



MERIDIAN INSTITUTE NEWS

RESEARCHING THE SPIRIT-MIND-BODY CONNECTION

Paraspinal Thermography & Health

The concept of spinal abnormalities producing illness is an old idea. The early osteopathic physicians spoke of “lesions” (now called “somatic dysfunction”). The early chiropractors called these abnormalities “subluxations” (now called a “subluxation complex”). Edgar Cayce used both designations (lesions and subluxations) while also simply referring to “pressures” and “impingements” at specific vertebral segments. Like the early osteopaths, Cayce also recognized that the abnormalities are not restricted to the skeletal structure (“bony lesions”) but also could manifest as “muscular lesions,” “ligamentous lesions,” “circular lesions,” “floating lesions,” and “reflex lesions.”

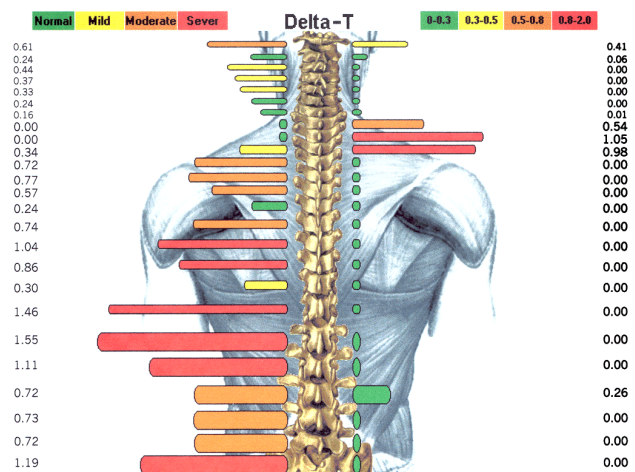
According to these historic sources, the various forms of spinal lesions and subluxations can cause illness and reduced quality of life. Hence, manual treatment (spinal adjustment or manipulation) is an appropriate treatment for improving health.

According to the early osteopaths and Edgar Cayce, one common characteristic of the various forms of spinal abnormality is temperature variation. Thus, the early osteopaths typically used their hands to detect changes in temperatures along the spine (paraspinal) when doing an examination.

The early chiropractors were also aware of thermal variations associated with spinal subluxations. Although they also relied on manual palpation of the spine to detect thermal variations, some enterprising chiropractors developed an instrument called a neurocalometer that could perform this type of assessment.

Edgar Cayce endorsed this instrument in at least two of his readings, stating: “... but there has been perfected or used in the chiropractic association a thermometer, or a gadget that run along the spine shows WHEN they [the centers] coordinate one with another, see?” (480-44) Cayce acknowledged that the device could be useful for detecting pathology and tracking the effects of treatment.

In conjunction with the HRRC (Health and Rejuvenation Research Center – a division of the A.R.E.), Meridian Institute has conducted a preliminary research study using a modern equivalent of the neurocalometer. Meridian Institute research director Douglas Richards, Ph.D. will present the findings of the study at the annual



The Tytron C-3000 generates digital data and graphics as shown above.

convocation of the American Academy of Osteopathy in Norfolk, Virginia in March. The talk is titled, “Correlations Between Paraspinal Temperature Variation And Health Status: From Manual Therapeutic Art To Objective Measurement.”

The purpose of our study was to explore correlations between paraspinal temperature variations and health quality of life. The study compared paraspinal temperature measurements using the Tytron C-3000 with questionnaire measurements using the SF-36, a well-validated measure of health status. Data from 79 people participating in health assessments were used.

The correlations of the SF-36 with measurements of temperature differential on either side of the spine, and temperature variations along the spine, ranged from $r = -.23$ to $-.28$, and were statistically significant at the .05 level. The study demonstrates that temperature imbalances along the spine are correlated with lower health quality of life.

The findings support the ideas expressed by the early osteopaths, chiropractors, and the Cayce readings. Temperature variations along the spine that are believed to be associated with “lesions” and/or “subluxations” may be

associated with health problems that can be objectively measured.

This line of thinking is extremely controversial. In previous issues of this newsletter we have cited articles on this subject by Meridian Institute staff that have been published in medical journals. To review this literature, visit the Meridian Institute website at:

<http://www.meridianinstitute.com/publish.html>

Meridian Institute will continue researching the connection between paraspinal thermography and health. We are currently planning a follow-up study that will include additional measures (such as heart rate variability and bioimpedance) for correlation with paraspinal temperatures. Future studies will also examine the potential therapeutic effects of manual therapy as measured by paraspinal thermography – just as Edgar Cayce recommended.

AWARD

TEMPLETON FOUNDATION AWARD

Dr. Douglas Richards, Meridian Institute research director, recently received an award in the John Templeton Foundation's *Creative Research in Neurobiology* competition, for his essay, "Neurological Correlates of Transformational Experiences." The Templeton Foundation supports research and scholarship in the dialogue between religion and modern science and medicine. This competition was intended to produce new ideas for exploring the higher faculties of humanity (e.g., creativity, mystical experiences) using the techniques of neurobiology.

