



Meridian Institute News

RESEARCHING THE SPIRIT-MIND-BODY CONNECTION

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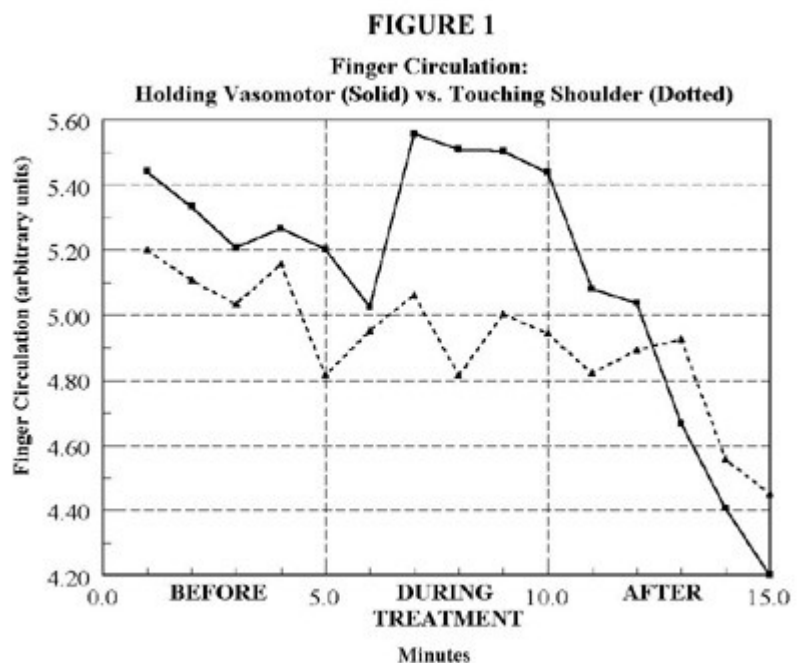
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Osteopathic Regulation of Physiology

A key element of Edgar Cayce's system of healing was the use of osteopathy to help the body to heal itself. Osteopathy, a healing system originated by A.T. Still in the late 1800s, is a system of manual medicine - the use of the hands for healing. Today when people think of manual medicine, they are most familiar with the adjustments done by many chiropractors (and some osteopaths as well); these involve an abrupt movement of a joint in the spine, often with an audible "click" or "pop." Yet the original system of osteopathy was far more than this. As one Cayce reading stated:

"Then, the SCIENCE of osteopathy is not merely the punching in a certain segment or the cracking of the bones, but it is the keeping of a BALANCE - by the touch - between the sympathetic and the cerebrospinal system! THAT is real osteopathy!" (1158-24)

At Meridian Institute we have been exploring the capability to regulate the sympathetic and cerebrospinal nervous systems that control the physiology of the body - such things as heart rate and blood flow - by use of the hands. In our most recent experiment, we chose a simple



move performed by the early osteopaths and recommended by Cayce. In Reading 3624-1 he suggested that pressure by a therapist's hand placed at the 3rd cervical vertebra in the neck would relax and "drain the whole system."

The osteopaths called a maneuver similar to this "holding the vasomotor." The vasomotor system controls the circulation of the body. Holding this center was said to dilate the blood vessels, increasing circulation to such areas as the hands and feet. We had two questions. The first was whether the effects of such a maneuver on physiology could be measured. The second was whether the maneuver of holding the vasomotor had specific effects that were different from those of a "sham" treatment - simply lightly touching the tops of the shoulders. The placebo effect, well known in studies of drugs, is that even a "sham" treatment can produce results due to the effects of a person's belief on his own physiology.

To test this hypothesis, we had volunteers lie on a table for 40 minutes, while we measured such aspects of physiology as finger temperature, finger and toe circulation, breathing, heart rate, and skin conductance. They were told to simply relax. After a baseline period of relaxation, a therapist would either hold the vasomotor area, or lightly touch the tops of the shoulders, for 5 minutes. The order was randomly chosen to avoid effects simply due to how long the person had been lying on the table. Then, after another period of relaxation, the other maneuver would be given for 5 minutes, and the session would end with a final period of relaxation.

Figure 1 shows the average effect on finger circulation for 23 sessions. The graph shows 5 minutes before the treatment, the 5 minute treatment, and 5 minutes after the treatment. Holding the vasomotor is the solid line; the shoulder touch is the dotted line. The graph shows that, on the average, about a minute into the treatment, circulation goes up with the active treatment, while it stays the same with the sham treatment. Then, after the treatments, circulation drops as the person's body becomes cooler while lying on the table.

