



MERIDIAN INSTITUTE NEWS

RESEARCHING THE SPIRIT-MIND-BODY CONNECTION

Colonic Irrigation Project Begins

Sometimes referred to as a colonic or colon hydrotherapy, colonic irrigation is an internal bath. The forty-five-minute procedure involves a gentle infusion of warm, filtered water into the rectum. The water circulates throughout the colon, dissolving and removing its contents, while the client lies on a table. Water temperature and pressure are closely monitored and regulated during a series of fills and releases to aid in the peristaltic action of the colon. As the method involves an enclosed system, the waste materials are removed without the unpleasant odors or discomfort usually associated with enemas.

This alternative health procedure is receiving increased attention among alternative medicine and mainstream practitioners. Colonic irrigation has received a boost from several Hollywood celebrities who credit this procedure with enhancing their beauty and health. Some colon hydrotherapists make claims about the effectiveness of colonic irrigation for reducing headaches, backaches, constipation, fatigue, bad breath, body odor, irritability, confusion, skin problems, abdominal gas, bloating, diarrhea, and sciatic pain. Edgar Cayce often recommended colonics as one element of a cleansing program.

At the other end of the spectrum of opinion, many alternative and mainstream physicians believe that colonics are not helpful for these problems, and warn of the possibility that the procedure itself may cause infection or colon perforation. However, little actual data is available either in support of or against colonic irrigations.

Historical Background

Various forms of colon cleansing have been used for centuries to maintain health and treat a wide spectrum of disorders. The modern colonic machine was developed about one hundred years ago. Up until the late 1920's many doctors offices and hospi-



Colon hydrotherapy setting showing colonic machine and massage table.

tals had colonic machines. In the early 1930's, although there were still proponents of the procedure, colonic irrigation began to fall out of favor in favor of drugs and surgery, and no scientific research was performed. After some cases of serious illness were reported in the late 1970s from a single clinic using contaminated equipment, mainstream medicine came out strongly against colonics.

With the resurgence of interest in alternative medicine and natural healing, colonic irrigation has become more commonly available. Modern colonic machines use disposable tubing to eliminate the problem of contamination. But the block to acceptance by the wider medical community is that there is virtually no research literature on the safety and efficacy of colonic irrigation. The value of colonic irrigation attributed by historical sources has either been forgotten or ignored. So while modern colon hydrotherapists make claims for the safety and efficacy of these treatments, the modern medical literature continues to take a very negative view of colonics (Ernst, 1997).

Colonic Irrigation Research Project

Meridian Institute has begun a project studying

the process of colonic irrigation. The first phase of the project involves collecting data on people's experiences just after a colonic session and one week later. The brief questionnaires contain items that may relate to bowel health or the colonic irrigation procedure, including: energy level, abdominal discomfort, rectal discomfort, diarrhea, constipation, indigestion, headache, anxiety, muscle discomfort, depression, joint pain, skin blemishes, and intestinal gas.

The specific aim of this project is to evaluate the experiences of people receiving colonic irrigations. The primary hypothesis is that colonic irrigation is a safe health procedure and that this will be reflected in a low incidence of adverse experiences and a high level of positive experiences. Secondly, some preliminary data will be collected to explore whether the procedure offers some benefit. This project is a first step toward establishing safety and efficacy in a formal way.

We will be collecting data from clients of the A.R.E. Health Services department in Virginia Beach. Based on our preliminary data samples, we hope to have completed a research report on Phase 1 of this project by the end of this year.

Reference

Ernst EJ. Colonic irrigation and the theory of auto-intoxication: a triumph of ignorance over science. *J Clin Gastroenterol* 1997;24:196-8.

PUBLICATION

GOLD AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO NEUROLOGIC/GLANDULAR CONDITIONS

We are pleased to announce the publication of an article titled "Gold and its Relationship to Neurologic/Glandular Conditions" in the *International Journal of Neuroscience*. The paper provides a conceptual and historical review of the medicinal use of gold.

Despite increasing sales of gold supplements, and claims of benefits for neurological and glandular conditions, gold has received little attention in modern medical literature except as a drug for rheumatoid arthritis. Historically, however, gold had a reputation as a "nervine," a therapy for nervous disorders.

