

“The Effects of Manual Osteopathy on People’s Health”

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Introduction

Osteopathy is a hands-on manual therapy approach that relieves pain. Restores mobility and significantly improves the quality and function of the body without the use of drugs or surgery. Osteopaths can help improve performance at work and in professional sport. Most people need just 2 or 3 treatments to make significant improvements. Osteopaths are trained in screening for underlying medical conditions and can communicate with your family physician and other health care practitioners, in order to provide you with a complete personalized management plan. Also, Osteopathic practitioners are master at palpation skills that help them to realize the cause of the pain with only some gentle touches and examinations to find out the root of each limitation, dysfunction or abnormality in body.

The treatments is based on many wonderful techniques and with the help of Joint Mobilization Techniques, Muscle Energy Techniques, stretches, and manipulation, the range-of-motion in a particular joint will get increased, so the patient can restore his/her functional abilities faster and better, with releasing tension and strain in the issue and muscles, ligaments and fasciae, the pain will go away and circulation of all the fluids in the body will improve. These are very effective gentle techniques that can help you to release from your pain, structural deformity, malfunction movements and bad posture in your body. Osteopathy is all about connections in our body and with osteopathic techniques these connections will work together like a web and the ability of body to heal itself will get increase without any drug or surgery and it has the greatest therapeutic effects based on science.

Osteopathy manipulation has significant positive response in treatment for spinal problems, digestive issues as well as fertility problems. Each of them will be discussed in detail in this article.

Spinal Issues

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Manual Osteopathy is its focus on whole body treatment, specifically musculoskeletal system. Osteopathy is a health care activity dedicated to conservative, non-surgical, and non-pharmacological treatments. Osteopath practitioners practice manipulation and joint mobilization to remove the cause of the pain or restriction.

The prevalence of middle back pain (thoracic back pain) is as frequent as lower back pain or neck pain. Thoracic back pain hasn't traditionally received the same amount of attention as lumbar and cervical pain. Therefore it remains less known to public that osteopathic treatments such as Joint Mobilization, Muscle Energy Techniques (MET), and Soft Tissue Therapy (SST) in addition to exercises, stretches, lifestyle changes and ergonomics can help to reduce pain and improve the range of motion in such cases.

Movement and rotation of spines in the middle back is more restricted than neck and lower back. This is due to the fact that in the middle back part attachment of spinal column and ribs restrict the possible range of motion of these bones. In addition, spinal conditions and abnormalities in this region are rather more pronounced and significant in

comparison to lower back (lumbar) and neck (cervical) area since spinal cord and nerves in this region supply the intercostal muscles, which help inhalation and exhalation. Therefore it follows that any nerve damage or pathology of spine can cause serious effects, such as difficulty breathing, which over time can cause serious damages to visceral organs or Central Nervous System (CNS).

Thoracic back pain might happen suddenly (such as trauma, car accident, whiplash, and sport injury) or over time (such as having poor posture, repetitive movements, over bending, and over rotating). Most of the times the pain is due to soft tissue damages and it appears due to muscular irritation that might arise from lack of erector-spinae muscle power or other superficial muscle power. Degenerative joint diseases (DJD) such as osteoarthritis of the spines in vertebral column, ankylosing spondylitis are the second cause of the thoracic back pain. In this case the joint between each spine gets affected and will cause narrowing of the disc, which might cause the herniating disc, or in sever cases nerve impingement. The last cause of the thoracic back pain might be due to structural deformities and it happens rarely compare to the first two causes. Hyper kyphosis, scoliosis and Scheuermann's disease are the conditions that essentially arise by structural deformity or osteochondroses.

Your manual osteopath can figure out the specific cause of your pain depending on your signs and symptoms after taking a complete medical history along with preliminary physical examination in your consultation session. Further treatments then follow in later session.

Osteopathic manual treatment offers many techniques to prevent and treat pain in middle back pain. Treatments aim to restore normal muscle tone in order to release of any muscle tension or nerve impingement, which in turn act towards mobilization of vertebral spines to further relieve pain. Also stretches and exercises along with certain muscle energy techniques can increase range of motion in the affected area. Almost all patients are greatly satisfied with their hands-on osteopathic treatment due to the gentle and non-intrusive nature of the treatment. Patients often report that treatment has helped to substantially reduce the frequency and intensity of their pain episodes.

For back pain specifically, manipulation of spines, some soft tissue therapy on the back muscles to get them relaxed and myofascial release of back joints and muscles can be really effective to relieve pain in the back. However, before any treatments, your osteopath should be able to know what is the cause of your pain. Is it coming from your bone, muscle, joint, nerve, tendon, ligament, or any other soft tissue? To investigate about the cause of the back pain, history taking from the patient and some physical examinations are necessary. After knowing exactly the cause of your back pain, your osteopath can start the treatment.

The treatment for your back pain can be start with Osteopathic Manipulation Techniques (OMT), which is the most pleasant part of your appointment. OMT is a hands-on manipulation for back muscles or other soft tissue in your back. There also might include some pressure on the facet joints of your back depending on your

condition. With the help of OMT associated with some traction on your back, your muscles, joints, nerves and ligaments can be more relaxed and stress free which can be really effective treatment for problems which are coming from those areas.

Apart from OMT, Joint Mobilization Techniques can give you the higher mobility on your spinal discs and will increase your range of motion in any direction. Muscle Energy Techniques (MET) of back area, in addition to those above, can help you to have normal muscle tone. MET of the back muscles usually performed with applying pressure against a muscle and releasing and stretching the same muscles. This is a really effective way to get rid of any nerve impingement due to high muscle tones.

