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Effect of Swedish massage on muscle tone of children with spastic cerebral palsy

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Objective: Massage therapy is one of the most widely used complementary and alternative medicine therapies for children. This study was conducted to determine the effect of Swedish massage on muscle tone in children with spastic cerebral palsy.

Method: This study is a double blind clinical trial. Subjects were randomly assigned to intervention and control groups. The routine rehabilitation techniques were done for 3 months in both groups. The intervention group also received Swedish massage for 30 minutes before rehabilitation. Muscle tonicity was evaluated at the beginning of the study and 3 months later by Modified Ashworth Scale.

Results: Although tonicity of upper and lower limbs, trunk and neck in intervention group in comparison with control group had no differences after intervention, there were statistically significant differences before and after intervention "tonicity differences" in two groups ($P < 0.05$)

Conclusion: The encouraging results of this study with children who have cerebral palsy indicate that further studies should be done with children having this or a related condition.