

Madison Olver

*Relax!*

In my experiment, I wanted to see if lavender essential oil has a calming effect on horses. Many people have tried to relax their crazy horse, but failed. It would be a relief to many people if they could just rub lavender on their horses muzzle and have it relax. Lavender essential oil has been known to have many health benefits, like ability to remove tension and pain, and if inhaled, it increases alpha waves in the back of the head, which increases relaxation. My hypothesis was that if horses inhaled lavender essential oil, they would relax a fair amount. In this experiment, I used a tarp to trigger the anxiety level in a horse's brain. A certified veterinarian took the horse's heart rate because of safety issues, and I recorded the heart rate and took observations for the baseline. I found that lavender essential oil definitely decreased heart rate, more so in the calm horses though. I also found that exposure toward the stressor desensitize the horses reaction to the stressor. However, they will still probably have a little anxiety to the stressor, but not as much.