

Massage Reduces Chronic Tension Headache

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University of Granada researchers have shown that a 30 minute massage is able to reduce tension headache symptoms. The project involved cooperation between the University of Granada, the University Rey Juan Carlos and the Clinical Hospital San Cecilio. Between them they revealed how massage changes the physiological as well as psychological state of tension headache patients inside of 24 hours from receiving the massage.

The standard treatment for tension headaches, which are becoming increasingly prevalent in the population, is to administer analgesics, but these only temporarily relieve the symptoms.

The researchers already understood that one of the main reasons for the development of tension headaches is the presence of trigger points, which are specific points on the body that literally trigger pain or headaches.

Leader of the study was researcher Cristina Toro Velasco, who worked under the supervision of Professor Manuel Arroyo Morales. She worked on massaging the cervical trigger points of her patients for 30 minutes in order to improve the regulation of the autonomic nervous system.

Interestingly, the treatment led to both a physiological improvement as well as a better psychological state in the form of a reduction in the "stress and anxiety associated to such a disturbing disorder".

Within 24 hours of treatment, the patients were reporting relief from their symptoms. The researchers think that this was due to the massage lowering the pain activated by the trigger points which in turn resulted in a better general sense of well being in the patients.

The American Journal of Manipulative Physiological and Therapeutics is to publish the study.

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