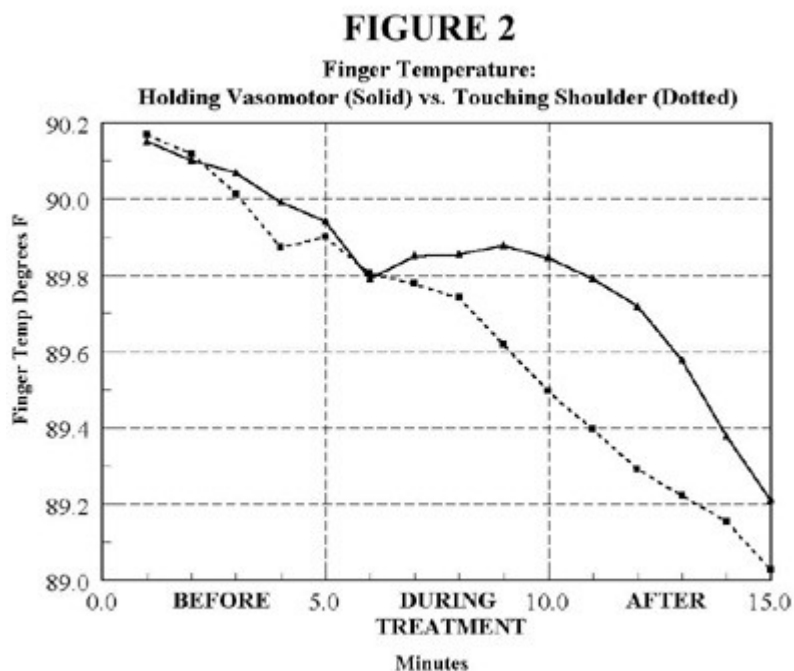


Figure 2 shows the average effect on finger temperature. Note that the effect on temperature is smoother and longer lasting than the one on circulation. It takes a while for the flow of blood to the surface to actually warm the skin, and then the skin holds heat longer after the blood flow has decreased.

Figure 3 shows the effect on heart rate. This was especially interesting to us, since in the first minute of both maneuvers, heart rate decreases. This seems to be a general response to being touched. Then, however, heart rate increases for the "holding the vasomotor" maneuver, while for the shoulder touch there is no change.

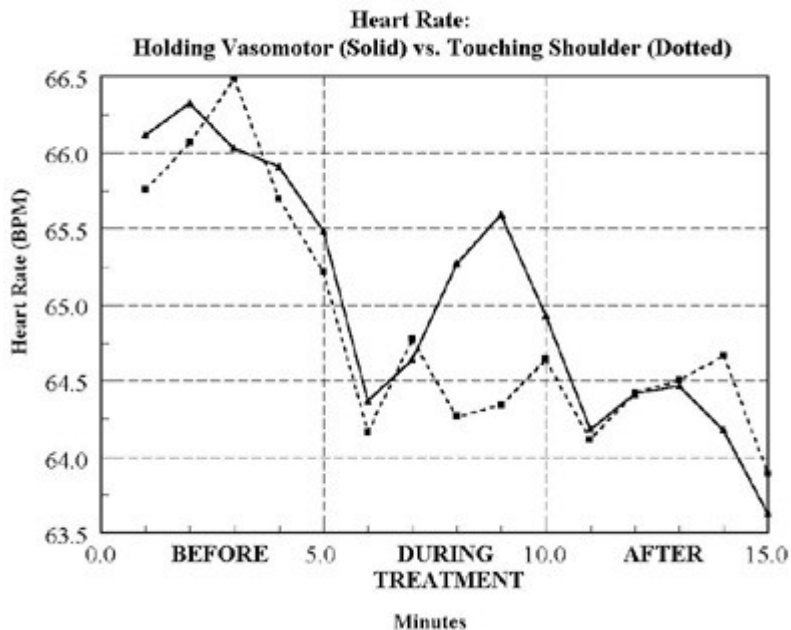
There was a great deal of individual variability in results, but by averaging over many people and sessions, we were able to clearly see the typical effects of these maneuvers on physiology. This made us appreciate Cayce's ability to see into the body of a person and

recommend individually-specific treatments. Over time, with no treatment at all, circulation and skin temperature tend to drop in a cool room, and heart rate decreases as the body relaxes. In these graphs we see departures from this general trend; the manipulation temporarily reverses the natural cooling as circulation to the extremities increases.

The heart rate result shows how hard it may be to define a "sham" treatment for scientific study. Any touch may have general effects, but these must be separated from the specific effects of the osteopathic maneuver. Our further studies are being directed to questions of the best sham treatments for comparison to osteopathic treatments for specific healing purposes. For example, we are planning a study on the use of osteopathy for treating asthma. In a letter to the *New England Journal of Medicine* (1999), we noted that a major study of chiropractic on asthma was flawed because the sham treatment was similar to traditional osteopathic treatments.

We hope to improve on this study by using sham treatments more easily distinguished from the active treatments.

