



# MERIDIAN INSTITUTE NEWS

RESEARCHING THE SPIRIT-MIND-BODY CONNECTION

## Colonic Irrigation Project Update

We have been making great progress with the Colonic Irrigation Project (See the July 2002 issue of this newsletter for background).

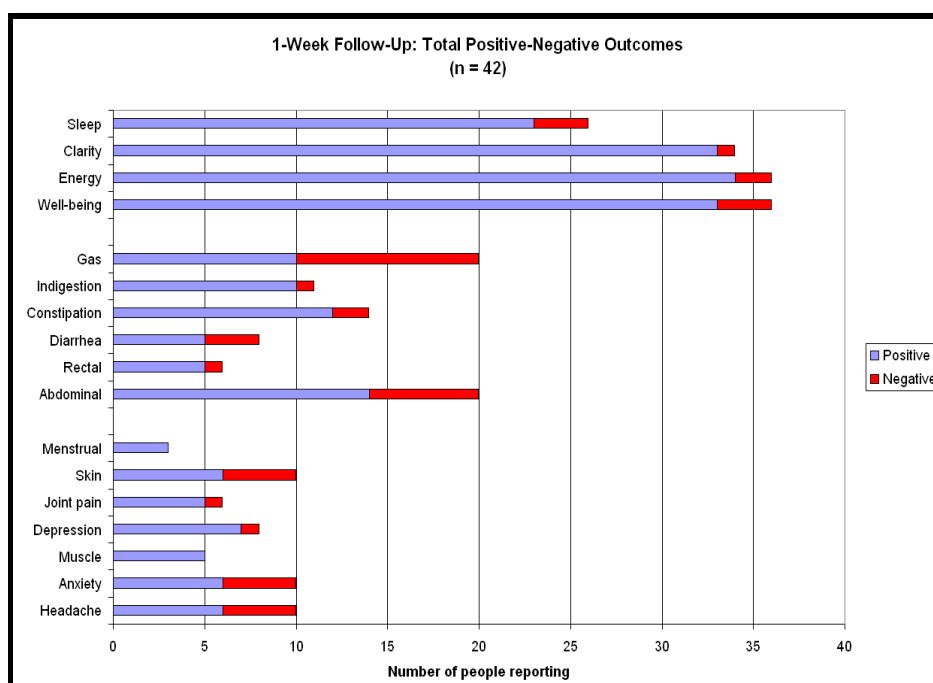
A colonic irrigation is a gentle infusion of warm, filtered water into the rectum to cleanse the large bowel and promote peristaltic action. Although the procedure has ample historical documentation and is advocated by many alternative medicine practitioners, there is little direct data on the safety and efficacy on this therapy.

To begin the process of addressing this deficiency in documentation, the first phase of our colonic irrigation project is a preliminary study intended to develop psychometric instruments that measure experiences of people getting a colonic irrigation at the A.R.E. Health Services Department. The first phase has also generated some important preliminary data on the experience itself.

During the past six months over 100 people have participated in the study. The results have been very encouraging, as described below. The majority of participants feel that the colonic irrigation was a very positive experience.

Two questionnaires were used, one filled out by participants immediately after the colonic irrigation, and one filled out and returned a week later. The response rate for the one-week follow-up was about 50%, which is excellent for a mail-in form.

The reports immediately following the colonic



irrigation have been overwhelmingly positive on items like “relaxation,” and “general well-being.” They have also indicated a low incidence of side-effects such as cramping.

The one-week follow-up results are also very positive. The graph (see above) shows the positive (improved) and negative (got worse) outcomes reported. This includes any change (e.g., even slight changes).

Most of the participants reported improvements in sleep, clarity of thought, energy level, and general well-being; only a few reported feeling slightly worse. Most of the people reported no change or not applicable for the other items.

Of those reporting, for some items like indigestion most people reported improvement, whereas for

other items like intestinal gas, some people had more and some had less. For most of these items, the intensity of the change was small. In addition, there were occasionally comments, like that of one woman who reported greater anxiety, but said it was probably due to going back to work after a vacation in Virginia Beach.

