

Research and the FELDENKRAIS METHOD®

There is a growing body of research to support the efficacy of the *Feldenkrais Method*. In addition to the many case studies that contain detailed information about the interventions used with individuals, a number of recent studies incorporating larger groups, more effective methods, and random assignment control have been conducted. The following represent some of the three dozen studies included in “Complementary Therapies in Rehabilitation” (Slack Incorporated. Thorofare, NJ 2004), Chapter 12, written by James Stephens, PT, PhD., CFP and Teresa M. Miller, PT, MS, CFT.

Pain Management

In a study of 97 auto workers in Sweden, significant decreases in complaints of neck and shoulder pain were found in the group receiving *Feldenkrais Method* compared to a group randomly assigned physical therapy and a control group.

(Lundblad, et al. Randomized controlled trial of physiotherapy and *Feldenkrais*® interventions in female workers with neck-shoulder complaints. *J Occup Rehab*. 1999;9(3):179-94.)

Following an 8- week intensive *Feldenkrais* intervention, a group of seven chronic pain patients found – one year later – a reduction in use of pain medicine along with large decreases in pain perception, with a 40% reduction in the cost of medical care.

(Bearman et al. *Feldenkrais* method in the treatment of chronic pain: a study of efficacy and cost effectiveness. *Amer J Pain Manage*. 1999;9(1):22-27.)

The *Feldenkrais Method* helped to reduce pain and improve function in 34 chronic pain patients, who continued to independently incorporate what they learned 2 years after the study.

(Phipps, et al. A functional outcome study on the use of movement re-education in chronic pain management. (unpublished master’s thesis). Forest Grove, Ore; Pacific University, School of Physical Therapy; 1997.)

Motor and Postural Control, Functional Mobility

A random controlled follow-up study with people with multiple sclerosis showed improved balance and balance confidence.

(Stephens et al. Use of *Awareness Through Movement*® improves balance and balance confidence in people with multiple sclerosis: a random controlled study. *Neurology Report*. 2001;25(2): 39-49.)

Randomly dividing 59 elderly women into three groups, Hall et al found improvements in the group receiving ten weeks of *Feldenkrais* lessons measured by the activities of daily living score, Timed Up and Go, and Berg balance assessment.

(Hall et al. Study of the effects of various *forms* of exercise on balance in older women (unpublished manuscript). Healthway Starter Grant, File #7672, Dept of Rehabilitation, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Nedlands, Western Australia; 1999.)

Psychology and Quality of Life

In a randomly assigned, crossover design study involving 20 people with multiple sclerosis, a significant decrease in perceived stress and anxiety was found following *Feldenkrais* sessions.

(Johnson, et al. A controlled investigation of bodywork in multiple sclerosis. *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. 1999;5(3):237-43.)

In a matched, control group study of 30 patients, all young women with eating disorders, outcomes were measured using standardized psychological testing following a 9- hour *Feldenkrais* course. Results included an improved level of acceptance of the body, decreased feelings of helplessness, and increased self-confidence.

(Laumer et al. Therapeutic effects of *Feldenkrais Method*® “*Awareness Through Movement*®” in patients with eating disorders. *Psychother Psychosom Med Psychol*. 1997;47(5):170-180.)

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