

Overall Function and Symptom Impact of Self-Applied Myofascial Release in Adult Patients With Fibromyalgia. A Seven-Week Pilot Study

Authors : Domenica Tambasco, Riina Bray, Sophia Jaworski, Gillian Grant, Celeste Corkery

Abstract : Fibromyalgia is a chronic condition characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain, fatigue, and reduced function. Management of symptoms include medications, physical treatments and mindfulness therapies. Myofascial Release is a modality that has been successfully applied in various musculoskeletal conditions. However, to the author's best knowledge, it is not yet recognized as a self-management therapy option in Fibromyalgia. In this study, we investigated whether Self-applied Myofascial Release (SMR) is associated with overall improved function and symptoms in Fibromyalgia. Methods: Eligible adult patients with a confirmed diagnosis of Fibromyalgia at Women's College Hospital were recruited to SMR. Sessions ran for 1 hour once a week for 7 weeks, led by the same two Physiotherapists knowledgeable in this physical treatment modality. The main outcome measure was an overall impact score for function and symptoms based on the validated assessment tool for Fibromyalgia, the Revised Fibromyalgia Impact Questionnaire (FIQR), measured pre and post-intervention. Both descriptive and analytical methods were applied and reported. Results: We analyzed results using a paired t-test to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in mean FIQR scores between initial (pre-intervention) and final (post-intervention) scores. A clinically significant difference in FIQR was defined as a reduction in score by 10 or more points. Conclusions: Our pilot study showed that SMR appeared to be a safe and effective intervention for our Fibromyalgia participants and the overall impact on function and symptoms occurred in only 7 weeks. Further studies with larger sample sizes comparing SMR to other physical treatment modalities (such as stretching) in an RCT are recommended.

Keywords : fibromyalgia, myofascial release, physical therapy, FIQR

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