

Abstract

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TITLE: The effect of Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT) on muscle tension dysphonia (MTD).

RESEARCH TITLE: A double blind randomized placebo controlled clinical trial about the effect of OMT on MTD, in patients suffering from a benign organic or non-organic voice pathology.

BACKGROUND: In patients suffering from primary or secondary MTD changes in subjective and objective voice quality might occur as a result of osteopathic clinical reasoning and treatment. Voice disorders are considered multi factorial and require a multidisciplinary approach. Despite a growing interest in the manual approach by speech therapists, the prevalence of patients presenting with voice disorders to osteopaths is very low. OBJECTIVE: To determine the efficacy of osteopathic manipulative treatment as a complementary treatment for primary and secondary MTD. METHOD: Eighteen patients (5 men, 13 women) diagnosed by an ENT physician as suffering from MTD were randomized into two groups. The experimental OMT group (n= 9, 33.8 ± 11.7 years) received three osteopathic treatments for three weeks, the placebo group (n= 9, 50.8 ± 18 years) three times received a placebo intervention. Non-organic as well as benign organic voice pathology were included. Voice Handicap Index (VHI), GRB scale and Dysphonia Severity Index (DSI), performed by a speech therapist who was blinded for group assignment, were recorded one week before and one week after the set of three interventions. RESULTS: Comparing baseline and final measurements, a significant improvement in VHI was found in the OMT group. DSI and GRB also improved after the osteopathic treatment but was not found statistically significant. When comparing between both groups a tendency towards significant better results in all parameters has been shown in favor of OMT. DISCUSSION: A small sample size and a large variability between groups form the main points of criticism. CONCLUSION: The present study showed positive and suggestive evidence of the beneficial effects of osteopathic treatment on voice quality in patients suffering from muscle tension dysphonia. Due to the positive outcomes in the current study, it is to be concluded that the osteopathic approach of voice disorders should be further assessed in future research.

Keywords: Muscle Tension Dysphonia, organic, voice, osteopathy, OMT.