

# Effects of Healing Touch on Post-operative Pain and Anxiety in Adults

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## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify if there was a difference in post-surgical patients' pain or anxiety after receiving Healing Touch (HT)

## Background

- Reductions in pain, anxiety and improved quality of life have been found in participants receiving HT
- Post-surgical patients often experience high levels of pain, anxiety, and sleep disturbance
- Non-pharmacologic interventions are not consistently used as adjuncts to medications to help manage these symptoms
- Poorly controlled pain leads to longer recovery times, sleep disturbances, and increased healthcare costs

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## Methods

- One group pre-post exploratory design, convenience sample
- Adult post-surgical patients with pain, anxiety, or difficulty sleeping; exclusion: < 18 years, non-English speaking, unable to self-report
- Participants completed surveys pre and post HT: pain, anxiety, and sleep numeric ratings; reason for requesting HT
- EHR data: related medications, surgery times
- HT intervention was performed by a Healing Touch Practitioner, no additional modalities were used
- Analysis: descriptive statistics, paired t-test

## Results

- Length of HT session: mean 41 minutes (SD 8.4); range 20-55 minutes
- Timing of HT session: mean 29 hours after surgery (SD 41.2); range 4.6-179.1 hours
- Participants who received oral or IV opioids within 30 minutes before HT session:
  - 0 doses: 31 (78%)
  - 1 dose: 9 (23%)
- Participants who received oral or IV opioids within 30 minutes after HT session:
  - 0 doses: 33 (83%)
  - 1 dose: 7 (18%)

### Sample Characteristics

Age (y)	Mean 67 (SD 12.1) Range: 40 – 88	
Sex	Female	34 (85%)
	Male	6 (15%)
Surgery type	Ortho	28 (70%)
	Spine	6 (15%)
	General	5 (13%)
	OB/GYN	1 (3%)
Surgery length (hr)	Mean 2.4 (SD 1.2) Range: 0.4 – 6.6	
Previous experience with HT	13 (33%)	
Patient's goal for HT: pain, anxiety, sleep	All 3	22 (55%)
	Pain only	5 (13%)
	Pain and anxiety	5 (13%)
	Anxiety and sleep	4 (10%)
	Pain and sleep	3 (8%)
Pain relief alone or in combination was identified as a goal by 90%		

### Comparison of Pre HT and Post HT scores

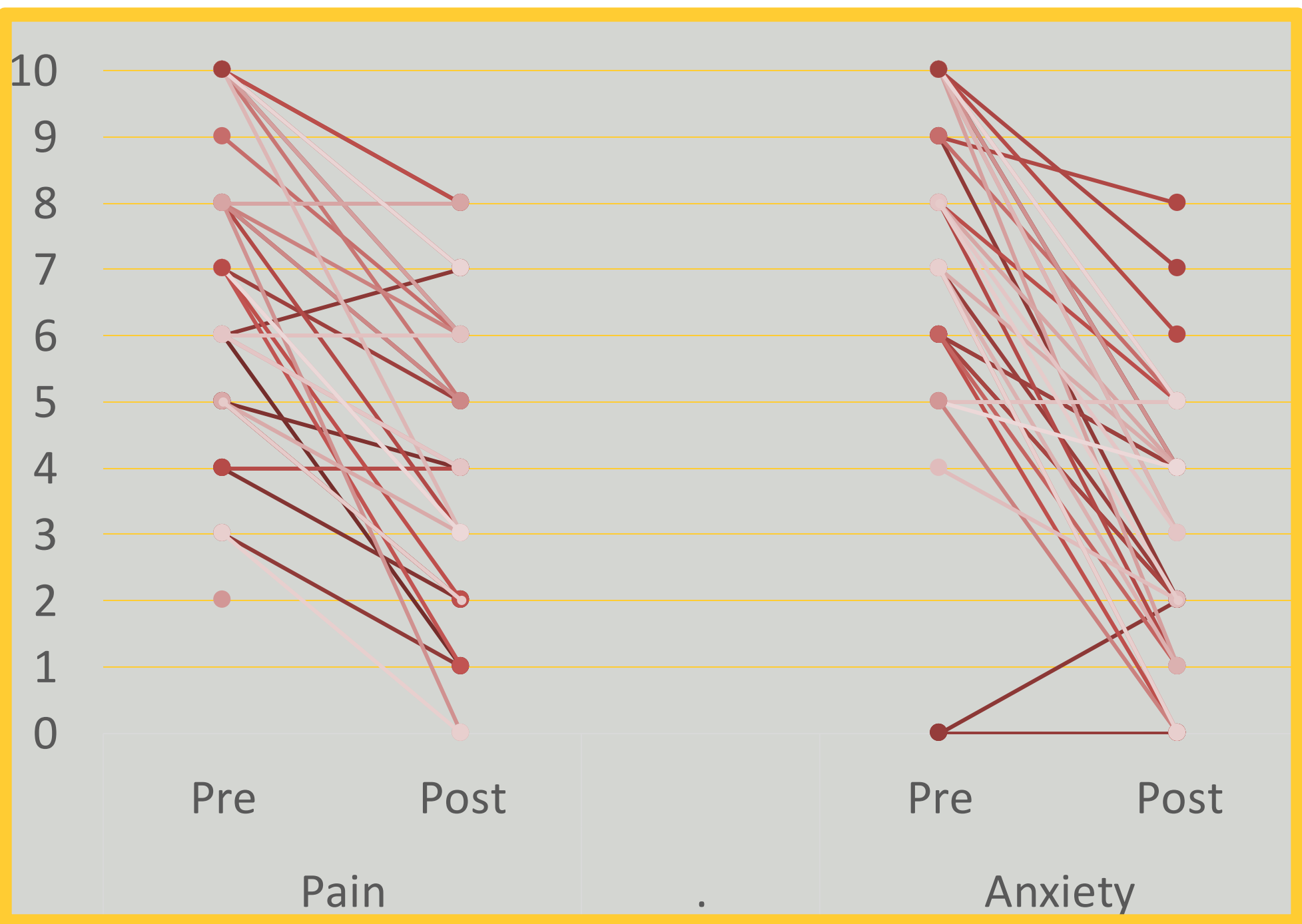
	Pre HT Mean (SD) n=40	Post HT Mean (SD) n=37	Difference Mean (SD)
Pain	6.9 (2.3)	4.1 (2.3)	2.8* (2.0)
Anxiety	7.1 (2.8)	2.9 (2.1)	4.2* (3.4)
Sleep	29 identified sleep as goal	12 (41%) appeared asleep	–

\*p<.001

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### Individual pain and anxiety scores Pre/Post HT



## Conclusion

- Pain and anxiety scores decreased significantly following HT sessions
- HT, a holistic, non-pharmacological approach, in addition to standard care, may help with pain, anxiety, and sleep in post-surgical patients
- Limitations to this study include small sample size, and large variations in timing of HT impacted by the decrease in patient length of stay after the pandemic (study started prior to pandemic and suspended for 11 months)

## References

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