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Concussion: Effect of positional release therapy in reducing somatic symptoms at secondary school setting

Statement of the Problem: Due to the comparable somatic presentation and biomechanical nature of concussions, cervicogenic headaches (CGH), tension-type headaches (TTH), cervicogenic vertigo (CGV), and whiplash, it is conceivable that cranial and/or cervical-based dysfunctions can occur secondarily to concussions and increase somatic symptom presentation. Fascial restrictions found within cervical and cranial structures have been found to increase biotensegrital tensions along cranial nerves and vestibular systems; however, fascial release techniques like Positional Release Therapy (PRT) have been found to be an effective treatment in reducing symptoms related to CGH, TTH, CGV, and whiplash. The purpose of this study is to examine the post intervention effect of PRT in resolving somatic symptoms (i.e., headaches, vertigo, hyperacusis, and photosensitivity) associated with concussions in a secondary school setting.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: An action research study utilizing numerical rating scale (NRS) and post-concussion symptom score (PCSS) to measure changes to headaches, vertigo, nausea, hyperacusis, and/or photosensitivity pre/post PRT interventions.

Findings: The participants in this study were of an active population within a secondary school setting. Statistically significant decreases in intensity of headaches, nausea, vertigo, hyperacusis, and photosensitivity were witnessed by outcome measures between pre/post PRT interventions.

Conclusion & Significance: Patients suffering from symptoms associated with concussions may additionally be affected by cervicogenic and cranial-based fascial restrictions which exacerbates headaches, nausea, vertigo, hyperacucis, and/or photosensitivity. Findings suggest concussion patients may benefit from PRT in reducing somatic symptoms during their recovery.

Biography

Joshua K Underwood is the Head Athletic Trainer at Vermont Academy in Saxtons River, Vermont, USA and is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Athletic Training at the University of Idaho. He has worked in a variety of clinical settings over the last 12 years including semi-professional football, summer collegiate baseball, adventure camps, secondary schools, and orthopedic clinics. He specializes in treating regional interdependent dysfunctions, concussions, orthopedic injuries, and fascia with a variety of treatments including Positional Release Therapy, Primal Reflex Release Technique, and Mulligan Concept. His primary areas of research have focused on the treatment of concussions with manual therapy and the treatment of regional independent causation of pain or dysfunction.

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