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Effects of massage on pain, mood status, relaxation and sleep in Taiwanese patients with metastatic bone pain: A randomized clinical trial.

To date, patients with bony metastases were only a small fraction of the samples studied, or they were entirely excluded. Patients with metastatic cancers, such as bone metastases, are more likely to report pain, compared to patients without metastatic cancer (50-74% and 15%, respectively). Their cancer pain results in substantial morbidity and disrupted quality of life in 34-45% of cancer patients. Massage therapy (MT) appears to have positive effects in patients with cancer; however, the benefits of MT, specifically in patients with metastatic bone pain, remains unknown. The purpose of this randomized clinical trial was to compare the efficacy of MT to a social attention control condition on pain intensity, mood status, muscle relaxation, and sleep quality in a sample (n=72) of Taiwanese cancer patients with bone metastases. In this investigation, MT was shown to have beneficial within- or between-subjects effects on pain, mood, muscle relaxation, and sleep quality. Results from repeated-measures analysis of covariance demonstrated that massage resulted in a linear trend of improvements in mood and relaxation over time. More importantly, the reduction in pain with massage was both statistically and clinically significant, and the massage-related effects on

relaxation were sustained for at least 16-18hours post intervention. Furthermore, massage-related effects on sleep were associated with within-subjects effects. Future studies are suggested with increased sample sizes, a longer interventional period duration, and an objective and sensitive measure of sleep. Overall, results from this study support employing MT as an adjuvant to other therapies in improving bone pain management
