





Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice

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A study of Reiki therapy on unpleasant symptoms in children with cerebral palsy

Lamara Love ^a  , Avery M. Anderson ^b, Victoria von Sadvoszky ^b, Julie Kusiak ^a, Jodi Ford ^c, Garey Noritz ^a

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Abstract

Children with Cerebral Palsy (CP) commonly experience unpleasant symptoms such as pain, anger, and sadness. The purpose of this quasi-experimental study, guided by the Theory of Unpleasant Symptoms (TOUS), was to examine the practicality and impact of delivering Reiki Therapy (RT) in homes over an 8-week intervention phase to children with CP. Thirteen pediatric participants were recruited, ranging in age from 5 to 16 years. Reiki Therapy was administered by a Level 3 Reiki Therapist in the home for 8 consecutive weeks. Parents completed on-line questionnaires addressing their children's unpleasant symptoms. Hair cortisol was measured as an indicator of stress. Nearly all study procedures were completed by the participants, indicating that the methods are feasible for a larger study. Reiki Therapy significantly decreased pain while lying down (3.09 vs. 2.00; $p = .002$) but not while sitting (2.55 vs. 2.09; $p = .40$). Anger symptoms showed a trend towards improvement in the participants. These preliminary findings demonstrate that Reiki is a therapeutic modality worthy of further investigation in the CP pediatric population.

Section snippets

Methods

This quasi-experimental study incorporated a convenience sampling approach to ascertain the feasibility of the methods for determination in a larger study....

Results

For the first research question, all 8 treatments were given to all 13 participants (100% completion) and adherence to both sample hair cortisol collections was 100%. All parents completed the study questionnaires for time 1 and time 2 and 11/13 (84.6%) completed the questionnaires for time point 3.

The second research question addressed parents' evaluations of the 8-week RT sessions (Table 4). Overall, parents found RT helpful and wanted it offered as a regular therapy and in the home (M...

Discussion

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to examine the feasibility – including the applicability and practicality -- of RT for children with CP in their homes over an 8-week intervention phase. The results provide strong support for feasibility of RT. All participants were retained through the entirety of the intervention period and 90% or more of subjects had completion of all measures including hair cortisol. This study is the first to explore RT in a population of children with CP...

Credit author statement

Lamara Love: Conceptualization, resources, data curation, project administration, writing-original and final draft, writing review & editing, supervision, funding acquisition.

Avery Anderson: Writing – original and final draft, writing – review & editing.

Victoria von Sadovszky: Conceptualization, formal analysis, methodology, data curation, visualization, writing-original and final draft, supervision, funding acquisition.

Julie Kusiak: Conceptualization, investigation, visualization, writing –...

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose....

Lamara Love, BSN, RN, CPN, HNB-BC. Lamara is the CP Program Coordinator responsible for operational oversight. Lamara ensures the provision of nursing and care coordination services. She attended The Ohio State University and has been a nurse at Nationwide Children's Hospital for over 30 years. Currently enrolled in Capital University's Master of Nursing program. Lamara's research interest is in developing and implementing a holistic approach to improving the health and care of children with...

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Lamara Love, BSN, RN, CPN, HNB-BC. Lamara is the CP Program Coordinator responsible for operational oversight. Lamara ensures the provision of nursing and care coordination services. She attended The Ohio State University and has been a nurse at Nationwide Children's Hospital for over 30 years. Currently enrolled in Capital University's Master of Nursing program. Lamara's research interest is in developing and implementing a holistic approach to improving the health and care of children with Cerebral Palsy.

Avery Anderson, BA, BSN, RN, With a passion for mental health, Avery M. Anderson received degrees in psychology from Kenyon College (OH) and nursing from Duke University (NC). He has served in various clinical, research and policy positions at Nationwide Children's Hospital. Currently enrolled in The Ohio State University College of Nursing's MSN/PhD program, Avery's clinical and research careers focus on mental health of underserved youth populations, specifically psychosocial and neurocognitive factors underlying suicide among transgender youth.

Victoria von Sadovszky, PhD, RN, FAAN. Victoria von Sadovszky is the Director of Professional Development at Nationwide Children's Hospital. Her clinical and research experience spans over 30 years. Her clinical specialty is psychiatric and behavioral health nursing. Her research focuses on effective interventions for behavior change and health gaming in this area.

Julie Kusiak, MA. Julie Kusiak has her Masters in Child and Family Studies and has worked in the hospital setting for 30 years. She is a Reiki therapy practitioner, Master level trained, with 20 years of experience. She provided Reiki therapy for families in the Family Resource Center at Nationwide Children's Hospital, as well as for the Comprehensive Cerebral Palsy program research study. She also served as the Reiki therapy program instructor for Beaumont Health's Integrative Medicine program from 2004-2021.

Jodi Ford, PhD,RN,FAAN. Dr. Ford is the Associate Professor, Director, Stress Science Lab at The Ohio State University's College of Nursing. Dr. Ford's program of research focuses on understanding the effects of the social environment on neuroendocrine and immune biomarkers of stress, and ultimately, the physical and mental health outcomes of adolescents and young adults. She also studies the potential for neuroendocrine and immune biomarkers of stress to aid in the identification and management of mental health symptoms and outcomes.

Garey Noritz, MD. Garey Noritz is an Internist and Pediatrician at Nationwide Children's Hospital and Professor of Pediatrics at The Ohio State University. He is the Division Director of the Complex Care Program and Chair-elect of the Council on Children with Disabilities of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Dr. Noritz graduated from Brown University School of Medicine. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, and Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

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