

Collected Scientific Research Relating to the Use of Osteopathy with Insomnia

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.

More research is being done all of the time. I am not aware of any research which shows that osteopathic treatment, delivered by a qualified osteopath, is ineffective in relation to this area. If you are aware of any studies that show that, please bring them to my attention.

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

Cutler MJ, Holland BS, Stupski BA, Gamber RG, Smith ML 2005 **Cranial manipulation can alter sleep latency and sympathetic nerve activity in humans: a pilot study.** *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* Feb;11(1):103-8. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15750368>

"The current study is the first to demonstrate that cranial manipulation, specifically the CV4 [compression of the 4th ventricle] technique, can alter sleep latency [more rapid onset of sleep] and directly measured MSNA [muscle sympathetic nerve activity] in healthy humans. These findings provide important insight into the possible physiologic effects of cranial manipulation."

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."

Case controlled studies

Number of studies: 1

Kelmanson IA, Adulas EI 2006 **Massage therapy and sleep behaviour in infants born with low birth weight.** *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice* Aug;12(3):200-5 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16835031>

"Babies in the experimental group were assigned massage intervention therapy that include gentle rubbing, stroking, passive movements of the limbs and other means of kinaesthetic stimulation performed by professionals until the infant is 8 months old. The findings suggest that 8-month-old LBW infants who received massage intervention were less likely to snore during sleep, required less feeding on waking-up at night, and appeared more alert during the day. These apparent correlations remained significant after adjustment was made for major potential confounders."

Mixed results (significant for some outcomes, not others)

Number
of studies:
1

Systematic reviews

Number of studies: 1

Jäkel A, von Hauenschild P 2011 **Therapeutic effects of cranial osteopathic manipulative medicine: a systematic review.** *J Am Osteopath Assoc* Dec;111(12):685-93. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22182954>

"Of the 8 studies that met the inclusion criteria, 7 were randomized controlled trials and 1 was an observational study. A range of cranial OMM techniques used for the management of a variety of conditions were identified in the included studies. Positive clinical outcomes were reported for pain reduction, change in autonomic nervous system function, and improvement of sleeping patterns. Methodological Downs and Black quality scores ranged from 14 to 23 points out of a maximum of 27 points (overall median score, 16)."