

Abstract

Wirkung von osteopathischen Therapiekonzepten angewandt an Patientinnen mit sekundärem Lymphödem in Folge einer Brustkrebsoperation

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The major problem of patients with postmastectomy lymphedema is chronic limb swelling, which can cause discomfort, heaviness, and tightness. Complications include recurrent acute erysipelas and malignancy in form of lymphangiosarcoma. Psychological handicap occurs as a result of disfigurement. Manual lymphatic drainage (MLD) combined with exercises, skin care, and elastic hosiery are accepted as an intensive phase treatment for lymphedema patients. The relative efficacy of each of the components of this comprehensive treatment program has not been determined yet. This study aims to compare the effect of osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) combined with osteopathic lymphatic technique (OLT) during second phase of lymphedema treatment and manual lymphatic drainage.

A randomized, controlled parallel-group trial had been accomplished at the private physiotherapy-clinic in Achim. Twenty women with breast cancer induced lymphedema of the upper limb were enrolled in the study.

The study consisted of four weeks of MLD treatment for both groups, either followed by OMT/ OLT or MLD. During the study, all patients were obliged to wear elastic hosiery. The main outcome of the study was percentage reduction in excess limb volume. Further, the development of quality of life, influenced by treatments as described above, was monitored and scored, using the SF-36 questionnaire.

The reduction in limb volume by the group treated with MLD was identical as for the OMT/OLT-group. The results showed *no significant* benefit of the applied therapies. The quality of life measured in the study group treated with OMT and OLT was *significantly* higher than in the control group treated with MLD (physical $p= 0,003$) and psychological ($p=0.002$). Patients after OMT/ OLT achieve better health-related quality of life.

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