

Visceral Manipulation / Organ Massage

By Glenn Rexroad

Visceral manipulation, also called organ massage, has been widely used by many cultures for thousands of years. The ancient Greeks and Romans employing a balanced approach to healing would naturally include manual manipulation of organs. Visceral manipulation is still used by many cultures. China, Japan, Persia and the Hindu system of Ayurvedic Medicine all use visceral manipulation. In the United States the most well known proponent of Visceral Manipulation was Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, M.D. In the early twentieth century Dr. Kellogg used Visceral Manipulation with great success in his renowned Battlecreek Michigan Sanitarium.

In more modern times the most renowned advocates of Visceral Massage are Jean-Pierre Barral, D. O. and Jean-Claude Mercier, D. O., who have authored two textbooks, "Visceral Manipulations, Volumes 1 & 2". In their books they outline the interrelationship of structure and function among the internal organs and that manipulation of the viscera can be beneficially used in the treatment of internal organ dysfunction. It is their belief that all pathology or impairment of an organ results in visceral restriction, fixation or adhesion to another structure. This means that when the organ in question is no longer able to move freely in its cavity it is fixed or adhered to another structure. This impairs function of the organ and the body must compensate for this situation.

Impairment of an organ can also lead to dysfunction in other areas of the body. This is known as visceral to somatic (organ to body) referral. Dr. Frank H. Netter illustrated in his book, "Atlas of Human Anatomy", that a dysfunction of the liver can refer chronic pain to the right shoulder. He further illustrated that the pancreas can refer pain across the midback. Thus, treating organs can improve chronic pain in other areas of the body, which in fact could be the cause of the pain.

Conditions that can be effectively treated by Visceral Manipulation include: back pain, head ache, constipation, chronic nausea, irritable bowel syndrome, hiatal hernia, indigestion, reflux syndrome, chronic intestinal gas, abdominal bloating, chronic abdominal cramping, menstrual cramping, prolapsed (dropped out of place) organ, et al. In addition, the viscera should always be examined for adhesions after any abdominal surgery.

Treatment consists of releasing adhesions and restoring blood flow to the viscera in order to restore its primary physiological mobility and motility. It is my experience that it is possible to improve function by restoring proper blood flow and motion through manipulation of the viscera.

Organ massage, although safe for most people, is not intended to diagnose. And, should not be undertaken if you have a serious condition without the written permission from a physician.

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