FIGURE 3



REFERENCE

Richards, D. G., Mein, E. A., & Nelson, C. D. (1999). Chiropractic manipulation for childhood asthma [Letter]. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 340, 391-392.

PUBLICATION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

The July, 2000 issue of *Alternative Therapies* included an interesting interview with Alan Abromovitz, M.D. in which he discussed the impact that the Edgar Cayce health information and philosophy had on his initial entry into the field of integrated patient care. In response to some of the issues raised in the article, Meridian Institute members responded with a letter to the editor that was published in the December issue. Here is an excerpt from the letter. The entire letter is available on the Meridian Institute website.

"While Edgar Cayce lived in the first of half of the 20th century, his ideas helped create the holistic health movement of the past 30-40 years. The founding of the American Holistic Medical Association in 1978 by Bill and Gladys McGarey, Norm Shealy, and others was a direct outcome of their knowledge of the Cayce information (1). This influence was recognized in the first JAMA acknowledgement of this movement, an editorial titled "Holistic Health or

Holistic Hoax" published in 1979 (2) which stated "The roots of present-day holism probably go back 100 years to the birth of Edgar Cayce in Hopkinsville, Ky." Even the modern-day use of the word "holistic" traces its origins to a paper presented in 1969 about the Cayce approach to mental illness (3). Any new movement does well to recognize its historical grounding."

REFERENCES

1. Personal comment from Gladys McGarey, M.D.
2. Callan, J.P. (1979). Holistic health or holistic hoax? *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 241 (11), 1156
3. McGarey, W.A. (1983) *The Edgar Cayce Remedies*. New York: Bantam Books.

HEALING

UTERINE FIBROID

Numerous women have reported relief from uterine fibroids using therapies recommended by Edgar Cayce. Typically, the treatment plan for this condition includes hot castor oil packs over the uterus, massage and manipulation for increased drainages, and alkaline diet. The following account was recently submitted by a patient of Dr. Nelson.

"In previous I had experienced extremely irregular menstrual cycles with heavy bleeding frequently lasting in excess of two weeks (and several times three weeks). I also experienced constant pelvic pain, cramping, severe headaches, and on several occasions problems urinating.

"I now have regular 28-32 day cycles with moderate to light bleeding lasting 2-4 days, no cramping or headaches, and only mild fibroid pain two days preceding flow. No problems urinating. Following spinal adjustments I often experienced clear vaginal drainage; last two cycles have been preceded and followed by noticeable clear vaginal drainage. In the hour following first acupuncture session, I experienced a tremendous release of pelvic energy similar in sensation to the drainage. (Note: The acupuncture was given the day after cessation of a cycle, and following the acupuncture I had to be in a public setting in which I had the distinct sensation of having begun bleeding again very heavily, so much so that I was sure I had bled through my clothing and onto the car seat, only to find once at home only a trace of blood.)"

The following treatment plan was utilized from July - December, 2000:

1. Weekly massages followed by spinal manipulation and adjustments for drainage (First 5 weeks)
2. Weekly adjustments combined with energy (laying on of hands) treatments (Sept.-Dec.). Violet ray added in mid-Oct. with carbon ash taken before ray treatments.
3. Weekly douches of Atomidine one day after the ray treatment followed by Glyco-thymoline douches one day after the atomidine douche (Oct.-Dec.)
4. Monthly needle-less acupuncture treatments (Nov. and Dec.)
5. Castor oil packs over liver and pelvic area 5 days on/3 days off for 60-100 minutes combined with meditation (July-Dec.)
6. Modification of diet:
 - Per Cayce*: 80% fruits and vegetables, of those a high percentage of orange and yellow, raw veggies & salads; very little meat-of that, organic only-deer, rabbit, freerange chicken (July-Dec.)

•*Per Dr. Christiane Northrup* (author of *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*): No dairy; no alcohol; 500-1000 mg. daily of lipotropic factors choline, inositol, L-methionine in conjunction with B-complex, calcium and magnesium. Weight loss (20 lbs.) to rid body of excess estrogen (July-Dec.)

•*Per Dr. Nelson*: 1000-1500 mg. Vitamin C daily (July-Aug.)

•(Note on diet: Patient as a longstanding practice avoids coffee, colas, all fried and processed foods.)

7. Regular practice of yoga and aerobic exercise (July-Dec.)

Interestingly, her gynecologist observed that the size of the uterine fibroid had not changed significantly during the period of treatment. The patient is undaunted and interprets this data as a cessation of growth and a turning point in the healing process. Her plan is to continue the therapies above but at a more relaxed pace. She concluded: "To be pain-free and able to lead a life of normal activities is miraculous. Particularly as of early November, I have experienced a culminating effect from these treatments that can only be described as a very high level of physical well-being and a feeling of breakthrough on many levels."