

NAMES: Field T, Schanberg S, Kuhn C, Fierro K, Henteleff T, Mueller C, Yando R, Burman I.

SOURCE: Touch Research Institute, University of Miami School of Medicine, Florida.

DESCRIPTION: Randomized, Controlled Clinical Trial. Published Manuscript 17 pages, 25 references.

Synopsis:

Twenty-four female adolescent bulimic inpatients were randomly assigned to a massage therapy of a standard treatment group. The massage patients showed greater decreases in short-term measure of anxiety and depression (both self-report and behavior observation). In addition, by the last day of the therapy they had lower depression scores, lower cortisol levels, increased dopamine levels and improved attitudes about their eating disorder including improved body image. These data suggest the effectiveness of massage therapy as an adjunct to treatment for bulimia.

The article begins with a brief description of bulimia, indicating that it is similar to depression. It then discusses the effectiveness of anti-depressant medications in treating bulimia. Next, it describes the study process, results, and calls for more studies on the issue.

Massage therapy was performed twice per week for five weeks. The massage was administered by massage therapists. Both groups attended daily therapy sessions, learned about nutritional choices and basic principles of physiology, metabolism and non-verbal therapies such as movement therapy (total of 30 - 40 sessions per week). Results were verified using ANOVA and t-tests.

It should be noted that depression levels remained high in both groups, but this is explained by the fact that depression is considered a depressive disorder. The lack of increase in serotonin and decreases in norepinephrine levels is not explained. Also, results for the control group are not presented in the tables.

Keywords:

TYPES: Swedish (slow stroke massage); traction, joint mobilization

MeSH: Psychological effects

FOCUS: Alternative to surgery/drugs

AGE: Adolescent females (16 to 21 year old)

AREA: Neck, face, jaw, shoulders, arms, torso, legs, back, sacrum.

DISEASE: Bulimia

SPORTS: N/A

COUNTRY: USA, English

DATABASE: Touch Research Institute publication listings