A review of the historical literature shows gold in use during the 19th century for conditions including

depression, epilepsy, migraine, and glandular problems including amenorrhea and impotence. The most notable use of gold was in a treatment for alcoholism developed by Leslie E. Keeley, M.D. In the modern medical literature, gold-containing medicines for rheumatoid arthritis are known to have occasional neurotoxic adverse effects. There are also a few studies suggesting a role for gold as a naturally occurring trace element in the reproductive glands. One small recent study demonstrated a possible positive effect of gold on cognitive ability. There is a need for more experimental and clinical research into the neuropharmacology and neurochemistry of gold, and exploration of gold's possible role as a trace element.

Reference

Richards DG, McMillin DL, Mein EA, Nelson CD. Gold and its Relationship to Neurologic/Glandular Conditions. *International Journal of Neuroscience*, 2002, Vol.112:31-53.

LITERATURE

MASSAGE FOR LOW-BACK PAIN

The Research Institute for Work and Health has completed a review of studies (randomized or quasi-randomized trials) on the efficacy of massage for non-specific low-back pain. Low-back pain is a common and costly musculoskeletal problem in modern society. Advocates of massage therapy claim it can minimize pain and disability, and speed return to normal function. The two reviewers searched Medline, Embase, Cochrane Controlled Trials Register, HealthSTAR, CINAHL and Dissertation abstracts through May 2001 with no language restrictions. The reviewers were blinded to authors, journal, and institutions. They assessed the methodological quality using the criteria recommended by the Cochrane Back Review Group. The studies were analysed in a qualitative way due to heterogeneity of population, massage technique, comparison groups, timing and type of outcome measured.

Nine publications reporting on eight randomized trials were included in the analysis. Three had low and five had high methodological quality scores. Massage was compared to an inert treatment (sham laser) in one study that showed that massage was superior, especially if given in combination with exercises and education. In the other seven studies, mas-

sage was compared to different active treatments. They showed that massage was inferior to manipulation and TENS; massage was equal to corsets and exercises; and massage was superior to relaxation therapy, acupuncture and self-care education. The beneficial effects of massage in patients with chronic low-back pain lasted at least one year after the end of the treatment. One study comparing two different techniques of massage concluded in favour of acupuncture massage over classic (Swedish) massage.

The reviewers conclude that massage might be beneficial for patients with subacute and chronic non-specific low-back pain, especially when combined with exercises and education. However they noted that more studies are needed to confirm these conclusions and to assess the impact of massage on return-to-work, and to measure longer term effects to determine cost-effectiveness of massage as an intervention for low-back pain.

Reference

Furlan AD, Brosseau L, Imamura M, Irvin E. Massage for low back pain. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev* 2002;(2).

HEALING

“SENIOR MOMENTS”

The radial appliance is an energy medicine device recommended by Edgar Cayce to work with the body's “vibratory energies.” The appliance looks like a battery but produces no measurable energy. Cayce said it works more like a magnet that draws energy from one part of the body where a metal plate is attached and redistributes the energy via another plate attached to another area of the body. When a solution jar is included in the circuit, Cayce said that the vibratory signature of the ingredient could be carried into the system. Gold chloride and silver nitrate were two of the more common substances used in the solution jar, especially for neurological conditions (see gold article cited in the Publication section).

Here is an anecdote provided by a woman who was experiencing “senior moments” and decided to try the radial appliance with gold and silver to improve her memory.

“Off and on over the past five years I have had moments when I couldn't remember the name of something, or someone's name. But about nine

months ago it became harder to think and remember what happened yesterday or last week. It felt like something wasn't connecting in the brain. It was different and I knew it was serious.

“I called David [McMillin] and asked him how to use the Radial appliance with the gold and silver and he very kindly helped me.

“After the first cycle of 4 days, I could feel a shift beginning to take place. My mind felt clearer and sharper. It slowly . Amproved and by the 16th day (4 cycles) I felt normal again.

“It actually felt better than normal. I could remember details, people's names, etc etc. It felt like everything was new again.

“I am doing my second cycle after nine months because the clarity and sharpness are beginning to fade a little and I don't want to fall back to the place where I had been.

“It is exciting to know that something can be done and as one ages, one does not have to experience ‘senior moments.’”

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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