A variety of experiences – visions, near-death experiences, mystical and numinous experiences - may lead to transformation of the personality, resulting in greater compassion, altruism, and universal love. Cognitive science has explored the reasoning capacities of the human mind/brain, but has heretofore paid little attention to these higher functions. There has been previous work on the role of the temporal lobe of the brain in such experiences (e.g., that of Michael Persinger), as well as some neuroimaging on the areas of the brain involved in meditation (e.g., that of Andrew Newberg). My approach here is to extend this work in several ways to explore the neurological correlates of transformational experiences: (1) better quantitative assessment of experiences, going beyond descriptive phenomenology, (2) more diversity of experiences, comparing spontaneous experiences to induced experiences, and particularly exploring the factors involved in positive vs. negative experiences (3) focusing specifically on neuroimaging, with near-death experiences

as a model, and (4) using the results of neuroimaging to design experiments to induce experiences for controlled study. This approach has the potential to show coherent mechanisms for these experiences (as opposed to pathology caused by biological deterioration), encouraging further exploration to gain an understanding of their role in human existence.

Dr. Richard's award-winning paper can be viewed on the Meridian Institute website at:

<http://www.meridianinstitute.com/reports/neurocor.html>

LITERATURE

TOMATO-BASED FOODS CUT RISK OF PROSTATE CANCER

A recent study published in *the Journal of the National Cancer Institute* reports that a diet rich in tomato-based foods can reduce the risk of prostate cancer. When researchers analyzed the diets and prostate cancer data of more than 47,000 men (40-75 years old), they found that eating at least two meals each week containing tomato products reduced prostate cancer rates by 24 to 36 percent.

The study is consistent with previous prostate cancer research involving foods that contain lycopene, a powerful antioxidant found in tomato products. Antioxidants are substances thought to protect against cancer by reducing tissue-damaging free radicals that are produced during metabolism.

The researchers note that foods containing *cooked tomatoes* appear to be particularly beneficial in protecting against prostate cancer. Tomato sauce was a favorite food of the research participants and also seemed to provide the most protection. Cooking may allow the body to absorb more lycopene by breaking down the cell walls of the tomato.

Interestingly, Edgar Cayce was a big advocate of tomatoes, both raw and cooked. When asked about the effects of eating an abundance of tomatoes he responded, "Quite a dissertation might be given as to the effect of tomatoes upon the human system. Of all the vegetables, tomatoes carry most of the vitamins in a well-balanced assimilative manner for the activities in the system. Yet if these are not cared for properly, they may become very destructive to a physical organism; that is, if they ripen after being pulled, or if there is the contamination with other influences."

In numerous instances, Cayce also advised eating canned tomatoes unless they were fresh and vine-ripened: "Beware of raw tomatoes, unless well-ripened on the vine – not those gathered green and then ripened. Preferably use these cooked or canned, rather than raw – unless well

ripened when gathered – from the vine.” When canned, he cautioned against using sodium benzoate as a preservative.

Cayce didn't make any specific statements regarding tomatoes as protecting against prostate cancer, but seemed to regard tomatoes, properly harvested and prepared, as having general health benefits. Perhaps future research will uncover additional positive effects of eating tomatoes!

Reference

Edward Giovannucci, Eric B. Rimm, Yan Liu, Meir J. Stampfer, and Walter C. Willett. A Prospective Study of Tomato Products, Lycopene, and Prostate Cancer Risk. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2002; 94: 391-398.

HEALING

CAYCE DIET FOR HEARTBURN

This anecdote was provided by a fifty-four year old woman on January 10, 2002.

“For the past 25 years, I have had awful heartburn. Fifteen years ago I had a bleeding ulcer that originated at the juncture of my stomach and esophagus and had to receive 2 units of blood. Since then I have used Tagamet and Tums like candy to prevent a recurrence. Nights were the worst!

“Three days ago I began following the Alkaline diet guidelines set down by Cayce. For the past two days I have had NO heartburn at all and have not taken one tagamet or Tums. I am able to sleep all night, even lying on my stomach, without a problem.”

On March 13, 2002 we received a follow up report that read:

“As long as I follow the guidelines, I have remained heart-burn free. A small package of potatoes chips will give me heartburn, or a candy bar....but even then it is not as pervasive as it had been before following the alkaline diet guidelines. And, I try not to stray from the guidelines 90% of the time.”

Although Edgar Cayce provided individualized treatment plans with varied dietary recommendations, many of his readings indicate that for most people an alkaline-reacting diet is beneficial. Numerous readings suggested that such a diet should consist of about 80 percent alkaline-reacting foods (most fruits and vegetables) and about 20 percent acid-reacting foods (such as meat, grains, and sweets).

CALENDAR

September 13-15, 2002: 7th Annual Cayce Health Professional's Symposium, Virginia Beach.

MERIDIAN INSTITUTE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

We welcome your support and participation. Please contribute your knowledge, time and money to Meridian Institute's important research on the Edgar Cayce health readings. Meridian Institute is a non-profit organization. Your donations are tax-deductible.

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Statement of Purpose:

The goal of Meridian Institute is to expand the meeting ground between science and spirit by conducting and sponsoring clinical and basic science research. We intend to examine concepts about the body compatible with the premise that we are spiritual beings, and to approach the healing process from this perspective.

The body of information that will be researched and used as a guide for directing our work will be the Edgar Cayce health readings. Now over fifty years old, they provide a coherent and consistent physiology of how the body functions in health and disease. These health readings have never been fully researched in a modern, scientific manner that would provide data acceptable to all healthcare professionals and agencies.

It is our intention to conduct research in a manner acceptable to the modern healthcare community.

Priorities:

1.) To conduct and support research that examines physiological, anatomical, and health concepts which help unify the scientific and spiritual world views. This will involve sponsoring clinical and basic research, and engaging in "seed research" through conferences on specific topics and clinical projects incorporating a network of cooperating researchers and clinicians.

2.) To support, sponsor and directly present programs educating health professionals, scientists, and the public regarding these spirit-mind-body connections.

3.) To serve as an information network for researchers and clinicians exploring and applying these concepts and methods.

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