

Esoteric Connective Tissue Therapy Study (Quantitative Data: Key Findings)

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About the research practitioner

In the original study all participants were treated by the same practitioner, a fully qualified and practising physiotherapist for over 30 years. Kate specialises in the treatment of complex chronic pain and musculoskeletal disorders using gentle Physiotherapy, Esoteric Connective Tissue Therapy (ECTT), Remedial massage, Hands on Healing, and Body Awareness / Connective Tissue Exercises. 1995 Kate was fully trained in craniosacral therapy at the Upledger Institute (USA) where she learned the importance of the connective tissue in the body. Her work with connective tissue was greatly enhanced upon meeting and later working with a remarkable complementary health practitioner in 1999 in Northern NSW who taught her Esoteric Connective Tissue Therapy. Kate has been studying and refining her work with the connective tissue since that time.

Study 1

Findings from a short term follow up study showed that a 6 week treatment program of ECTT :

- reduced 56% of all pain (as measured by VAS)
- 45 of the 51 participants reported reduced pain up to 6 months
- General wellbeing was improved and maintained up to 6 months (as measured by the General Wellbeing Schedule).

For full details of research findings see :

<https://www.kategreenaway.com.au/research-education>

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INTRODUCTION

Chronic pain is one of the most common conditions that plagues humanity today. There are various chronic pain conditions, the most common being chronic back pain which affects up to 80% of Australians at some point in their lives with 10% experiencing significant disability as a result.¹ Chronic pain is a huge burden to the global economy with treatment costing billions of dollars each year. In Australia alone, chronic pain was estimated to have cost \$34.3 billion or nearly \$11,000 per person affected by chronic pain in that year.²

Chronic pain adversely influences all areas of a person's life and often has long-term social consequences due to a reduced ability to earn income, relationship separation and other complex health issues.¹ Despite a multitude of treatment and management approaches, treatment results are mixed with many reporting little or modest change to either pain symptoms or quality of life.^{3,4}

The aim of this study was to assess the long term impact on people with chronic musculoskeletal pain from Esoteric Connective Tissue Therapy (ECTT).

ECTT is a gentle hands on healing modality that works on the physical and energetic nature of the connective tissue with gentle rhythmical motions applied to the ankles/feet, spine, arms, legs and skull.



Figure 1. Label in 24pt Arial.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Participants 16 years or older and with chronic bodily pain for more than 3 months were eligible to participate. A total of 51 participants were recruited with 38 re-surveyed at the long term follow-up (7-9 years). Each participant received a 1 hour session, once a week for six weeks, of a particular sequence of five ECTT techniques.

Participants were assessed at baseline, 6 weeks, 6 months and 9 years using well-validated outcome measures and compared through time-dependent univariate and multivariate (SPSS V14.0): Visual Analogue Pain Scale (VAS), Quebec analysis Back Pain Disability Scale and the General Well-Being (GWB) Schedule.

RESULTS

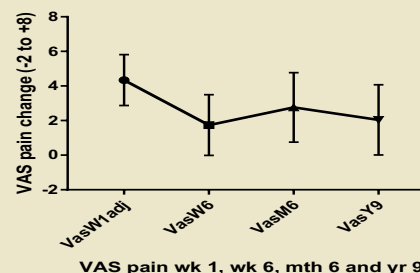
As Table 1 shows, the cohort of 38 subjects was mainly female, showed significant improvement in functional capacity and general well-being and a consistent trend towards improved pain levels 6 months post-ECTT treatment. The BMI scores had a trend of increasing over the 6 months to 9 years with gender predilection for women (t-test, p<0.001). This result has not been observed in the published literature when a person has less pain and is more physically active with positive lifestyle changes, they often lose weight. This trend needs to be explored in further qualitative and quantitative research.

In the long-term follow-up, scores on all measures showed a trend for improvements maintained over time compared to Week 1. The Quebec scores of functional capacity were consistently improved over the 9 years (p=0.051 at Week 1, p<0.001 at Week 6 and 9 years). However the GWB score was statistically significant at 6 months (p=0.017) but not significant at 9 years (p=0.133). This time-related disparity is likely due to inadequate sensitivity of a general survey such as GWB score in detecting small differences in functional improvement against persistent issue(s) in physical and social dimensions. The overall comparative changes in VAS was only significant from Week 1 to Week 6 (p=0.047, ANOVA) but not from Week 6 through to Year 9 (p>0.05, ANOVA) which may indicate VAS as a crude marker of chronic lower back pain.

Table 1. Cohort characteristics at Week 1 and 6 months post-ECT treatment (mean, SE, p-value).

Cohort n = 38	Week 1	6 Month	P-value
Gender	11:25 (31%:69%)	11:25 (31%:69%)	0.050
BMI	23.8 (1.2)	26.3 (1.9)	0.054
GWB score	65.1 (6.3)	82.9 (8.1)	0.017
Quebec score	22.8 (5.7)	15.3 (7.2)	0.001
VAS	3.94 (0.7)	2.7 (0.9)	0.051
Symptom change vs VAS response	n/a	VAS < -2 7.10 (52.4) VAS > -2 45.6 (27.3)	0.041

VAS pain trend over time (2007-2016)



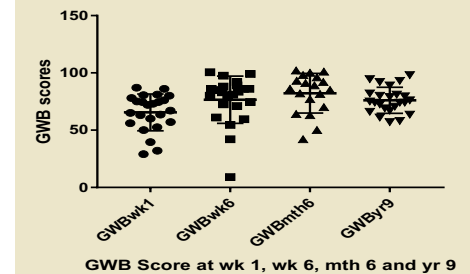
DISCUSSION

Findings from the current study indicate that a 6-week ECTT program resulted in a significant reduction in self-reported pain at 6 months and for 38 subjects who were followed up, this pain reduction lasted up to 9 years. Existing literature shows no definitive treatments for chronic pain that have reduced pain beyond short-term relief, that is, no longer than 12 months^{1,3}. Participants comments confirmed these findings, for example:

"With Esoteric Connective Tissue Therapy I noticed immediate improvement and then ongoing improvements from further treatment to the point where improvement still occurred years later and I have not had a relapse of the pain since"

The observed improvements in VAS, GWB and Quebec scores suggest that even without ongoing treatment these subjects changed their behaviour in some way.

General Well-Being (GWB) Score trend over time (2007-2016)



CONCLUSIONS

ECTT is a gentle hands on healing modality that seems to offer more than relief of pain, or support for pain management. The long-term improvements reported suggest it is very possible that ECTT supports people to make lifestyle changes and to review how they have been moving and performing their daily activities, leading to positive changes in their self-care activities. As this study had varied bodily pain conditions, further scientific studies are needed on the functional effects and physiological mechanism of ECTT on specific clinical conditions of public interest such as chronic neck pain and chronic back pain.

REFERENCES

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