Daily life-style changes can improve your back pain significantly. Consulting about your day-to-day activities can be helpful for your osteopath to figure out the exact problem and to give you the best recommendation for back-friendly changes. Recommending some light exercises, activity modification, ergonomic using, nutritional changes and possibly weight loss can actually relieve your pain greatly. Some exercises for strengthen your back muscle to support your posture or therapeutic belt or backrest in your seats also can be really effective for postural changes.

Digestion Problems

Osteopathy has a holistic approach to every condition that you might have. People who tried Osteopathy treatments mostly see great results. Visceral osteopathy is a part of general manual osteopathy that focuses more on digestion problems. Digestive conditions that osteopathy can help including but are not limited to irritable bowel syndrome, heartburn, constipation, flatulence, and indigestion.

There are two types of visceral osteopathic treatments. One of them is helping to stabilizing the organ; the other one is trying to create normal movement of the organ along with stabilizing in its place. Normal movements of organs are vital. All the organs require exhibiting certain movements as part of their own function, so any restriction in their movements is dangerous and often accompanied by pain. One of the worst consequences of having restricted movements in smooth muscles is that the organ might stop working. For example, small intestine works best when there is no restriction in its movement and the smooth muscle cells can work in this condition. Otherwise, small intestine would not work, so digestion might cease right there. However, when there is no restriction of movement contraction of smooth muscles is normal. This is why regular and synchronized movements are predicted and as a result abortion of food is the outcome.

Stabilizing the organs in their position means manipulating the ligaments that hold our organs in their places. There are several ligaments that hold our organs in each direction. This is why for example, if we are lying down all of our visceral organs does

not go in one direction. Some disorders or swelling may prevent the specific ligament to do its proper works, and that is why we feel pain in our digesters tract.

We have thus far observed how mobilization of organs can be beneficial for movement of organs and stabilizing them in their places. Also, with mobilization of the organs and having pressure and deep tissue manipulation all the blood and oxygen will come to the site of pain, so it would be beneficial for gastro-intestinal tract, gut mobility and healing process of the discomfort.

Because osteopathy has a holistic approach having a broad and complete history taking and physical examination is really essential and needed. Some problems in our body might have ambiguous pain elsewhere in our body. For instance, particular shoulder pain or upper back pains are as a consequence of visceral organs' conditions, such as hiatus hernia or gall bladder problems. That is why when you seek to see an osteopath s/he might ask to examine other parts of your body and not exactly where you said you have pain.

Osteopathic manipulation has significant positive response in to get rid of any restriction in the organs that a manual osteopath can help you to benefit from it. In addition to your practitioner, you, as a person who wants to help himself/herself need to do some exercises and change your nutritional diet as well. Sufferers who tried visceral osteopathy and having a good nutrient advise and doing their recommended exercises daily have the highest rate of satisfaction and improvement among other digestive problem patients.

Fertility

Osteopathic Manual Therapy is advantageous for variety of different conditions. Although many people may not generally associate Osteopathy treatment with fertility related topics, many studies have shown that Manual Osteopathy can have several benefits in prognosis and treatment of infertility and related conditions. One of the core tenants of Manual Osteopathy is that “structure” and “function” are often interrelated, and this certainly holds true when it comes to Osteopathy and fertility topics. While the list of prognosis techniques, approaches and treatments is an endless topic by itself, the following is a summary designed to merely shed an insight towards the subject.

Given that infertility may be result of malformations, and vice versa, it is then of outmost importance for any examination to include looking for any impaired structure in female patients. Such studies should include examining the pelvic floor and the skull area for neuropathy. With that said, the pelvic floor itself contains a number of organs within it. The uterus, gentile organs, intestine, bladder and musculoskeletal structures such as spine, ribs, muscles, and ligaments are a few examples of these organs. Therefore prognosis is further broken down based on categories of organs.

Uterus is a very motile organ and its shape depends on bladder and intestine and whether if they are full or empty. Free movement of these organs can give them optimal function. Squeezed or displaced uterus might restrict its movement and as a result its functionality will decrease. Fallopian tubes should be mobile and well nourished similar to the uterus. There are some ligaments, which hold fallopian tubes in their place, and plenty of blood supplies to nourish them. Any dysfunction of these ligaments or compression in blood vessels should be treated in order to restore the natural functionality. By stretching and strengthening certain muscles such as iliopsoas muscle, the uterus, intestine, bladder and all the ligaments and structure inside your pelvic area inferior regions will have greater support, so gravity and other external factors could not have a negative impact on the pelvic cavity and its inner organs. The latter procedures constitute the core of what's often referred to as Visceral Manipulation (VM) and musculoskeletal treatment.

One thing that may not be obvious at first is that Crania-Sacral Therapy (CST) can be used to help treating neuropathy of pelvic nerves and is often performed along VM and musculoskeletal treatments. There is possibility of nerve irritation if there are some dysfunctions in sacrum area or base of the skull. Elimination of any pressure or obstacle from nervous system and having the functionality of sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system back can help to balance irritated areas, ultimately helping towards restoring reproductive health.

Osteopathic VM and mobilization techniques can help to remove various obstacles and restore optimal function of the uterus and fallopian tubes. Manual osteopathy therapy works on body as a whole interconnected system, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that its multiple functional units work properly and in harmony. In terms of fertility this entails that manual osteopathic treatments look at not only the immediate organs but also other areas and causes.

To summarize, osteopathic manipulation can be beneficial for all these problems, which I explained in detail. These three parts are included in the treatments but these are not the only concerns why people seeking to see an osteopath. Manual osteopathy treatments can significantly reduce any misalignment in people's spinal column, also will positively improve any restriction in the body's organ, as well as, helping with fertility as described above.

References

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