



OSTEOPATHY

Also Known As:

Cranial Osteopathy, DO, Doctor of Osteopathy, Manipulative Therapy, Osteopathic Manipulation, Osteopathic Medicine, Osteopathic Physician, Physical Medicine.

Scientific Name:

None.

People Use This For:

Osteopathy is a complete system of medicine that uses a wide variety of methods for diagnosing and treating all types of medical conditions. Osteopathic practitioners are best known for treatments involving physical manipulation, such as spinal adjustments. However, in some regions, such as the US, osteopathic practitioners are licensed physicians that use the same diagnostic procedures and treatments as other physicians.

Safety:

Osteopathy is a complete system of medicine that uses a wide variety of methods for diagnosing and treating all types of medical conditions. Treatments include physical manipulation, drug therapy, surgery, and other procedures. Safety depends on the specific therapy used.

Effectiveness:

Osteopathy is a complete system of medicine that uses a wide variety of methods for diagnosing and treating all types of medical conditions. Treatments include physical manipulation, drug therapy, surgery, and other procedures. Effectiveness depends on the specific therapy used.

Mechanism of Action:

Osteopathy is a whole system of medicine that employs a variety of techniques and therapies to diagnose and treat medical conditions, similar to conventional or allopathic medicine. Diagnostic approaches include conventional laboratory tests and physical assessment. Therapies are similar to allopathic medicine practitioners; however, osteopathic physicians also utilize physical medicine including spinal manipulation and craniosacral therapy (14613, 16143).

Osteopathic practitioners, similar to chiropractic, believe that abnormal function of the musculoskeletal system can result in illness. Therefore, specific musculoskeletal manipulations are thought to be effective for a variety of medical conditions (16156).

Osteopathic practitioners utilize physical manipulation for a limited number of ailments, often for conditions such as back or neck pain. Other conventional or allopathic treatments such as drug therapy, psychiatry, surgery, etc., are typically employed for other conditions. Osteopathic practitioners suggest that osteopathy is different than allopathic medicine due to increased emphasis on a whole-person or patient-centered approach and a focus on preventive medicine (14613).

Adverse Reactions:

Osteopathy is a complete system of medicine that uses a wide variety of methods for diagnosing and treating all types of medical conditions. Treatments include physical manipulation, drug therapy, surgery, and other procedures. Potential adverse reactions depend on the specific therapy used.

Interactions with Herbs & Supplements:

None known.

Interactions with Drugs:

None known.

Interactions with Foods:

None known.

Interactions with Lab Tests:

Potential interactions depend on the specific therapy used.

Interactions with Diseases or Conditions:

Potential interactions depend on the specific therapy used.

Dosage/Administration:

Dosing and administration depends on the specific therapy used.

Editor's Comments:

Osteopathy was founded by Andrew Taylor Still in rural Kansas in the late 1800s. He founded the first school of osteopathy in Kirksville, Missouri in 1892 (14613, 16143). Both osteopathy and chiropractic are referred to as manipulative therapies because both use hands-on physical manipulation techniques to diagnose and treat some conditions. However, osteopathic practitioners and chiropractors are otherwise substantially different. In the U.S., osteopathic practitioners (doctors of osteopathy, DO) are licensed physicians similar to allopathic practitioners with the doctor of medicine (MD) degree. Therefore, they utilize the same or similar diagnostic procedures and medical treatments as allopathic physicians. In addition to these approaches, osteopathic physicians also are trained and use manipulative techniques.

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