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SKIN DISORDER: PSORIASIS AND ECZEMA

By: Regan Walker, Registered Massage Therapist

INTRODUCTION

The following case study is a look at the treatment of psoriasis and eczema through Osteopathic therapy. Osteopathy is a manual medicine that is able to treat a broad spectrum of conditions through a variety of manual techniques. The focus is on putting the body back in alignment so that all systems within the body may function normally.

BACKGROUND

Psoriasis and eczema are very common, chronic skin diseases that cause dry, itchy, scaling, and some times cracking lesions of the skin. Psoriasis often occurs on the backs of elbows and the fronts of knees (the extensor surfaces) and eczema often occurs on the insides of the arms and the backs of the knees (the flexor surfaces). Both of these conditions may be aggravated by irritants, such as chemicals present in some lotions, perfumes, soaps, or by allergens present in things such as foods (wheat, dairy, alcohol, etc.).

HISTORY

I.M. is a 43 year old male who suffers from both eczema and psoriasis. He has suffered from eczema since his early teens and was diagnosed with psoriasis later on in his life. I.M. has outbreaks over many parts of his body with the most severe outbreaks occurring over his arms and neck. He has noticed a correlation between his outbreaks and dietary influences such as alcohol.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND RATIONAL BEHIND TREATMENT

I.M. presented with multiple asymmetries throughout his body. These could have occurred from a variety of causes. Common causes include: injury, improper physical training, and prolonged periods of remaining in one position such as working at a computer station, using a mouse, or long periods of driving. Imbalances and asymmetries occur when certain muscles are made to work overtime while their counterparts remain inactive. Since muscles attach onto bones this can



create a rotation or pull on a joint which will in turn affect not only the joint but everything around it including nerves, arteries, veins, and other important tissues. Many of these nerves and arteries are vital to the functioning of our internal organs so when rotations or asymmetries are present, not only can musculoskeletal pain occur, but also disruption to the normal functioning of our body.

I found it interesting that some of the most significant asymmetries that I.M. presented with occurred around the area of the spine where the nerves that go to the liver and digestive tract come from. If the liver is unable to function optimally it is then unable to do its job of cleansing the body of substances and eliminating chemicals, toxins, poisons and many other things. The body is then left to excrete these toxins by other means, one of which may be through the skin. This can create reactions from the skin in the form of pimples, exema, psoriasis, or any other kind of rash. If the liver or parts of the digestive tract are not functioning properly the blood supply becomes loaded with an abnormally high level of toxins that the skin will become responsible for excreting. Many of these toxins are not meant to be excreted through the skin or even come into contact with it and therefore may produce an irritative response such as inflammation, redness, sores, and itchiness.

The focus of my treatment was to try and remove the asymmetries that I.M. presented with using different manual techniques that target the musculoskeletal system as well as the nervous system. It was also recommended that an exercise program be introduced that will help him maintain the structural changes that were made during the treatments. It is expected that over the course of treatment, when the asymmetries begin to normalize so will the functioning of the compromised organs. When the liver and intestines are able to function properly this will take the load off of the skin and hopefully remove the irritants that are causing the breakouts of eczema and psoriasis.