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CranioSacral Therapy shows promise as concussion treatment – research

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image: https://i0.wp.com/www.horsetalk.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Will-Smith-Peter-Landesman-Bennet-Omalu.jpg?resize=800%2C445&ssl=1

Actor Will Smith at left, with Dr Bennet Omalu, whom he played in the film Concussion, with producer Peter Landesman. The film raised awareness of the issue of brain injuries in sport, particularly football. © Columbia Pictures 2015/Melinda Sue Gordon

A study of football players who had sustained a concussion or mild traumatic brain injury found that CranioSacral Therapy improved their symptoms.

The integrative medicine technique was tested on a group of ex-National Football League (NFL) players who showed significant improvement in range of motion, pain, sleep, and cognitive function.

Lead researcher Eric Leskowitz MD, from the Integrative Medicine Task Force at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, in Charlestown, Massachusetts, said the therapy involves applying gentle pressure on specific sites on the skull to release restrictions believed to have been caused by head trauma.

These restrictions are thought to impair brain function and neuronal repair by altering the rhythmic pulsation and circulation of the cerebrospinal fluid. Leskowitz highlighted the growing need for new treatments for TBI increasingly recognized in sports people and among military personnel experiencing blast injuries, and for post-concussive syndrome.

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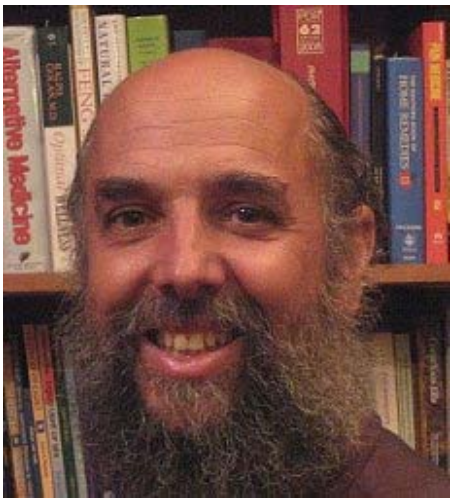

Eric Leskowitz, MD

In a commentary in the topic in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Therapy*, Leskowitz writes that despite increased attention to TBI, definitive research into effective treatment modalities is lagging.
In explaining CST, he said "Contrary to the orthodox medical operating assumption, osteopaths since the 1930s have maintained that the cranial vault – the skull – is not a fixed box whose edges – the sutures – are fused in place. Rather, by an easily learned technique of manual palpation at the temporal bones, they are able to detect a rhythmic pulsation in which the skull perceptibly expands and contracts outward and inward *5 times per minute. This is significantly slower than the respiratory rate or heart rate. As a result of fluid dynamic studies,3 the movement is now believed to represent pulsations of the cerebrospinal fluid."

He continues: "CST practitioners assert that physical and even emotional traumas can become embedded in the connective tissue surrounding the central nervous system. This process is in alignment with the embodied trauma model proposed by other body-centered therapies such as myofascial release and yoga."

Journal of Alternative and Complementary Therapy Editor-in-Chief John Weeks said that while the data cited by Leskowitz was preliminary, "at the same time we are all aware since the 2015 movie *Concussion* of the magnitude of the problem in football. "The situation supports drawing attention to the potential – as this commentary does – so that researchers may more quickly be called to examine this treatment option more thoroughly."
Leskowitz's article *CranioSacral Therapy, Brain Injury, and American Football: Time for a Convergence* is available free online until February 9.

Read more at https://www.horsetalk.co.nz/2018/01/11/craniosacral-therapy-concussion-treatment/#hRe6L5Ie6vXMQHsQ.99

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