

The Effect of Strain Counterstrain on Pain and Strength in Hip Musculature

Christopher Kevin Wong, MS, PT, OCS¹

Carrie Schauer-Alvarez, MS, PT²

2004

This randomized, controlled study assessed the effect of Strain Counterstrain (SCS) on tender points (TP) and strength of hip musculature. The convenience sample included 49 volunteers (15 men, 34 women; 98 limbs), aged 19-38 years, with hip weakness and corresponding TPs. A visual analog scale was used to assess pain; a digital handheld dynamometer was used to assess strength. Participants were randomly assigned to three intervention groups: SCS, Exercise (EX), and SCS+EX. All interventions were performed twice over two weeks; pain and strength were measured three times, both before and after intervention began. The SCS and SCS+EX group demonstrated increased strength ($p < .001$, 2-tailed t-tests), which when analyzed with one-way ANOVA and Scheffe' post-hoc tests was significantly greater than in the EX group ($p < .001$). All groups reported reduced pain and increased strength 2-4 weeks after intervention ($p < .001$). The results support the hypothesis that SCS reduces TP pain and demonstrated that SCS positively affects strength.