# The effectiveness reflexology in reducing anxiety and pain in multiple sclerosis

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## BACKGROUND

Devastating symptoms adversely affect the daily lives of people with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Reflexology is used for physical and mental relaxation.

## OBJECTIVE

The aim of this study was to show and analyze the perception of people with MS about the effects of reflexology on anxiety and pain.

## METHODS

Participated fourteen people with MS and complains of anxiety and pain, ten women and four men, aged 40 to 57 years, relapsing-remitting MS (n=8/57%), primary-progressive MS (n=5/36%), secondary-progressive MS (n=1/7%), and Kurtze Expanded Disability Status Scale (EDSS) between 1 and 5.5. Participants underwent ten Reflexology sessions held once a week. Reflexology was applied for 60 minutes and conducted on an ergonomic bed that could be positioned in a special room with controlled temperature and light. The technique promoted manual stimuli in specific points of the body, known as nerve plexuses, located in the hands, legs, feet, nose, skull and ears. Before and after the therapy period, all answered a structured questionnaire containing open questions about sociodemographic and physical and mental sensations.

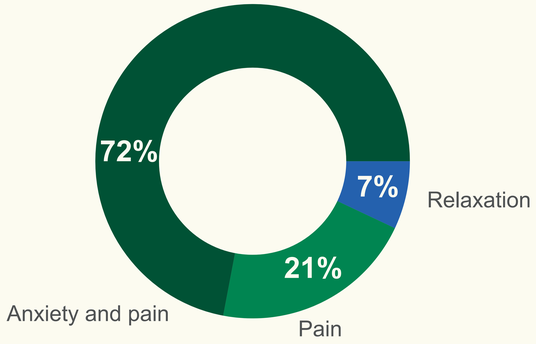
## RESULTS

Eight participants had already undergone Reflexology before and were in maintenance therapy, six were beginners in the approach. They reported that conventional treatment was limited to anxiety and pain relief. All reported improvement in physical, emotional and spiritual well--being after the sessions.

## CONCLUSIONS

Reflexology, as a complementary health approach, has been shown to be effective as an anxiolytic and analgesic effect in the opinion of this group of people with MS, promoting an increase in quality of life. This study suggests that Reflexology is a useful intervention for people with MS and can be used in conjunction with contemporary care.

## IMPROVEMENTS AFTER REFLEXOLOGY



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