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[Osteopathic versus orthopedic treatments for chronic epicondylopathia humeri radialis: a randomized controlled trial].

[Article in German]

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: The Epicondylopathia humeri radialis is mainly caused by an overload of the extensor muscles of the hand, the afflicted side is generally the dominant hand. There is a multitude of treatment methods, none of them, however, can guarantee success.

OBJECTIVE: Can an osteopathic treatment of the chronic Epicondylopathia humeri radialis reduce the pain more effectively than an orthopedic treatment?

STUDY DESIGN: Randomized controlled clinical study.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: 53 patients were randomly distributed among examination and control group. They were treated for 8 weeks. The osteopathic treatment was done exclusively manually, with parietal, visceral, and craniosacral techniques, individually chosen for each patient. The orthopedic treatment was performed with chiropractic techniques, antiphlogistics, and mostly with injections of cortison. Four common tests were used, all 4 valuing pain and development of power: pressure pain test, Thomsen test, middlefinger extension test, and test for strength. Additionally a questionnaire about the attendant circumstances of the chronic Epicondylopathia humeri radialis was raised.

RESULTS: Subjective pain sensation reduced from 50% to 33% ($p < 0.01$) in the intervention group and from 48% to 32% ($p = 0.03$) in the orthopedic group. A reduction of pain as well as an increase of power could be measured. The difference between the two treatment methods, however, was not statistically significant.

CONCLUSIONS: In this study it was possible to successfully treat the chronic Epicondylopathia humeri radialis with an osteopathic approach. A significant difference to an orthopedic treatment could not be proved.

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