

Abstract

The significance of fascial research has been steadily growing in recent years, driven by an increasing recognition of the integral role played by the fascial system in the body's structure, function, and overall well-being. Fascia, a complex network of connective tissue, encompasses various layers throughout the body. The present dissertation deals with the interplay between chronic neck pain, depression, and the fascial continuum, offering comprehensive insights into potential interventions and underlying mechanisms. Through three distinct studies, the research explores how myofascial release influences pain management and emotional well-being in individuals coping with chronic neck pain and depression. Additionally, it investigates the relationship between fascial properties and these common conditions. The initial study addresses the widespread issue of chronic neck pain, affecting a significant portion of the global population. Recognizing its complex nature and extended diagnostic process, the research evaluates the impact of myofascial release on pain and range of motion in individuals with chronic neck pain. By incorporating selection criteria and a systematic search algorithm across diverse databases, the study draws from ten randomized controlled trials involving 549 participants. The findings reveal a noteworthy difference in favor of myofascial release in pain, rotation, and lateral flexion compared to alternative treatment methods. Despite these positive outcomes, the study underscores the need for further scientific exploration to comprehensively grasp myofascial release's benefits in managing chronic neck pain. The second study delves into the complex interplay between depressive disorder, chronic pain, and the fascial continuum. Highlighting the limited existing research on the association between fascial properties and these conditions, the study investigates the deep fascia of the M. Trapezius. The research uncovers significant differences in stiffness, tone, and fascia thickness by utilizing standardized techniques such as ultrasound imaging and a compliance meter. The interplay between mental health, chronic pain, and fascial properties is further highlighted by the correlations found among depression, chronic pain, and fascial characteristics. The third study, adopting an experimental study design, extends its focus to the relationship between depression and chronic neck pain. The research examines the potential of myofascial release as an intervention. The study uncovers promising outcomes by comprehensively investigating emotional states, autonomic nervous system functioning, and various physical parameters. Significant improvements are noted in pain perception, stiffness, cervical spine mobility, heart rate variability, and positive affect within the myofascial release group. The study advocates integrating myofascial release into treatment approaches, signaling potential benefits. Nevertheless, the call for further research is emphasized to replicate these findings, explore long-term effects, and ascertain the clinical significance of specific outcomes.