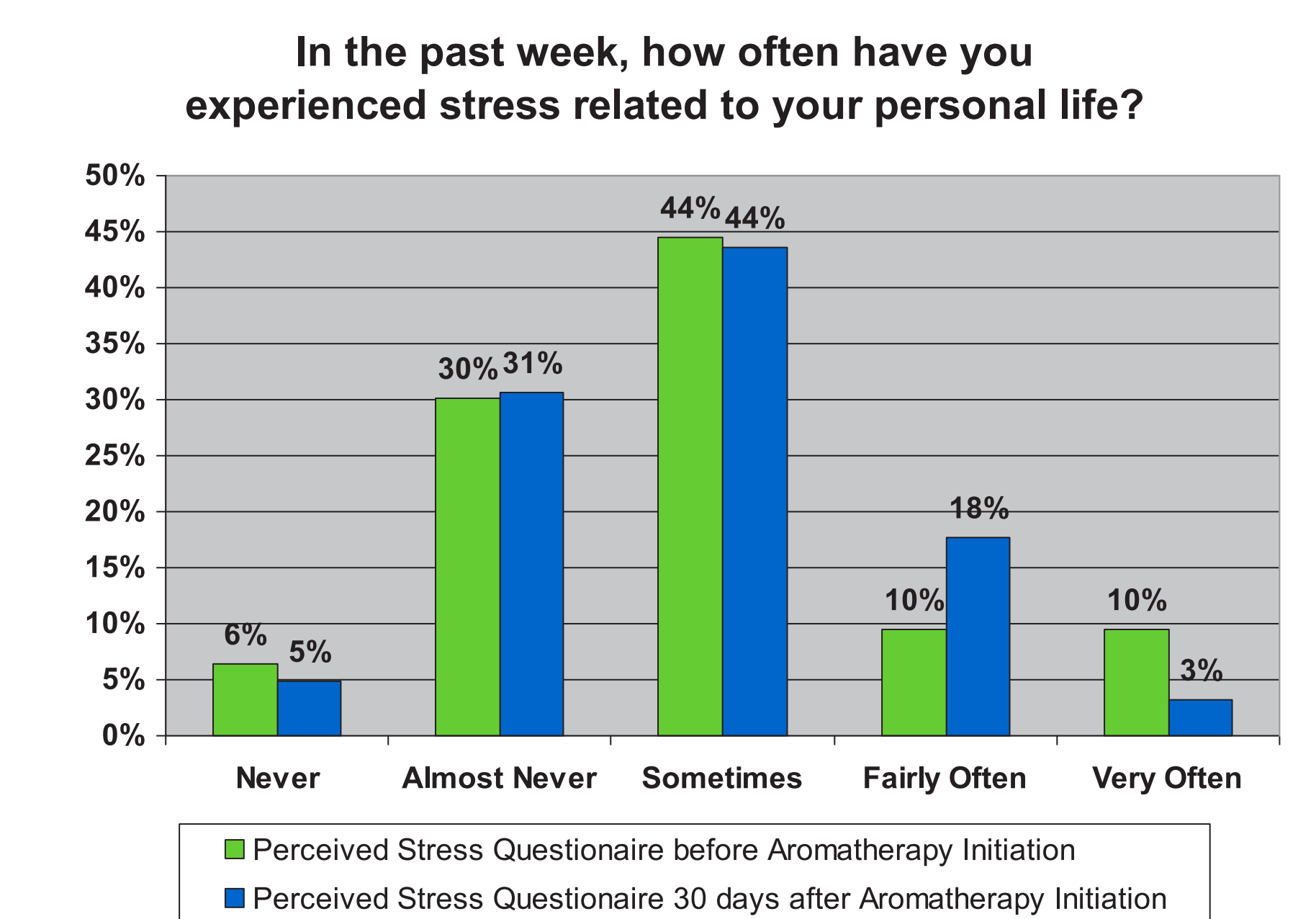
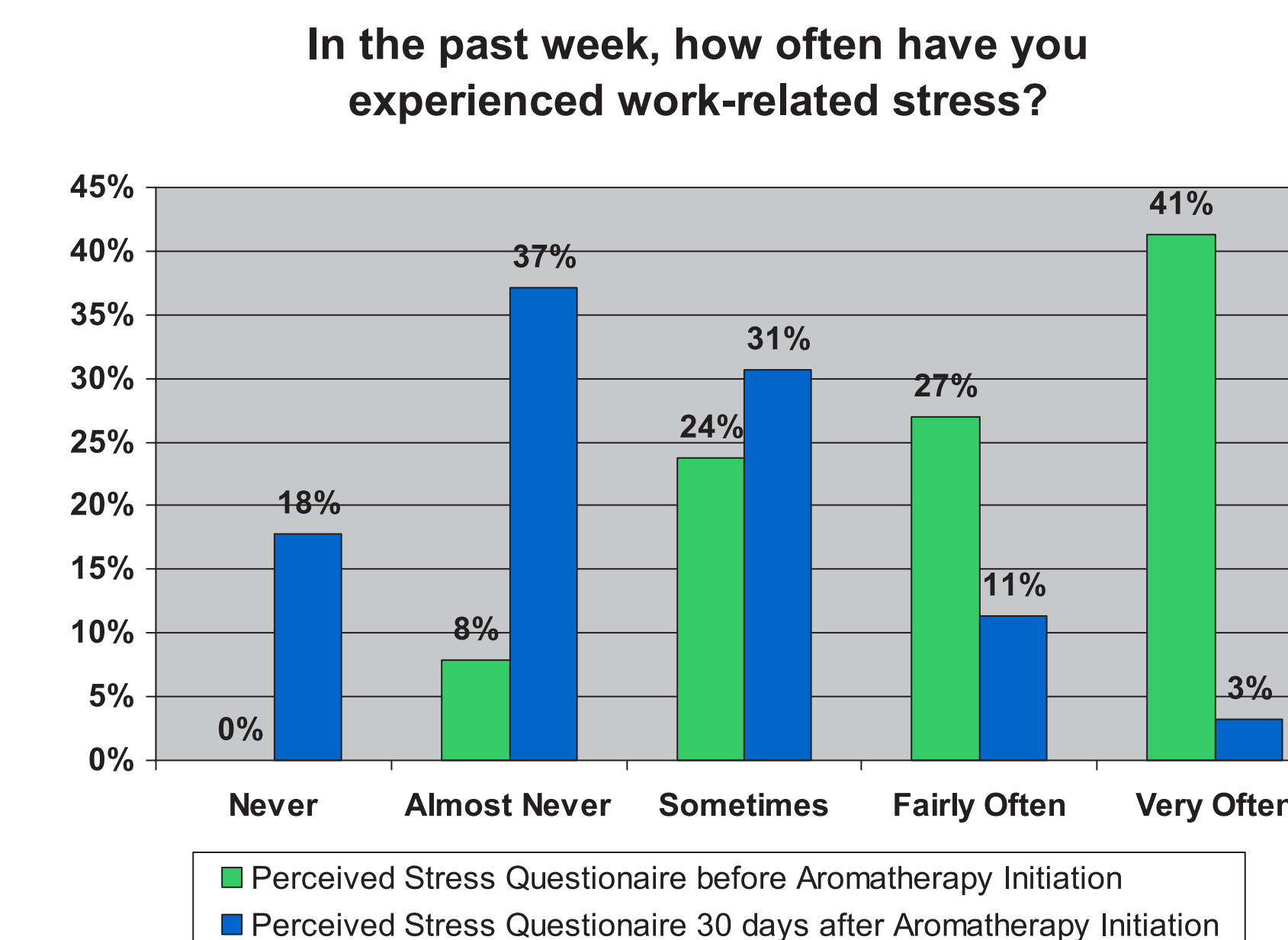
The ED Wellness Committee developed the Essential Oil Protocol and the Essential Oil Guidelines. Perceived staff stress was reported proportionately less with an increase in staff energy following the initiation of aromatherapy in the ED. The ED staff strongly agrees (84%) that diffusers with essential oils in the ED contribute to a more positive work environment.

## ED Wellness Committee Essential Oil Protocol



### Wellness Committee Essential Oils Usage Guidelines:

- » Essential Oils will be available for staff use only. They are not for patient use.
- » Members of the Wellness Committee will access the Essential Oils for employee use.
- » Staff participation is voluntary.
- » Essential Oils are provided for use in the workplace, not for employees to take home.
- » Essential Oils are donated to the ED, they are not for purchase.
- » There will be an air freshening protocol when there is a foul odor.



## IMPLICATIONS

- The Wellness Committee encourages caregiver's self care initiatives.
- The survey's suggest that the diffusion of certified pure therapeutic grade essential oils might decrease perceived stress levels and increase optimal energy levels of staff in a chaotic ED environment.
- More research is necessary to establish essential oils utility in the ED.

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