

SCALP MASSAGE **AND** *STRESS*

Are you experiencing anxiety or a loss of productivity? Do you have concentration problems? Are you losing the motivation to go to work? In Korea, a solution has been found with a **scalp massage program that can improve well-being at work**. A Korean team studied the effects of scalp massage on 34 female office workers between the ages of 20 and 49. They were divided into three groups to receive (or not) 20 scalp massage sessions (TWICE a week):

- Group 1: 15-MINUTE sessions
- Group 2: 25-MINUTE sessions
- Group 3: no massage (control)

The sessions mainly included **massage of the neck, shoulders, ear, temples and occiput** and tapping with a finger and compressions with the wrist.





Various measurements were performed under standard conditions before and after on all subjects:

- Blood samples to measure stress hormones: epinephrine, norepinephrine and cortisol
- Blood pressure
- Heart rate

Comparing the data before and after 10 weeks, the results show that:

- Scalp massage for 15 or 25 minutes has a significant effect on norepinephrine and cortisol, and scalp massage for 25 minutes has a significant effect on epinephrine. Massage **reduces the activation of the sympathetic nerve** while **increasing the activation of the parasympathetic nerve** that control the relaxation of the body. The result is a stabilization of hormone levels.

- **Systolic and diastolic blood pressure decreased** in groups 1 and 2, which appears to be the result of stabilized stress hormones.
- Heart rate shows a tendency to decrease slightly in groups 1 and 2, but not significantly despite the decrease in norepinephrine and cortisol levels that control the sympathetic nervous system.

Scalp massage therefore has a positive effect on stress hormones, blood pressure and heart rate. In conclusion, the authors recommend scalp massage to control stress in office workers.

It remains to be established whether this method is applicable other countries.

SOURCE:

Kim IH, Kim TY, Ko YW. The effect of a scalp massage on stress hormone, blood pressure, and heart rate of healthy female. J Phys Ther Sci. 2016; 28(10): 2703-2707.



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