

### 13. Diseases of the Musculoskeletal and Connective Tissue

#### Reference

Yamamoto K. A clinical study of manual therapy for chronic rheumatoid arthritis \*. *Nihon Shugi Ryoho Gakkai Zasshi (The Journal of Japanese Association of Manual Therapy)* 2001; 12(1): 7–15 (in Japanese). Ichushi Web ID 2003139616

#### 1. Objectives

To evaluate the effect of manual therapy on quality of life (QOL) in chronic rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients.

#### 2. Design

Quasi-randomized controlled trial (quasi-RCT).

#### 3. Setting

Outpatients clinics (the University of Tokyo Hospital), Japan.

#### 4. Participants

Twenty adult patients with RA (at least two years since onset, treated with steroids [10 mg/day [prednisolone equivalent] or less]).

#### 5. Intervention

Arm 1: Combined group: Drug therapy and manual therapy (once a week, n=10).

Arm 2: Control group: Drug therapy (n=10).

#### 6. Main outcome measures

American College of Rheumatology (ACR) Core Set (RA activity score).

Arthritis Impact Measurement Scales 2 (AIMS-2) (disease-specific QOL scale).

The study observation period was one year.

#### 7. Main results

Of the ACR Core Set measures, the tender and swollen joint counts improved by 20% or more in both groups, and the improvement in patient-assessed pain and physician-assessed pain scores was significantly different between groups. QOL tended to improve in both groups. The improvement in QOL measures including hand and finger function, pain, and tension was similar in both groups.

#### 8. Conclusions

Combining manual therapy with standard treatment limits reduction of physical functioning, improves activities of daily living, and contributes to improved QOL in RA patients.

#### 9. Safety assessment in the article

Not mentioned.

#### 10. Abstractor's comments

The author has designed the study well: the observation period spans the relatively long period of one year, and standard measures are used for the outcomes. The author's institution demonstrates its potential as a research institute. Regrettably, the study has flaws, including its use of the odd-even ID number method of randomization. Such problems could be rectified by using the university's clinical trial center.

#### 11. Abstractor and date

Tsukayama H, 17 December 2011.