

Collected Scientific Research Relating to the Use of Osteopathy with Cerebral palsy (people with)

Important:

1) Osteopathy involves helping people's own self-healing abilities to work better, rather than focussing primarily on particular conditions.

2) Each person is different, and osteopathy treats them differently.

Therefore people respond to osteopathic treatment in different ways. Treatments that work for one person cannot be guaranteed to work for another person in the same way. The fact that there is scientific research supporting a treatment in a group of people does not mean that it will always work in the same way (which is probably true of all research).

A number of things make research into osteopathy challenging. These include the two aspects of osteopathy mentioned above, and also the lack of major commercial interests to provide funding in expectation of financial returns. At the same time, there is an emerging body of research demonstrating the usefulness of osteopathic treatment.

Please note: there is room for debate about the classifications used for these studies. Please let John Smartt know if you believe that any of these classifications are incorrect.

These studies are from peer-reviewed journals

Number
of studies:
4

Clinically and statistically significant results

Number
of studies:
3

Randomised controlled trials

Number of studies: 2

Duncan B, Barton L, Edmonds D, Blashill BM 2004 **Parental perceptions of the therapeutic effect from osteopathic manipulation or acupuncture in children with spastic cerebral palsy.** Clin Pediatr (Phila) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15118778>

"Fifty children were involved in a randomized, controlled trial to evaluate the effectiveness of either osteopathic manipulation or acupuncture as a 6-month therapeutic adjunct for children with spastic cerebral palsy. Exit interviews were used to obtain parental perceptions and form the basis of this report. Only 2 of 17 parents reported positive gains while their child was in a wait-list control period but all 17 reported gains while in the treatment phase of the study. Ninety-six percent (48 of 50) of the parents reported some improvement while their child was receiving treatments but the gains varied from child to child. The most frequent gains were seen in improvement in the use of arms or legs (61% and 68%) and more restful sleep (39% and 68%) in the osteopathic and the acupuncture groups, respectively. Improvement in mood and improved bowel function were also very common benefits noted by the parents in both groups."

Duncan B, McDonough-Means S, Worden K, Schnyer R, Andrews J, Meaney FJ. 2008 **Effectiveness of osteopathy in the cranial field and myofascial release versus acupuncture as complementary treatment for children with spastic cerebral palsy: a pilot study.** J Am Osteopath Assoc Oct;108(10):559-70. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18948639>

"Fifty-five patients were included in the study. Individual analyses of the 11 outcome variables revealed statistically significant improvement in two mobility measures for patients who received OMT--the total score of Gross Motor Function Measurement and the mobility domain of Functional Independence Measure for Children (P<.05). No statistically significant improvements were seen among patients in the acupuncture treatment arm."

Other controlled clinical trials

Number of studies: 1

Tarsuslu T, Bol H, Şimşek IE, Toylan IE, Çam S, 2009 **The Effects of Osteopathic Treatment on Constipation in Children With Cerebral Palsy: A Pilot Study** Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics Volume 32, Issue 8, October , Pages 648–653 <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0161475409002000>

Osteopathic manipulative treatment was included with both groups studied. (One group had other medical treatment). There was no control used in this study that did not include osteopathic treatment.

"This study included 13 children with cerebral palsy diagnosed as having chronic constipation by a gastroenterologist. The subjects were separated into 2 groups. Group 1 was treated with osteopathic methods and group 2 underwent both medical and exactly the same osteopathic treatments of group 1."

"Osteopathic treatments included fascial release, iliopsoas muscle release, sphincter release, and bowel mobilizations."

"The satisfaction of the subjects or the families with the treatments was not different when the groups were compared ($P > .05$). Constipation Assessment Scale scores decreased significantly in both groups ($P < .05$). Pretreatment (initial evaluation) and posttreatment (follow-ups at 3 and 6 months) results revealed no difference between the groups in either aspects ($P > .05$). However, both groups showed significant improvements compared with baseline evaluations ($P < .05$)."

"Osteopathic methods were as effective as osteopathic methods in addition to medical care for both treatment groups. The results of this study suggest that osteopathic methods may be helpful as an alternative treatment in constipation. "

Mixed results (significant for some outcomes, not others)

Number of studies:
1

Randomised controlled trials

Number of studies: 1

Wyatt K, Edwards V, Franck L, Britten N, Creanor S, Maddick A, Logan S. 2011 **Cranial osteopathy for children with cerebral palsy: a randomised controlled trial**. Archives of Disease in Childhood Jun;96(6):505-12 <http://adc.bmj.com/content/early/2011/02/23/adc.2010.199877.abstract>

"Compared with children in the control group, carers of children receiving cranial osteopathy were nearly twice as likely to report that their child's global health had 'improved' at 6 months rather than 'decreased' or 'remained the same' (38% vs 18%; odds ratio 2.8, 95% CI 1.1 to 6.9)"
"This trial found no statistically significant evidence that cranial osteopathy leads to sustained improvement in motor function, pain, sleep or quality of life in children aged 5-12 years with cerebral palsy"