The Effects of Massage Therapy on Children Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy

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INTRODUCTION
- Cerebral palsy is a neurologic disorder that affects the movement, tone, and posture, which can result in unsteadiness and clumsiness (Hansen, 2014).
- Alternative therapy is a group of therapies (that do not include pharmacological influence) to help treat a variety of symptoms and diseases.
- Massage therapy is a non-invasive therapy that can possibly help improve muscle strength and reduce pain with children diagnosed with cerebral palsy.
- If massage therapy is proven to be beneficial, children with cerebral palsy may see improvements in their gait, balance, and motor function as a result of massage therapy (Hansen, 2014).

RESULTS
- Massage therapy can improve gait characteristics and motor function, thus improving comfort and quality of life in these patients.
- Massage therapy has shown to increase circulation and therefore decreases muscle tension, improves motor function, and reduces overall pain.
- Some children found it painful at first but became more relaxing as the sessions carried on.
- The feedback gathered from the children show that they enjoyed the massage therapy, and they especially enjoyed the fact that it is non-invasive and that their parents can practice massage therapy at home whenever possible.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION
- The majority of this population do not find full relief of pain and motor function improvement from pharmacological medications and therapies.
- Non-invasive, easy to apply therapy
- As nurses, we are trained to provide comfort and help improve quality of life to our patients.
- Nurses can reach our goal by providing comfort and improving their quality of life because it can help improve their gait characteristics and motor function.
- This is a promising area of research that needs future research.

REFERENCES