

PSTD could be treated with Craniosacral therapy according to a research study

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Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is impacting people worldwide. In the United States alone, more than five million people will suffer from PTSD this year. There are major emotional, financial, and negative health implications associated with PTSD making it a timely priority.

"Post-traumatic stress is a complex condition that can be difficult to treat with conventional medical and psychotherapeutic methods," explains naturopathic researcher and clinician Dr. Lisa M. Chavez. "Now more than ever, practical, holistic and effective interventions for post-traumatic stress are needed worldwide."

Dr. Chavez's compelling research involving 38 Tibetan ex-political prisoners in exile is just one of many innovative presentations featured at the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians convention this month.

All study participants were given three medically recognized surveys including The Harvard Trauma Questionnaire, a W.H.O. Brief Quality of Life survey, and the Hopkins Symptom Checklist-25. Participants were divided into two groups: one that received Craniosacral Therapy and another that did not receive the treatment. The majority of the treatment participants were victims of torture who had been imprisoned and suffered severe trauma. Results of the pilot study found that survey scores for anxiety and somatic complaints of the participants who received the Craniosacral Therapy decreased, while the somatic complaint scores of the participants who did not receive therapy actually increased. "The decrease in somatic, anxiety and total scores of the treatment group was statistically significant, with female participants benefiting the most," explained Dr. Chavez.

Craniosacral therapy is based on manually following subtle movements of bone and fascia with focused therapeutic intent. It is considered an alternative therapy involving unconventional concepts such as balance, rhythm, flow, and energy healing. The practitioner gently manipulates the skull and sacrum, which are key components of the central nervous system. No special equipment is used, just the practitioner's hands and their expertise in detecting changes in the movement of energy and fluid in the craniosacral system.

"I think this therapy works so well for body mind conditions because it induces the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system, or as it is commonly called the 'rest and digest' state," explains Dr. Chavez. "This allows the entire body to enter a state of restoration, unlike psychoactive drugs that just dampen the sympathetic response."

Dr. Chavez's research provides hope that this nonverbal, physical medicine can safely and effectively work with the underlying aspects of chronic physical issues that ensue from trauma, including PTSD. "Holistic interventions, like Craniosacral Therapy, work outside the bounds of packaging, culture, language, gender and even mental constraints," says Dr. Chavez. "As we listen with our hands, we can help patients heal their deepest wounds."

The AANP encourages its membership to spearhead innovative research such as the work of Dr. Chavez. The vision of the AANP is to transform the healthcare system from one of disease management to one that is comprehensive and embraces the safe and effective principles and practices of naturopathic medicine.

Source:

American Association of Naturopathic Physicians