Based on the encouraging results of the first phase of the project, we will now proceed to the second stage by refining our questionnaires and procedures. For example, several participants noted that the original questionnaire was somewhat ambiguous regarding items like "abdominal pressure," which might go up during the colonic, and then release. In response to this feedback the questionnaire has been modified for future data collection to be more sensitive to the timing of experiences both during *and* immediately after the colonic irrigation.

We wish to acknowledge and thank the staff of the A.R.E. Health Services Department who have been terrific in the recruitment of participants and collection of data.

## PUBLICATION

### MERIDIAN INSTITUTE VIDEO MAGAZINE

We are just putting the finishing touches on a video magazine as a special benefit to those who provide financial support to Meridian Institute. As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand



words. At thirty frames per second, video media allows viewers a much deeper look at our research projects and the people involved in this important work. Considering the amount of time that most of us watch TV, we might as well put it to good use.

After a brief introduction that provides background on how Meridian Institute was founded and has evolved, the video features interviews with Meridian researchers who discuss some of our current projects and plans for the future. The nontechnical language and images will help viewers to better understand our research efforts.

This exploratory venture is intended to improve our educational outreach and increase donations. If you have made a donation to Meridian Institute, you can expect to receive the video within the next couple of weeks. For those who have not yet donated, a gift of any amount will qualify you to receive a copy of the first edition of the Meridian Institute Video Magazine. Your donation is tax deductible.

## LITERATURE

### BRAIN DRAINAGE FOR ALZHEIMER'S

Alzheimer's disease is a form of dementia characterized by brain degeneration linked to two types of abnormal brain deposits – plaques of amyloid beta proteins and tangles of tau proteins. Some researchers believe that poor clearance of these toxic proteins cause the unique brain deterioration in Alzheimer's disease.

A novel study with positive results suggests that drainage of cerebrospinal fluid from the brains of Alzheimer's patients may reduce the toxic proteins and halt the cognitive decline associated with the illness. The experimental treatment consisted of surgically implanting a shunt to drain small amounts of cerebrospinal fluid (low-flow ventriculoperitoneal shunt). Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) normally circulates in the spaces (ventricles) within the brain and spinal cord, is absorbed, and then replenished by the body. The circulation of CSF diminishes with age.

The preliminary study involved twenty-nine probable Alzheimer's patients who were screened to exclude normal pressure hydrocephalus or other etiologies of dementia and randomized into treatment (shunt) and no treatment groups. The CSF drained from the brains of Alzheimer's patients was analyzed for the presence of the toxic proteins for one year. The CSF of Alzheimer's patients changed over time and the Alzheimer's patients receiving the drainage technique exhibited little change in psychometric (Mattis Dementia Rating Scale and Mini-Mental State Examination) scores while the untreated control group showed the progressive cognitive decline associated with Alzheimer's. The researchers acknowledged the preliminary nature of the data. A larger, randomized, double-blinded, controlled, clinical trial is underway to test the initial findings.

Interestingly, the traditional osteopathic model of dementia is that of brain toxicity. Based on this model, the early osteopathic physicians utilized manipulations to increase drainage of the brain when treating dementia and other neurologic syndromes (Riggs, 1901; Millard, 1922). Edgar Cayce was aware of these techniques and recommended them in certain cases of brain disease. Notably, in one reading that recommended electrotherapy with gold and silver to regenerate brain tissue in dementia, he insisted that "proper manipulations to PRODUCE coordination WITH drainage in the system, as may be given through manipulation osteopathically, or neuropathically given to the system under various stages, may create for a body almost a new brain ..." (Cayce, 1930) Perhaps the modern medical studies of brain drainage for Alzheimer's may serve to elaborate the traditional osteopathic hypothesis endorsed by Cayce.

### References

- Cayce E. *Edgar Cayce reading 1800-16*; 1930.
- Riggs WL. *A manual of osteopathic manipulations and treatment*. Elkhart, IN: New Science Publishing Co.; 1901.
- Millard FP. *Applied anatomy of the lymphatics*. A. G. Walmsley (Ed.). Kirksville, MO: Mitchell, Moran and Pruzzo, Associates; 1922.
- Silverberg GD., et al. Assessment of low-flow CSF drainage as a treatment for AD: Results of a randomized pilot study. *Neurology* 2002;59:1139-1145.

## CALENDAR

September 19-21, 2003: 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Cayce Health Professionals 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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