



Fasciathery and Reflexology, compared to Hypnosis and Music therapy in stress management

BACKGROUND

Among the numerous nonpharmacological techniques available for coping with stress, some like hypnosis [1] gave strong evidence of efficiency, some others did not yet. In the field of fasciathery and reflexology, the earlier phases of qualitative [2,3], or pilot [4,5,6,7,8] research provided very pertinent information, but quantitative

research on a large scale remained to be realized for providing a stronger evidence. **The aim of this study is to statistically assess the effectiveness of these two methods in stress reduction, and to compare their performance to hypnosis, music therapy and nonintervention groups.**

METHODS

315 outpatients -average age 49- were enrolled in a prospective clinical open trial, carried out in multiple centers and operated by practitioners in the different techniques. According to the center the participants went to, they were exposed to a single session of either fasciathery (nb 88), reflexology (nb 79), hypnosis (nb 42), or music

therapy (nb 64), or had a 30 mn controlled resting condition (nb 42). Stress has been assessed just before (t 0) and after (t 1) each session using the STAI-Y inventory. MANOVA and MANCOVA were performed to assess and compare the effectiveness of each method on stress reduction.

RESULTS

A significant decrease of the stress level STAI-Y average was shown with fasciathery (40.7 to 26.8, $p < 0.0001$) and reflexology (43.8 to 27.9, $p < 0.0001$). Adjusted on the stress level in t0, fasciathery and reflexology were as effective as hypnosis, but were more effective than music therapy on the decrease of the stress level.

A significant reduction of the stress level was found in the control group (38.1 to 31.7, $p < 0.0001$), but the gain was significantly lower in the control condition than in all other conditions.

CONCLUSION

This study provides for the first time statistical evidence of effectiveness of a single session of fasciathery and of reflexology in decreasing the stress level. A similar efficiency to hypnosis, grants to fasciathery and to reflexology the same rank of performance. Therefore, availability of several equivalent methods offers the opportunity of a tailored response to the stressed patients expecting a relief, as it already was shown for pregnant stressed women with a single session of several complementary therapies [9].

Further studies should investigate effectiveness of long term fasciathery or reflexologic treatments on chronic stress disorder or on high blood pressure, as well as in the management of stressful situations, ie. in acute pain and especially in the case of induced pain.

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